



# **St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church February 8, 2026 5th Sunday after Epiphany**

**Worship every Sunday  
10:45 AM**

## **Welcome**

***We welcome all visitors who come to worship with us today.  
We are delighted that you have come to share in the prayer  
and praise of our Lord and invite you to return and add your  
voice to ours in holy celebration. If you have a special need or  
prayer write it on the prayer card in the pew rack and place it  
in the offering plate. Before you leave us today, we ask that  
you please sign our guest book.***

**Pulpit Supply: Mark Hoover  
Church Organist/Choir Director: Patricia McConnell  
Administrative Assistant: Tim Surkovich**

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**St. James Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament by the Holy Spirit.**

Announcements: If you cannot read the hymns, you can turn to the hymn in the red ELW hymnal in the pew racks.

Prelude: Lo, The Season Passes

David Paxton

*(We take this time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship)*

PLEASE STAND

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*An extended silence may be kept.*

Merciful God,

**We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, and Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

***We Gather***

\*GATHERING SONG: Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

ELW 553

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## Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

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.

The musical score is written for a three-part setting (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass) in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains three verses of the hymn. The second system contains two verses. The third system contains two verses. The music is a simple, hymn-like setting with a steady rhythm and a clear melodic line.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788

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

**\*GREETING:**

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

**C:** And also with you.

# KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



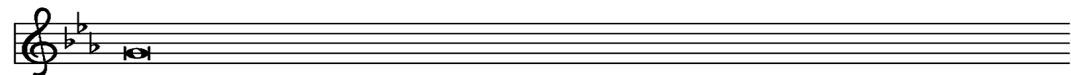
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



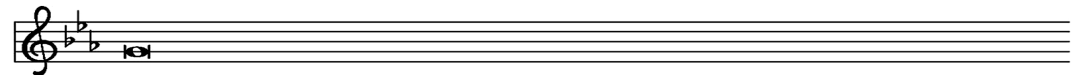
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

# Glory to God

Assisting minister



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



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;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



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. A-men.

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: 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.**

***We Listen to the Word***

**First Reading:**

**Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]**

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> “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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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?

<sup>6</sup> 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?

<sup>7</sup> 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?

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9a</sup> Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.”

[<sup>9b</sup> If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.]

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

## Psalm 112:1-9 [10]

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the LORD and have great delight in God's commandments!

<sup>2</sup> **Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.**

<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches will be in their house, and their righteousness will last forever.

<sup>4</sup> **Light shines in the darkness for the upright; the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup> It is good for them to be generous in lending and to manage their affairs with justice.

<sup>6</sup> **For they will never be shaken; the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.**

<sup>7</sup> They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; their heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> **Their heart is established and will not shrink, until they see their desire upon their enemies.**

<sup>9</sup> They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands fast forever; they will hold up their head with honor.

[<sup>10</sup> **The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away; the desires of the wicked will perish.]**

## Second Reading:

## 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

<sup>1</sup> When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

<sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory <sup>8</sup> and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> 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”—

<sup>10</sup> God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. [<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

<sup>16</sup> “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.**



\* Please stand if you are able

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

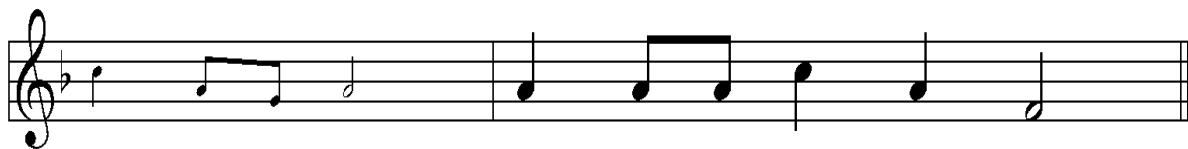


You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

**\*GOSPEL:**

**Matthew 5:13-20**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] <sup>13</sup> “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.

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

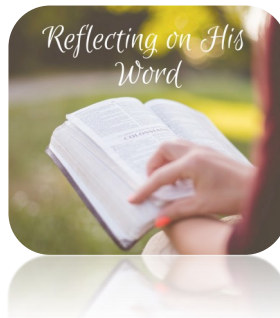
<sup>15</sup> People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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.



## Sermon



# *We Respond to the Word*

\*Hymn of the Day:

ELW 815

## I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to  
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to  
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to

fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give  
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,  
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with

light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.  
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.  
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

*Refrain*  
In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the

day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the

cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934  
Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson  
Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration.

