



January 18th, 2026,
9:00 a.m.

2nd Sunday After Epiphany, Year A

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The days are short, the nights long, and winter's frost lingers on the ground. Yet even in the cold and quiet, God's light continues to shine. Icicles glimmer in muted sunlight, and long shadows stretch across the landscape, yet even here, God's love breaks through the chill. Amid the stillness of these winter days, let us lay down our burdens and open our hearts to God's mercy and grace. Let us pray:

God of new beginnings, we confess that we are weary and unsure. In the long winter of our hearts, we carry brokenness we cannot mend, worries we cannot quiet, and doubts we cannot answer. We stumble through the shadows of fear and uncertainty, longing for your light to guide us. Help us to trust your path, to follow even when the way is unclear, and to open our hearts to the new beginnings you offer each day. Amen.

Hear the good news: the light of Christ shines in the darkness, and nothing can overcome it. Your sins are forgiven, your burdens lifted, your doubts and worries met with grace and mercy. God's love, steadfast as the winter sky, surrounds you and guides you, by day and by night.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

GATHERING HYMN

O Day of Rest and Gladness



1 O day of rest and glad - ness, O day of joy and light,
2 On you, at earth's cre - a - tion, the light first had its birth;
3 To - day on wea - ry na - tions the heav'n - ly man - na falls;
4 New grac - es ev - er gain - ing from this our day of rest,



O balm for care and sad - ness, most beau - ti - ful, most bright:
on you, for our sal - va - tion, Christ rose from depths of earth;
to ho - ly con - vo - ca - tions the sil - ver trum - pet calls,
we reach the rest re - main - ing to spir - its of the blest.



on you the high and low - ly, through a - ges joined in tune,
on you, our Lord vic - to - rious the Spir - it sent from heav'n;
where gos - pel light is glow - ing with pure and ra - diant beams
We sing to you our prais - es, O Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son;



sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly," to the great God tri - une.
and thus on you, most glo - rious, a three - fold light was giv'n.
and liv - ing wa - ter flow - ing with soul - re - fresh - ing streams.
the church its voice up - rais - es to you, blest Three in One.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807–1885, alt.

Music: ELLACOMBE, German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mainzer Gesangbuche*, 1833

GREETING

May 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of stardust and moonbeams,

You call us by name and send us to bear your light. Open our eyes to recognize Christ in our midst, strengthen our hearts to follow where He leads, and guide us by your Spirit to bring hope and mercy to the world.

Amen.

READING: Isaiah 49:1-7

Listen to me, O coastlands; pay attention, you peoples from far away!

The Lord called me before I was born; while I was in my mother's womb he named me. ² He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.

³ And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord and my reward with my God."

⁵ And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength ⁶ he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." ⁷ Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand up; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.

⁷ Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 40:1-11

I waited patiently upon the Lord, who stooped to me and heard my cry.

The Lord lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a high cliff, making my footing sure.

The Lord put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many shall see, and stand in awe, and put their trust in the Lord.

Happy are they who trust in the Lord! They do not turn to enemies or to those who follow lies.

Great are the wonders you have done, O Lord my God! In your plans for us, none can be compared with you! Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! But they are more than I can count.

Sacrifice and offering you do not desire; you have opened my ears: burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

And so I said, "Here I am; I come. In the scroll of the book it is written of me:

'I love to do your will, O my God; your law is deep within me.'"

I proclaimed righteousness in the great assembly; I have not restrained my lips, O Lord, you know.

I have not hidden your righteousness in my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; I have not concealed your steadfast love and truth from the great assembly.

You are the Lord; do not withhold your compassion from me; may your steadfast love and your truth continually keep me safe.

READING: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, ² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God

that has been given you in Christ Jesus,⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (page 205)

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word. Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred. Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: John 1:29-42

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁹ John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’³¹ I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.”³² And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.”³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.”³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!”³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?”³⁹ He said to them,

“Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).
The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

I Love to Tell the Story



1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,
2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat
3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best



of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love,
what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!
seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.



I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;
I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,



it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.
the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.
I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

Refrain



I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo - ry



to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

Text: Katherine Hankey, 1834-1911
Music: HANKEY, William E. Fischer, 1849-1936

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. 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. 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.
Responding to "Hear us, O God" with "Your mercy is great."

PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God is a generous giver of gifts that flow like a river from the fountain of life. Let us bring our offerings and tributes with thanks and praise.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZEVQ/home>

GIVE THANKS

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich," because of what the Lord has done for us.

And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am rich,” because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

OFFERING PRAYER

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—these gifts, our lives, our hearts—to bring your light into the world, and show your steadfast love to all people. In Christ we pray.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav’n 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, hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & LORD'S PRAYER

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, forever & ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Even in the cold of winter, when icicles glimmer and pale sunlight stretches long shadows across the earth, the light of Christ shines for all. At this table, God gathers everyone—those who are weary, those who are searching, those who are joyful, and those who long for mercy and hope. Come as you are, and be warmed by God's love. Come to this bread and cup, and be fed with grace, forgiveness, and the promise of new beginnings.


LAMB OF GOD (page 154)

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS


Come, Let Us Eat

Leader or All



1 Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,
2 Come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured,
3 In Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest,
4 Rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word,

All



come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.
come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.
in Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest.
rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word.

Leader or All



Our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er,
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er,
In the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er,
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom,

All



our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er.
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er.
in the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er.
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom.

