

Worship on February 5, 2023 (CCLI: License Number #3156883)
(Welcoming Elder: Anne Neuman)

Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 712 Arise, your light is come
- Words of Assurance
- Time for our children and youth
- Praise song – BOP 416 Blessed Jesus, at your word

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- First reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12
- Second reading: Psalm 112 (refrain 1)
- Third reading: Matthew 5:13-20
- Sermon: Are you showing your light?
- Communion (with The Apostles' Creed BOP 539)

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 461 Be thou my vision

We Serve

- Benediction

As we come into the presence of our God, let us open our hearts and minds,
and focus on our Lord and King.

Responsive Call to Worship

Just as sunrise breaks through the darkness each day,

So God's grace, mercy and justice shine forth.

We gather together, with devotion and doubt, with weariness and wonder;

trusting that God's peace and love are present here.

Come and worship as you are, knowing you are loved.

We come, rejoicing, to praise God's holy name.

Praise song – BOP 712 Arise, your light is come

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Holy One, Light of the world, In the sparkle of the snowflake, we see your beauty.

In frosted treetops, we delight in your splendour. Even in the cold of winter, your creation amazes us. We praise you for blessing the world with such beauty and giving us a place within it. Just as months of winter renew creation for springtime growth, renew us with your Spirit in this time of worship to grow in faithfulness and service.

Grant that our lives can shine the light of Christ into these challenging times.

Holy One, we confess that we have taken your creation for granted. We squander its resources as if they were only for us. We consume whatever we want, selfishly and carelessly.

Forgive us, we pray. Shine your light on us so we see the ways of your wisdom more clearly and follow the path Jesus sets before us with more humble hearts.

This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)

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.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Christ is the first born of creation, shining a redeeming light into the darkness of human sin. In him we are forgiven, restored and made new. Thanks be to God, we can make a fresh start today.

May the peace of the Lord be with you. Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Prayer for children and youth

God of creation, first thing you created was light. The word you said in the Bible was "Let there be light." Let your light shine upon us and our precious children and youth. Especially, at this time, for this generation, they need your guidance. They need your staff and rod of the shepherd. Show them your light. Lead them to the green pastures like the shepherd. Gracious God, let them plunge into your love and grace and enjoy your presence.

Please God, grant us our prayers for our precious babies. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Praise Song: BOP 416 Blessed Jesus, at your word

Prayer for Illumination:

Holy God, Your mysteries surround and astound us each day. Send your Holy Spirit to open the mysteries of Scripture for us so that our understanding is refreshed and courage to follow Christ renewed. Amen.

First reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12

Second reading: Psalm 112 (refrain 1)

Third reading: Matthew 5:13-20

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: Are you showing your light?

Today's sermon title is **"Are you showing your light?"**

In Genesis 1, God created the whole universe. Do you know what God created first? Light. Then, do you know the first word God said in the Bible?

"Let there be light."

The whole world first heard the voice of the Creator God.

Light. Why light? Do you know **the order of creation**?

Light / Sea & Sky / Land & plants / sun, moon, and stars / fish & birds / animals & humans.

Looking at this creation order, I ponder upon the reason **why the light was the first.**

Without light, God can't see? **Separating water and sky makes good sense to me then, water and land seems great. But, why light? (slide)**

"Let there be light."

I thought it is like the beginning of a play. **Spot light is on.**

What it tells is this. The play is beginning now. In God's case, the creation begins now.

Also, a light is the source of energy. When the spot light is on, we focus on the stage. When the light shines, we see what the light shows to us.

1 John 1:5, "This is the message we have heard from him (Jesus) and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all."

Before the creation, there was darkness. There was nothing. God gave himself from the beginning. God entered in his own creation from the beginning. God is Light. Therefore, there cannot be any darkness. This world is the creation of who? God, who is Light. So, there cannot be any darkness. God shows this from the first moment of the creation. From the beginning, God shows that he is Light.

