

## Year A (2026) – Sundays after Epiphany

# ***IDENTITY REVEALED***

---

### **SERIES EXPLANATION**

“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.

Our worship follows this pattern.

First Sunday after Epiphany  
Second Sunday after Epiphany  
    Confession of St. Peter  
Third Sunday after Epiphany  
    Conversion of St. Paul  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
    Chaplain Sunday  
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany  
Transfiguration of Our Lord

*Jesus Is the Christ, the Anointed One*  
*Jesus Is the Lamb of God*  
    *Jesus Is the Christ, the Son of the Living God*  
*Jesus Is the Light*  
    *Jesus Is the Christ, the One Who Calls*  
*Jesus Calls You Blessed*  
    *see separate resources*  
*Jesus Calls You Salt and Light*  
*Jesus is the Son of God in Glory*



**IDENTITY REVEALED**

**JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE ANOINTED ONE**

*(The Baptism of Our Lord)*

---

**EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

“Christ” is not the family name of Jesus. It is a title. The Greek word “Christ” and the Hebrew word “Messiah” both mean the same thing: “The Anointed One.” Anointing was the practice of pouring liquid over the head of someone to signify selection for some special task. When the Lord had someone anointed, he also poured his Spirit over them. It was the fulfillment of promises made over centuries.

**READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Isaiah 42:1-7 – The Lord promises to put his Spirit on the Messiah.

Acts 10:34-38 – The Holy Spirit was poured out onto Peter’s listeners as he told them how God anointed Jesus.

\*Matthew 3:13-17 – In the waters of the Jordan River, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power.

**Preaching Note**

The Gospel is chosen, providing the preacher the opportunity to explain how someone with no sin fulfills all righteousness by being baptized. As the Messiah, Jesus stands in the place of sinful human beings, first at the font and then at the cross. Anointed by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is revealed as the Son of God. When we are baptized, we are also revealed as children of God, connected to the death and resurrection of Christ.

**[Psalm 45](#)**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 45 in services that honor Christ, the anointed King, as the groom for his Church, the bride.

**Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	384	384	377
HOD	377	377	378
Third/Distr	374	374	379
Closing	692	379	679

[374](#) (The Star Proclaims the King is Here) returns to the melody from TLH.

[377](#) (To Jordan's River Came Our Lord) has the same words and melody as CW93, but the organ accompaniment is easier.

[378](#) (To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord) has the melody from Luther's day, which should be practiced before singing.

[379](#) (Christ, Your Footprints through the Desert) has the words from CWS but is set to a new tune which is unfamiliar but not difficult to sing.

[384](#) (Hail to the Lord's Anointed) has the familiar words and tune, but the organist accompaniment is easier.

[679](#) (God's Own Child I Gladly Say It) has become beloved since it was introduced in CWS.

[692](#) (All Who Believe and Are Baptized) is familiar from TLH and CW93.



Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 18, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

## **JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD**

---

### **EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

For centuries Israel offered sacrifices to God for sin. Over and over, a substitute shed its blood to earn forgiveness. Then Jesus appeared, the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. He died as the substitute for sinful mankind. Connected to him by faith, you have new perspective and new motivation for living a Christian life.

### **READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Isaiah 49:1-6 – God would display his splendor by the suffering of the Servant of the Lord.

\*Colossians 2:6-15 – The Lamb of God was flesh and blood so he could be sacrificed to win forgiveness of all our sins.

John 1:29-41 – As the last and greatest of the prophets, John beautifully summarizes God’s plan of salvation by pointing to Jesus and calling him the Lamb of God.

### **Preaching Note**

The Second Reading serves as the sermon text. It allows the preacher the chance to present Christology at the appropriate level for his congregation. Verse 9 – Jesus is fully God in a way that goes beyond comprehension. Verse 14 – Jesus took on flesh and blood to serve as the ultimate Lamb of God in his death. Thoughts on the importance of baptism that went undeveloped last week can be developed this week.

### **Psalm 40**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 40 in services that commemorate Christ’s willing submission to the law and to death when he came into the world to be our Savior.

### **Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	398	525	550
HOD	375	375	375
Third/Distr	814	814	403
Closing	947	929	946

[375](#) (Arise and Shine in Splendor) returns to the melody from TLH.

[398](#) (Not All the Blood of Beasts) is the same as CW93.

[403](#) (Lamb of God) is new and can be accompanied on organ or piano. It's not difficult, but it must be practiced ahead of time.

