

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026

Baptism of Our Lord

**Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!**

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

*Words printed in **bold** are spoken by all. Visitors are invited to sign the guest registry in the Narthex or fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.*

**THIS SERVICE IS LIVE STREAMED. TELL YOUR FRIENDS!**

*GATHERING*

**WELCOME**

PM: Welcome to those who are joining us online. Welcome to worship at St. Paul's!

**PRELUDE**

*Lord Christ, The Only Son of God*

*Johann Walther*

*The assembly is invited to stand.*

**THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

P: In the name of the Giver of all gifts, Creator of word and water, Incarnate God, and life-giving Holy Spirit:

In the waters of baptism, God's Holy Spirit comes to us and binds us to the body of Christ. Let us give thanks for this sacrament that always makes wider and deeper the communion we have with each other through Jesus our Savior.

*A brief silence.*

P: The earth, O God, is our home, built by your Word and your breath. Made alive by you, we come to know you and to know ourselves as your people.

All: **We give you thanks.**

P: We drink your cooling waters.

All: **We give you thanks.**

P: We see your rivers, lakes, and oceans lush with creatures large and small, food for the eye and for our nourishment.

All: **We give you thanks.**

P: We bathe and are refreshed in the waters you have made.

**All: We give you thanks.**

P: Now gathered at baptismal water, a sign of your unending mercy, we praise you for the gift of your Beloved in whose life, death, and resurrection, and ascension you embraced the world, calling us to proclaim the good news that welcomes all people.

**All: Make us one in you.**

P: We praise you for the gift of prayer that allows us to hear you speak in our midst and gives us words when we are speechless with joy.

**All: Make us one in you.**

P: We praise you for the waters that bring us to this day, to celebrate a new and renewed life in your name.

**All: Make us one in you.**

P: Come, Holy Spirit, into your people, through the holy Word, by waters blessed. To you be all honor, glory, and gratitude, through Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**All: Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN

*Crashing Waters at Creation*

**ELW 455**

## GREETING

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

**All: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

A: Let us pray.

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**All: Amen.**

*The assembly is invited to be seated.*

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Isaiah 42:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup> He will not cry out or lift up his voice  
or make it heard in the street;  
<sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

<sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be crushed  
until he has established justice in the earth,  
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it:

<sup>6</sup> I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;  
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
a light to the nations,

<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup> I am the Lord; that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to idols.

<sup>9</sup> See, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth,  
I tell you of them.

Word of God. Word of Life.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 29



<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,  
ascribe to the Lord glo- ry and strength.

<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the Lord the glory due God's name;**  
**worship the Lord in the beau- ty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup> **The voice of the Lord is a pow- erful voice;**  
**the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor. R**

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

<sup>6</sup> **the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf,**  
**and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup>The voice | of the Lord  
bursts forth in | lightning flashes.

<sup>8</sup>**The voice of the Lord | shakes the wilderness;**  
**the Lord shakes the wilder- | ness of Kadesh. R**

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the | forests bare.  
And in the temple of the Lord all are | crying, “Glory!”

<sup>10</sup>**The Lord sits enthroned a- | bove the flood;**  
**the Lord sits enthroned as king for- | evermore.**

<sup>11</sup>O Lord, give strength | to your people;  
give them, O Lord, the bless- | ings of peace. R

## SECOND READING: Acts 10:34-43

A reading from Acts.

<sup>34</sup>Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup>but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup>That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup>but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup>All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly is invited to stand for the reading of the Gospel.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

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

## GOSPEL: Matthew 3:13-17

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup>Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup>But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. <sup>16</sup>And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

**SERMON**

**Pr. Peg Otte**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

### Down Galilee's Slow Roadways



1 Down Gal - i - lee's slow road - ways a strang - er trav - eled on  
2 A - ris - ing from the riv - er he saw the heav - ens torn;  
3 We too have found a road - way; it led us to this place.



from Naz - a - reth to Jor - dan to be bap - tized by John.  
it seemed the sky so o - pen re - vealed the Spir - it's form.  
We all have had to trav - el in search of hope and grace.



He went down to the wa - ters like sol - dier, scribe, and slave,  
The ho - ly dove de - scend - ed a - mid a glo - rious voice:  
But now be - side this wa - ter a - gain a voice is heard.



but there with - in the riv - er the sign was birth and grave.  
“You are my own be - lov - ed, my child, my heart, my choice.”  
“You are my own, my cho - sen, be - lov - ed of your Lord.”

## APOSTLES' CREED

P: We confess our faith with Christians throughout the world:

**All:** I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there 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 life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

PM: 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.

*A brief silence.*

PM: Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

A: Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs. Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

PM: Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

A: Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill, especially those on our prayer list and those we pray for either silently or aloud (*pause*). Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

PM: Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

A: Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God,

**All:** receive our prayer.

PM: 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.

**All:** Amen.

## PEACE

PM: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: **And also with you.**

*The assembly is invited to be seated.*

## MEAL

### THE OFFERING

*An offering is gathered and the Table is set.*

### MUSICAL OFFERING

*Deep River*

**Spiritual, arr. Kurt Westerberg**

Libby Harrison, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano

*Please stand as you are able.*

### OFFERING PRAYER

A: 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.

All: **Amen**

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P: 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. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. 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 *Great Thanksgiving*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### EUCARISTIC PRAYER

P: God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity. The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire. In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

All: **Amen.**

P: Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

All: Amen.

P: Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

All: Amen.

