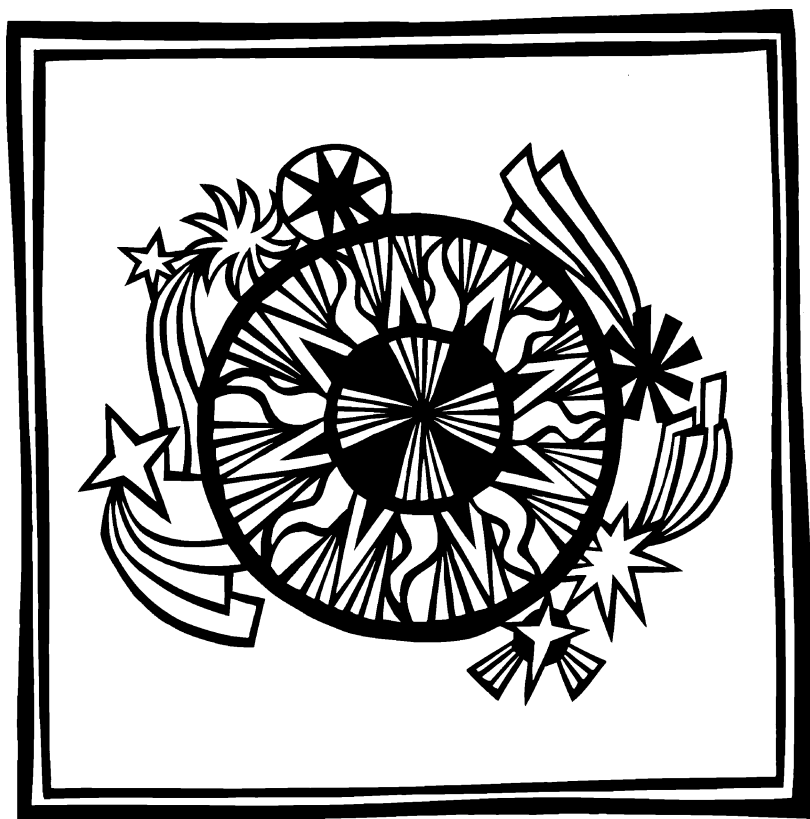


St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Crookston, MN

January 4th, 2026

2nd Sunday of Christmas



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

January 4th, 2026

2nd Sunday of Christmas

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WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/SHARING THE PEACE

OPENING WORDS/CALL TO WORSHIP

Grace to you and peace in this new year.

We will bless God who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

In Christ we have obtained an inheritance.

We have been redeemed as God's own people. Praise be to God!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sins, for God is gracious and always ready to forgive. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of love and compassion, you have come into the world and yet we have not recognized you.

Forgive our lack of insight and open our eyes to see you here and now, that we may receive your grace through Jesus our Christ. Amen.

