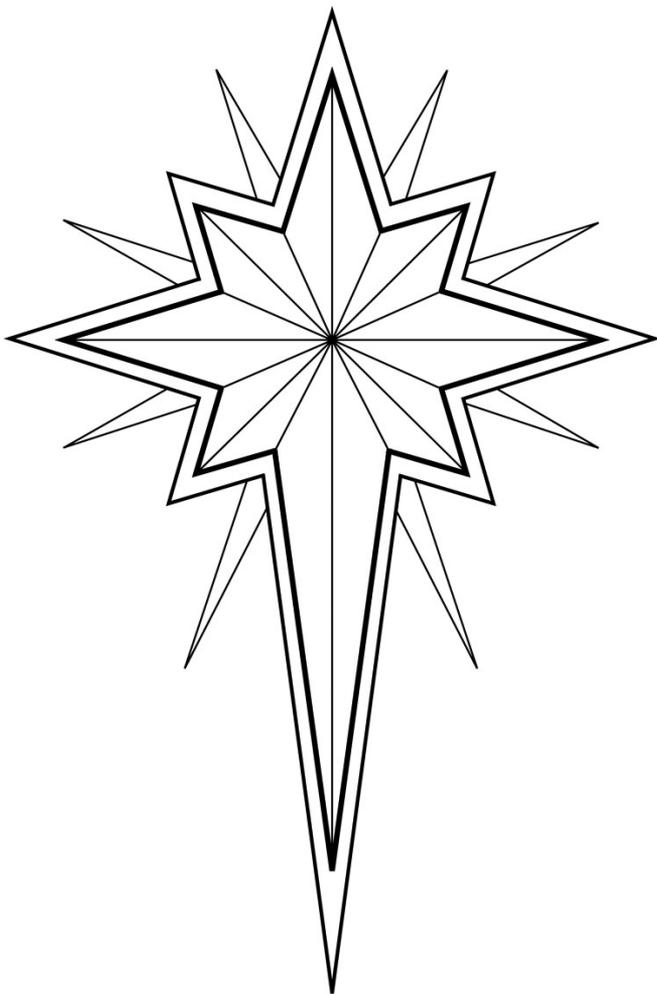


Fifth Sunday after Epiphany  
5 February 2023



Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# Service of Holy Communion

## *Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Setting 3*

*The liturgy is in the front of the ELW with numbers at the bottom of the pages.  
The hymns begin in the middle of the ELW with numbers at the top of the pages.*

### **Prelude**

### **Ringing of the Bell**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### **Confession and Forgiveness (pages 94-96)**

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

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

*(There is a time of silence for reflection.)*

P: Most merciful God,

**C: 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.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## Hymn #673 “God, Whose Almighty Word”

### Greeting (page 138)

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 (pages 138-139)

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

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

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: 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.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and  
praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**C: Amen.**

♪ **This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
whose blood set us free to be people of God.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,  
and honor, blessing, and glory are his.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Sing with all the people of God  
and join in the hymn of all creation.  
Blessing, honor, glory and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**For the Lamb who was slain  
has begun his reign. Alleluia.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

## **Prayer of the Day**

P: The Lord be with you.   **C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. *concluding:* **C: Amen**

## **Readings**

L: The Word of the Lord.   **C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Acclamation**

♫ **Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## **Gospel**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: The Gospel of the Lord.   **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Youth Sermon** – Pastor Holloway-Nilsen

**Sermon** – Pastor Holloway-Nilsen

**Hymn #712 “Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service”**

## **Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed**

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**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 with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic 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.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

P: Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world,  
and all in need.

