

4th Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026; 9 a.m.



St John's
Lutheran Church

(An usher rings the church bell at 8:55 a.m.)

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

(Acolytes light the candles)

Linda Ranney

Gathering Hymn *(please stand)*

ELW #522; *As We Gather at Your Table*

- 1 As we gather at your table,
as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence;
let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story
till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet
how to make Love's vict'ry known.

- 2 Turn our worship into witness
in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion
to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image
in the world you died to save.

- 3 Gracious Spirit, help us summon
other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us
nor will pride our peace destroy,

as we join with saints and angels
to repeat the sounding joy.

Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Kyrie

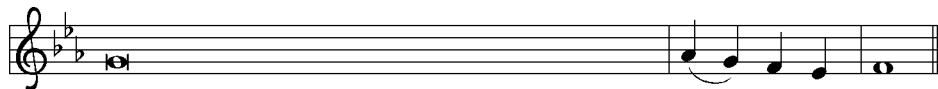
From ELW Setting 1



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



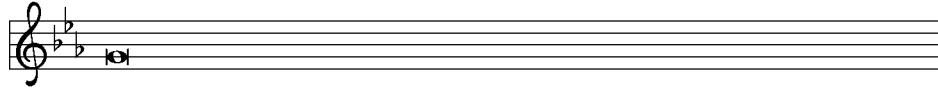
Lord, have mercy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mercy.



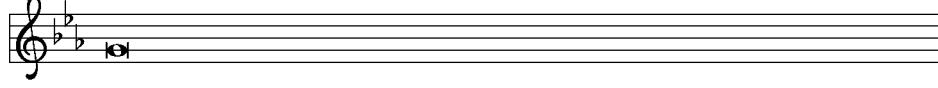
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mercy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

A - men, a - men.

Canticle of Praise

Gloria From ELW Setting 6; vs. 1, 3 (*Assembly sings refrains*)

Refrain

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace

to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the

high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

I Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa-ther,

we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace

to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the

high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a -
 lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly
 Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
Final refrain
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est.
 A - men, a - men.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Holy God, **you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

Reading: Micah 6:1-8 (please sit)

¹ Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
 and let the hills hear your voice.

² Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD,
 and you enduring foundations of the earth,
 for the LORD has a case against his people,
 and he will contend with Israel.

³ "O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
 and redeemed you from the house of slavery,

and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵ O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

⁶ "With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

¹⁸ The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,
"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

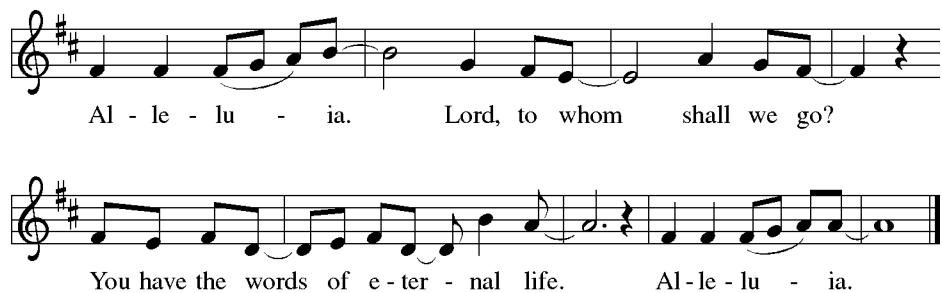
Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Time

Gospel Acclamation (*please stand*)

From ELW Setting 6 (*choir sings first, then assembly joins*)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 5th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon (*please sit*)

“More than a Motto” Pastor Christine Emerson

Hymn of the Day (*please stand*)

ACS #1062; Build a Longer Table

- 1 Build a longer table, not a higher wall,
feeding those who hunger, making room for all.
Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,
Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.

- 2 Build a safer refuge, not a larger jail;
where the weak find shelter, mercy will not fail.
For any place where justice is denied,
Christ will breach the jail wall, freeing all inside.

- 3 Build a broader doorway, not a longer fence.
Love protects all people, sparing no expense.
When we embrace compassion more than fear,
Christ tears down our fences: all are welcome here.

- 4 When we lived as exiles, refugees abroad,
Christ became our doorway to the reign of God.

So must our tables welcome those who roam.
None can be excluded; all must find a home.

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Adaline Sue Duce, daughter of Jessalyn and Lucas Duce
Sponsors: Patrick and Kaitlyn Williams

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?
I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?
I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?
I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?
I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(parents, child, and sponsors gather around the font)

Sponsors: We present **Adaline Sue Duce** for the sacrament of holy baptism.

Pastor: Parents, as you bring **Adaline Sue** to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with her among God's faithful people, bring her to the word of God and the holy supper, teach her the Lord's prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in her hands the holy scriptures, and nurture her in faith and prayer, so that she may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. Do you promise to fulfill these promises?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: Sponsors, do you promise to nurture **Adaline Sue** in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: We do.

Pastor: People of God, do you promise to support **Adaline Sue** and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

People: We do.

Pastor: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that they who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Pastor: Adaline Sue, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

(Parents lay hands on the head of the newly baptized.)

Sustain **Adaline Sue** with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, now and forever. **Amen.**

(Parents use oil to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the newly baptized)

Pastor: **Adaline Sue**, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

(Sponsors take the candle and light it using the Christ candle. The candle is to remind us that we carry the light of Christ throughout our baptized life.)

Worship Assistant: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us welcome **Adaline Sue** into the community of faith.

All: We welcome her into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

(The child, parents and sponsors may return to their seats.)

Prayers of the People

Petition:
Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always!
And also with you.