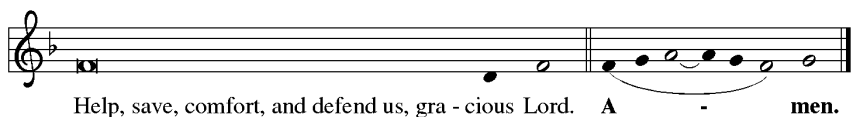
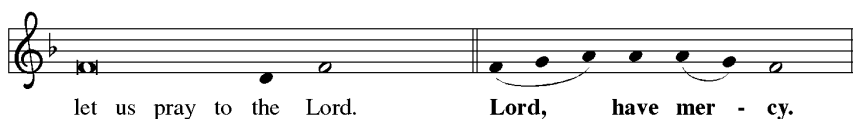
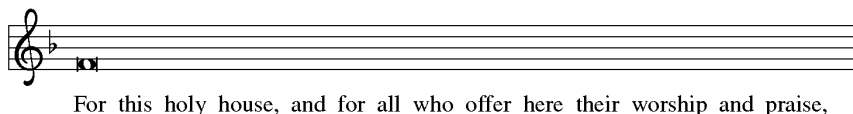
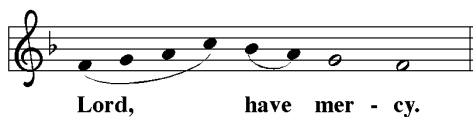
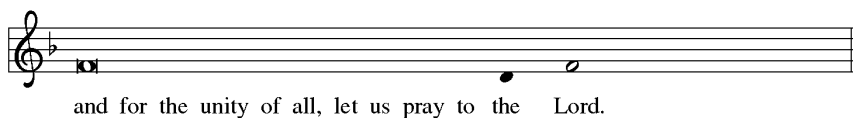
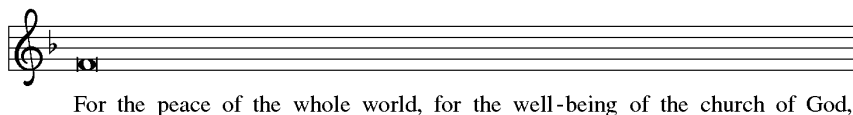
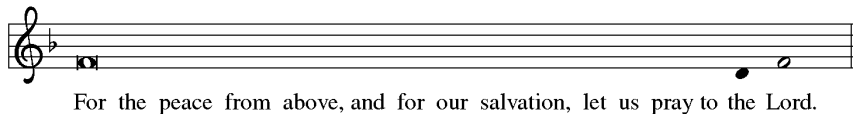
Friends, hear the good news of your salvation: God freely bestows God's grace on us through Jesus Christ. In Christ we receive redemption and forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of the grace that God lavishes on us. So be reconciled to God and one another. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

HYMN: #268 From Heaven Above (vs. 1, 2, 3, 6)

GREETING (p. 203)

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 (p. 138)



CANTICLE OF PRAISE (p. 140)



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was
 slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.
Final refrain
 This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Giving God, you have adopted us as your children, sisters and brothers of your beloved, Jesus Christ. Empower us to be holy and blameless witnesses to your glorious reign of peace and love now come into this world. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

First Reading (alternate): Sirach 24:1-12 (CEB)

The figure of Wisdom played a major role in early discussions of Christology. Wisdom is the divine word, coming from the mouth of God, and ruling over all of creation. Wisdom, created at the beginning of time, made her dwelling place in Jerusalem among God's people.

¹ Wisdom will praise herself,
 and she will boast in the midst of her people.

² In the assembly of the Most High,
 she will open her mouth,
 and in the presence of
 his heavenly forces, she will boast:

³ “I came forth from the mouth
 of the Most High,
 and I covered the earth like a mist.

- ⁴ I lived in the heights,
and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.
- ⁵ I alone encircled the vault of heaven
and walked in the depths of abysses.
- ⁶ In the waves of the sea and in every land,
and among every people and nation,
I led the way.
- ⁷ I sought a resting place
among all of these.
In whose allotted territory
should I make my home?
- ⁸ “Then the creator of all things
gave me a command;
the one who created me pitched my tent
and said, ‘Make your dwelling in Jacob,
and let Israel receive your inheritance.’
- ⁹ Before the ages, from the beginning,
he created me,
and till eternity I will never fail.
- ¹⁰ I ministered before him in the holy tent,
and so I was established in Zion.
- ¹¹ In the same way, he made
the dearly loved city my resting place
and established my authority
in Jerusalem.
- ¹² I took root in a glorified people;
among the people the Lord chose
for his inheritance.