*(Each petition ends: P: Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.)*

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

**C: Amen.**

### **Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

### **Offering**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

P: Holy God, gracious and merciful...our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### **♪ Great Thanksgiving (page 144)**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right....and join their unending hymn:

♫ **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna, Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

## **Words of Institution**

### **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.**

### ***Holy Communion is celebrated today.***

*All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are invited to receive Holy Communion  
Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

♫ **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace.**

## **Hymn #638 "Blessed Assurance"**

### **Post Communion Blessing**

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C: Amen**

## **Post-Communion Hymn (Hymn #302)**

♪ **As with gladness men of old  
did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright;  
so, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led by thee.**

## **Post Communion Prayer**

P: Let us pray.

P: We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **Blessing**

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **Hymn #301 “Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”**

## **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Share the good news.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

## **Ringling of the Bell / Postlude**

**Pastor:** Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen

**Organist:** Jason Boussetot or Linda Whitman

**Acolyte:** David Burke

**Lector:** Cindy Burke

**Communion Assistant:** Brian Boussetot

**Usher:** Shane Glover

**Cleaners:** Marcia Edens & Mark Olson

**Contact Information:**

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**This Week At A Glance**

|           |          |                                  |
|-----------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Wednesday | 6:00 pm  | Confirmation at Faith            |
|           | 7:00 pm  | Bible Jam at Faith               |
|           | 8:30 pm  | High School Bible Study at Faith |
| Sunday    | 8:00 am  | Our Savior's Worship Service     |
|           | 9:25 am  | Sunday School at Faith           |
|           | 10:30 am | Faith Worship Service            |

**Those to keep in prayer:** the homebound: Norman Bousset, Carol Christensen, Shirley Ferguson, Ron Gasper, Delores Lahann, Myrna Kay Petersen, Rusty Porth, Betty Schau, Bus Seastrand, Joan Shelton; and Vera St. John; and those serving in the military.

During the month of February, the God Squad will participate in a **Band-Aid Drive** to collect fun and colorful band-aids to donate to the University of Iowa Children's Hospital in Iowa City.

**Parent/Youth Bible Jam Night** will be held at Faith on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, starting at 7:00 pm. The youth would like to invite their parents to join us for supper, Q&A about the 2024 Youth Gathering and 2023 summer camp opportunities and family card night.

The **noisy offering** will be collected on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Ash Wednesday** will be February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Our Savior's at 7:00 pm. During **Pastor Holloway-Nilsen's maternity leave**, if you are willing to offer the homily or reflection on a Sunday, please let Pastor know by email or a phone call before Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Members of the congregation will be asked to bring communion to our homebound members during this time as well. If you are will to do this, please let Pastor know before March 16<sup>th</sup>.

# The Salt of the Earth

by William Barclay

*Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men."*

When Jesus said this, he provided men with an expression which has become the greatest compliment that can be paid to any man. When we wish to stress someone's solid worth and usefulness, we say of him, "People like that are the salt of the earth."

In the ancient world salt was highly valued. The Greeks called salt divine (theion) In a phrase, which in Latin is a kind of jingle, the Romans said, "There is nothing more useful than sun and salt." (Nil utilius sole et sale.) In the time of Jesus salt was connected in people's minds with three special qualities.

(i) Salt was connected with purity. No doubt its glistening whiteness made the connection easy. The Romans said that salt was the purest of all things, because it came from the purest of all things, the sun and the sea. Salt was indeed the most primitive of all offerings to the gods, and to the end of the day the Jewish sacrifices were offered with salt. So then, if the Christian is to be the salt of the earth he must be an example of purity.

One of the characteristics of the world in which we live is the lowering of standards. Standards of honesty, standards of diligence in work, standards of conscientiousness, moral standards, all tend to be lowered. The Christian must be the person who holds aloft the standard of absolute purity in speech, in conduct, and even in thought. A certain writer dedicated a book to J. Y. Simpson "who makes the best seem easily credible." No Christian can depart from the standards of strict honesty. No Christian can think lightly of the lowering of moral standards in a world where the streets of every great city provide their deliberate enticements to sin. No Christian can allow himself the tarnished and suggestive jests which are so often part of social conversation. The Christian cannot withdraw from the world, but he must, as James said, keep himself "unstained from the world" ([James 1:27](#)).

