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# Sunday 5th February 2023

**Epiphany / Ordinary 5**

**The Rev’d Catherine McFie**

## **Call to Worship**

We come into this space and time **to meet and worship God**

We bring our worries and our distractions **and lay them down before our God**

We open our hearts and minds **to the promptings of God’s Spirit**

**We are the salt of the earth. We are the light of the world.**

Let us worship together in Jesus’ name.

## **Prayers of Approach and Confession**

Amazing God,

on the first day of creation you made light:

a light that enables us to see the beauty of your creation,

a light that enables plants to grow and flourish,

a light that is part of the rhythm of our world and our lives;

we thank you for light.

When creation was struggling, you sent your Son Jesus, the light of the world.

His light illuminated the Scriptures,

defeated the powers of sin,

and led us back to you;

we thank you for Jesus.

In the light of flames you sent your Spirit into our world.

The Spirit lights our path and shows us your will.

She challenges and inspires us;

we thank you for your Spirit.

In joy and thankfulness we bring you our praise and worship.

Merciful God,

we have often asked you to judge others

while failing to acknowledging that we too have sinned.

We have worshipped you with our lips

but dishonoured you with our actions.

We have prayed for you to end suffering

but have not practiced compassion or generosity towards others.

We have used our words to hurt and argue

rather than testify to your love and grace.

Forgive our self-centredness and show us how to love you and our neighbour.

Bring us back into your light. Amen.

## **Declaration of Forgiveness**

O God, your heart is full of mercy.

May we hear and trust your words to each of us: ‘Your sins are forgiven.’

May we forgive each other and forgive ourselves.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

## **Theme Introduction / Children’s address**

* + Introduce pictures of well know logos or slogans and see if people know what product they advertise.
  + Logos and slogans help manufacturers sell their product – even if we don’t use a particular brand we often recognise the logo or slogan.
  + We are surrounded by advertising – in magazines, on TV, and it is hard to miss the messages that we pick up – many of them subconscious
  + When it comes to the Church – what are our logos or slogans?
  + What about discipleship – what would people pick as a logo?

## **Prayer of illumination**

Lord, open our understanding by the power of the Holy Spirit,

that as the Word is proclaimed

we may receive holy wisdom

to understand how to be salt and light in your world

In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

## **Reading**

## St Matthew 5:13 – 20

## **Reflection Notes**

Some things to ponder as you reflect on this passage.

* Part of the sermon on the mount so how could these verses fit into the sermon as a whole
* Why did Jesus pick salt and light to speak about discipleship? What are the uses of salt or the properties of light that say something about what it means to be a disciples then and today?
* Jesus and the law – what did it mean for Jesus to fulfil the law?
* What does that mean for the place of the Old Testament today?
* Often Jesus was critical of the Pharisees but they were people who kept the law – why would their righteousness be called into question.

## **Affirmation of Faith**

We are not alone,

**we live in God’s world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,**

**to reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God’s presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation,**

**to love and serve others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.**

We are not alone.

**Thanks be to God.**

## *from The United Church of Canada, General Council, 1068*

## **Prayers of Intercession**

*Specific situations could be added into each sections below.*

Lord, you have called us to salt and light,

people who make a difference in your world.

In this time of worship,

we bring before you people and situation that are in need…

We pray for those who are hungry and have no food to be flavoured with salt…

*(pause)*

As light and salt, **may we be agents of change in our community.**

We pray for those who live with the darkness of war and violence…

*(pause)*

As light and salt, **may we be agents of change in our community.**

We pray for those who are in need of healing…

*(pause)*

As light and salt, **may we be agents of change in our community.**

We pray for places where creation is struggling to thrive and be fruitful

*(pause)*

As light and salt, **may we be agents of change in our community.**

As we are your salt and lights in this world,

give us courage to answer our calling,

the resources to enable change,

the insight to understand your will,

and a heart that cares.

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

## **Offertory**

God calls us to share what we have received,

Let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Generous God,

we thank you for all that you have given us.

Receive these tokens of our love for you,

along with our time and talents

for the ministry of your Church.

Bless our offering for the work of your kingdom in our communities,

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

## **Blessing / Sending out**

Lord, send us out into your world as salt and light.

Help us to

shine your light,

show your love,

and enable your healing in our communities.

As we go may

the God who created us

Jesus who died for us

and the Spirit who inspires us

work in us and through us. Amen.

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| **Hymn Suggestions** | | | | |
|  | RS | CH4 | StF | MP |
| Light of the world you stepped down into darkness |  |  | 175 | 1086 |
| Thou, whose almighty Word | 38 | 112 | 106 | 699 |
| This little light of mine |  |  |  |  |
| Longing for light, we wait in darkness |  | 543 | 706 | 1201 |
| We’ll walk the land |  |  |  | 743 |

*RS – Rejoice & Sing* | *CH4 – Church Hymnary 4* | *StF – Singing the Faith* | *MP – Mission Praise*