

February 8, 2026
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
IDENTITY REVEALED: JESUS CALLS YOU SALT AND LIGHT



SALT & LIGHT

EMMANUEL & St. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES
Wisconsin Synod
Mecan, WI & Montello, WI
Sunday Worship: 8:00 AM & 10:00AM

WELCOME! WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

We pray that you are blessed by God's Word in worship today. **The order of worship** is printed here, is projected on the screen, and live-streamed at www.stjohnsmontello.org. **Restrooms** are located in the link way, out the church entryway, to the left and down the stairs. At Emmanuel, they are located in the Parish Hall. A **nursery changing station** is located in the lower level of St. John's.

IDENTITY REVEALED

"Epiphany" comes from a Greek word that means "reveal." It is the season when you see Jesus begin his public ministry, revealing the reason the Son of God came to earth. During Epiphany, you will come to understand that when the true identity of Jesus is revealed, you realize your own true identity as well.

JESUS CALLS YOU SALT AND LIGHT

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us that form and function are closely connected. That means that who we are influences what we do. When God called us to faith, he declared that we were something new: light, salt, his children. Jesus encourages us to be what God says we are as a way of blessing the world through us.

Today's Worship Leader: Vacancy Pastor Bruce Hanneman

Today's Accompanist: Electronic



For the Influence of God-Fearing Men and Women on Younger Generations

Lord God, our society is seeing a real need for mentorship for young men and women. They need strong male and female role models who provide an alternative to counter the narrative of toxic models of today. Raise up solid mentors who welcome the opportunity to positively influence the younger generation. Make them first men and women of THE

Word, and second, men and women of their word. Let them model godliness in every area of life, leading with humility, integrity, drive, self-discipline, compassion, and grace. Direct young people to see these examples and seek to emulate them. Move godly men

and women to praise and celebrate these relationships whenever they are evident, realizing that the influence of God-fearers on young peoples will bear desirable fruit in families, relationships, and society in general. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Today's Order of Worship

(Adapted from *Corporate Confession and Absolution* CW pages 278-281)

*At St. John's, before the Opening Hymn, The Sunday School sings:
John 3:16/We Love Because*

OPENING HYMN: 581 Lord, 'Tis Not that I Did Choose You

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by your Holy Spirit, that we may love you and praise your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTION

Our help is in the name of the Lord,

the maker of heaven and earth.

Let us confess our sins to God and ask for his forgiveness.

Almighty God, merciful Father, I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart. In what I have done and left undone, I have pursued my ways instead of your ways. I have not loved others as you command. For this I deserve your punishment now and forever. I am sorry for my sins. I repent of them. I beg for your mercy.

Silence for reflection

Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us.

Cleanse me from my sins. Release me from my guilt. Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.

Jesus says to his people, "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven." Do you believe this?

Yes, I believe.

In the name and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins.

Amen.

EXHORTATION

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven us, has reconciled us to God, and has promised us the power to forgive and love one another. Relying on his promise, therefore, be reconciled with one another.

Brothers and sisters, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, in our words, and in our actions.

PRAYER

Let us pray. God, our Father, by the sacrifice of your Son you reconciled the world to yourself. We thank you for the precious gift of forgiveness. Refresh us with the joy of our salvation, that we may walk in the way of peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Renew our minds and wills, that daily we may speak your word of peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FIRST READING: Exodus 19:1-8

God made something special out of Israel, a nation of slaves.

¹On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. ²After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain. ³Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out

of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶‘you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” ⁷So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the Lord had commanded him to speak. ⁸The people all responded together, “We will do everything the Lord has said.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 112A Light Dawns in the Darkness (Read responsively)

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:9-12

St. Peter encourages us to be what God has declared us to be.

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:13-20

Jesus explains that his disciples are blessings to this dark, decaying world.