Psalms (alternate): Wisdom 10:15-21

- ¹⁵ A holy people and blameless race;
wisdom delivered from a nation of oppressors.
- ¹⁶ **She entered the soul of a servant of the Lord,
and withstood dread kings with wonders and signs.**
- ¹⁷ She gave to holy people the reward of their labors;

she guided them along a marvelous way,
**and became a shelter to them by day,
and a starry flame through the night.**

¹⁸ She brought them over the Red Sea,
and led them through deep waters;

¹⁹ **but she drowned their enemies,
and cast them up from the depth of the sea.**

²⁰ Therefore the righteous plundered the ungodly;
they sang hymns, O Lord, to your holy name, and praised
with one accord your defending hand;

²¹ **for wisdom opened the mouths of those who were mute,
and made the tongues of infants speak clearly.**

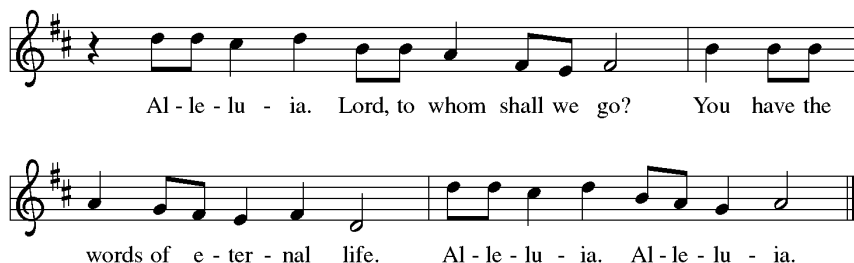
Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14 (CEB)

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³ Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. ⁴ God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. ⁵ God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan ⁶ and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. ⁷ We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, ⁸ which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. ⁹ God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. ¹⁰ This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. ¹¹ We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. ¹² We are called

to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ. ¹³ You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ. ¹⁴ The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Before: The holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: John 1:1-18 (CEB)

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

¹ In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

² The Word was with God in the beginning.

³ Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

What came into being

⁴ through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

⁶ A man named John was sent from God. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. ⁸ He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light.

⁹ The true light that shines on all people
was coming into the world.

¹⁰ The light was in the world,
and the world came into being through the light,
but the world didn't recognize the light.

¹¹ The light came to his own people,
and his own people didn't welcome him.

¹² But those who did welcome him,
those who believed in his name,
he authorized to become God's children,

¹³ born not from blood
nor from human desire or passion,
but born from God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh
and made his home among us.

We have seen his glory,
glory like that of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testified about him, crying out, "This is the one of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is greater than me because he existed before me.'"

¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace;

¹⁷ as the Law was given through Moses,
so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God.

God the only Son,
who is at the Father's side,
has made God known.

After: The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON "Wisdom's Home"

HYMN: #272 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

APOSTLES' CREED (p. 105)

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

Each petition concludes: O God, who is with us; **Hear our prayer.**

OFFERING

From God's generous mercy we have all received grace upon grace. Therefore let us give in gratitude for our lives and our inheritance as part of the family of Christ. **Amen.**

Offering Song: #186 Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Prayer: Gathering God, you have brought us together from many backgrounds and conditions to be this church together. Therefore we praise you with songs, shouts, and these offerings and gifts. Multiply them for your service, that they might become your presence in the world. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING / HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (p. 144)

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.

Holy are you, God of Wisdom, for before the ages you brought forth your Word, and through that Word all things came into being. Like

mist covering the earth, your Wisdom went forth from your mouth and led the way among every people and nation.

You commanded your Wisdom to pitch her tent among your chosen people, guiding them along a marvelous way, a shelter by day and a starry flame through the night. She brought them through deep waters and opened the mouths of the mute.

Before the creation of the world, you chose us in Christ to be your adopted children. When the fullness of time had come, the true light came into the world—the Word through whom all things were made, the life that was the light for all people.

Though the world did not recognize him, to all who received him you gave power to become your children, born from God. And so we join our voices with Wisdom herself, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, singing your unending praise:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION/EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

(p. 145)

...Great is the mystery of faith.

