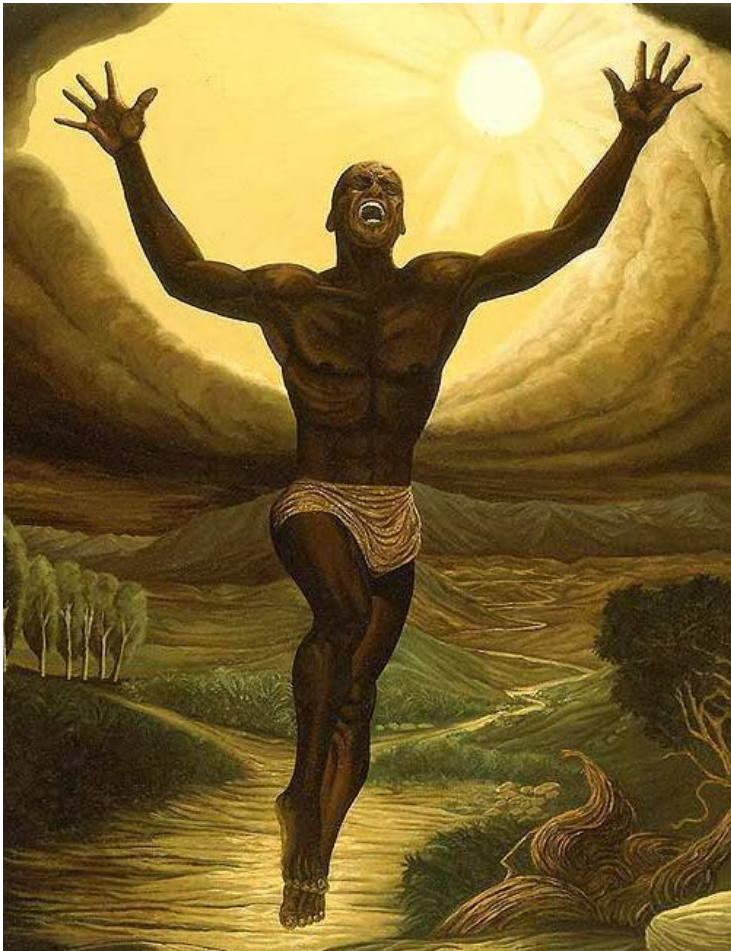


**A Service of Holy Communion for the
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Lectionary 5**
10:30 a.m. | February 8, 2026 | Year A



**University Lutheran Church, 66 Winthrop St.,
Cambridge, MA**
unilu.org

PRELUDE “Lord of Light” [ABBOTT’S LEIGH] — Tune by Cyril V. Taylor (1907 – 1991); setting by Robert J. Powell (1932 – 2025)

GATHERING

BELL AND WELCOME

CONFESSION 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, 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 is kept 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.**

GATHERING HYMN ELW 532 “Gather Us In”

APOSTOLIC 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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace to earth be
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
3 To you a - lone, O God, we cry, the Ho - ly One we



giv - en! Let an - gels sing, let all re - ply; good -
au - thor, O Lamb of God, your death a - lone takes
name you; for you a - lone are God most high, one



will breaks forth from heav - en! Lord God Al - might - y,
sin a - way for - ev - er. Stretch out your arms to
liv - ing God we claim you: we wor - ship you, Lord



heav - en's king, we wor - ship you, our thanks we sing, we
ev - 'ry land, and, as you reign at God's right hand, re -
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it ev - er blest, in



praise you for your glo - ry.
ceive our prayer; have mer - cy.
God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. 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.**

WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 58:1–12

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Shout 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.

²Yet 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.

⁴You 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.

⁵Is 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?

⁶Is 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?

⁷Is 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?

⁸Then 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 God will say, "Here I am."

^{9b}If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
¹⁰if 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.

¹¹The 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.

¹²Your 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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 112:1–10

The congregation is invited to chant the verses along with the choir, as well as to sing the response at the beginning and when indicated below.

Response:



Light shines in the dark-ness. We will hold up our heads with ho-nor.

Verse:

- ¹Hallelujah! Happy are they who | fear the LORD
and have great delight in | God's commandments!
- ²Their descendants will be mighty | in the land;
the generation of the upright | will be blessed.
- ³Wealth and riches will be | in their house,
and their righteousness will | last forever.
- ⁴Light shines in the darkness | for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion. **Response**

- ⁵It is good for them to be gener- | ous in lending
and to manage their af- | fairs with justice.
- ⁶For they will nev- | er be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance.
- ⁷They will not be afraid of any | evil rumors;
their heart is steadfast, trusting | in the LORD.
- ⁸Their heart is established and | will not shrink,
until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.
- ⁹They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands
| fast forever;
they will hold up their | head with honor.
- ¹⁰The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth
and | pine away;
the desires of the wick- | ed will perish. **Response**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 2:1–16

A reading from First Corinthians.

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

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

¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For 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. ¹²Now 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. ¹³And 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.

¹⁴Those 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. ¹⁵Those 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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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.

¹⁵People 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. ¹⁶In 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. ¹⁸For 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.

¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the dominion of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the dominion of heaven. ²⁰“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the dominion of heaven.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Carrie Ballenger

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 593 “Drawn to the Light”

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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
and born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**Who descended to the dead
and on the third day rose again.**

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

Who 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.**

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Individuals will be invited to offer prayers aloud or write them in the book found at the entrance to the worship space. Prayers may also be typed in the Zoom chat box to be read by the intercessor.

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.

