

# BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

*You have a place here!*

*"Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love.  
Here and now God dwells in all of our lives,  
bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."*

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## FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

**9:00 am Sunday, February 8, 2026**

*Pastor Dave Johnson*

### TODAY'S REFLECTION



Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

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*All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive Holy Communion.*

*We hope that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling  
and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy*

▼ **Prelude Reflections for Meditation**

▼ **Welcome Greeting—Prayers and Praises**

▲ **Opening Hymn**

*“Change My Heart, O God” page 9*

▲ **Confession & Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence for Reflection*

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community,  
but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors.  
We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words,  
but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and  
give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly  
with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of  
water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your  
sin in † Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you  
with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

▲ **Prayer of the Day**

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.**

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**THE WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song*

▼ **God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)**

*The First Reading is from Isaiah 58:1-12*

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. 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<sup>3</sup> their side. "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. 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. 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? 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? 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? 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. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am." If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, 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. 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. 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.**

▼ **God's Word from the Psalms (NRSV)**

*Psalms 112:1-10*

Praise the Lord! Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments.

**Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.**

Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.

**They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.**

It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

**For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.**

They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord.

**Their hearts are steady; they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.**

They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor.

**The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.**

▼ **God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)**

*The Second Reading is from 1 Corinthians 2:1-16*

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. 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. But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 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". God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 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. 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. 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. 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. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. "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.**

▲ **God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)**

*The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:13-20*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 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. 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. The Law and the Prophets "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 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. 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<sup>5</sup> 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—God’s Word Applied to Life**

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

*“They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love” , page 10*

▲ **The Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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 the Church**

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 for those we name before you either in silence or out loud).

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. 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.**

▲ **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace.*

**THE MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

▼ **Offering and Presentation of the Gifts**

January—March Mission Designation ~ **World Hunger**

▼ **Offering Prayer**

God of majesty,  
no eye has seen, no ear has heard  
what you have prepared for those who love you,  
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.

Use what we have gathered  
to feed us with the reign of God come near,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

▼ **The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution**

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, 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.

▼ **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.

▼ **Invitation and Distribution of Communion**

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Come to the table; taste and see.

## Let Us Break Bread Together



1 Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees;  
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees;  
 3 Let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees.  
 let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees.  
 let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BREAL BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

▼ **Post Communion Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
strengthen you and keep you in His grace until He comes again.  
In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

▼ **Post Communion Prayer**

Radiant God,  
we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
In the sacrament of his body and blood  
you have drawn us to your heart.  
Send us from this table with delight,  
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,  
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## **THE SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

▼ **Closing Hymn**

*"We Are Called" page 11*

▼ **Announcements**

*Anyone is welcome to make announcements at this time.*

▲ **Blessing and Dismissal**

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.  
In the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**



# Change My Heart, O God

*Refrain*



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.

*End*



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.

*Refrain*



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953

Music: CHANGE MY HEART, Eddie Espinosa

Text and music © 1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, admin. Music Services

# They'll Know We Are Christians



1. We are one in the Spir - it, we are  
 2. We will walk with each oth - er, we will  
 3. We will work with each oth - er, we will  
 4. All praise to the Fa - ther, from



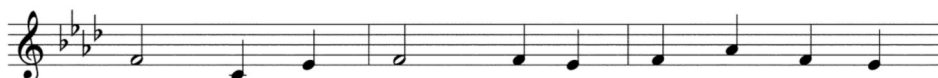
one in the Lord, We are one in the  
 walk hand in hand, We will walk with each  
 work side by side, We will work with each  
 whom all things come, And all praise to Christ



Spir - it, we are one in the Lord, And we  
 oth - er, we will walk hand in hand, And to -  
 oth - er, we will work side by side, And we'll  
 Je - sus, his on - ly Son, And all



pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re -  
 geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our  
 guard hu - man's dig - ni - ty and save hu - man's  
 praise to the Spir - it, who makes us



stored:  
 land: And they'll know we are Chris - tians by our  
 pride:  
 one:



love, by our love, Yes, they'll know we are



Chris - tians by our love.

# We Are Called



1 Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the  
 2 Come! O - pen your heart! Show your . . mer - cy to all those in  
 3 Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be



Lord! We are called to be light for the king - dom, to  
 fear! We are called to be hope for the hope - less so  
 one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each oth - er as



live in the free - dom of the cit - y of God.  
 ha - tred and blind - ness . . . will be . . . no more.  
 sis - ters and broth - ers . . . u - nit - ed in love.



*Refrain*  
 We are called to act with jus - tice, we are called to



love ten - der - ly; we are called to serve one an -



oth - er, to walk hum - bly with God.

Text: David Haas, b. 1957

Music: WE ARE CALLED, David Haas

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## ONLINE BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH OFFERING DONATIONS

are available following these easy steps from our secure Website or Facebook Page

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## MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed

Service Assistant to advance projected bulletin slides

Maintenance chores around the facility

Christian Education Volunteers

## BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

<b>Sunday</b>	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
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<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room
	9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom

<b>Wednesday</b>	10:00 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM
	6:00 pm Confirmation Classes

<b>Thursday</b>	7:00 am Men's Breakfast and Bible Study in Great Room
	11:00 am Crossroads Bible Study For ALL in Conference Room
	6:30 pm Pub Theology

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