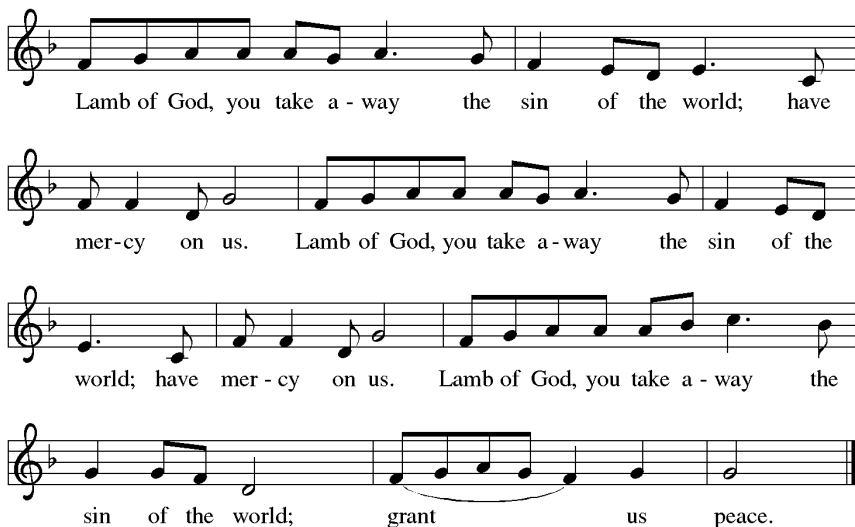
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (p. 145)

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 (p. 146)

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy! Let us sing:



COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Each group at the altar rail will be dismissed with a blessing. Please give a family Communion card to an usher. Please follow the guidance of the ushers as you come forward to receive the Lord's Supper.

Distribution Hymns:

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Now the God who turns our mourning into joy comfort you with the presence of the Holy Spirit and lead you forth into the incarnation of your own lives. **Amen.**

HYMN: #301 Bright and Glorious is the Sky

CHARGE

Go in peace. Share the good news of Jesus birth. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNDAY BULLETIN

St. Paul's Lutheran, Crookston, MN

January 4, 2026

Second Sunday of Christmas

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

PRAYER LIST

For those who need healing in body, mind, or spirit:

Julie Love	Eunice Sondrol	Judy Luettjohann
Darleen Jackson	Katie Bakken	Julian Bertils
Marlo Moren	Evie Gunderson	Nancy Eia
Mike Ophus	Loiland family	Dale Cameron
Corbin Caillier	Dale Knotek	Nash Erdman
Mark Peterson	Lenny Devos	Glorrayne Casmey
Lucile Torkelson	Delores Sandager	Carol Chaffee
Kari L Trudeau	Stuart Hanson	Bev Montieth
Trevin Monahan		

For our missionaries: Steve & Kelly Solheim
City of Joy Rwanda

For our servicemen: Brandon Johnson D.J. Brace

Please keep them in your prayers this week.

If you have prayer requests, please contact the church office at 218 281-3638 or our prayer chain coordinator, Marian Bakken: (h) 218-281-1584, (c) 218-275-3143, marianbakken@gmail.com.

MISSION

To bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people

1214 University Avenue – Crookston, Minnesota 56716

Website: stpaulscrookstonmn.com

facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn

Phone: 218-281-3638

Email: stpauls@midconetwork.com

Ministers

St. Paul's members

Council President

Anna Peterson

Pastor

Rev. Curt Peterson

Organist

Mary Ann Knotek

Webmaster

Anna Peterson

Treasurer

Betty Arvidson

Financial Secretary

Kathie Barnes

Custodian

Marilyn Flateland

Administrative Assistant

Tammy Frohlich

THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING TODAY!

Ushers

Dan Grunewald, Scott and Becky Kleven

Communion Server

Becky Cameron

Scripture Reader

Sandy Peterson

Acolyte

Vin Peterson

Altar Guild

Marilyn Flateland

Offering Counters

Dan Grunewald and Kathie Barnes

Livestream

Anna Peterson

Fellowship

WELCA

JANUARY WORSHIP TEAM

Thank you, Amazing January Worship Team, for giving of your time! Please sign up as soon as you are able!