(ii) In the ancient world salt was the commonest of all preservatives. It was used to keep things from going bad, and to hold putrefaction at bay. Plutarch has a strange way of putting that. He says that meat is a dead body and part of a dead body, and will, if left to itself, go bad; but salt preserves it and keeps it fresh, and is therefore like a new soul inserted into a dead body.

So then salt preserves from corruption. If the Christian is to be the salt of the earth, he must have a certain antiseptic influence on life.

We all know that there are certain people in whose company it is easy to be good; and that also there are certain people in whose company it is easy for standards to be relaxed. There are certain people in whose presence a soiled story would be readily told, and there are other people to whom no one would dream of telling such a tale. The Christian must be the cleansing antiseptic in any society in which he happens to be; he must be the person who by his presence defeats corruption and makes it easier for others to be good.

(iii) But the greatest and the most obvious quality of salt is that salt lends flavour to things. Food without salt is a sadly insipid and even a sickening thing. Christianity is to life what salt is to food. Christianity lends flavour to life.

The tragedy is that so often people have connected Christianity with precisely the opposite. They have connected Christianity with that which takes the flavour out of life. Swinburne had it:

"Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilaeen;  
the world has grown gray from Thy breath."

Even after Constantine had made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, there came to the throne another Emperor called Julian, who wished to put the clock back and to bring back the old gods. His complaint, as Ibsen puts it, was:

"Have you looked at these Christians closely? Hollow-eyed,  
pale-cheeked, flat-breasted all; they brood their lives away,  
unspurred by ambition: the sun shines for them, but they do not  
see it: the earth offers them its fulness, but they desire it not;  
all their desire is to renounce and to suffer that they may come

to die."

As Julian saw it, Christianity took the vividness out of life.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers." Robert Louis Stevenson once entered in his diary, as if he was recording an extraordinary phenomenon, "I have been to Church to-day, and am not depressed."

Men need to discover the lost radiance of the Christian faith. In a worried world, the Christian should be the only man who remains serene. In a depressed world, the Christian should be the only man who remains full of the joy of life. There should be a sheer sparkle about the Christian but too often he dresses like a mourner at a funeral, and talks like a specter at a feast. Wherever he is, if he is to be the salt of the earth, the Christian must be the diffuser of joy.

Jesus went on to say that, if the salt had become insipid, it was fit only to be thrown out and trodden on by men. This is difficult, because salt does not lose its flavour and its saltiness. E. F. F. Bishop in his book *Jesus of Palestine* cites a very likely explanation given by Miss F. E. Newton. In Palestine the ordinary oven is out of doors and is built of stone on a base of tiles. In such ovens "in order to retain the heat a thick bed of salt is laid under the tiled floor. After a certain length of time the salt perishes. The tiles are taken up, the salt removed and thrown on the road outside the door of the oven ... It has lost its power to heat the tiles and it is thrown out." That may well be the picture here.

But the essential point remains whatever the picture, and it is a point which the New Testament makes and remakes again and again--uselessness invites disaster. If a Christian is not fulfilling his purpose as a Christian, then he is on the way to disaster. We are meant to be the salt of the earth, and if we do not bring to life the purity, the antiseptic power, the radiance that we ought, then we invite disaster.

It remains to be noted that sometimes the early Church made a very strange use of this text. In the synagogue, among the Jews, there was a custom that, if a Jew became an apostate and then returned to the faith, before he was received back into the synagogue, he must in

penitence lie across the door of the synagogue and invite people to trample upon him as they entered. In certain places the Christian Church took over that custom, and a Christian who had been ejected by discipline from the Church, was compelled, before he was received back, to lie at the door of the Church and to invite people as they entered, "Trample upon me who am the salt which has lost its savour."

-Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT)

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/william-barcley>