

Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

February 8, 2026 – Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Connecting people to people • people to faith • faith to life

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(PLEASE POWER OFF OR AIRPLANE MODE YOUR DEVICES)

Here in Athens, in SE Ohio, we are occupying the traditional homeland of the Shawnee people. Before the Shawnee, this land was occupied by the Osage people, and by the Adena, Hopewell, and Fort Ancient cultures.

SERVING TODAY: Presider/Preacher: Pastor Rebecca Grate; Organist: George Weckman; Choir Director: Christian Yoder; Choir Accompanist: Donnalee Yoder; Pianist: Patricia Cambridge; Custodian: Nic Swain, Office: Danielle Huber, Lector: Jane Unger; Time with Children: Puppets; Ushers: Dan Snoddy, Nick Claussen; Greeter: Linda Batey; Acolyte: Rachel; Tray Server: Pat Cambridge; Livestream: Doug Debrick

PRELUDE *“Holy God, We Praise Thy Name”; CLC Choir*

CONFESSİON AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity,  one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace.

Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.
We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems

that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.
Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.

Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
☩ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.

GATHERING SONG

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies (ELW 553)



1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies, Christ, the true and on - ly light,
2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn un - ac - com - pa - nied by thee;
3 Vis - it then this soul of mine, pierce the gloom of sin and grief;



Sun of righ - teous - ness, a - rise, tri - umph o'er the shades of night;
joy - less is the day's re - turn, till thy mer - cy's beams I see,
fill me, ra - dian - cy di - vine, scat - ter all my un - be - lief;



Day - spring from on high, be near; Day - star, in my heart ap - pear.
till they in - ward light im - part, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.
more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788

Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815

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.

KYRIE

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

For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us

pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

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.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9a

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ Shout 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.

² Yet 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 want God on their side.

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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Is 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?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:

 to loose the bonds of injustice,
 to undo the straps of the yoke,
 to let the oppressed go free,
 and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is 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?

⁸ Then 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.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹ When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

⁴ My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶ Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. ⁷ But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory ⁸ and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

¹⁰ God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. [¹³ And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴ Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

¹⁵ Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

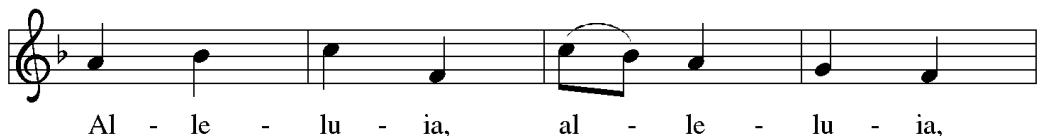
¹⁶ “For who has known the mind of the Lord
so as to instruct him?”

But we have the mind of Christ.]

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Repeat alleluia



GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20

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. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In 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. ¹⁸ For 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. ¹⁹ Therefore, 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. ²⁰ For 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

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service (ELW 712)



1 Lord, whose love in hum - ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu - man need,
2 Still your chil - dren wan - der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
3 As we wor - ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light
4 Called by wor - ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak - ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas - sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.
stir - ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984
Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray for all people everywhere according to their needs, and for the people of God in every place.

Let us pray for your church throughout the world
For its unity in witness and services
For all pastors and bishops and lay leaders
For all who believe and those who are yet to believe.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all nations and people, and for those in authority
For the President and Vice President, the Congress and Supreme Court
For the United Nations and NATO
For all who serve the common good of all people
That with God's help they may seek justice and truth and live in peace.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for the earth, our only home, that those with the power to truly protect her will find a way to do it.
For the forests, that they will no longer be cut down
For the oceans, lakes and rivers, that they will no longer be polluted
For the animals, birds, reptiles and all others in danger of extinction
For the farmers and those who depend on them (which is all of us)
Creator God, you have given us an amazing inheritance. May we care for your creation in ways that honor the coming generations.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body, mine, or spirit
For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and oppressed
For the sick and the wounded
For the lonely and fearful
For prisoners and captives and those in danger from ICE
For the sorrowful and bereaved
That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them of their suffering, and grant them the knowledge of his love and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Lord, God, hear the prayers of your church, as we rejoice in the mystery of our Lord's death and resurrection; grant that what we celebrate with faith we may put into practice in our lives, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **AMEN**

PEACE

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

OFFERING – THANK YOU! YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES OUR MINISTRY POSSIBLE.

Giving is easy online through our website at <https://www.clcathens.org/give>

There you will also find instructions for how you can text to give or by downloading our church app!

MUSICAL OFFERING *"In God, My Faithful God" CLC Choir*

OFFERTORY

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

O - so - sō o - so - sō, pyong - hwa - ūi - im - gūm
1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Say - ior.
4 Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sō.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.

Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope

Music: OSOSO, Geonyong Lee, b. 1947

Text and music © Geonyong Lee

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

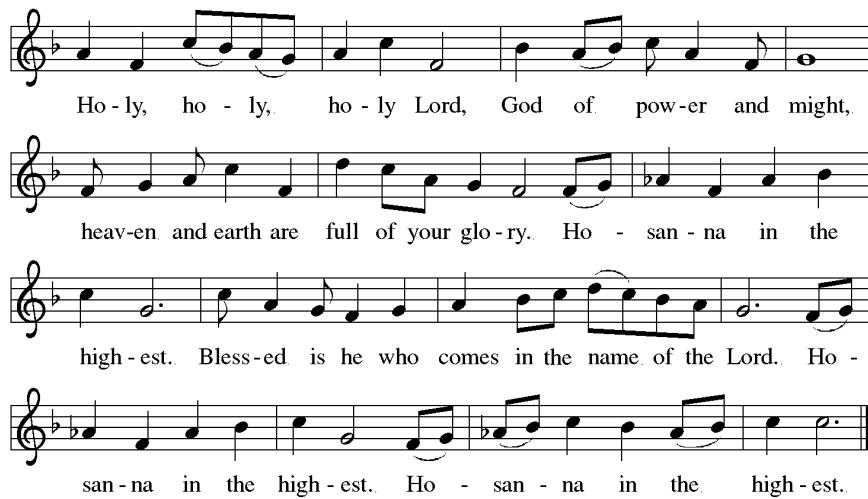
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. 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.

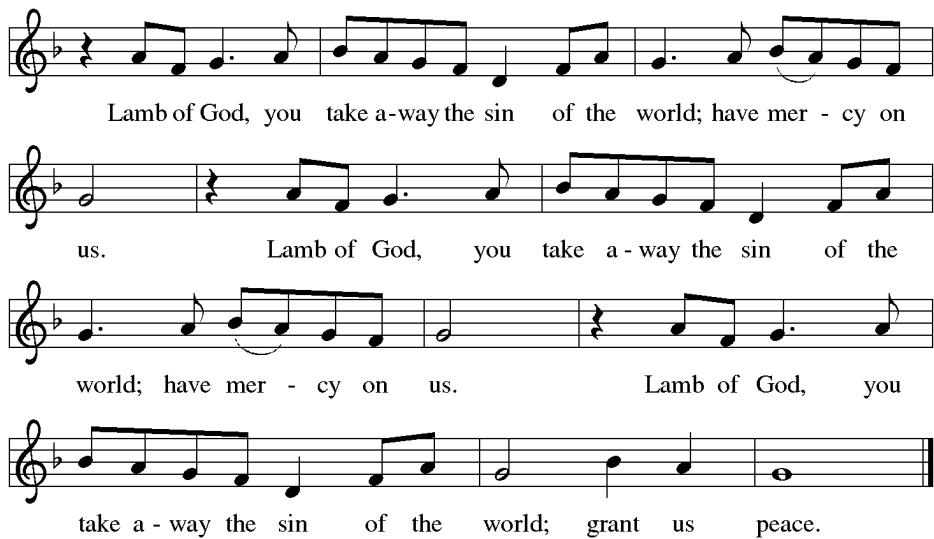
Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.
In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave 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.
Remembering, therefore,
his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,

we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.
By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy!
Thanks be to God!

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.
May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts
the mystery of your presence.
Move us to discover the wonders of your love
in the everyday moments of our lives,
through Christ born in us.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The triune God,
glorious Mystery,
holy Incarnate One,
abiding Comforter,
☩ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.



SENDING SONG

Sent Forth by God's Blessing (ELW 547)

1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, our true faith con-fess-ing,
 2 With praise and thanks-giv-ing to God ev-er liv-ing,

the peo-ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave.
 the tasks of our ev'-ry-day life we will face—

The sup-er is end-ed. Oh, now be ex-tend-ed
 our faith ev-er shar-ing, in love ev-er car-ing,

the fruits of this ser-vice in all who be-lieve.
 em-brac-ing God's chil-dren, the whole hu-man race.

The seed of Christ's teach-ing, re-cep-tive souls
 With your feast you feed us, with your light now

reach-ing, shall blos-som in ac-tion for God and for all.
 lead us; u-nite us as one in this life that we share.

Your grace shall in-cite us, your love shall u-nite us
 Then may all the liv-ing with praise and thanks-giv-ing

to work for your king-dom and an-swer your call.
 give hon-or to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.
 Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune
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DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.