February 1, 2026 ☩
RIC Sunday

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!
"God's Work. Our Hands. To serve ALL people."

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold.**

P: Indicates the Presider. AM: Indicates the Assisting Minister.

We Gather

Prelude – "Jésus, je voudraise te chanter" (Les Petites Soeurs) setting by Kristina Rizzotto

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** - no. 726 "Light Dawns on a Weary World"

***Confession and Forgiveness**

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.
Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in ☩ Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.
Amen.

*__Apostolic Greeting__ P: 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 -__ page 3, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Hymn of Praise__ – page 4, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Prayer of the Day__

P: 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**

Scripture Acclamation - "Come and See"

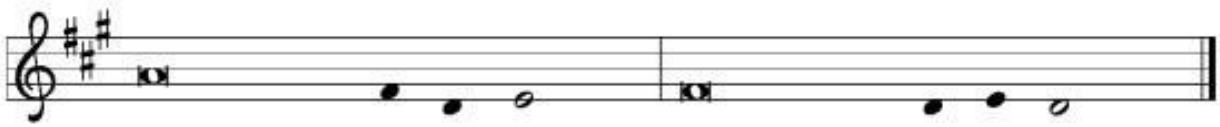
We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: Micah 6: 1-8

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.**



Psalm 15- *The psalm will be sung responsively by whole verse.*

1 LORD, who may dwell in your | tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your | holy hill?
2 **Those who lead a blameless life and do | what is right,**
who speak the truth | from their heart;
3 they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil | to their friends;
they do not cast discredit up- | on a neighbor.
4 **In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who | fear the LORD.**
They have sworn upon their health and do not take | back their word.
5 They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes a- | gainst the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown.

Second 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.**

***Gospel Acclamation** – page 7, *Now the Feast and Celebration* "Alleluia"

***Gospel:** Matthew 5: 1-12

The Gospel of 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 – Rev. Oby Ballinger

***Hymn** – ACS 977 *see last page* "Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table"

***The Apostles' Creed** –
Together let us profess our faith.

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

AM: 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.**

*__Sign of Peace__ P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.** Please offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.

Offering – For electronic giving please scan the QR on announcement page and ***Thank you!***

Offering music - "Do Justice" Olson and Clark

*__Offertory hymn__– page 9, *Now the Feast and Celebration* "As the Grains of Wheat"

*__Offering Prayer__ AM: 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.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

*__Great Thanksgiving and Preface__ - *(sung)* page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Holy, Holy, Holy__ – page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Words of Institution__

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

Distribution of Communion - *we will be serving communion at the rail.*
Lamb of God – page 13, *Now the Feast and Celebration*
Hymn – ACS 1062 *see back page* "Build a Longer Table"
Hymn – no. 725 "When the Poor Ones"

Prayer After Communion

P: 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.**

We Go in Peace

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** – no. 677 "This Little Light of Mine"

***Blessing & Dismissal**

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. **Amen.**

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

***Postlude** - "I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing" arr. Chuck Marohnic

In Worship Today
Pastor: Chris Culuris
Preacher: Oby Ballinger
Organist: Brenda Handel-Johnson
Assisting Minister: Larry Kiewel
Director of Choirs:
Sarah Chambers

Usher: Charlotte Loken, Aaven Twaddle
Communion Preparer: Kristy Larson
Communion Servers: Tom Thorkleson
Acolytes: Olive Chambers, Ambriela Linsmeier

Tech: Shanon Nowell, Luke Chambers
Bread Baker: Lynn Kidder

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Gretchen Bray, Lenore Schnobrich, Gloria Kane, Harvey Kane, Lisa Handel-Dalvand, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Ruth Edberg, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Chaplain Ben Hilding, Mary Ann Scharf, David Ribar, Nate Tuener (family friend of Bob and Rhoda Stenson), Bruce Gray, and Sandy Grochow.

