



Fifth Sunday after Epiphany Holy Communion

February 5, 2023 9:00 a.m.

Welcome to worship this morning!

If you are new to the congregation, please know that **children** are welcome to remain in worship or take a break in our “Kids’ Korner” in the gathering space where the service is piped in for parents. **Bathrooms** are located down the hall past the church office. All who desire the sacrament are welcome for **communion**. Pre-filled communion cups are available at the usher’s table. During Holy Communion we will invite all who desire to come forward to kneel at the altar rail. Please bring your communion kit with you at that time.

The **hymns** are printed in the red book available in the pew rack. “ELW” refers to the book’s title, “Evangelical Lutheran Worship.”

PRELUDE: *O heiliger Geist, o heiliger Gott*

J.C.F. Fischer

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things. †
Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.
Let us confront our sins,
and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.
I invite you to kneel or remain standing.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings,
we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.
We have strayed from your paths.
We prepare for war instead of peace.
We dishonor one another and your creation.
Purify us with your refining fire
and set us again on your way of love,
that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,
and welcome your coming among us.
Amen.

People of God,
a new thing is growing in our midst,
a tender branch,
a living sign.
By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.
You have put on † Christ,
and your sins have been washed away.
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.
Amen.

OPENING HYMN: *Rise, Shine, You People!*

ELW 665

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

GLORIA



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace to earth be
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
3 To you a - lone, O God, we cry, the Ho - ly One we



giv - en! Let an - gels sing, let all re - ply; good -
au - thor, O Lamb of God, your death a - lone takes
name you; for you a - lone are God most high, one



will break forth from heav - en! Lord God Al - might - y,
sin a - way for - ev - er. Stretch out your arms to
liv - ing God we claim you: we wor - ship you, Lord



heav - en's king, we wor - ship you, our thanks we sing, we
ev - 'ry land, and, as you reign at God's right hand, re -
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it ev - er blest, in



praise you for your glo - ry.
ceive our prayer; have mer - cy.
God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. A - - - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen. *The congregation may be seated.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9a

Shortly after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, the people were troubled by the ineffectiveness of their fasts. God reminds them that outward observance is no substitute for genuine fasting that results in acts of justice, such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.

A reading from Isaiah:

¹Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

²Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.

³“Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.

⁴Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

⁵Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

⁶Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

^{9a}Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Setting Eight

Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encourages his followers to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God's commandments.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Brian

HYMN OF THE DAY: *We Are Called*

ELW 720

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. I invite you to kneel or remain standing.

A brief silence.

God of Light, empower your church to be salt for the earth and light for the world. May we live faithful lives which reflect your goodness and love. May we manifest the kingdom with our lives. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God of the universe, inspire our wonder at creation, from the light of dawn to the beauty of the dark night. Sustain all your creatures, from those in the unseen depths of the ocean to the plants and animals we know well. Bring healing to lands and communities experiencing natural disasters. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Savior of the nations, instruct the powerful in your ways. Provide upright leadership in business and industry, that workers are not oppressed. Throughout the world, inspire voters and raise up politicians to heed your call for nations to practice righteousness. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Liberating God, loosen the bonds of injustice in our midst. Grant peace to endless quarrels, put an end to hunger, and break every yoke of oppression. Shelter all who flee abuse in their homes or violence in their communities. Liberate those afflicted in any way. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Eternal Lord, shape our congregation that we make a positive impact in our community. May we be a place where lives are transformed. Make us steadfast in our trust in you, ready with tangible mercy and compassion for our neighbors. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

For what else shall we pray? (*Here worshippers may raise other prayers, aloud or silently, ending each prayer with the words, God of grace, to which the congregation may respond, receive our prayer.*)

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

Amen.

PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

Thank you for your continued generosity and faithfulness! At this time ushers will pass the offering plate if you desire to give a financial gift. Donations may also be given online at www.stmatthewavon.org or mailed to the church.

OFFERTORY: A *Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester*

L.J. White

O holy Jesus,
most merciful redeemer,
friend and brother,
may I know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly
and follow thee more nearly.
Amen.

DOXOLOGY

All rise as the communion elements are brought forward.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God,
you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground.
Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,
and make us messengers of your mercy and love
for all in need of your healing and justice.
We ask this through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

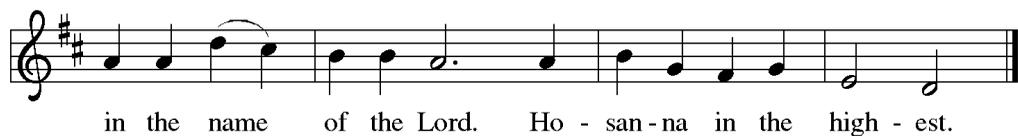
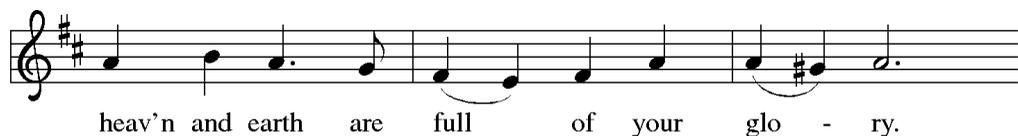
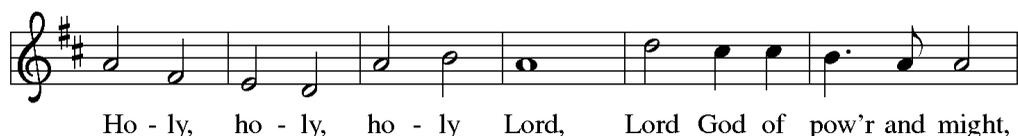
Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table. Come, taste and see.

At this time, we invite you to come forward with your communion kit and kneel at the altar rail or to remain in your seat to commune there. Trash bins will be available at the side of the altar rail and as you exit the church.

