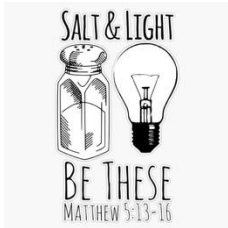


*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present. May we together experience the presence of God*

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**We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord**



**Prelude – Welcome - Announcements**

**Opening Meditation**

“You are the salt of the earth,” Jesus said to his disciples in today’s gospel reading.

It was a striking image then and it’s a striking one now, but what does it imply for the life of discipleship?

The implication for disciples is exceedingly curious: it means that we exist for mixing it up with the world. It means that for us to do our savory gospel task of making this world a better place, we need to be out there, being mixed up into people, culture, and society.

Following hard on the heels of his Beatitudes that we read about last week, Jesus is saying that if you’re going to live those grace-filled attitudes, then it’s not enough to work inside the church community, it’s not enough to nurture a strong interior life of spirituality.

No, the result of all your piety must be pouring yourself out onto this earth so as to bring out life’s complex and beautiful flavors.

With that amazing image in mind let us come together and worship Him this day.

**A Call to Worship**

People of God, why are you here?

**We gather to worship with our hearts and our lives.**

People of God, who do you worship?

**We worship God, who loves us and teaches us to love.**

People of God, how do you worship?

**We worship God by breaking the bonds of injustice and freeing the oppressed.**

People of God, come, let us worship God, whose glory surrounds us!

**May our worship demonstrate God’s glory in our neighborhood, community, and the whole earth.**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

How we long for that day when all creation will join the song,  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! We thank you and praise you for your presence with us,  
here, now, to strengthen us for our walk and our work with you and one another.  
Speak to us now through your word proclaimed among us, and focus our hearts  
on you. Amen

### Praise Hymn

## *We Hear God's Word*

**Gospel Reading.....Matthew 5:13-20**

### **Salt and Light**

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

### **The Fulfillment of the Law**

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.  
This is the Word of God for the people of God, **Thanks be to God!**

### **Children's Sermon**

### Faith Hymn

### Message

### Joys/Concerns

### Pastoral Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for calling us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. We pray that You will infuse our lives with the preserving and life-giving qualities of salt, enabling us to stand against moral corruption and add value and flavor to the lives of those around us.

Lord, we also pray that You would make us a vibrant, unmistakable light in this dark world. Help us to reflect Your love, Your grace, and Your truth, not for our own attention, but so that others will see our good works and give glory to You, the Father in heaven. Grant us courage to be bold in Your justice and to speak Your healing words. Empower us by Your Spirit to walk in Your ways, to live out Your righteousness, and to be a testament to Your presence in the world. May our lives be seasoned with wisdom, our actions be full of grace, and our very presence serve to reveal Your glory, in Jesus' name, Amen.

### **Offertory/Doxology/ Offertory Prayer**

*Loving God, you continue to provide for our every need, even when it seems that the resources we have taken for granted seem to be shrinking. We trust that your love for us will be sufficient to supply all our needs. So with glad and generous hearts, we present our tithes and offerings to you, not counting the cost, but counting our blessings. Thank you for the opportunity to demonstrate our faith in you by unselfishly sharing your bounty with others. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

### **Departing Hymn**

#### **SENDING FORTH**

Come now, we've been heard,  
come out of exile now...  
FOCUS...FOLKS God loves US.  
FOCUS...God SPOKE us into being  
FOCUS...God woke us up into dreaming  
FOCUS...you can...we will...GO THUS  
and know...this race is designed FOR US!  
LET'S GO!

#### **Postlude**