

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
February 8, 2026
Sunday 10:00 a.m.



Welcome to All! We are glad that you are able to worship with us today. **Please fill out a connection card in the pews if you like.** During the service, we will sit or stand in reverence to our Lord. Please do what is physically comfortable and reverent for you. For those who are unable to receive Communion near the altar and wish to have the Pastor administer it at your seat, please obtain a red and white card from one of the ushers and hold it up at Communion time to alert the Pastor. If you or a little one would like to receive a blessing instead of Holy Communion, we invite you to come forward and cross your arms at the time of Communion. Please feel free to introduce yourself to our Pastor and fill in your name, address, etc in the guest book near the entrance to the sanctuary.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Setting 3, page 138

Pre-Worship Music/Announcements

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

P: 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.

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Mighty God, lover of justice,

C: ... 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.

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P: 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. **C: Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

Gather Us In

ELW 532

Greeting

A: 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 (lead by Pastor Paul)

S 138

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,
(continued on next page)

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

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

Hymn of Praise

Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

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

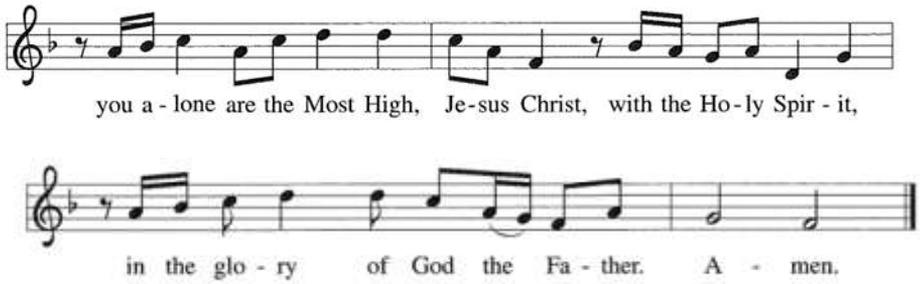
we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

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,



Prayer of the Day

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

A: Let us pray together... C: **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.**

WORD

First Lesson

Isaiah 58:1-12

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.

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. 9 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,

(continued on next page)

10 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. 11 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. 12 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.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody

Psalm 112:1-10

1 Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord and have great delight in God's commandments!

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

3 Wealth and riches will be in their house, and their righteousness will last forever.

4 Light shines in the darkness for the upright; the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.

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

6 For they will never be shaken; the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.

7 They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; their heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

8 Their heart is established and will not shrink, until they see their desire upon their enemies.

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

10 The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away; the desires of the wicked will perish.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Though people such as the Corinthians are enamored with human philosophy and wisdom, Paul continuously presents God's hidden wisdom which is Jesus Christ crucified. True spiritual maturity involves judging ourselves and others in light of God's revelation in the cross.

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.

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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.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia

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.

C: **...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.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Hymn of the Day

Lord of Light

ELW 688

Apostle’s 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: response after each petition: **“Receive our prayer”** (*Before prayer*) A: 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. (*Conclusion*) P: 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. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offering (Please be seated.)

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory (Please stand, as able.) *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: 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.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you. S 144a

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.

Great Thanksgiving (continued)

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. 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.

Words of Institution

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.

P: The gifts of God for the people of God. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Communion ***Please note: Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

Lamb of God

S 146

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.

Communion Hymns

*Eat This Bread, Drink Cup
Be Thou My Vision*

*ELW 492
ELW 793*

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 Canticle

Thankful Hearts

Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.
Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.
Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with
shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia.

Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. 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.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

P: May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise † bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Song

We Praise You, O God

ELW 870

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem February 8, 2026
LUTHERAN CHURCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemlc.org

2/8—John Stretlien

2/11—Joe White

2/14—Kelly Thomson

2/9—Zachary Word

2/12—Nathan Goebel

2/15—Martha Sheehan

2/10—Claudia Heindl

2/12—Doug Cunningham

Worship Servants for February 8

Preaching & Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Barbara Oster

Lector—Nancy Ammann

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Doug & Diane Cunningham in Celebration of their 50th Anniversary on March 6th*

Hospitality: Tim & Peggy Goebel

A/V—Jim Hinds / Paul Ton

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— Volunteer

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor—Gail Goldsmith

Altar Guild—Erin Word / Barbara Oster

Counters: Kate Holtfreter / Mike McCarty

Today's Rose is in celebration of Eloise Jane "Ellie" Boomer, born on November 3, 2025, daughter of Alanna and Josh Boomer and sister of Sammy.

Souper Bowl Sunday Immediately following today's church service, join us for our first annual Souper Bowl Sunday – a delicious way to fight hunger in our community! This will be a take-out only event offering containers filled with warm soups, breads, and desserts. All free-will donations will benefit our Food Pantry.

COLLEGE & MILITARY LOVE PACKAGES: We will again be sending Love Packages to our college and military people who are away from home. Please furnish the name and complete address for your loved one by today to Nancy Ammann at nmammann@gmail.com OR phone 946-8433. Thank you.

NEW MEMBERS: The new member meeting has been rescheduled for Sunday, February 15th immediately after church. If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chair Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net

BOOK CLUB: We are returning to the home of Betsy Morley, but on a different day this month. We will meet Monday Feb 16 at 5:30 to discuss “*How to Read a Book*” by Monica Wood. It is an excellent book involving grief, second chances and forgiveness. Please contact Betsy at betsymorley@charter.net if you are NOT on the mailing list and would like to attend.”

Shrove Tuesday Pancakes: Mark your calendars for: Shrove Tuesday, February 17th, at 5:30 PM serving the traditional pancakes and sausage, quiche, desserts as well as classic Mardi Gras fare. Every Thursday in Lent will feature a meal prior to the church service at 5:45. There will be sign-ups requesting volunteers to provide a meal for each Thursday during Lent.

Giving Statements Available Your individual giving statements will be available in your mailbox in the Narthex beginning Sunday February 1, 2026. The statement covers giving from January 1st through December 31, 2025. Please pick them up at your convenience. To save on postage, I will mail out the ones not picked up by the end of February. Thank you for your generous support for the programs and ministries of your church. We are all blessed by your faithful giving. Your Bookkeeper

Grief Group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 in the gathering space, unless the TC schools are closed. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education hold their classes at 9:15am on Sunday. The Wednesday Zoom Book/Bible Study meets at 1:30pm with a study of James using the book *James: Walking in Wisdom* by Lydia Brownback. Please see either Pr Paul or Barbara for more information. Please note: we will not meet on Ash Wednesday, February 18th. Please see either Pr Paul or Barbara for more information.