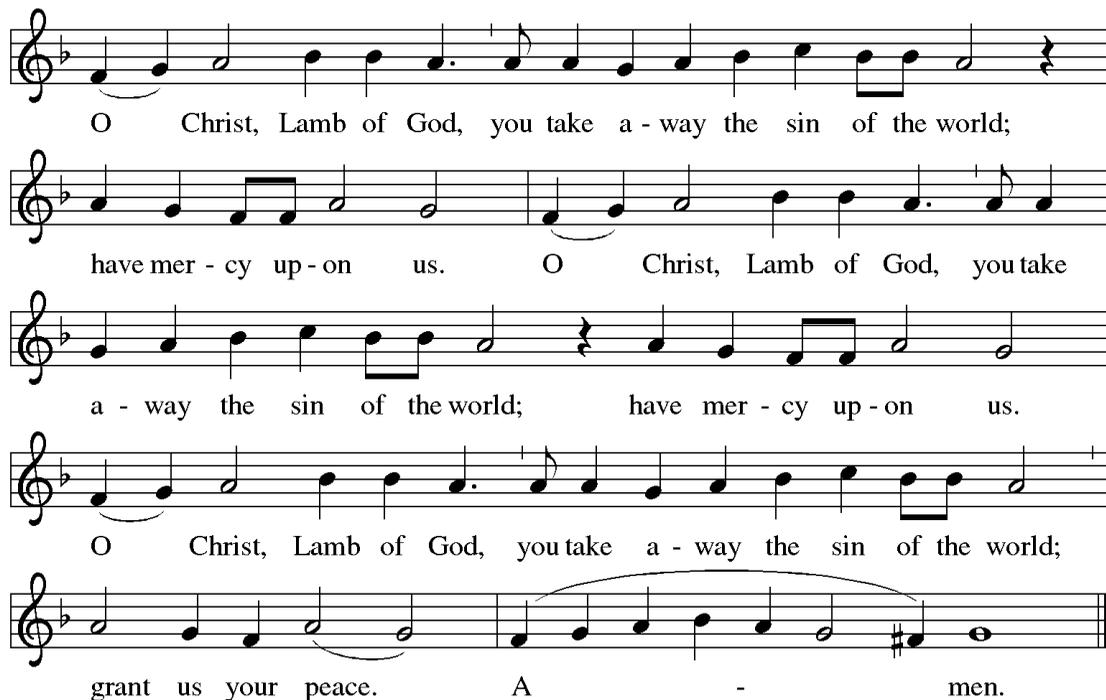
THE DISTRIBUTION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

AGNUS DEI

O Christ, Lamb of God



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take
a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy up - on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Music: J. Bugenhagen, *Christliche Ordnung*, 1528

COMMUNION HYMN: *This Little Light of Mine*

ELW 677

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God,
in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.
As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

BLESSING

God the eternal Word,
who dwells with us in Jesus,
and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Go My Children, with My Blessing*

ELW 543

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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This morning, altar flowers are given for the glory of God.

MANY THANKS THIS MORNING TO OUR:

Ushers: Kevin Reichler & Bob Hoffman

Lector: Kathy Alsgaard

Assisting Minister: Jane Hanson

Live Stream: Ben Wright

Altar Guild: Ellen Ericson & Robin Lindquist

Staff:

The Rev. Dr. Brian R. Rajcok, Pastor-pastorbrian@stmatthewavon.org

Sarah Schiener, Director of Music - contact the Church office (860) 673-3301

Paul Martin, Church Administrator - office@stmatthewavon.org

Roy Zurell, Sexton - contact the Church office (860) 673-3301

Visit us on our website: www.stmatthewavon.org

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday: 9:00 am Sanctuary Communion Service
10:20 am Adult Forum & Sunday School
4:30 pm Confirmation

Monday: 6:30 pm Confirmation

Wednesday: 9:30 am Weight Watchers (Hall of the Evangelists)
5:00 pm Centering Prayer
5:15 pm Weight Watchers (Hall of the Evangelists)
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

Sunday: 9:00 am Sanctuary Communion Service
10:20 am Adult Forum & Sunday School
4:00 pm Confirmation

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT FORUM

Please join us after the service today for Adult Forum and a continuation of last week's topic on "The Power of Prayer." Last week's Forum was a profoundly moving time, and we want to make sure others have a chance to share their prayer journey/experiences.

Come and be blessed!

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The call committee is in the process of interviewing a candidate for the position of Senior Pastor; the congregation will continue to be updated through Constant Contact, bulletin announcements or in-person updates. We ask the congregation to please continue to pray for the committee as it does its work.

GIFTS OF LOVE

We're looking for a volunteer to bring our overflowing food donations to Gifts of Love in Avon while Dave Erb is away. If you'd like to give us a hand, please contact the office or Pastor Brian.

USHERS NEEDED

St. Matthew is looking to add more Ushers to the roster. Any members (men, women, and/or youth) who are interested may reach out to the office, Pastor Brian, or Kevin Reichler for more information.

SMLC CHOIR

The St. Matthew Choir meets to rehearse on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm. Anyone who enjoys singing is welcome to join us. If you want to take part but cannot commit to every rehearsal and service, please reach out to Sarah Schiener to explore the ways in which you can be involved.

St. Matthew Mission Statement:

St. Matthew Lutheran Church is a worshipping community called to proclaim God's love for all and to grow spiritually together. Challenged by Jesus' example, we strive to connect people of all ages, abilities, and needs, and to nurture them to be disciples of Christ. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the wider community and welcome our neighbors to a life of worship, preaching, teaching, Christian care, service, and spiritual growth.

***In Christ, We Are
Digging Deep, Reaching Out, Changing Lives.***