Text: Billema Kwillia, b. 1925, sts. 1-3; Gilbert E. Doan Jr., b. 1930, st. 4, alt.; tr. Margaret D. Miller, b. 1927, sts. 1-3, alt.
Music: A VA DE, Billema Kwillia, adapt.
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Just a Closer Walk with Thee



Just a clos-er walk with thee, grant it, Je-sus, is my plea;



dai - ly walk-ing close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.



- 1 I am weak but thou art strong: Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;
- 2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal-ter, Lord, who cares?
- 3 When my fee-ble life is o'er, time for me will be no more;



I'll be sat - is - fied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.
Who with me my bur - den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.
guide me gent - ly, safe - ly o'er to thy king - dom shore, to thy shore.

Text: North American traditional

Music: CLOSER WALK, North American traditional

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Radiant God,

We have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Strengthened by this gift, may we carry your light into the world—bringing hope to the weary, warmth to the lonely, and love to those we meet. Guide our steps each day, and help us follow Christ faithfully, sharing your grace with everyone. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the Creator wake your flesh with life anew,

May Christ weave strength and courage into your bones,

May the Holy Spirit breathe joy in your presence,

May the Three in One immerse you with grace upon grace,

And may the Holy God † Triune saturate you with hope, renewal & peace.

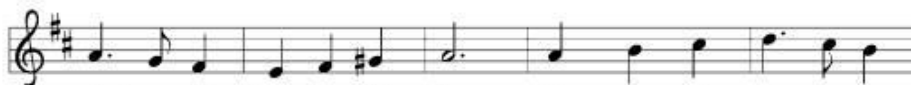
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Great Is Thy Faithfulness



1 Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
2 Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and
3 Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear



shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
stars in their cours-es a-bove join with all na-ture in
pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright



pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.
man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.
hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

Refrain



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by



morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy



hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me.

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960

Music: FAITHFULNESS, William M. Runyan, 1870–1957

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DISMISSAL Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **Thanks be to God.**

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Welcome to all! Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones.

To those who are visiting: Welcome to St. John and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex.

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to Christ's Table.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John (715) 675-6950
If you or a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from Pastor Maggie, please contact St. John.

Food Basket. Each week you are invited to bring **non-perishable grocery** items to be given to a local food pantry. Place your gift in the *Shopping Cart* next to the main entrance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noisy offering! The 2nd Sunday of the month! Next Noisy offering:

Sunday, February 8th bring your coins (bills also accepted 😊).

Money will be raised and donated quarterly. This noisy offering will go to: *Community Dinners for those in need.* Did you know St. John hosts three Community Dinners a year and each one costs approximately \$1,300. Your donations help serve a very real need in our community! **If you are a Thrivent member, you may be eligible to apply for a \$250 Thrivent Action Team card** which can go directly towards our community dinners. Please see Connie Nowak if you can help!

LENTEN DINNERS: We need volunteers to prepare and serve our Lenten Dinners. We also need volunteers to bring salads, desserts and milk, and to help with cleanup. The dinners will be served from 5-6 pm. Worship starts at 6:30. The sign-up chart is in the narthex. Please join us for Lent this year.

Sunday School Teachers Needed: As parent-teachers age out of Sunday School with their kids, we need 2-3 new teachers to step in and help teach the good word! With enough help, the commitment averages to teaching one lesson each month. Please contact Kim Landwehr at kamootz@gmail.com if you are interested!

Chair Yoga: Saturday January 24th / January 31st / February 21st / February 28th all starting at 10:00 a.m. at St. John! A free event, donations are accepted for St. John's Youth.

Mission Trip to Duluth, MN Sunday, July 12th – Friday July 17th Grades 7th – 12th Please let us know if your student is interested by 02/18/2026 Monday, January 26th at 6:30 Pastor Maggie's Book Club will discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus.

Memorial Committee Position Open – See Jan Mueller for details!!!

Sunday, February 1st at 10:15 a.m. Annual Congregational Meeting.

Thursday, February 12th at 6:30 p.m. Adult Study will discuss Chapters 14 – 19:27 of the Gospel of Luke.

Wednesday, February 18th Ash Wednesday. Lenten Dinner starts at 5:00 p.m. Worship 6:30 p.m.

Church Mailboxes have moved – The mailboxes are now in order numerically by envelope number, though your name is also listed alongside your number. There are master lists in red binders, listed alphabetically by last name. Our mailbox section only accommodates 240 slots. We have set up a temporary location by the side door of the narthex. If you do not see your name or see errors, please let us know. *****We have also changed our envelope system***** If you are looking for offering envelopes, please fill out the pink offering envelope form and place it in the office door mailbox.

Kwik Trip Gift Cards Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or on our website! Help support St. John with Kwik Trip gift cards!

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Lutheran Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children's sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

Coming This Week @ St. John January 18th – January 25th

Today - Sunday, January 18th

9:00 a.m. Worship / No Sunday School

3:30 p.m. Community Dinner @First United Methodist Church

Monday, January 19th

MLK Day – Church Closed

Wednesday, January 21st

8:30 a.m. Quilters Meet

6:30 p.m. Confirmation Class

Thursday, January 22nd

5:30 p.m. Bells Practice – come try the bells! No experience needed.

Sunday, January 25th

9:00 a.m. Worship

10:15 a.m. Sunday School – The Battle of Jericho