January 18, 2026 ☩
Second Sunday After Epiphany

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 –

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** - A.C.S. 914 see last page "Jesus, the Light of the 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, 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.**

Scripture Acclamation - "Come and See"

We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

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. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 40:1-11 - *The psalm will be spoken responsively by whole verse.*

1 I waited patiently upon 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.
5 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.
6 **Sacrifice and offering you do not desire;**
you have opened my ears: burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required.
7 And so I said, "Here I am; I come.
In the scroll of the book it is written 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 compassion from me;
may your steadfast love and your truth continually keep me safe.

Second 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 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. **Thanks be to God.**

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

***Gospel:** John 1: 29-42

The Gospel of John, the 1st Chapter. **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.**

Sermon Pastor Chris Culuris

***Hymn** – ACS 954 see last page "You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd"

***Holy Baptism** – page 227, *ELW*

Hymn – no. 781 vs. 1,3 "Children of the Heavenly Father"

***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

*__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 continuously.*

Lamb of God – page 13, *Now the Feast and Celebration*
Hymn – no. 310 "Songs of Thankfulness and Praise"
Hymn – no. 696 "Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult"

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. 841 "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

***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** "

In Worship Today

Pastor: Chris Culuris
Organist: Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson
Assisting Minister: Mary Spear
Director of Choirs: Sarah Chambers

Usher: Tom Thorkelson
Communion Preparer: Kristy Larson
Communion Servers:

Tech: Rachel Ribar
Bread Baker: Nancy Thorkelson

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, Laurie Dietrich, 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:

- ? will be serving **fellowship** after worship today.
- **Can you help** with a Wednesday night meal in January and February? We need meals, servers, and clean-up crew. Sign up in the narthex bit.ly/flcmeals12
- **Today we welcome** Aurora Grace Kuss, Lyla Lou Schave, and Kai Philip Schave into the Lord's family through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Their parents are Mallory Smith, Nicholas Kuss and Philip Schave. Their sponsors are Jolene Smith, Kathy and Vince Guertin, Farrah Schave and Alison Salazar.
- **JEREMIAH: PROPHET OF DOOM**–Jeremiah warned his people of disaster to come, if they did not repent. Did anyone listen? This Wednesday at 6:45 in the Pioneer Parlor, Pastor Ted Kunze will continue the study of Jeremiah with an answer to that question! All are welcome. Bring your Bible, or use one of ours.
- **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 4- 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.
- **Summer Service trip** opportunity - All students in grades 8-12 are invited to join the FLC/Trinity group that will be heading to Milwaukee for a service trip in June. See Deacon Brenda for more info, deadline to register is January 30.

Events at FLC and around the area:

The office will be closed tomorrow – January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King day.

- 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.
- **Annual Meeting – next Sunday, Jan. 25**. We'll discuss and vote on our Annual Budget, review reports from our leaders and committees, revisit our strategic plan, and vote for our leaders.
- **LIGHTS FOR EPIPHANY** light bulb drive. The Green committee requests you bring new, energy-efficient light bulbs, in their original packaging, to church for them to deliver to the St. Peter Area Food Shelf for their clients. On Sundays in January, please find baskets marked for light bulb contributions in the Gathering Space. Thank you!
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Meal Volunteers Needed: Please consider being a meal server or clean up crew for our

