

Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 25 and 26, 2026



Jesus Is the Light

Welcome to Worship

Thank you for joining us for worship today! We are honored that you are with us. We pray that the Word of God you hear will strengthen your faith and increase your love for the Lord! Please fill out a “Welcome to Worship” card (found in the hymnal racks) and place it in an offering plate, located near the sanctuary doors, as you leave worship. If you are a guest, know that we are thankful you have joined us and hope that you will join us again soon.

Prepare for Worship

To prepare for worship, read through the service focus and the Scripture readings. Ponder the words of the Psalm of the Day. Spend time in prayer, using the prayers on the inside cover of the hymnal or on pages 255-258. For those intending to receive the Lord’s Supper, read through the “Christian Questions” on pages 295-296. Consider reading through portions of the Small Catechism on pages 286-293.

Today's Focus for Worship – Jesus Is the Light

The prophet Isaiah vividly described humanity as “people walking in darkness.” Then he foretold that a light would shine on them. Enveloped by sin, suffering, and death, we find our minds and hearts clouded. But Jesus is revealed as the promised light. He shines his light by preaching repentance and the good news of the kingdom. Our Savior is the Light of the world, and we reflect his light onto everyone around us.

Serving at Worship

Presiding Minister: Pastor Kenneth Rodrigue

Preacher: Pastor Kirk Lahmann

Accompanist: Vicki Jensen

Guitarist: Pastor Kirk Lahmann

Acknowledgments

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The Service

Setting Five



Opening Hymn

O Christ, Our True and Only Light | 904

Please stand to sing the final stanza.

Invocation

Matthew 18:20; 28:19-20

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession and Absolution

1 John 1:8-9; 2:2; Matthew 28:19-20

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy Kyrie

Matthew 15:22; 17:15; Mark 10:47

In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world,
for the well-being of the Church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this ho - ly house and for all who of - fer here their
 wor - ship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
 Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord.
A - men.

Glory Be to God *Gloria in Excelsis*

Luke 2:14; John 1:29

Glo - ry, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the
 high - est! Glo - ry, glo-ry to God, and peace to his
 peo - ple on earth. Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al -



mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Glo - ry, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the
high - est! Glo - ry, glo-ry to God, and peace to his
peo - ple on earth. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly

Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on us.

You are seat - ed at the right hand of the
Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer, re - ceive our prayer.

Glo - ry, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the
high - est! Glo - ry, glo - ry to God, and peace to his
peo - ple on earth. For you a - lone are the
Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the
Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly
Spir - it in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
Glo - ry, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the
high - est! Glo - ry, glo - ry to God, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth.

The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.



Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and teach with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit that we too may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 8:19-9:4

¹⁹ When someone tells you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ Consult God's instruction and the testimony of warning. If anyone does not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn. ²¹ Distressed and hungry, they will roam through the land; when they are famished, they will become enraged and, looking upward, will curse their king and their God. ²² Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness.

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. ³ You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. ⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Refrain

The LORD is my light and my sal - va - tion— of
whom shall I be a - fraid, of whom shall I be a - fraid?

Tone

Hear my voice when I / call, LORD;
be merciful to me and / answer me.
Do not hide your / face from me,
do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my / helper.
Do not reject me or for- / sake me,
God my / Savior. *Refrain*

Though my father and mother for- / sake me,
the LORD will re- / ceive me.
I remain confi- / dent of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the / living.
Wait / for the LORD;
be strong and take heart and wait / for the LORD.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen.** *Refrain*

³ We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.

⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness.

¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Isaiah 9:2



Refrain

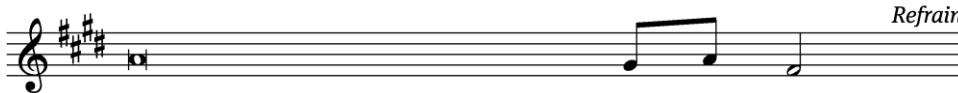
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Tone



The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;



on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

Gospel

Matthew 4:12-23

¹² When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— ¹⁴ to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—¹⁶ the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” ¹⁷ From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day

When Jesus Came From Nazareth

1. When Je-sus came from Naz-a-reth, he
2. He led them o-ver un-known ways whose
3. We make our vows, O Christ, to-day to
4. Lord, grant us grace to walk your way and,
5. Good Shep-herd, ris-en from the grave, in

walked be-side the sea. He saw four
end they could not see And, when they
serve you faith-ful-ly. For you have
fall-ing, rise a-gain Re-stored, for
death our com-fort be: Call out, from

fish-er-men and called, "Come,
fal-tered, called a-gain, "Come,
called us each by name, "Come,
giv-en, hear-ing still, "Come,
heav'n, where you have gone, "Come,
fol-low me! Come, fol-low me!"

Text (st. 1-4): Herman G. Stuempfle, 2000

NAZARETH

(st. 5): Michael Schultz, 2006

Tune, Setting: Stephen C. Lehmann, 2009

Sermon

Matthew 4:12-23

Follow the Leader

1. Christ Is Our Leader
2. We Are His Followers
3. He Makes Us Leaders

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

2 Samuel 22:29, Psalm 18:28

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Light which the darkness cannot overcome. Banish the darkness of sin, guilt and fear from our lives and let your light shine forth.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

Open our lips to speak your praise to those around us. Give success to the work of missionaries as they proclaim your Word. Give your Word of love, peace and forgiveness the power to break hard hearts and lead people in your way.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

You called your first disciples from their boats and nets to catch people for you. Lord of the harvest, send new workers into your harvest field. Call young people and lead them to your service of preaching and teaching your Word.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

You are the Lord of life. In your grace you give people time, and our times are in your hands. Enlighten people everywhere, and move them to value all life, born and unborn, young and old, healthy and sick.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

We give you thanks for faithful pastors. Give them knowledge, wisdom and boldness as they speak your Word. Give them faithfulness, courage and persistence as they shepherd your people.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

Lift the darkness of sadness and uncertainty from those who must suffer pains of mind or body. Give them light and hope with the promise of your constant presence and your purpose to work all things for the good of those who love you.

You, Lord, are our lamp. Lord, turn our darkness into light.

Shine in our hearts with the most precious Light of your grace. Send your Holy Spirit to enlighten us when we hear the promises of your Word. Shine within us. Shine through us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offering

2 Corinthians 9:7

Offerings given in thanks to the Lord are brought to the Lord's altar. We ask all worshipers to fill out a "Welcome to Worship" card (found in the hymnal racks) and place it in the offering plates at the sanctuary doors following the service.

The Sacrament

Stand



Preface

2 Timothy 4:22; Colossians 3:1; Psalm 136:1

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy *Sanctus*

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the
high - est! Bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Matthew 26:26

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer *Pater Noster*

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Words of Institution *Verba*

Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my \pm body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my \pm blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

0 Christ, Lamb of God *Agnus Dei*

John 1:29

Lamb of God, Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world, (hmmm) have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world, (hmmm) have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world, (hmmm) grant us your peace.

(hmmm) A - men.

Be seated

Holy Communion Distribution

St. John's Lutheran Church practices Close Communion. We ask that only members of St. John's, or members of a church in fellowship with St. John's, come forward for Communion. Our pastoral staff would be happy to set up a time to discuss this, and any teaching of Scripture, with you.

Distribution Hymns (Sunday)

Arise, Your Light Is Come! | 387

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light | 713

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness | 517

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Gracious Father, unite us in the gospel of your Son, that we may follow him and share the kingdom of God in all the world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing Aaronic Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated

Closing Hymn

The People Who in Darkness Walked | 381