[525](#) (The Lamb) was CWS Hymn 714. If you learned it from there, you know it, and if you didn't, you must practice it. It's simpler than 403.

[550](#) (Lamb of God) was CWS Hymn 748. If you learned it from there, you know it, and if you didn't, you must practice it. It's a little harder than 525.

[814](#) (Just as I Am, without One Plea) is quite familiar.

[929](#) (May the Peace of God) is harder to play than it is to sing. It was CWS Hymn 745.

[946](#) (Jesus, Lamb of God) is completely unfamiliar, but it's easy to play and easy to sing.

[947](#) (Lamb of God, Pure and Holy) was in both TLH and CW93.



Second Sunday after Epiphany - ALTERNATE

January 18, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

**JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD**

*(Confession of St. Peter)*

---

### EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY

Peter became a disciple of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit made it clear to him who Jesus was. When others speculated about who Jesus might be, Peter made a clear confession of faith. The implications of that confession still resonate in our personal lives today.

### READING INTRODUCTIONS *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

2 Peter 1:1-4 – Saint Peter writes about the implications of his confession of faith.

Acts 4:8-13 – Saint Peter preaches that salvation comes only through Jesus.

\*Matthew 16:13-19 – Saint Peter is commended for his confession of faith.

### Preaching Note

The Gospel serves as the sermon text. With an American pope, it may be helpful to rehearse the actual meaning of these verses and the false history of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. When people said that Jesus was the Christ, they were also identifying him as the Son of God with the power to forgive sins. Thoughts on the family of God that went undeveloped last week can be developed this week.

### [Psalm 118](#)

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 118 in services that celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

### Hymns

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	575	510	510
HOD	861	861	861
Third/Distr	855	892:1,10,3	892:1,10,3
Closing	856	856	516

[510](#) (In Christ Alone) became quite familiar as CWS Hymn 752.

[516](#) (Christ Be the Way in Whom We Walk) is a completely unfamiliar text and tune, but once it's sung, it stays on your mind.

[575](#) (By Grace I'm Saved) was CW93 Hymn 384.

[855](#) (The Church's One Foundation) was CW93 Hymn 538.

[856](#) (Built on the Rock) was CW93 Hymn 529.

[861](#) (Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head) was CW93 Hymn 536.

[892](#) (By All Your Saints Still Striving) is familiar from CW93 Hymn 552, where the Confession of St. Peter verse (sung as the second stanza) was verse 4. In CW21 the Confession of St. Peter verse is verse 10 (still sung as stanza 2).



Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 25, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

**JESUS IS THE LIGHT**

---

### EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY

The prophet Isaiah vividly described humanity as “people walking in darkness.” Then he foretold that a light would shine on them. Enveloped by sin, suffering, and death, we find our minds and hearts clouded. But Jesus is revealed as the promised light. He shines his light by preaching repentance and the good news of the kingdom. Our Savior is the Light of the world, and we reflect his light onto everyone around us.

### READING INTRODUCTIONS *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Isaiah 8:19-9:4 – The prophet foretold that people walking in darkness would see a great light.

1 John 2:3-11 – God’s children walk in the light of Christ by living in love for God and for one another.

\*Matthew 4:12-23 – Jesus preached the light of the gospel to a world in the darkness of unbelief.

### Preaching Note

The Gospel is the recommended sermon text. Although it includes the promise of Jesus to make his disciples fishers of men, that is more the emphasis of Epiphany 3, Year B. Here in Year A, the emphasis is Jesus being revealed as the Light of the world. His call to repentance shines the light into the shadowed nooks and crannies of the world. His teaching, preaching, and healing lead people to see him as the Savior. We follow him and reflect his light.

### [Psalm 27](#)

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 27 in services that emphasize the victory of the light of the Lord over darkness and unbelief, false gods and false doctrine.

### Hymns

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	792	381	382
HOD	904	904	904
Third/Distr	375	713	376
Closing	381	517	580

[375](#) (Arise and Shine in Splendor) restores the melody from TLH.

[376](#) (Rise Up and Shine) is a new text to one of the very familiar tunes for “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

[381](#) (The People Who in Darkness Walked) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[382](#) (The People Who Walked in Darkness) is a new text and tune of medium difficulty, probably better accompanied on piano than on organ.

[517](#) (Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness) is familiar as CW93 Hymn 353. It has the same melody, but the accompaniment is changed so it can be more easily sung in parts.

[580](#) (All I Have Is Christ) is a modern text and tune that must be practiced but is easy to learn.