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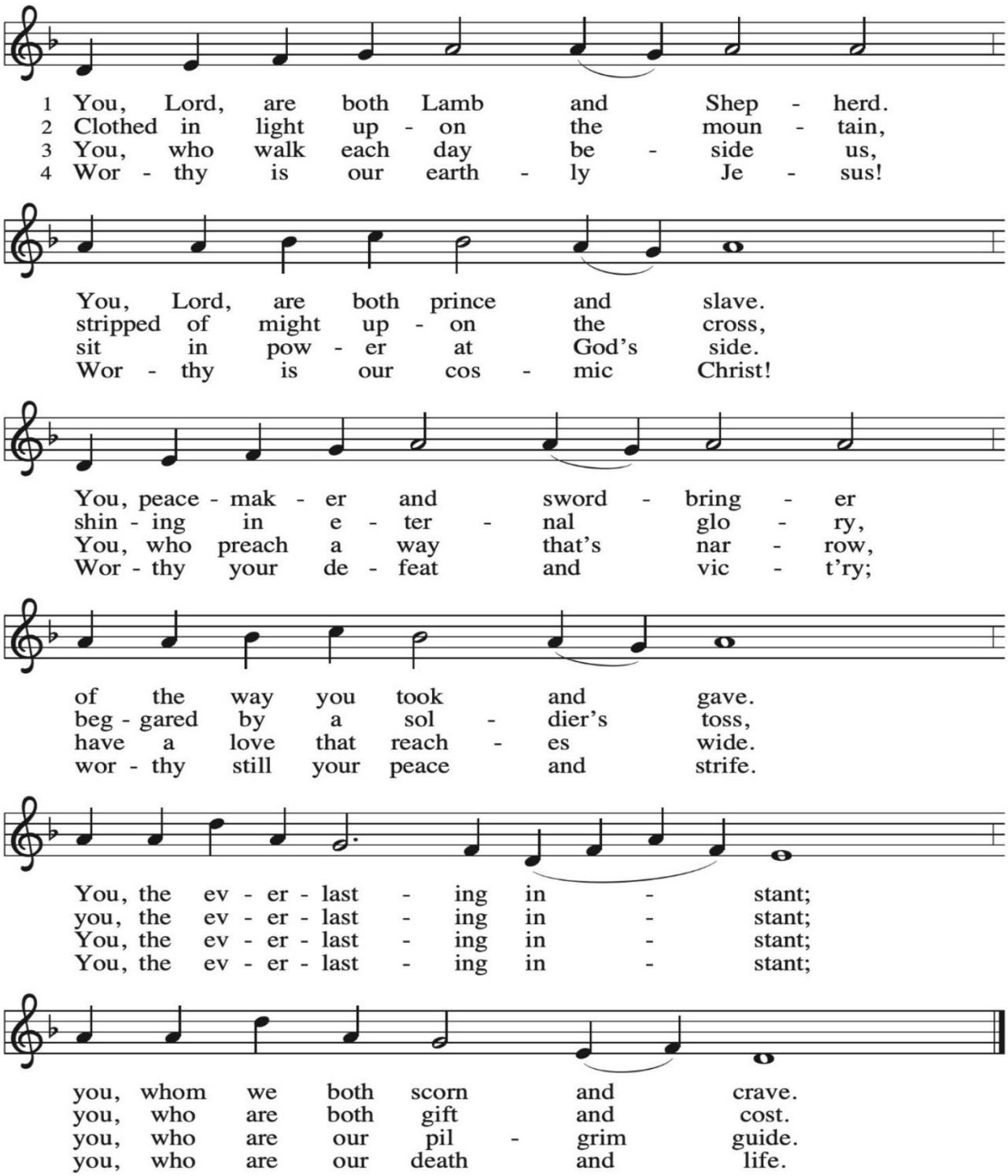
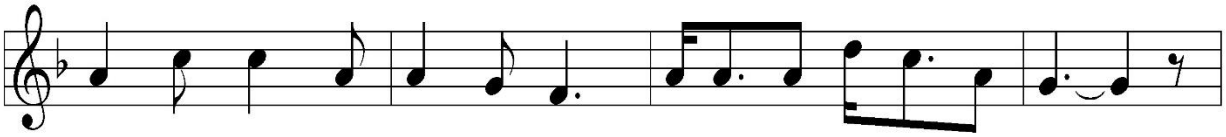
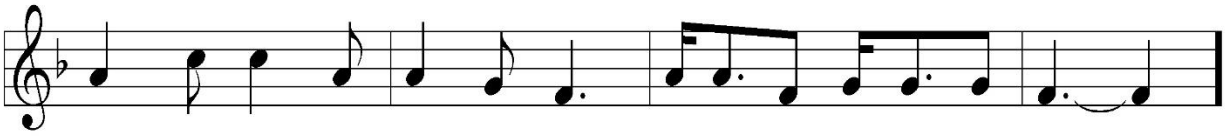
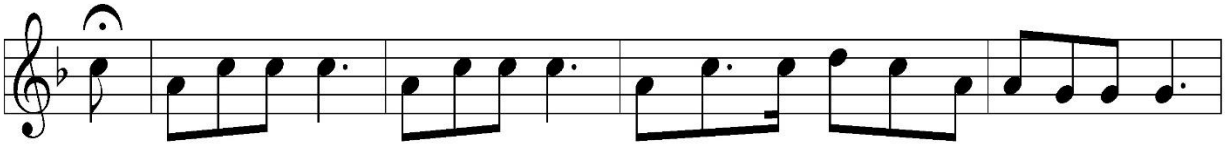
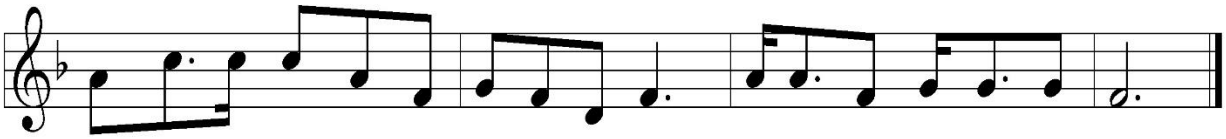
Celebrate our 18th year as a
Reconciling in Christ congregation
Sunday, February 1st
Pastor Oby Ballinger preaching
Welcome Waffles following Worship

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.

You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd

Jesus, the Light of the World

1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
2 Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
3 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
4 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Je - sus, the Light of the world;

"Glo - ry to the new - born King," Je - sus, the Light of the world.
join the tri - umph of the skies; Je - sus, the Light of the world.
Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord! Je - sus, the Light of the world.
hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness! Je - sus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright.

Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788; addl. text "J.V.C."; adapt. George Elderkin
Music: JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, traditional; arr. George Elderkin