

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2026

Second Sunday of Epiphany

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

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.

*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

Hold On

Spiritual
arr. Kurt Westerberg

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

Light Shone In Darkness

ELW 307

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.

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.

All: Amen.

The assembly is invited to be seated.

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 49: 1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ 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.”

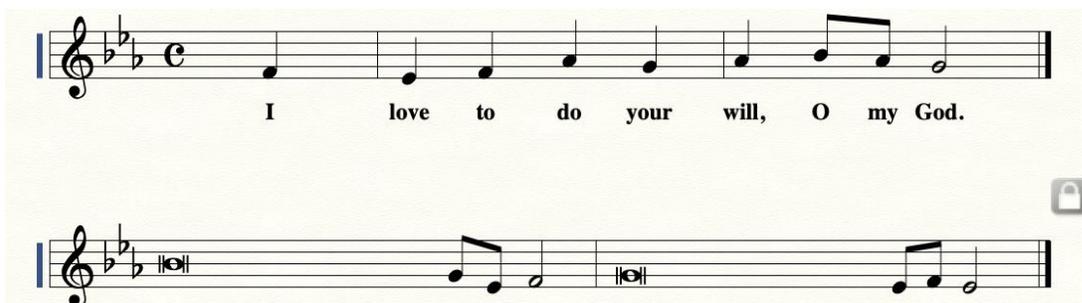
⁵ And now the Lord says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the Lord,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says,
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes 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.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 40:1-11



¹ I waited patiently up- | on the LORD,
who stooped to me and | heard my cry.
² **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.**
³ 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.

4 Happy are they who trust | in the LORD!

They do not turn to enemies or to those who | follow lies. R

5 Great are the wonders you have done, O LORD my God! In your plans for us, none can be com- | pared with you!

Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! But they are more than | I can count.

6 Sacrifice and offering you do | not desire;

you have opened my ears: burnt-offering and sin-offering you have | not required. R

7 And so I said, “Here I | am; I come.

In the scroll of the book it is writ- | ten of me:

8 ‘I love to do your will, | O my God;

your law is | deep within me.’ ”

9 I proclaimed righteousness in the | great assembly;

I have not restrained my lips, O | LORD, you know.

10 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.

11 You are the LORD; do not withhold your compas- | sion from me;

may your steadfast love and your truth continually | keep me safe. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

A reading from First Corinthians.

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 kind **6** just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you **7** 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.

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: John 1:29-42

The Holy Gospel according to John.

All: 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.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pr. Peg Otte

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Arise, Your Light Has Come!

ELW 314

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: Gracious God, gather the church into one great fellowship. Equip your people to work together for justice and peace, following the example of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, whose birth we remember this week. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Creating God, sustain the web of life on this planet. Protect wild places, endangered species, and vulnerable habitats. Come to the aid of those affected by natural disasters. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

PM: Just God, you desire respect and equality for everyone. Raise up prophets who speak truth to the nations. Embolden leaders and those in authority to advocate for people in need. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Healing God, you lift up those who are bowed down by trouble, oppression, or illness, especially those on our prayer list and those we pray for either silently or aloud (*pause*). Bring an end to social injustice and inequities of every kind, so that all people may have abundant life. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

PM: Abiding God, you are present with this congregation. Keep us mindful of our mission and guide our ministries in this community. Kindle in us a desire to help one another. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Faithful God, you promise to be with us always. We remember with gratitude the faithful departed who now rest in you. Strengthen us to the end, that we may see you face to face. 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.

Liana German, 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.

EUCCHARISTIC 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.



DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We will commune one side of the church at a time. Please come forward to receive the bread first. Gluten free wafers are available.

You may choose a cup of red wine or white grape juice.

Move to the side eat and drink.

Place your empty cup in the tray provided.

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
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

We Shall Overcome

1. We shall overcome
2. We'll walk hand in hand
3. We shall live in peace
4. We shall all be free

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

We Are Marching In The Light

ELW 866

1. We are marching
2. We are praying
3. We are singing

DISMISSAL

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light

Wayne Wold

THANK YOU

To our musicians: Liana German, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano.
To Linda Nagatani 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.
For Mary Williamson, recovering from a fall.



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."



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.