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## **\*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.**

## **\*Sharing of the Peace**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

## ***We Offer Our Gifts***

### **\*Offering Prayer:**

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the One who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

*A brief silence.*

Your church does ministry in many and various ways. Keep the baptized true to the mind of Christ, that our works and witness bring hope to a troubled world. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Your marvelous creation cries out to you. Restore polluted air, soil, and water sources to wholeness. Guard honeybees, elephants, great whales and songbirds from harm, and renew the face of the earth. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Your people in every nation suffer injustice, poverty, and the threat of violence. Guide those in authority to govern with compassion, and bring peace to war zones (*areas of conflict may be named*). We pray for our enemies. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Your blessings are poured out for all in need. Help and heal any who experience trauma, discrimination, disease, hunger, abuse, or persecution. Comfort those who are sick or grieving (*especially*). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Your wisdom guides this congregation and its ministries. Sustain our ordained leaders, staff, lay leaders, and volunteers. Form us to be salt and light for the neighbors we serve, following the example of Christ. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Your saints rejoice at your heavenly banquet. We give thanks for their lives of faith, trusting that we also will be embraced by your eternal love. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

**Amen.**

Lord remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

\*The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

***We Are Sent***

\*Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

\*Sending Song: Lord of Light

ELW 688

*NEXT PAGE*

\*Dismissal

**P:** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

Recessional

Postlude On The Strings

Lionel Lackey

# Lord of Light



1 Lord of light, your name out - shin - ing all the stars and  
 2 By the toil of faith - ful work - ers in some far out -  
 3 Grant that knowl - edge, still in - creas - ing, at your feet may  
 4 By the prayers of faith - ful watch - ers, nev - er si - lent



suns of space, use our tal - ents in your king - dom  
 ly - ing field, by the cour - age where the ra - diance  
 low - ly kneel; with your grace our tri - umphs hal - low,  
 day or night; by the cross of Je - sus, bring - ing



as the ser - vants of your grace; use us to ful -  
 of the cross is still re - vealed, by the vic - to -  
 with your char - i - ty our zeal; lift the na - tions  
 peace to all and heal - ing light; by the love that



fill your pur - pose in the gift of Christ your Son.  
 ries of meek - ness, through re - proach and suf - f'ring won:  
 from the shad - ows to the glad - ness of the sun:  
 pass - es knowl - edge, mak - ing all your chil - dren one:

## Refrain



Fa - ther, as in high - est heav - en, so on earth your will be done.

Text: Howell E. Lewis, 1860-1953, alt.

Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907-1991

Text © Union of Welsh Independents.

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# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**IN THE CASE OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY,**  
In the event of a Pastoral Emergency, please contact Pastor Eli Hess  
Work: 814-943-3972

The church office email is [stjamesaltoona@gmail.com](mailto:stjamesaltoona@gmail.com) The church's  
website is [www.stjamesaltoona.org](http://www.stjamesaltoona.org)  
On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



## **Our Prayer List:**

Tim Surkovich	Jeff Bickel	Bill Wilt	Bob Holsinger Sr
Staff Sgt John Hiles	Donna Foster	Donna Wilt	Bob Holsinger
Carolyn Feather	Bill Dambeck	Judy Dambeck	Evelyn Holsinger
The soul and family of Debbie Thomas		The soul and family of Debra Morgan	
The soul of Marian "Toots" Holsinger		The soul of Deborah Manbeck	
The soul of Sylvia Malsatzki		The soul of Carol Weaver	

(Names for inclusion on our parish prayer list can be submitted to the church office. The name will remain on the list for one month. At the end of that period please advise the church office, if you would like the name to be continue for another month.)

Those serving in our military.





## **UPCOMING MEETINGS, EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES:**

<b>St Luke's Community Lunch</b>	<b>Feb 11 12 PM</b>
<b>Easter Flower Order Deadline</b>	<b>Feb 20 12 PM</b>
<b>Potluck Dinner</b>	<b>Feb 22 12 PM</b>
<b>Sweets and Treats</b>	<b>Mar 1 10 AM</b>
<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Mar 9 4 PM</b>
<b>Allegheny Chorale Concert</b>	<b>Apr 26 3 PM</b>
<b>Church Picnic</b>	<b>Jun 28 11 AM</b>

***\*Highland Park Pavillion #2***

- NOTE: Worship Services will be held in the Sunday School Room until Palm Sunday!**



**POTLUCK DINNER**

**The next Potluck Dinner is**  
**February 22, 2026**  
**12 PM**

**SWEETS**



## **SWEETS AND TREATS**

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF  
EACH MONTH.**

**OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL  
BE: March 1, 2026**

**Provided By: Evelyn Holsinger**

\* We are always looking for volunteers to sponsor Sweets and Treats. If you're interested there is a sign up sheet in the Sunday School Room. Your support is appreciated!

*Please consider volunteering and signing up to  
sponsor Sweets and Treats for the  
2026 Calendar Year..*



## **NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**March 9, 2026**

**4 PM**

**COMMUNITY  
LUNCH**



## **ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH**

**Feb 11 12 PM**

- Hosted by St James Lutheran Held 2nd Wednesday of each month in the St James Social Hall

## Easter Flowers

Your name (as you wish it to appear in the bulletin)

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This Donation is made:

IHO: 

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IMO: 

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Choice of Flowers:

<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Tulips 5/6 Bulb (\$13)	<input type="checkbox"/> Red Tulips 5/6 Bulb (\$13)
<input type="checkbox"/> 8"Daffodils(\$16)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lilies single stem (\$17)
<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Color 3 Bulb Hyacinths (\$17)	

Amount of Contribution: \$ 

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 Envelope Number: 

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Please Check One:

☐ Yes, I do want to take the flower(s) home with me.

☐ No, I do not want to take the flower(s) home with me. I would like them to be given to a shut-in or friend of St. James.

Please use the My Offering envelope in your pew to place your

# *St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church*

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**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.