[713](#) (I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light) became familiar as CWS Hymn 771.

[792](#) (O Trinity, Most Blessed Light) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[904](#) (O Christ, Our True and Only Light) is a classic Lutheran text and tune.



**IDENTITY REVEALED**

**JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE ONE WHO CALLS**

*(Conversion of St. Paul)*

---

**EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

Since Jesus was the Christ, he had a number of roles to fulfill. He was the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King, and he was the Savior. He was also the one who called people to faith in him and sent them to be his witnesses to the world. He called Saint Paul to join the apostles as a missionary to the Gentiles. He also calls us to lives of faith and witness.

**READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

\*Acts 9:1-22 – Jesus appears to Saul, later named Paul, on the road to Damascus.

Galatians 1:11-24 – Paul describes what happened before and after his conversion.

Matthew 19:27-30 – Converting to Christianity changes lives for eternity.

**Preaching Note**

The First Reading is the recommended sermon text. People may be unfamiliar with the details of the text, so the story can be retold with emphasis on the improbability of Saul becoming a believer and a missionary. Because we are born dead in sin, it is equally improbable that God would bring us to faith by the light of the means of grace. What grace that he even entrusts us with his gospel message!

**Psalm 67**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 67 in services that celebrate mission work.

**Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	578	743	736
HOD	745	571	571
Third/Dist	702	702	906
Closing	576	892:1,12,3	892:1,12,3

[571](#) (O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth) is familiar text set to a famous new tune, must be practiced.

[576](#) (Amazing Grace) is as well-known as any hymn.

[578](#) (Chief of Sinners Though I Be) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[702](#) (Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spoke) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

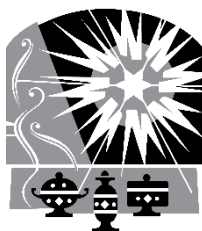
[736](#) (Lord, You Call Us as Your People) has a tune from CWS 763 but a new text.

[743](#) (I Hear the Savior Calling) is familiar as CW93 Hymn 560.

[745](#) (Hark, The Voice of Jesus Crying) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[892](#) (By All Your Saints Still Striving) is familiar from CW93 Hymn 552, where the Conversion of St. Paul verse (sung as the second stanza) was verse 6. In CW21 the Conversion of St. Paul verse is verse 12 (still sung as stanza 2).

[906](#) (May God Bestow on Us His Grace), Martin Luther's mission hymn, was in both TLH and CW93, but it was not sung very often because of its difficult original melody.



Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

## **JESUS CALLS YOU BLESSED**

---

### **EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

You may not feel blessed when you are hungry or insulted or mourning the death of a loved one. You may not be in the mood to boast when you feel foolish, weak, or lowly. But knowing your difficulties, Jesus still chose you to be his own. He gives you many gifts, and he calls you blessed.

### **READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Zephaniah 2:3,3:11-13 – The Lord promises that those who trust him will not be put to shame.

\*1 Corinthians 1:26-31 – God changes how we view ourselves by connecting us to Christ Jesus.

Matthew 5:1-12 – In the Beatitudes, our Savior turns the ideas of the world upside down.

### **Preaching Note**

The Second Reading is the recommended sermon text. Paul's list of God's chosen ones fits well with Jesus' description of the blessed ones in the Gospel. God's purpose in working through weakness is so no one can boast. With Jesus as our righteousness, we realize a new identity. Regardless of our circumstances in life, we are blessed.

### **Psalm 1**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 1 in services that emphasize the benefits of meditation on the law of the Lord.

### **Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	619	619	619
HOD	816	690	690
Third/Distr	799	806	568
Closing	849	849	867

[568](#) (His Robes for Mine) is new in this hymnal and was recently popularized by the Martin Luther College Choir

[619](#) (Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him) is familiar from both TLH and CW93.

[690](#) (Blest Are They) is new, easy to sing and hard to play. Piano, not organ.

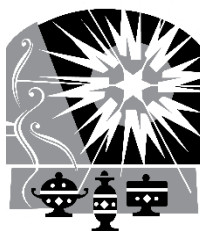
[799](#) (I Leave All Things to God's Direction) has the familiar melody, CW93 wording, and a simpler organ accompaniment.

[806](#) (Your Days and Ways to God Surrender) has the familiar melody, a newly translated text, and a simpler organ accompaniment.

[816](#) (I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus) is very familiar, easy both to play and sing.

