

**The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Love Sunday**

**February 8, 2026**

**10:00 AM**

**Celebrant:** The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw

**Homilist:** The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans

**Music Ministry:** St. Thomas Gospel Choir

\*\*\*\*\*

**Order of Service**

**A Meditation Prayer**

**The Prelude**

St. Thomas Music Ministry

**The Opening Hymn- "Oh Freedom"**

**Lift Every Voice and Sing LEVAS #225**

1) Oh, freedom! Oh, freedom,  
oh, freedom over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

2) No mo' moanin', no mo' moanin',  
no mo' moanin' over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

3) No mo' weepin', no mo' weepin'  
no, mo' weepin' over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

4) There'll be singin', there'll be singin',  
there'll be singin' over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

5) There'll be shoutin', there'll be shoutin',  
there'll be shoutin' over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

6) There'll be prayin', there'll be prayin',  
there'll be prayin' over me!  
An' be fo' I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my Lord and be free.

**A Word of Welcome**

The Celebrant

## **The Opening Acclamation**

**The Celebrant:** Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**The People:** And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. AMEN

## **The Collect for Purity**

**The Celebrant:** Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your Holy name; through Christ our Lord. AMEN

## **The Gloria in excelsis**

**The Celebrant and People:**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord, Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. AMEN**

## **The Proclamation of the Word**

### **The Collect of the Day**

**The Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**The People:** And also with you.

### **The Celebrant: Let us pray.**

Set us free, O God, from the bondage of our sins, and give us the liberty of that abundant life which you have made known to us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN

## **The First Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12**

Cynthia Muse

### **A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.**

Shout 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. Yet 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 delight to draw near to God. "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. Look, you 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. Is 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?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is 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? Then 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. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if 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. The 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. Your 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.

**The Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**The People:** Thanks be to God.

**Psalms 112:1-10**

Conchetta Brewer

Hallelujah!

Happy are they who fear the Lord \*  
**and have great delight in his commandments!**

Their descendants will be mighty in the land; \*  
**the generation of the upright will be blessed.**

Wealth and riches will be in their house, \*  
**and their righteousness will last forever.**

Light shines in the darkness for the upright; \*  
**the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**

It is good for them to be generous in lending \*  
**and to manage their affairs with justice.**

For they will never be shaken; \*  
**the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.**

They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; \*  
**their heart is right;**  
**they put their trust in the Lord.**

Their heart is established and will not shrink, \*  
**until they see their desire upon their enemies.**

They have given freely to the poor, \*  
**and their righteousness stands fast for ever;**  
**they will hold up their head with honor.**

The wicked will see it and be angry;  
they will gnash their teeth and pine away; \*  
**the desires of the wicked will perish.**

**The Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-16**

Tyrone Keller

**A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Corinth.**

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet 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 doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, 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 him"—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being 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. Now 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.

And 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. Those 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. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

**The Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**The People:** Thanks be to God.

**The Gradual Hymn - "We Will Understand It Better By and By"**

**LEVAS # 207 (vv. 1-2)**

**1) We are often tossed and driv'n on the restless sea of time,  
Somber skies and howling tempest oft succeed a bright sunshine;  
In that land of perfect day, when the mists have rolled away,  
We will understand it better by and by. [Refrain]**

**Refrain: By and by when the morning comes,  
when the saints of God are gathered home,  
we'll tell the story how we're overcome;  
For we'll understand it better by and by.**

**2) We are often destitute of the things that life demands,  
want of food and want of shelter thirsty hills and barren lands;  
We are trusting in the Lord, and according to His word,  
We will understand it better by and by. [Refrain]**

**The Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:13-20**

Fr. Evans

**The Priest:** The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

**The People:** Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "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 underfoot.

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one, after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In 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.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For 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. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

**The Reader:** The Gospel of our Lord.

**The People:** Praise to you, Lord Christ.

**The Homily Hymn- "We Will Understand It Better By and By"**

**LEVAS # 207 (vv. 3-4)**

**3) Trials dark on every hand, and we cannot understand,  
All the ways that God would lead us to that blessed promised land;  
But He guides us with His eye and we'll follow till we die,  
For we'll understand it better by and by. [Refrain]**  
**4) Temptations hidden snares often take us unawares,  
And our hearts are made to bleed for many a thoughtless word or deed;  
And we wonder why the test when we try to do our best,  
But we'll understand it better by and by. [Refrain]**

**The Homily**

Fr. Evans

**The Call to Christian Discipleship**

### **The 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:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**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.  
With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic 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**

### **The Prayers of the People – Form IV      BCP 388**

Patricia Akins

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love,  
and reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

For Sean, our Presiding Bishop, Daniel, our Bishop, Martini our Rector, Daren our associate to the Rector,  
Gerald and Wil our Associate Priests, Karen and Eugene our Vergers, Paul our Associate Minister, and for all  
bishops and other ministers.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one  
another and serve the common good.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Bless us as we celebrate America250 and the many contributions of Black people in the growth of our nation.

Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

For those incarcerated: Guide them Lord in all they do with your Grace and Love and grant them your continual help. In all their problems, your guidance; in all their dangers, your protection; and in all their sorrows, your peace. And we remember and pray for those who may have been affected by their actions.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

For those who may be experiencing loneliness or sadness following the death of a loved one, grant them your presence and comfort.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Prince of Peace, help us.

**God of Grace save us.**

In the communion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thomas, Absalom, and all of the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God.

**To thee, Lord our God.**

**The Concluding Collect**

The Celebrant

**The Confession**

**BCP 360**

The Celebrant: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us kneel and confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**The Celebrant and The People:**

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. AMEN**

**The Absolution**

The Celebrant

Almighty God, have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. AMEN

**The Peace**

**The Celebrant:** The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

**The People:** And also with you.

**The Holy Eucharist****The Offertory Sentence and Offering**

**Offer your gift now via text: Text “AECST” to 73256  
or use the QR Code found on page 1**

**The Offertory Musical Selection**

St. Thomas Gospel Choir

**The Great Thanksgiving**

**The Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**The People:** And also with you.

**The Celebrant:** Lift up your hearts.

**The People:** We lift them to the Lord.

**The Celebrant:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**The People:** It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. (*Celebrant adds a short Proper Preface*)

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**The Sanctus**

**The Celebrant and the People:**

**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.**

**The Celebrant:** Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**The Memorial Acclamation**

**The Celebrant and People:**

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

**The Celebrant:** We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **AMEN**

**The Lord's Prayer**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray.

**The Celebrant and People:**

**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, for ever and ever. AMEN**

**The Breaking of the Bread**

**The Celebrant:** Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

**The People:** Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

**The Agnus Dei**

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Have mercy upon us.

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Have mercy upon us.

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Grant us thy peace.

**The Prayer of Humble Access**

**Let us pray:** We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. **AMEN**

**The Celebrant:** The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

**The Distribution of Communion**

(All baptized persons who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior are invited to receive the Holy Sacrament. If you only wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms on your chest.)



## **The Post-Communion Prayer**

### **The Celebrant and People:**

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. AMEN**

### **Sending Forth of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors**

**The Celebrant:** In the healing name of Jesus and with the compassionate embrace of this parish family, I send you forth bearing these Holy Gifts to those to whom you go today, so that they may share with us in the Communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

**The People:** We who are many are one body, and we all share on bread and one cup.

### **The Announcements**

Richard Jones, Rector's Warden

### **The Recognition of Visitors and Guests**

### **The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel**

### **The Final Blessing**

The Celebrant

### **The Closing Hymn - "Down By the Riverside"**

LEVAS # 210

#### **1) Goin' to lay down my sword and shield,**

**Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside.**

#### **Goin' to lay down my sword and shield,**

**Down by the riverside, To study was no more.**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more.**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more.**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more.**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more.**

#### **2) Goin' to lay down my war shoes,**

**Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside.**

#### **Goin' to lay down my war shoes,**

**Down by the riverside, To study was no more.**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more.**

**Ain't goin't study war no more,**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more.**

#### **3) Goin' to put on my long white robe,**

**Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside.**

**Goin' to put on my long white robe, Down by the riverside, to study was no more.**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more.**

**Ain't goin't study war no more,**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more,**

**Ain't gonin't study war no more.**

#### **4) Goin' to meet my loving savior,**

**Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside.**

**Goin' to meet my loving savior,**

**Down by the riverside, to study was no more.**

**(I ain't goin't) study war no more.**  
**Ain't goin't study war no more,**  
**(I ain't goin't) study war no more,**  
**Ain't gonin't study war no more,**  
**Ain't gonin't study war no more.**

**The Dismissal**

**The Postlude**

St. Thomas Music Ministry

**The End of Mass:** This is a reminder that the Mass (service) ends following the closing hymn and dismissal. Please make an extra effort to refrain from unnecessary chatter and departure from the service before its conclusion. This request is being made to respect all gathered wishing to embrace the fullness of worship.