FLC Refrigerator Page

Worship, Education and Service:

- **Thank you** to Pastor Oby Ballinger for preaching today on this 18th Year of FLC being an RIC Congregation. Following worship please join us for Welcome Waffles. See the Acknowledgments page for more info on Pastor Ballinger.
- **JEREMIAH, PROPHET OF HOPE?**--After disaster came upon the people of Israel, God's Word through Jeremiah changed to one of hope, promise–even grace! Pastor Ted Kunze will share that hopeful message in the conclusion of his study of Jeremiah this Wednesday, February 4th, at 6:15 in the Pioneer Parlor.
- **Pontius Pilate's Passion**: This Lenten season, join Annalise Rivas for an exploration of the Passion story like you've never seen it before. Wednesday evenings from 6:45-7:30pm in the Pioneer Parlor, February 11 - April 8. Three different options available: 1) view the videos on Wednesday nights and discuss 2) preview the full series each week in preparation for Wednesday discussion 3) read the full novel *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov (copies available). Contact Annalise for more information.
- Please join us for worship on Feb. 15th. We will have a special "**Thanksgiving at the Retirement of a Debt**" during worship to celebrate paying off our mortgage!

Events at FLC and around the area:

- As our Building Mortgage is now paid, **please do not** use your building envelopes anymore. If any are received, they will be deposited into the Capital Improvement Fund.
- **Thank You** to the anonymous couple who donated $600,000 to help us pay off our building mortgage! Your generosity inspired many others and is very appreciated!
- **Meal Volunteers Needed:** Please consider being a meal server or clean-up crew for our Wednesday meals in February. Sign up in the narthex or at bit.ly/flcmeals1-2

Please use the QR code below for electronic giving and thank you!

QR offering code

Acknowledgments

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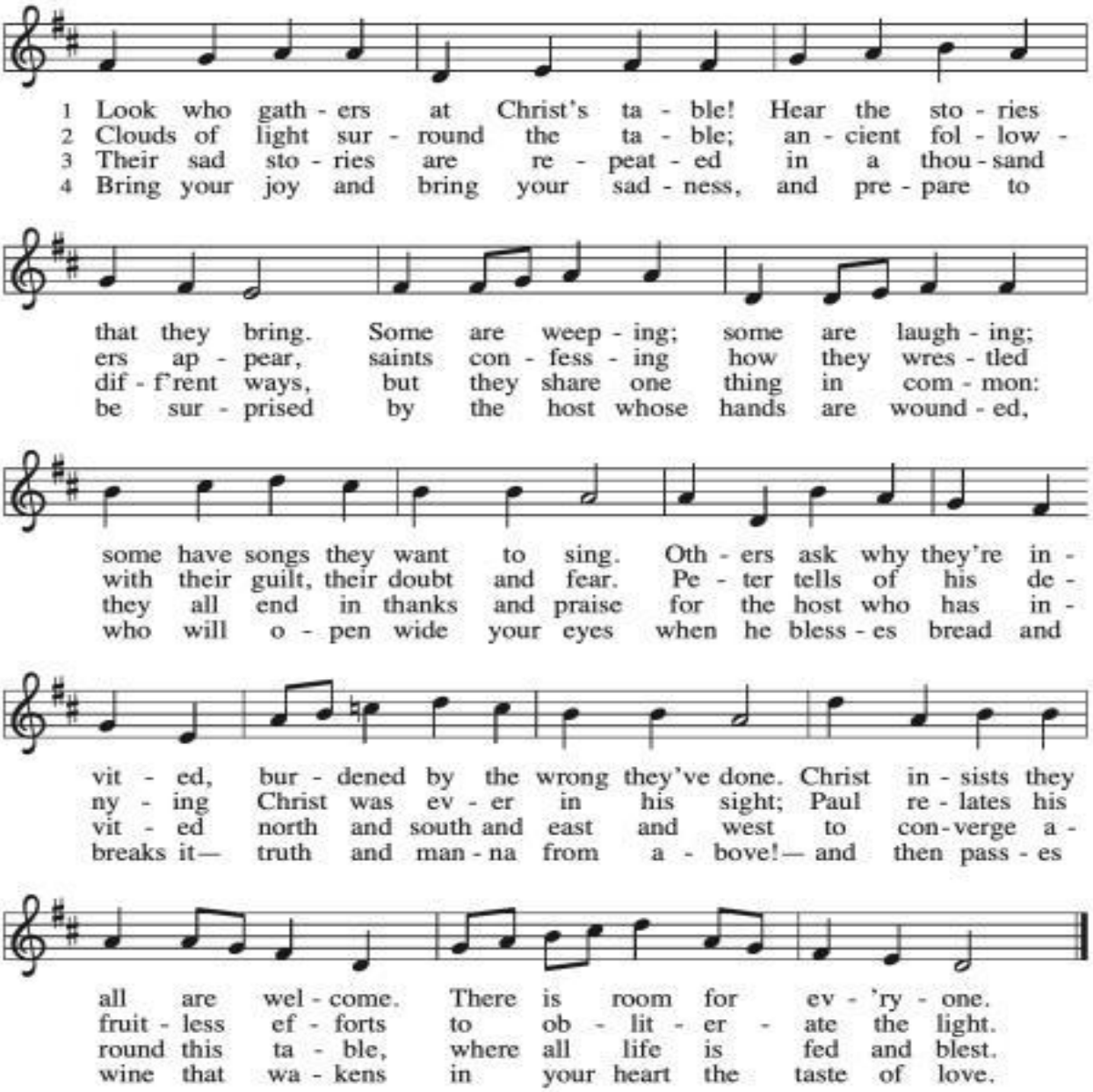
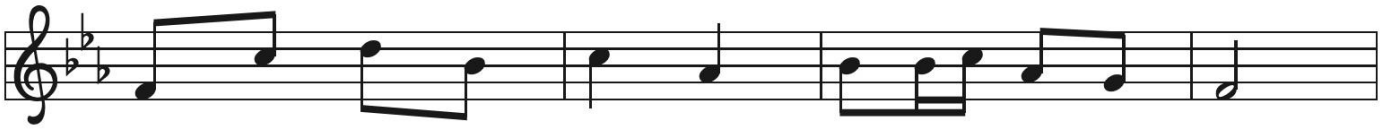
Today we Celebrate our 18th year as a Reconciling in Christ congregation
Sunday, February 1st
Pastor Oby Ballinger preaching
Welcome Waffles following Worship