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. ¹⁵Neither 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. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. 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. ¹⁸For 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. ¹⁹Therefore 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. ²⁰For 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY: 630 Thy Strong Word

SERMON: Matthew 5:13-20. "Be All Jesus Wants You to Be" 1. Savory Salt 2. A Shining Light

NICENE CREED:

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING & PRAYERS

THE SACRAMENT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts: heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you. As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

♪ O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace.
Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

Our Biblical Communion Practice

The Lord's Supper is God's gift in which we receive Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and strengthening of faith. This gift brings certain responsibilities. The sacrament is intended for those who have been instructed and who understand what the sacrament is all about. Communing together is also a way we express oneness of faith. Therefore, we ask that only confirmed members of our congregations or other churches in fellowship with the Wisconsin Synod come forward to receive the sacrament today. Thank you for respecting this biblical practice. To learn more, you may speak with the pastor after the service.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: 770 God of Grace and God of Glory

Acknowledgments

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Intercessory Prayers

Let's all pray for the Spirit's guidance in today's call meeting. Ask that God's will be done, and that his will be that we receive the pastoral shepherd and the principal and teacher our parish and school needs. *If you wish to be included in our intercessory prayer list, please contact Pastor Hanneman or the church office.*

CALL MEETINGS IS TODAY FOLLOWING 10AM WORSHIP

We need our people to come and be a part of this discussion so that our voters can make a decision that reflects the input of all.

Thank You to Those Who Serve as Ushers at St. John's!

Thank you to today's ushers are James Wachholz, Zeb Zuehls, Chuck Boetcher, Jesse Schable, Aaron Wachholz. The ushers for Feb. 15th & 18th are: Paul Van Treeck, Matt Borzick, Ken Borzick, James Henke, Haiden Van Treeck, Nolan Van Treeck, Brody Henke, Milo Henke.

This Week of February 8th-15th :

TODAY: Pastor Call Meeting Following St. John's Worship

MON 9th: NO SCHOOL

Joint Choir Practice 6:30pm

TUES 10th: Board of Education Meeting at St. John's, 4:45pm.

WED 11th: Public School Catechism Class 5:00pm

Bible Class at 10:30am and 6:30PM

THU 12th: NO SCHOOL

GriefShare at St. John's, 6:00pm

FRI 13th: NO SCHOOL

WALL B Basketball Tournament at WLA

SAT 14th: WALL B Basketball Tournament at WLA

Next Sunday, February 15th *Transfiguration Sunday*: Emmanuel Congregational Meeting following Worship. Pastor Dolan leads worship, and we will again be using electronic music.

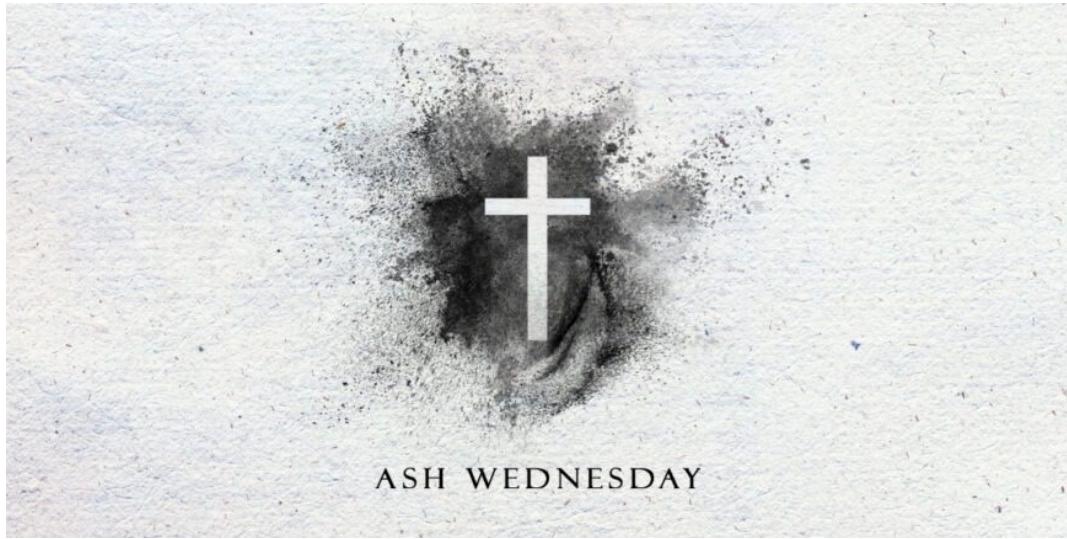
Divine Calls Made!

Pastor Mark Luetzow holds the call to serve as pastor to St. John's, Princeton. He now serves as president of our synod prep school in Saginaw, MI, Michigan Lutheran Seminary.

On January 26th, **John Niebuhr** was called to be principal of our elementary school. He is presently teaching at St. Mark's Lutheran in Eu Claire, WI. He is completing his third school year and is being mentored to be a future principal in the Principal Training Program. He is married to Briana who is a social worker and they have one child. Also, **Mrs. Emily R. Symons**, currently serving at St. Peter's, Sturgeon Bay, WI was called to be our lower grade teacher for the 2025-26 School year. She is married to Andrew, who is a special education teacher in the public school. They have two small children. Keep these called workers and their respective ministries in your prayers.