But, from today's passage, Jesus is telling us that **"You are the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14) We are?** Are we casting away darkness? When we step in the room with full of despair and desperateness, darkness, do we light up the room? **Does our presence make any changes?** If not, what is God intending, what does God want from us?

In Judaism, salt was a symbol of covenant. **Isaiah 42:6, "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations."**

This shows that people of Israel is called to shine God's light to the nations.

I read it from somewhere but I lost the reference. It states, **"Christianity is the only religion for other people."**

Light shines not because of itself, but for others, so that others can see well. Light shines for the sake of others.

Also, **v13, "You are the salt of the earth."** Salt, it dissolves in food and makes it tastier. We put salt not for the sake of salt itself, but for the sake of the food we make.

We are the salt. We are the light.

GOD SAYS TO YOU, YOU ARE THE SALT. YOU ARE THE LIGHT

Now, how do you see your life?

We are to live for others. We are to display God's glory and goodness for others to see and become attracted. We are to reflect God's light like the prism we talked about few weeks ago. God's light poured upon us, each and every one of us. **So, like the prism,** we refract God's light as we reflect God's light. God's light comes into us and goes out from us with our own uniqueness. That is our calling. That is our purpose of our lives.

Trevor, **you are the salt.** You will have this particular kind of taste. Ed, you are the salt too, but you have different taste. Justine, you are the salt too and you have different taste also. This applies to every one of us. We do not have the same characters. We do not have the same values. We do not have the same experiences. We do not have the same quality. So, we have different taste. **Some are good at** music, some are good at teaching, some are good at serving, some are good at caring, some are good at encouraging ... and so on. We all have different gifts from God. We all have different saltiness from God. In the same way, **we are the light. But we all have different colours of light from God.**

That is the special areas which we are called to shine and to be mixed in like a salt.

By any chance, are you thinking this?

"I am not good at anything." **"This might be too much for me."** **"I am busy just taking care of myself alone."** **"I am too small."** **"I cannot."** And so on... There could be many many reasons when we focus on ourselves.

Do you know Moses? He had the greatest followers in his life time. **Exodus 12:37, "The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children (and women)."**

So, we can guess the total number of people would be about 2 million.

Do you know when Moses said to God first when God told him to lead his people out of Egypt? He said, **"No, I am too small."** **"No, I have no gift of public speaking."** **"No, they are not going to listen to me. I am no body."** (Exodus 3)

But, God led Moses and Moses led **2 M people out of Egypt.**

The Apostle Paul. His original name was **Saul**. This means a great person. After his conversion, Saul changed his name to **Paul, which means a small one.** When we look at his life, although he did not have to go through, he sacrificed so much for the sake of the Gospel. Paul's life was a continuation of enduring suffering. He had too many reasons not to continue. But, after all, because of his endurance, because of his faithful obedience, how many lives are changed? How many people benefitted with Paul's light?

Paul confessed that **"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the foremost."** 1 Timothy 1:15

"Here's a word you can take to heart and depend on: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I'm proof – Public Sinner Number One ... evidence of his endless patience"

Paul was not confident of his own power and strength. Moses did not believe in himself. But, they lived very impactful lives because they followed the light of the Lord.

Can you see how impactful your lives can be?

BOUNDLESS

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

I used to have this T-shirts. It says **“I AM BOUNDLESS”** in the middle of the chest.

Are you boundless?

Who sets your limit? Is this the life you want to live with your limitation?
What hinders you of unfolding all your possibilities?

Limitless life. Boundless life.

This might seem too far from our realistic present life.
Moses had the same feelings. Paul was in the same place as we are.
They put their life’s foundation on God. They put down their roots of their lives in God.
They let God’s light shine upon them continually. They walked with God in the light of God.

You know the children song, Little by little?

