

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
of Stillwater, Minnesota

January 18, 2026

Second Sunday after Epiphany



Your presence at worship is important to God and to us! Whether you are a first-time visitor, frequent participant, neighbor, member, or friend, please take a moment as you prepare for worship to share some information on the "Welcome to Worship" card included with your bulletin. Place it in the offering plate at the time the offering is received.

Today's gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy, we come and see Christ revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made known among us.

Many of our worship materials are taken from the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). Page numbers are located in the front half of the book, and hymn numbers are located in the back half of the book.

The assembly **speaks** or **sings** the bold responses.



## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

Prelude

Mark Zempel, soloist

*"Wayfaring Stranger"*



Confession and Forgiveness

ELW page 94

Gathering Song

ELW hymn 715

*"Christ, Be Our Light"*

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.**

Prayer of the Day

Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by your Spirit  
hold us forever, that through your grace we may worship  
you and faithfully serve you, follow you and joyfully find  
you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

First Reading

Pew Bible: Old Testament Page 679

Isaiah 49:1-7

*Here the servant, identified as Israel, speaks for herself and describes her honored mission. Called before her birth like Jeremiah and John the Baptist, the servant is not only to restore Israel. The servant's ultimate assignment is to bring news of God's victory to the ends of the earth. God in faithfulness has chosen Israel for this task.*

*At the conclusion:*

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 40:1-5, 10-11

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.**

(Continued on the next page.) 3

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.**

Second Reading      Pew Bible: New Testament Pages 165-166

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

*Though God's church in Corinth is a fractious congregation beset with many conflicts, Paul opens this letter by spotlighting the multiple ways God has enriched and sustained its life as part of the divine call into the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*At the conclusion:*

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

Children's and Outreach Message

Jenny Brelje

Gospel Acclamation



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

John 1:29-42

*John the Baptist's witness to Jesus initiates a chain of testimony as his disciples begin to share with others what they have found.*

*The gospel is introduced:*

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the conclusion:*

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**



Sermon

Pastor Nathan Baker-Trinity

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

Hymn of the Day

ELW Hymn 574

*"Here I Am, Lord"*



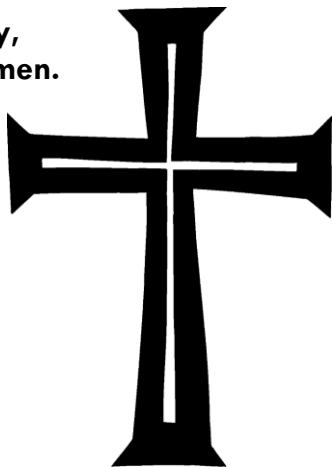
## Apostles' Creed

**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.**

**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

*After each prayer:*  
Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

*At the conclusion:*  
Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and  
answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's  
loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*All are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

Offering

"Miracle Man"

Mark Zempel, soloist

*Our offering is a collection of money for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, as a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. Your offering and "Welcome to Worship" card may be placed in the offering plate. The QR code on the right may be used if you wish to give electronically.*



## Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts,

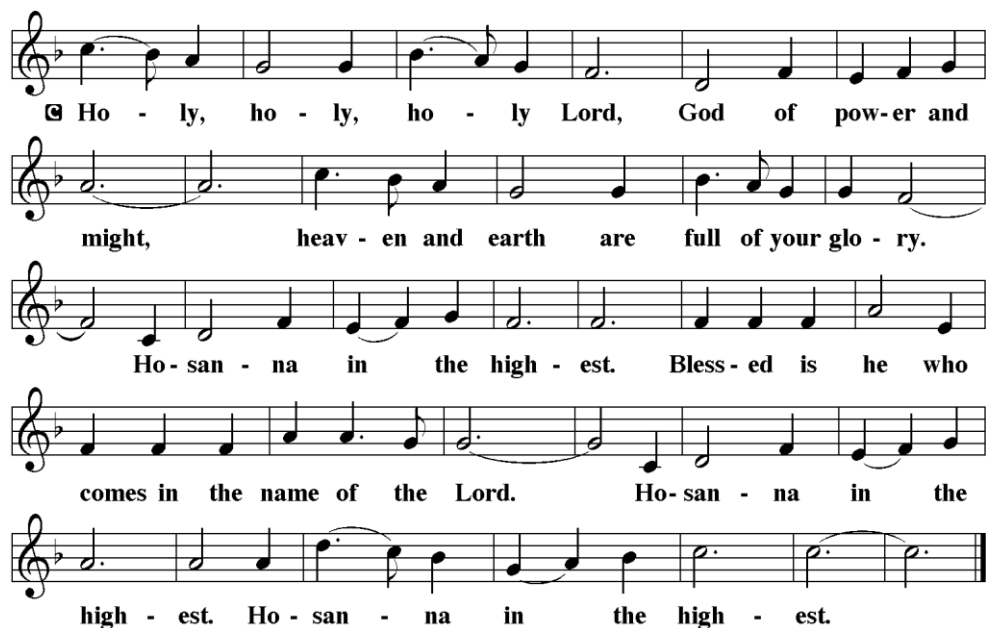
**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all. By your powerful word you created all things. Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son. He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

In the night in which he was betrayed . . .

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks . . .

Remembering, therefore, his preaching and healing, his dying and rising, and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.



Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father,  
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and  
forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus  
taught us.