Joint Choir Practice begins Monday!

The joint choir will resume practice on Monday evenings at 6:30 starting with this upcoming Monday, February 9th. ... Lent, Holy Week and Easter are coming and our choir will be a major part of our upcoming worship. Don't be bashful if you are thinking about joining them for this season.



LENT Begins SOON!

Ash Wednesday is February 18. We have Lenten devotions at Emmanuel, 3:30 and St. John's, 6:30...In the recent past the involvement of our members in Lenten worship has severely declined. This is the year to change that. Let it begin with you and yours. Make it a commitment and a priority to worship at this 45-minute midweek devotion. LENTEN SUPPERS between services are being planned. Pastor Dolan will lead the first week and Pastor Hanemann, and Pastor Heise (Camp Philip) will lead subsequent Wednesdays.

Worship Attendance Last Week

Emmanuel 52

St. John's 75

"I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord."
(Psalm 122:1)

GriefShare is held at St. John's on Thursdays at 6:00pm. If you have questions call Mark Emond 608-697-1600 and leave a message if no answer. *GriefShare* is a safe, welcoming support group where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. In this 13-week program, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. There are no neat, orderly stages of grief, but you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief in all its unpredictability and gain solid support each step of the way.

We Have Men Signed Up and Going to the ...



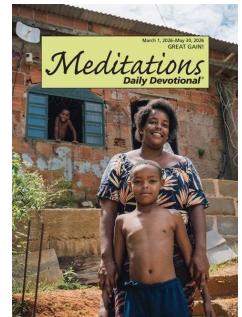
The Seventeenth Annual Men of His Word Conference
Saturday, February 21, 2026/Oshkosh Waterfront Hotel and
Convention Center – Oshkosh, WI
Register at: www.menofhisword.org

Ooops! Forward in Christ Mystery Solved

Both the January and February issues of the *Forward in Christ* magazine are now available for you to enjoy and share. There is really good stuff in each issue. Like ... “*When there’s no one to share the popcorn*”- a sensitive and thoughtful article about how you can help support someone who has lost a spouse. Synod mission news, Bible studies, and human interest stories of all kinds are part of every issue. ALSO – give a copy or to away. FIC is a great and easy way to reach out to someone you care about and love.

Meditations

You will have noticed that the daily meditation booklet is nearing the end of this issue. New copies are out and ready for you to pick up. Get one for yourself and maybe one to share with a family member or friend who could use good daily dose of God’s Word!! *Some kind of personal devotional and prayer life is essential to the spiritual health of the believer. Do not neglect this part of your life with God.* The *Meditations* is a short and simple way to get started.



CHR1ST ALONE LUTHERAN ACADEMY SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

Dear Friends in Christ,

Christ Alone Lutheran Academy and St. John's Little Lambs Learning Center is hosting their annual fundraiser, Art for Dinner. It will be held on Saturday, February 28 at the CALA Princeton campus. Advanced admission (\$25 each) is required upon entry. This admission includes a catered meal, which will be buffet style and will feature 2 meat entrees, potatoes, vegetables, rolls and dessert. There will be a free kids spaghetti meal for kids 13 and under, provided separately.

If children would like to eat the catered meal, they will need to purchase an admission ticket. Guests will be able to view a collection of children's art projects that will be sold at a silent auction and enjoy a delicious meal. Raffle tickets for the basket raffle will also be available for purchase.

This year, we are raising funds to purchase and upgrade classroom pianos. Music plays a vital role in a Christian education and faith-based learning environment. These pianos are used daily and are an important part of our students' worship, classroom learning, and our school's connection with our churches. Singing is a beautiful way to praise God, and these pianos help give our children the opportunity to do just that.

For registration, please contact Megan Jaster at artfordinner15@gmail.com or Jorgia Kempley at the school office, 920-481-9002 by Monday, February 16th.

We are looking for donations of items for our basket raffle. If any family would be like to donate a basket already made up, any type of items, services, gift cards, or products, that would be greatly appreciated! If you know of any businesses that would be willing to donate, please ask them as well. Donation request letters are available if needed. Please have all donations turned into the Princeton or Montello office by Monday, February 23.