Little by little everyday / Little by little in every way / Jesus is changing me (oh yes he’s changing me) / Since I’ve made that turn-about-face / I’ve been growing in his grace
My Jesus is changing me
He’s changing me / My precious Saviour / I’m not the same person that I used to be
Sometimes it’s slow going / But there’s a knowing That someday perfect I will

This is the wisdom of life. Little by little, our lives are changing towards God, so we shine God’s light in our uniqueness.

This is who we are. God defines us: **“You are the salt of the earth.” “You are the light of the world.”** Let us shine God’s light through our lives.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Communion At The Lord’s Table This is the time for the Communion at the Lord’s Table.
In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.
I invite all God’s people who longs for the light of God. We sometimes feel like that we are like a formless void. To us, God shows his light. With the fellowship with God, let us gain the strength to walk with God again. Let us confess our faith by saying the Apostles’ Creed.

The Apostles’ Creed (BOP 539)

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.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD print together**)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: You commanded light to shine out of darkness, divided the sea and dry land, created the vast universe and called it good. You made us in your image to live with one another in love. You have us the breath of life and freedom to choose your way. You set forth your purpose in commandments through Moses, and called for justice in the cry of prophets. Through long generations you have been patient and kind to all your children.

Therefore, with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens, we join the song of creation and **we lift our hearts in joyful praise:**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: We praise you, most hold God, for sending your only Son Jesus to live among us, full of grace and truth. Sharing our joy and sorrow, he healed the sick and was a friend of sinners. Obeying you, he took up his cross and died that we might live. We praise you that he overcame death and is risen to rule the world. He is still the friend of sinners. We trust him to overcome every power that can hurt or divide us, and believe that when he comes in glory we will celebrate victory with him. Therefore, **we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Recalling his death, proclaiming his resurrection, and looking for his coming again in glory, we offer you, Father, this bread and this cup. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts, that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body and one holy people, a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, almighty God, for every and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (BREAD)

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us take it)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (CUP)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

God, you are the Light. You show us your light. You shine your light upon us all the time, continually and faithfully. Thank you Lord for giving us your light. Thank you for calling us your light. Help us know our true identity. We are to shine your light through our lives. We are to be melted in this world like a salt and give this world your goodness. We are to let the world taste your love and grace and goodness. Thank you for trusting us and thank you for guiding us.

Lord God, with your presence in us, with you in our lives, let us live boldly. One university states boundless life for their goal of their education. Education removes their boundary in life. You said it first. Truth will set you free. Let us embrace your truth. You gave us freedom. You removed our sins as well as our boundaries. We are truly boundless because of you. You continually remind us that you are giving us dream, you are giving us power, and you are leading our lives. There is nothing who can stop us. There is nothing blocks your light. You are the God who accomplish your purposes in our lives. Help us be with you all through our lives.

We pray for our church. There are struggles in our lives. God, have mercy upon us and shine your light upon us. So, we overcome our hardships with your power and with your presence. We all have some people around who need our prayers. Help us have them in our hearts and remember them and pray for them. Fill our hearts with your love and care, and let your goodness overflow from our lives and fill our church, fill our family, and fill the whole earth. Help us shine your light.

Be glorified and be pleased through our worship and through our daily lives. In Jesus' precious and wonderful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The prophet Isaiah issued a call to feed the hungry, cloth the naked and house the homeless. We give in response to this call, praying that every gift accomplishes more than we can ask or imagine through the power of God at work in us and through us. As we offer our gifts, let us praise God and glorify him.

The Doxology (BOP 830)

Offering prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, your love makes us salt for the earth and light for the world. Bless our gifts so that they bring light into dark days and salt to flavour the earth with your justice and mercy. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey BOP 461 Be thou my vision

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Be the salt. Make the world tastier. Shine your light. Display God's amazing love and awesome grace through your lives. That is who you are. Live without limit. God is the King of the whole universe. He has no bound, neither are we. Why? Because our God is with us. Live with God. Live with King.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.