Rev. Oby Ballinger grew up on a family farm near Rochester and went to Concordia College in Moorhead, graduated from Yale Divinity School, then served several Twin Cities congregations in the United Church of Christ. Oby organized UCC communities statewide to support marriage equality in 2012 as part of the Minnesotans United for All Families campaign, and has also been an organizer for racial, social, and economic justice. In January 2025, Oby left parish ministry after fifteen years to launch Prism Organizing Network, a statewide community organizing initiative focused on LGBTQ safety, dignity, and liberation. Prism follows a model of multiracial, multifaith organizing and develops leaders working for LGBTQ equality across the state. Through Prism, Oby has led almost twenty LGBTQ listening sessions throughout the state, and in 2026 Prism is starting to organize to address community needs that surfaced from those conversations. Oby lives in Saint Paul with his husband Javen Swanson, their cat Amos, and their dog Ruthie.

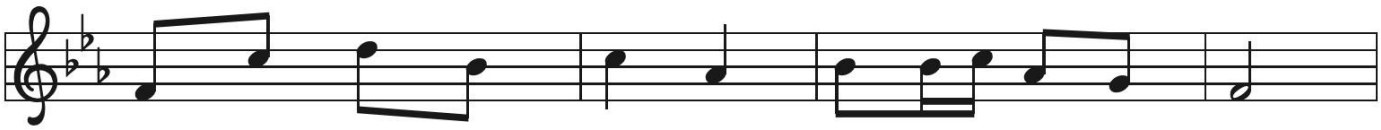
Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table



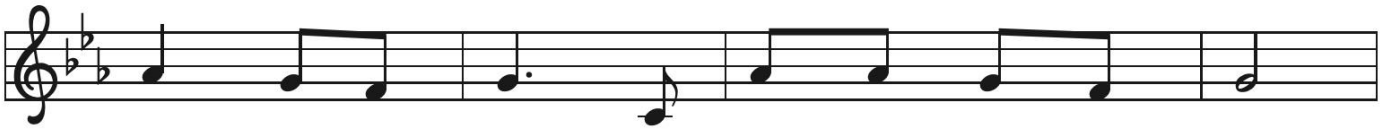
Build a Longer Table



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.

Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
Christ tears down our fenc - es: all are wel - come here.
None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.