Thank you so much. 😊

Dan and Stacey Grunewald

Barb and Doug Erdman

Grant and Gina Gunderson

Lacia Hanson

Scott and Julie Kleven

Judy Luettjohann

Kari and Tim Moe

John and Jan Vallager

SCRIPTURE READING FOR NEXT WEEK

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalms 29

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-17

Readings for January 11, 2026

Baptism of our Lord

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 9am- 2pm

Please leave a message after 2 pm on the answering machine/drop something in the mailbox (north side of building)/call ahead. Pastor Curt is usually in the building but may be out on other church business. Worship via Facebook: facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn

Sunday, January 4

**8:45 am
10:00 am
11:00 am**

Second Sunday of Christmas

**Adult Bible Study/NO SS
Worship and Communion
Fellowship**

Monday, January 5

8:30 am

LWR Quilting

Tuesday, January 6

7:00 pm

Epiphany of our Lord

AA

Wednesday, January 7

**7:00 pm
7:00 pm**

**Confirmation resumes
Choir practice**

Thursday, January 8

Friday, January 9

Church Office Closed

Pastor's Day Off

Sunday, January 11

**8:45 am

10:00 am
11:00 am**

Baptism of our Lord

**Sunday School resumes
Adult Bible Study
Worship
Fellowship**

WEEKLY FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our Response to God's Love

December 24th, 2025

Attendance:172

Our gifts towards Budget:

Sunday Envelopes	\$ 725.00
Loose Offering	\$ 163.00
Christmas	\$ 2465.00

Other (non-budget) Receipts:

Food Shelf	\$ 20.00
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Needed weekly towards 2025 Budget:

	\$ 4,959.61
Total received towards Budget	\$ 3,353.00
Total (non-budget) Receipts	\$ 20.00
Total Received	\$ 3,373.00

December 25th, 2025

Attendance:36

Our gifts towards Budget:

Loose Offering	\$ 118.00
Christmas	\$ 215.00

Other (non-budget) Receipts:

Food Shelf	\$ 20.00
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Needed weekly towards 2025 Budget:

	\$ 4,959.61
Total received towards Budget	\$ 333.00
Total Received	\$ 333.00

December 28th, 2025

Attendance: Blizzard/cancelled

Our gifts towards Budget:

Sunday Envelopes	\$ 1524.72
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Other (non-budget) Receipts:

Improvement Fund	\$ 10.00
Memorials	\$ 90.00

Needed weekly towards 2025 Budget:

	\$ 4,959.61
Total received towards Budget	\$ 1524.72
Total (non-budget) Receipts	\$ 100.00
Total Received	\$ 1,624.72

**The parsonage siding fund is \$24,598.63. Thank you very much
for blessing the church this Holiday season!**

TREASURER'S END OF NOVEMBER MONTHLY REPORT

The Treasure's end of November report was approved at the November Church Council Meeting. It was published in the November 30th Sunday Bulletin. If you would like to review the report, please refer to that bulletin or request a copy from the church office.

SPECIAL MESSAGES

SIGN UP FOR CAMP EMMAUS:

Early Bird Registration for Camp Emmaus begins December 1st!
The 2026 Camp Emmaus brochure is on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

HELP WANTED:

St. Paul's Church is seeking a **paid Substitute Secretary** to fill in as needed. Basic computer skills and familiarity with **Windows programs** required. No experience with church bulletins? **No problem – we will teach you?** If you are organized, friendly, and willing to learn, we would love to have you on our team. For more information or to apply, contact the Church office.

Candace Sam at 217-280-2644 to help make a difference!

St. Paul's WOMEN'S BOOK READ:

Our Book Read group will meet on Sunday, January 18th from 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Our January book read is - *"The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride"* by Joe Siple . Dana Johnson will lead our discussion, and Barb Erdman will host. We extend a warm welcome to all who may be interested. Join us for lively discussions and Christian fellowship!

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVING: Alzheimer Caregiving, Parts 2 to 5, will be presented by Alicia Berhow from Tri-Valley, on Tuesdays, January 6, 13, 20, 27 at 10:00 am, at the Golden Link.