God has blessed us with many different talents! We are very excited to be hosting this fundraiser. With your help, we are hoping that it will be a great success! Please help spread the word to anyone you think would like to come and support our school!

Thank You,
Art for Dinner Committee

If you have any questions; Megan Jaster 608.369.3456 artfordinner15@gmail.com



From Our Little Lambs Ministry

OUR LITTLE LAMBS MINISTRY NEEDS YOUR ONGOING PRAYERS AND SUPPORT!

Assistant Teacher Needed - Monday through Friday 8:00-11:30, February-May. Please email Mrs. Straschinske if you are interested in learning more about the position.

lladmin@stjohnsmontello.org.

Also, your special gifts designated for **future tuition assistance** are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Give that prayerful consideration in 2026. Got questions about that? Talk to Sylvia or Rachel or a board member, Mark Emond, Adam Malsack, or Kevin Kaul.

Did you know that LL has a **Facebook page**? Check it out and keep up on what's going on. at <https://www.facebook.com/sjllmontello/>

Pray for teacher Rachel Huebner, coordinator Sylvia Strashinske, the helpers and all the little lambs entrusted to their care (and their families too.).

Little Lambs
Learning Center



St John's. Montello

St. John's Financials

	Budget	Offerings	All Income	Expenses
January	\$33,436.46	\$22,407.48	\$35,127.13	\$32,092.22
Year to Date	\$234,055.19	\$160,645.51	\$246,971.00	\$212,319.84

Over the first seven months of this fiscal year, income and expenses both continued to run a little lower than budget, but income continued to outweigh expenses, favorably resulting in a significant net gain. After being quite high end of December, the checkbook balance returned to a more normal level end of January, following large expenditures related to the parsonage water damage. Overall book equity (assets minus obligations to dedicated accounts) continued to be much improved over the start of the fiscal year. We must continue to be mindful that this budget only supports a part time pastor. May God help and bless us, and may God bless our giving of the firstfruits he has given to us.

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

1 Corinthians 1:26

The Only Credential

If we were to ask people at your church the reason God chose them to be believers in Jesus, you'd probably see some uncomfortable shifting in the pews. A few smiles. Maybe even a laugh. We know better. Left to ourselves, none of us has a list convincing enough to impress God.

The apostle Paul invites us to “think of what you were when you were called.” Not to shame us, but to assure us. God didn’t wait for us to become wise, influential, impressive, or spiritually polished. He called us when we were helpless and unworthy, when we had nothing to offer him but our sin. His calling was not based on our qualities but on his compassion.

This is the upside-down beauty of grace. The world celebrates strength, status, intelligence, and achievement. God delights in rescuing the weak, the unknown, the ordinary. In a world obsessed with proving ourselves, the gospel frees us from the exhausting effort of self-validation. God’s love didn’t choose us because of who we are. Instead, it helped us become what we could never be on our own.

Think of what that means for you today. Your worth does not rise or fall with your productivity. Your identity is not anchored in your accomplishments. Your hope does not depend on whether you feel spiritual enough. God’s call came to you through water and Word, through promise and proclamation, and it rested entirely on Christ’s finished work. His perfect life replaced your broken one. His cross absorbed the judgment you deserved. His empty tomb wrapped you in a future that cannot be undone.

So, walk today with confidence, the kind that comes from hearing your Savior say, “You are mine.” When doubts whisper that you are not enough, return to the truth the Bible proclaims. God chose you deliberately, joyfully, graciously. You may not be wise by the world’s standards. You may not be influential or noble. But you are Christ’s. And that is the only credential that matters.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, remind me daily that your call is pure grace. Quiet my pride and insecurity and let my confidence rest in you alone. Amen.

Daily Devotions is brought to you by WELS.

Welcome to Our Visitors - Help Us Stay In Touch

Scan the barcode using your smartphone camera and fill out the prompted information...OR... fill out the attendance card located at the end of each pew and place it in the offering plate



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CALA Principal: principal@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Mr. Martin Raasch - Grade 6-8 mraasch@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Miss Beth Barenz - Grade 3-5 bbarenz@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Mrs. Elizabeth Wolter - K-2 ewolter@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Miss Rachel Huebner - Little Lambs Teacher -littlelambs@stjohnsmontello.org

Mrs. Sylvia Straschinske - Little Lambs Director -lladmin@stjohnsmontello.org

Mrs. Jorgia Kempley - CALA Secretary -
secretary@christalonelutheranacademy.net 920-481-9002

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