**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 and ever. Amen.**



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

*We celebrate at an open communion table. All who hear our Lord's invitation are welcome to participate. Receive the bread first with an open hand and eat immediately, followed by the juice (white) or wine (red). Gluten-free bread is available at the front end of the center aisle. Please indicate to an usher if you need to receive communion from your pew. Children who have received age-appropriate instruction are welcome to commune. If you prefer instead to receive a blessing, please indicate by crossing your arms over your shoulders.*

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:  
The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

*and each person may respond:*

**Amen.**



Communion Song

ELW hymn 608

*"Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling"*

## Prayer After Communion

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### Announcements

### Charge and Blessing

Go out into the world in peace;  
have courage;  
hold on to what is good;  
return no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted;  
support the weak, and help the suffering;  
honor all people;  
love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

### Sending Song

ELW hymn 733

*"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"*

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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**DAILY PRAYER**  
**We're In This Together**



God, our refuge and strength, you have bound us together in a common life. In all our conflicts, help us to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, to listen for your voice amid competing claims, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

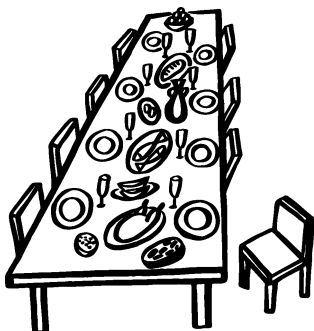
**CONNECTIONS WITH THE LITURGY**  
*Lamb of God*



For centuries, Christians have sung “Lamb of God” when they come forward for communion to receive Christ's presence of mercy and peace. In Christian art, the Lamb is depicted as both a sacrificial (Gospel of John) and warrior (Revelation) lamb. Even as Jesus willingly accepts his own death, he also defies it in love for all people.

## CATECHISM CONNECTION

### Feasting With Creatures



To inspire families to pray before and after meals, Martin Luther quotes the psalms. Before the meal he quotes Psalm 145: “The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature.” After the meal he quotes Psalm 147: “Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God’s mercy endures forever. God provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they cry. God is not impressed by the might of a horse, and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner, but finds pleasure in those who fear the Lord, in those who await God’s steadfast love.” In both cases, Luther ties our health and well-being to that of all creation.

## **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

### **Confession of Peter**

**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

Today the church remembers the apostle Peter's great acknowledgement of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." This festival serves as a fitting beginning to the week in which we particularly pray that all Christians might be united in faith and witness.

### **Henry, Bishop of Uppsala, martyr, died 1156**

**Monday, January 19, 2026**

When Erik, King of Sweden, determined to invade Finland for the purpose of converting the people there to Christianity, Henry went with him. Henry is recognized as the patron saint of Finland.

### **Agnes, martyr, died around 304**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026**

Agnes was a girl of about thirteen living in Rome. The details of her martyrdom are not clear, but she gave witness to her faith and was put to death as a result, most likely by the sword. The church has honored her as one of the chief martyrs of her time.

## **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

### **Then Knowing Begins**

There is a whole lot written about knowing in this gospel's pithy account of Jesus' debut. There is, for that matter, a lot written about knowing throughout John's gospel; it's part of this book of the Bible's particularity. But take note: Before any claims of knowing are dashed into this memoir, John the Baptizer bothers to reveal that there was, for him, a time before knowing—a time when he did not know Jesus. This little and perhaps overlooked detail, "I myself did not know him" (John 1:31), is like sugar water in a hummingbird feeder: a sweet invitation or coaxing to come, taste and see what is good.

That admission from John lures readers and hearers to pay attention not simply to events: the arrival of Jesus on the scene, his walking toward John, the act of baptizing with water, or even the flamboyant descent of a dove. These are descriptive details, but they are not the essence of what soon will overtake John and others—an invitation to know Jesus.

The difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus is tucked in and all around this gospel text that leads initially to the Baptizer and then moves onto a pathway beyond him. Yes, Jesus is introduced as "Lamb of God." Yes, like a dove, the Spirit was seen descending. Vivid, symbolic details, for sure, about one coming to take away sin. But it is afterward, in Andrew and Simon's curiosity and willingness to follow, when Jesus asks "What are you looking for?" and urges them to "come and see," when they begin to stay together—they with Jesus and he with them—that knowing Jesus overtakes them and they fall into the grace of what he comes to take away and what he comes to give.

## **Church Staff**

Sr. Pastor	Rev. Nathan Baker-Trinity
Visitation Pastor	Rev. Laurel Halvorson Bernard
Director of Music	Andy Peterson
Casual Worship Leader	Karen Hillmann
Office Coordinator	Kristin Nelson
CYF & Outreach Director	Jenny Brelje
Maintenance	Jeff Thomsen
Audio-Video Engineer	Tim Schingen

## **2025 Church Council Officers**

President	Shelley Jokinen
Secretary	Chris Shivers

## **2025 Committee Chairpersons**

Financial Operations	(Open Seat)
CYF	Sabrina Bell
Evangelism & Membership	(Open Seat)
Fellowship	Janine Siverson
Memorial & Grants	Diane Podratz Barb LaCosse
Mission Outreach	Ann Kriesel
Property & Grounds	(Open Seat)
Seniors	Jenny Powell
Worship	Jennifer Braun

## **St. Paul Lutheran Church**

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### **Office Hours**

Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

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