Offering

(Ushers take up the collection)

*When The Poor Ones arr. David Cherwien
St. John's Choir*

Offertory (please stand)

(Ushers bring collection forward for acolytes to receive)

ELW #445; *Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters* vs. 1, 3



1 Wash, O God, our sons and daugh - ters, where your cleans-ing wa - ters flow.

2 We who bring them long for nur - ture; by your milk may we be fed.

3 Oh, how deep your ho - ly wis - dom! Un - im - ag - ined, all your ways!



Num - ber them a - mong your peo - ple; bless as Christ blessed long a - go.
Let us join your feast, par - tak - ing cup of bless - ing, liv - ing bread.
To your name be glo - ry, hon - or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
God, re - new us, guide our foot - steps; free from sin and all its snares,
We your peo - ple stand be - fore you, wa - ter-washed and Spir - it - born.



Fill, a - noint them; send your Spir - it, ho - ly dove and heart's de - light.
one with Christ in liv - ing, dy - ing, by your Spir - it, chil - dren, heirs.
By your grace, our lives we of - fer. Re - cre - ate us; God, trans - form!

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. God of majesty,
no eye has seen, no ear has heard
what you have prepared for those who love you,
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.
Use what we have gathered
to feed us with the reign of God come near,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy

From ELW Setting 6



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, Lord God of pow-er and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-
san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

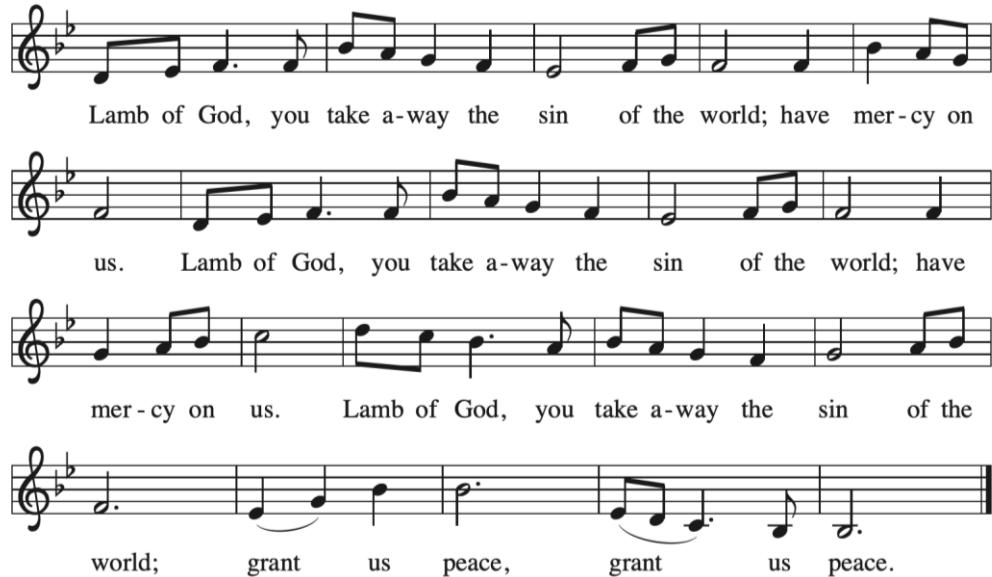
Invitation to the Table

(Acolytes prepare for communion distribution; ushers come forward to invite assembly by pew. Greeters will guide those wishing to receive at the altar: stop at credence table for a cup, then walk up side steps into the chancel)

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

Lamb of God

From ACS Setting 12



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Hymn

ELW #729; *The Church of Christ in Every Age*

- 1 The church of Christ, in ev'ry age
beset by change, but Spirit-led,
must claim and test its heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.
- 2 Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live before they die.
- 3 Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.
- 4 For he alone, whose blood was shed,

can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

5 We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord;
to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating word.

Post-Communion Blessing & Prayer (please stand)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Let us pray. Radiant God,
we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
In the sacrament of his body and blood
you have drawn us to your heart.
Send us from this table with delight,
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Benediction

May the triune God,
who has put a new song in your mouth
and tuned your heart for praise
☩ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

(Acolytes extinguish the candles)

ELW #704; *When Pain of the World Surrounds Us*, vs. 1, 2, 4

1 When pain of the world surrounds us with darkness and despair,
when searching just confounds us with false hopes ev'rywhere,
when lives are starved for meaning and destiny is bare,
we are called to follow Jesus and let God's healing flow through us.

2 We see with fear and trembling our aching world in need,
confessing to each other our wastefulness and greed.
May we with steadfast caring the hungry children feed.
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's justice flow through us.

4 We praise you for our journey and your abundant grace,
your saving word that guided a struggling human race.
O God, with all creation, your future we embrace.
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's changes flow through us.

Sending

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Linda Ranney

Altar Flowers

In Memory of Grandma Kate Thompson & brother Donn Schultz by the Richard Schultz family.

Chancel Flowers

In Memory of Buz McAdam by Arlene

Serving at Worship Today

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Presider | Pastor Christine Emerson |
| Assistant | Jean Jirovec |
| Lector | Gracelyn Boeckmann |
| Acolytes | Xavier Olson, Reese Boeckmann |
| Ushers | Doug Hayes, Ron Norby |
| Greeters | Norb Kirk, Larry Krause |
| Communion Servers | Eric Nielsen, Mark Sontag, Patti Sontag, Jenna Boeckmann, Cora Klawiter |
| Media & Streaming | Lydia Elko |
| Screen Operator | Maxx Christopherson |
| Musicians | Linda Ranney, piano/organ; Mark Lundin, Director of Music; St. John's Choir |

Copyright Information

Reprinted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, copyright 2006 & Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright 1978 Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #20510. Reprinted from With One Voice copyright © 1995 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #20510. Reprinted from Worship & Praise copyright © 1995 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #20510. "All Rights Reserved" Used by permission. CCLI License # 1070784. With permission by OneLicense.net license A-703800.