CROOKSTON CARE AND SHARE: Donation and New Hope Food Shelf Hours:

The Donation Room and New Hope Food Shelf are open every Monday and Wednesday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., and every Friday from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. For more information or to donate, call **218-277-0000**.

Care and Share has a variety of **opportunities, to love and serve the poor and the homeless**, either as individuals and/or as group: Help with odd and ends type jobs, such as changing light bulbs, painting projects, providing a weekend meal while their cook is off, and more! Please contact Candace Sam at 217-280-2644 to help make a difference!

COMING IN 2026:

Mark Your Calendars

As we look ahead to the new year, we invite you to mark these important dates in your calendars:

January

- **Wednesday, January 8:** Confirmation classes resume
- **Sunday, January 11:** Sunday school resumes

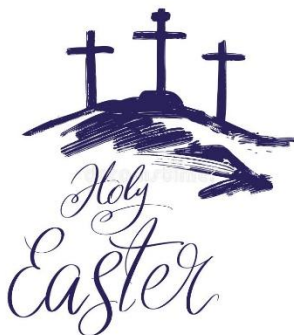
February

- **Sunday, February 8:** Annual Meeting—receive the annual report and vote on new church council members
- **Wednesday, February 18:** Ash Wednesday

Lenten Season Join us on Wednesdays in Lent for suppers and a transformative Lenten journey with our theme **"Rebuilding: A Lenten Journey of Repentance and Renewal,"** as we explore powerful themes from Ezra and Nehemiah.

Holy Week & Easter

- **Sunday, March 29:**
Palm/Passion Sunday
- **Thursday, April 2:**
Maundy Thursday
- **Friday, April 3:** Good Friday



- **Sunday, April 5:** Easter

May

- **Sunday, May 3:** Confirmation—celebrating our 9th grade confirmands

We look forward to worshiping, learning, and growing together in the year ahead!

EPIPHANY: Celebrated this coming Wednesday, January 6, 2026. The Wise Men, far from Bethlehem, traveled a long distance to find the Holy child spoken of by the Prophets.

While "epiphany" comes from Greek (meaning manifestation/appearance), its Hebrew equivalent for a sudden realization is derived from the root for "reveal." The word is often used for God's manifestation or a deep insight, like God appearing to prophets, or a personal "aha!" moment. In Jewish tradition, it relates to divine revelation, while in Christian context it's the revelation of Christ to the world (Magi visit).



Hebrew Meanings

- The most direct translation for a personal epiphany or a divine manifestation means "revealing" or "unveiling."
- Literally, "appearance of God," used for theophany (God appearing) in the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament).

Contextual Meanings

Relates to the revelation of God's presence or will, like how prophets experienced it, or a profound spiritual insight.

Christian Context (Epiphany):

The feast day (Jan 6) commemorates the manifestation of Jesus to the Gentiles (non-Jews) via the Magi, symbolizing the revelation of Christ to all nations, not just Israel.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER:

Theological Reflection

In times of struggle people often say that God has a plan. This sentiment can point to a project manager sort of God who moves things around according to a detailed timeline. Ephesians tells us that God does indeed have a plan, and the plan is to gather everything up into God. It is a plan for the reconciliation of the whole creation. This is less about details and more about God drawing us toward this final state of grace and life for all. In this plan, God does not manage our lives but joins us in our journey through suffering and death into new life.

How have you received "grace upon grace" in your life through Jesus Christ? Can you think of times when God has turned your mourning into joy, your sorrow into gladness? Does the incarnation of Christ call us to "make flesh" the love of God for others?

Household Prayer: Morning

God who gives birth to the new heaven and the new earth, midwife in me your love made flesh for others as I live in your world today. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening Holy One, as I review my day and all I have done or not done-lavish me once again in your grace, that I may rest in the inheritance of being one of your children, trusting this evening in the renewing power of your love. Amen.

The Epiphany continues! All over the world, Christians are born every day. Praise God that He has revealed His truth, Word, and Wisdom to US! Let us be obedient to His call and do the same, in word and in deed.

