



# Order of service: Be the light



*for the 2025 One Great Hour of Sharing*

## **Call to Worship**

ONE: Be the light, bearing it to all the world

ALL: **No hiding.**

ONE: Be the light, sharing it with all you encounter.

ALL: **No stalling.**

ONE: Be the light, so that our neighbors can find their way.

ALL: **No holding back.**

ONE: Be the light, so that the world will know there is a path forward.

ALL: **No hiding. No stalling. No holding.  
We move forward to be the light.**

## **Prayer of Invocation**

Creator and Creative God, The sun rises in the morning, bringing forth the many-colored hues of light illuminating the day. At night, the moon rises to illuminate the sky. The stars shine, giving light where there is none. Regardless of the time of day or night, God sends light to the world. Each of us is called to bear the light in that same way, no matter the time of day or the situation we find ourselves in. As we worship, we follow in the footsteps of the one who was the light of the world, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

## **Litany**

ONE: When communities are in crisis,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: When tornados devastate the countryside,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: When human beings are mistreated,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: When the earth is abused and creation is disrespected,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: When justice is denied,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: When another is in need,

ALL: **Be the light.**

ONE: Light-bearers you are,

ALL: **We will be the light.**

ONE: Go public. Find a hilltop.

ALL: **We will be the light.**

## **Invitation to Communion**

“It is late at night, so dark you cannot see the path home,  
and you are suddenly lost in this place that once felt familiar and safe.”

Thus begins the poem by Tom Atkins. As we move through life, we often find ourselves lost, even in places that can seem quite familiar. This can happen for many reasons and at many different times in our lives.

Holy Communion is a moment that beckons us home, no matter how lost we may feel. In these simple elements of bread and wine, and through an invitation from Christ to this table, we realize that the meal is for all and that it is Christ who serves as the host.

However, Atkins’ poem concludes by reminding us that the table is a place where we are never alone:

“Next time, you vow, as the path grows clear,  
you will bring a lantern, your own light,  
and join others lost in the night, a defiance of the dark,  
a beacon, a reminder to all who see you  
that they are never, ever alone.”

At this table, we share in the fellowship of one another and with Christ. We bring the light of Christ with us and others are able to find the table, dine with others and find that which is familiar and safe. Come, now, as Christ shares the best with us.

## **Communion Prayer**

From the beginning of creation, light has been an ever-present gift to humanity. God spoke forth light and it shone over all the earth. Human beings were created with the breath of God and the light shone forth from each person, formed in the very image of God. After the flood, a rainbow lights up the sky to remind us of the covenant with God for the rest of time.

There were times where (or when) the light was not as visible. Humanity did not react to the light as we should have. We followed kings and despots, when the sages and prophets were calling us to follow along different paths.

Eventually you sent your son, Jesus, who called himself the light of the world and called us to join him in sharing the light with all we encounter. After his death and resurrection, you sent the Spirit to illuminate our lives so that we could continue to bear the light of Christ into the world for ages to come.

Sharing that light still today, we boldly proclaim all this by faith. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## Invitation to the Offering

Lea Morris wrote a song called “Be the Light.”  
There is always a light – when we are ready to see it  
There is always a light – when we are ready to be it  
To see the light, to be the light, to raise our eyes in the dark of night  
[To climb this hill, together we will].

The song ends with the words, “Be a gift to the world.” You are invited to offer the gift of light to others around the world through One Great Hour of Sharing.

Jesus’ call for us to be light is an ongoing opportunity for us to offer a gift to another. The world needs light more than ever before. We cannot be in all of these places ourselves or even see them with our own eyes, but through our generous tithes, offerings and special gifts, we can be a light which shines day or night. In that spirit, let us share now!

## Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we offer these gifts in the spirit of light and with a heart full of gratitude for what we’ve been given. These offerings are one way of showing our commitment to sharing with those who are in need, neighbors near and far, whom we are unlikely to meet. As we share, we shine the light of our faith with brothers and sisters we may never meet. Bless the gifts, just as you have us, with an extra measure of your grace. In Christ’s name, Amen.

## Charge & Benediction

*[Encourage those in your congregations to shine the lights on their cell phones during the benediction as a way of signaling that they will be the light shining in the places where they find themselves but that, collectively, the light is brighter when we join other in being the light.]*

**ONE:** May you always be the light, shining bright in the darkness, just as Jesus calls us to.

**ALL:** **Let your kindness be a beacon, your compassion a guiding star, and your love a radiant flame.**

**ONE:** As you illuminate the world with your actions, may others see your good deeds and be inspired to glorify the divine.

**ALL:** **We go forth, empowered by faith, let our light shine for all to see.**

## Hymn Suggestions

- This Little Light of Mine – African American Spiritual
- Bring Forth the Kingdom – Marty Haugen
- Gather Us In – Marty Haugen
- O Word of God, Incarnate – William W. How
- Jesus Bids Us Shine – Susan Warner
- Christ Be Our Light—Bernadette Ferrell
- As a Fire Is Meant for Burning – Ruth Duck
- O Jesus I Have Promised – John E. Bode / Arthur H. Mann
- Song for the Nations – Chris Christensen
- Salt & Light – Jan and John L’Ecuyer
- Shine, Jesus, Shine – Graham Kendrick
- Go, Light Your World – Kathy Troccoli
- We Are Called to Be God’s People – Thomas Jackson
- Pass It On – Kurt Kaiser
- Sois la Semilla (You Are the Seed) – Cesareo Gabaraín