Each prayer petition may be concluded with one of these (or similar) responses:

God, in your mercy,

Bless we the Holy One!

or

Hear our prayer.

Thanks be to God!

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.**

PEACE

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

OFFERTORY MUSIC "Keep Your Lamps!" Text and melody: traditional Spiritual; Arr. André Thomas (b. 1952)

Keep your lamps trimmed and burning,
The time is drawing nigh.
Children, don't get weary
'Til your work is done.
Christian journey soon be over,
The time is drawing nigh.
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning,
The time is drawing nigh.

To make a one-time donation by phone (Google or Apple Pay, Venmo, PayPal, or credit card), please visit givebutter.com/university-lutheran-church or scan the QR code here:



Please visit unilu.org/giving if you would like to set up an electronic funds transfer, or a credit card donation on a recurring or one-time basis. You can also give by mailing a check to: 66 Winthrop St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

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

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.

Detailed description: This block contains four staves of musical notation. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, often beamed together. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff has two measures, the second and third have two measures each, and the fourth has one measure.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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 in the high - est.

Bless-ed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Ho - san - na in the high - est.

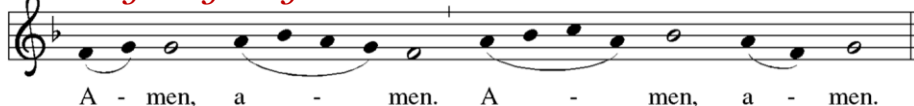
Detailed description: This block contains five staves of musical notation, continuing the hymn. It uses the same musical notation as the first block (treble clef, one flat key signature). The lyrics continue across the staves, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The first staff has two measures, the second and third have two measures each, the fourth has one measure, and the fifth has one measure.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The thanksgiving may include this acclamation:



The thanksgiving may conclude:



LORD'S PRAYER

In the Bible, Jesus often speaks of God as "Abba," Father, reflecting a profound intimacy with the creator of all worlds. Here, we extend that intimacy to name God as our Mother.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using either the version printed in your bulletin or the version closest to your heart:

**God our Mother, God 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.**

INVITATION TO RECEIVE AND SHARE COMMUNION

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

For those worshipping via Zoom, individuals may commune themselves and households may serve one another with the same words.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

ELW 688 “Lord of Light”

ELW 307 “Light Shone in Darkness”

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God’s grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.

Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

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

SENDING HYMN

ELW 731 “Earth and All Stars”

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE “Fuga in B^b Major” — Johann Pachelbel (1653 – 1706)

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ARE ASKED FOR:

Cheri Agaskar — UniLu member
Polly Allen — UniLu member
Ellen Bartlett — sister of Gail Bucher
C. Paz Betancourt — mother of Ricardo Pulgar
Lorraine and Roland Blanchard — friends of Gail Bucher
Ed Bucher — UniLu member
Gail Bucher — UniLu member
Alice Conway — sister of Karin Kutrieb
Scott Evans — son-in-law of Nancy Gould
Bob Flannery — UniLu member
Barbara Frank — mother-in-law of Anne Howarth
Nancy Gould — UniLu member
Charles Jaferian — grandson of Nancy Gould
Duncan McCoy Norton — son of Megan McCoy
Anne Minton — colleague of Imogene Stulken
Larry Nichols — UniLu member
The Ralston-Lamb family — UniLu members
Jeanette Searson — sister of Imogene Stulken
Judy Steele — sister of Phyllis Steele
Adriana Tocco — friend of Ricardo Pulgar
Judee Tomlinson — aunt of Susan Worst
Julie Wilson — UniLu member

For our siblings at Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge and their pastor,
Robin Lutjohann.

For First Church Somerville and the Somerville Homeless Coalition as they
face legal challenges.

For our siblings in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy
Land, including the staff of Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives
and all those for whom they provide care.

For all who are seeking refuge, who are facing immigration challenges, who
have been deported to homes that are not home, and who have been
separated from their families.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we remember the peoples of Andorra, Italy,
Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Vatican City.

Serving the Community

Carrie Ballenger, *Pastor*

Gracious Moyo, *Associate Pastor*

Katie Emmons, *Ministry Intern*

Ethan Strouse, *Office Administrator*

Lorraine Fitzmaurice, *Music Director—Choir / Building Manager*

Imogene Stulken, *Music Director—Organ*

Holly Druckman, *Tech Verger*

Mary Pederson Metelmann, *Council President*

Ed Bucher, *Treasurer and Bookkeeper*

Gail Bucher, *Service Deacon*

Chris Porter, *Financial Secretary*

Susan Worst, *Webmaster*

Joyce DeGreeff, *Lutheran Chaplain at Northeastern University*

Andrew Heisen, *Lutheran Chaplain at MIT*

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Serving Today

Presider: Carrie Ballenger; Assisting Minister: Helen Schwickrath

Musicians: Chris Porter, organist; Carrie Ballenger, pianist

Lector: Laura Tracy; Intercessor: Julia Kempton

Hospitality: John Gregg

Land Acknowledgment: *University Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pawtucket and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusetts) peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called, and who continue to call, this land their home.*

Welcome to University Lutheran Church, a Christian witness and ministry of and to members of the academic and wider communities in Cambridge-Boston — and, virtually, across the world! We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation, welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are also a member congregation of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO).



Community Potluck Rescheduled!

The Community Potluck, previously scheduled for RIC Sunday, has been rescheduled to February 22, following worship.

A vegetarian main dish will be provided, and you are invited to provide anything to add!

All are welcome!