[849](#) (Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me) is familiar as CW93 Hymn 439.

[867](#) (Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near) is new, but it is gaining popularity rapidly. It is easy to play and easy to learn to sing.



Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 8, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

## **JESUS CALLS YOU SALT AND LIGHT**

---

### **EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

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.

### **READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Exodus 19:1-8 – God made something special out of Israel, a nation of slaves.

1 Peter 2:9-12 – St. Peter encourages us to be what God has declared us to be.

\*Matthew 5:13-20 – Jesus explains that his disciples are blessings to this dark, decaying world.

### **Preaching Note**

The Gospel serves as the recommended sermon text. We don't need to discover how we become salt and light. Jesus' call to discipleship effected it. Salt preserves because it is salt. Light shines because it is light. Don't understand this identity as a way of being saved. Jesus fulfilled the Law and Prophets so that we are saved. We live these identities so people ultimately glorify our Father in heaven.

### **Psalm 112**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 112 in services that encourage insightful living based on knowing what God has declared us to be.

### **Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	581	854	854
HOD	630	630	630
Third/Distr	697	697	735
Closing	770	770	772

[581](#) (Lord, 'Tis Not that I Did Choose You) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[630](#) (Thy Strong Word) is well-known as CW93 Hymn 280. Not easy to play or sing, but worth the effort.

[697](#) (May We Your Precepts, Lord, Fulfill) has the accompaniment from TLH restored so it is easier to sing in parts.

[735](#) (Before You I Kneel) takes some getting used to, but once you learn it, it stays in your mind.

[770](#) (God of Grace and God of Glory) is familiar as CW93 Hymn 523.

[772](#) (O God Most High, Your Saints Below) is a new text set to a sturdy new tune. It must be practiced.

[854](#) (Church of God, Elect and Glorious) was introduced as CWS Hymn 774. The accompaniment in the new hymnal is more majestic.



Last Sunday after Epiphany – Transfiguration of Our Lord February 15, 2026

**IDENTITY REVEALED**

## **JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD IN GLORY**

*(The Transfiguration of Our Lord)*

---

### **EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY**

Jesus was a real human being, and he looked like it when he taught his disciples. But one day atop a high mountain, Jesus gave his disciples a glimpse of his glory as the Son of God. After he came down from the mountain, Jesus went to Jerusalem to suffer and die. It is good for us to view Jesus in glory on the mountain. It prepares us for Lent, and it prepares us for life.

### **READING INTRODUCTIONS** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to the lesson)*

Exodus 24:9-18 – On Mount Sinai, Moses saw the glory of the Lord's law. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses would see the glory of the Lord's gospel.

2 Peter 1:16-21 – As an eyewitness to the majesty and glory of Jesus, St. Peter testifies to the reliability of the Christian faith.

\*Matthew 17:1-9 – The transfiguration of our Lord.

### **Preaching Note**

A sermon on the Gospel is a wonderful way to close the season of Epiphany. On the first Sunday, the Father called Jesus his Son at his baptism. On this Sunday, the Father calls Jesus his Son at his transfiguration. His identity as the Son of God is demonstrated by the glimpses of the glory of the Lord. We join Peter in wanting to remember that. But ultimately the glory of God is demonstrated in his crucifixion and his resurrection, and that's the context we want to preserve in faithful memory for the rest of our lives. We are co-heirs of his glory!

### **[Psalm 2](#)**

Click on the link to help choose which psalter setting will work best in your congregation.

**PSALM INTRODUCTION** *(to be printed in the worship folder and/or read prior to singing the Psalm)* – The Church sings Psalm 2 in services that emphasize the relationship of the Father and the Son.

### **Hymns**

	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Introductory</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Opening	389	391	390
HOD	388	388	388
Third/Distr	700	390	392
Closing	522	389	977

[388](#) (Down from the Mount of Glory) is familiar as CW93 Hymn 97.

[389](#) (How Good, Lord, to Be Here) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[390](#) (Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain) became familiar as CWS Hymn 712.

[391](#) (O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair) was CW93 Hymn 96. It's a little harder to sing than it first appears.

[392](#) (This Brightness, Lord! What Shall I Say) is a new text set to an American folk tune. It must be practiced.

[522](#) (Beautiful Savior) is well-known and beloved.

[700](#) (Draw Us to Thee) is familiar from TLH and CW93.

[977](#) (Farewell to Alleluias) is in the accompaniment book and *Service Builder* but not in the pew edition hymnal. It's fairly easy to play and sing.