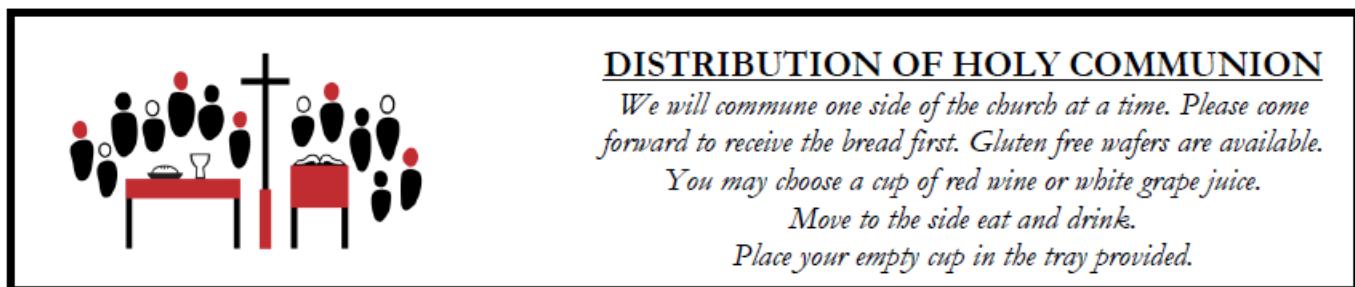
## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Together as one body, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNE

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



*All are welcome at Christ's Table. We believe Jesus is the host and the gifts of God are for everyone. Children will be offered communion unless otherwise indicated by parents. The wine is red and grape juice is white.*

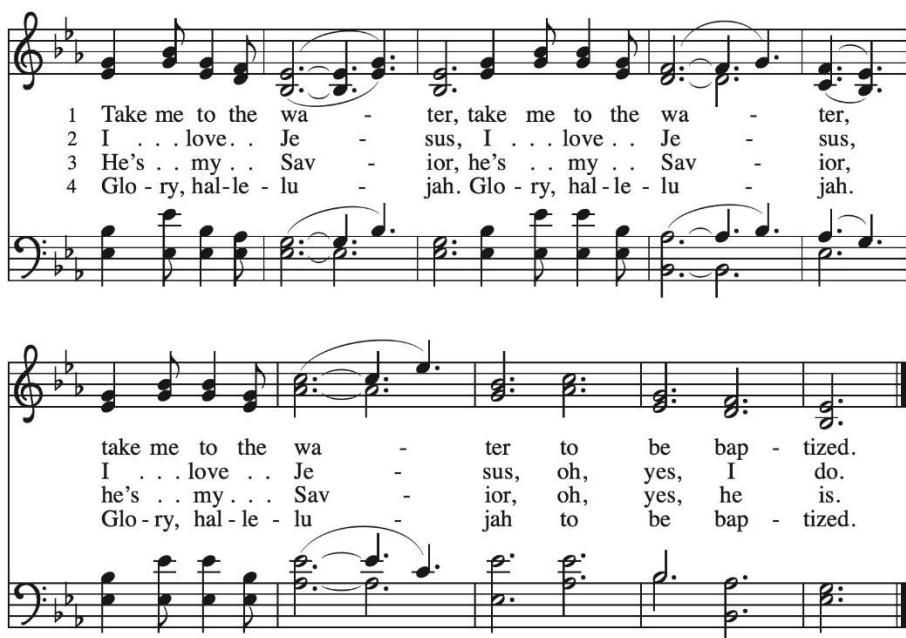
*Please be seated.*

## LAMB OF GOD

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 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

### Take Me to the Water



1 Take me to the wa - ter, take me to the wa - ter,  
2 I . . . love . . Je - sus, I . . . love . . Je - sus,  
3 He's . . my . . Sav - ior, he's . . my . . Sav - ior,  
4 Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah.

take me to the wa - ter to be bap - tized.  
I . . . love . . Je - sus, oh, yes, I do.  
he's . . my . . Sav - ior, oh, yes, he is.  
Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah to be bap - tized.

*Please stand as you are able.*

## TABLE BLESSING

P: Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into your heart, your mind, and your body to heal your wounds and, through your healing to all the earth. In Jesus' name,

All: Amen.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: 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.

All: Amen.

*SENDING*

*Please be seated for the announcements.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The assembly is invited to stand.*

## SENDING BLESSING

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

All: Amen.

## SENDING HYMN

*Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters*

**ELW 445**

## DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

All: Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*

Dietrich Buxtehude

## THANK YOU

To our musicians: Libby Harrison, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano.  
To Diane Mues for hosting coffee fellowship.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

For Joan Ehrenberg, suffering from a broken wrist and bruising.  
For Sue Murphy, as she undergoes chemotherapy for breast cancer.  
For Jan Rock, as she recovers from stenoses.



To donate via Zelle, aim your device's camera at the code on the left, click on the link and follow the instructions. Or you can go to your bank's website, go to Zelle payments and look for "office@stpaulevanston.org."



## WELCOME BACK PASTOR PEG OTTE

We are thrilled to welcome back our good friend, Pr. Peg Otte, as our Pastoral Fellow for the Epiphany season (Jan. 4 – Feb. 15). We've been blessed to have Pr. Peg's leadership many times over the years – as our Pastoral Fellow in each of 2023, 2024 and 2025, and prior to that, as our interim pastor during 2019 after Pr. Tim McKenzie moved to North Carolina. Pr. Peg and her husband Randy are long-time Evanston residents who raised their three now-adult children here. Pr. Peg previously served at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Prospect Heights and St. John's Lutheran Church in Wilmette, has served as an interim minister in this synod, and for many winters, served at Shepherd by the Sea, a joint Episcopal/Lutheran congregation in Gualala, California. She is delighted to return to St. Paul's this year for the beloved season of Epiphany.