

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Crookston, MN

February 1st, 2026 4th Sunday after Epiphany



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

February 1st, 2026

4th Sunday after Epiphany

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WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/SHARING THE PEACE

OPENING WORDS/CALL TO WORSHIP

What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God?

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sins, for the Holy One delights in blessing those who seek to walk with God. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God, we have not done what is blameless and right, nor spoken truth from the heart with love. We do not keep your word, and when we participate in gossip, our words and deeds cause pain. Forgive us by the power of your mercy, that we might stand in the goodness of Christ and walk in the light of his love. Amen.

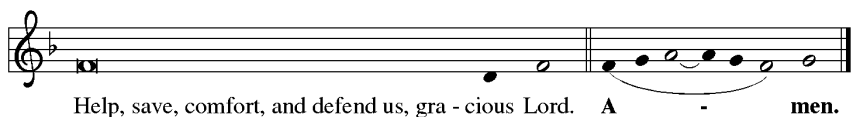
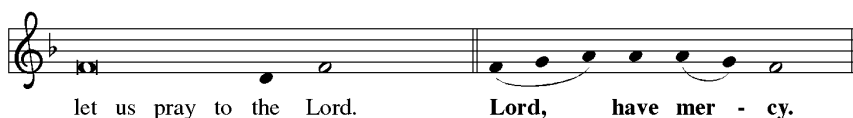
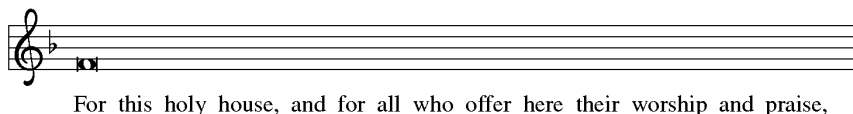
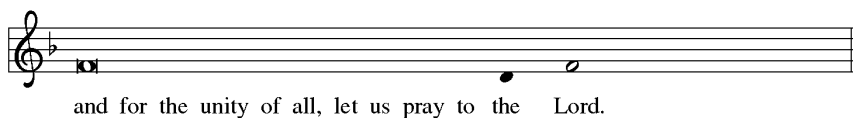
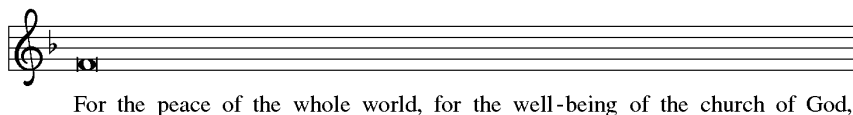
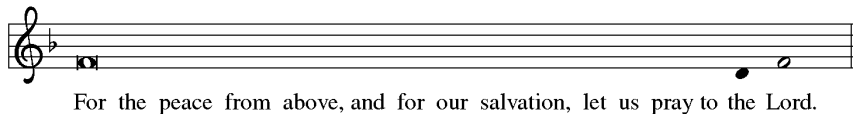
Siblings in Christ, your sins are forgiven by the faith of Christ, who chose love over hatred and forgiveness over blame. Rejoice and be glad, for God's mercy is great; Jesus brings healing, justice, and peace. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

HYMN: #873 Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart

GREETING (p. 203)

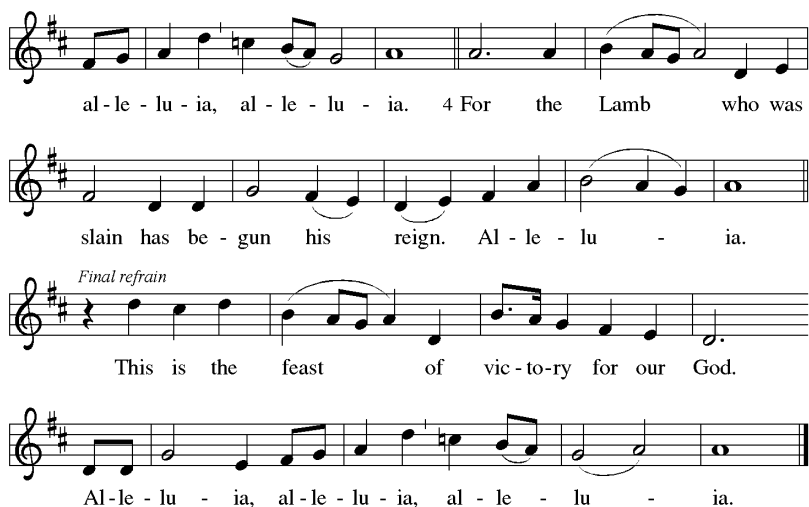
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE (p. 138)



CANTICLE OF PRAISE (p. 140)





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Redeeming God, you come to us in Christ to rescue us from slavery and lead us out of captivity. Guide us by the wisdom of the cross, and show us how to live a life of justice, love, and blessedness. Amen

SPECIAL MUSIC: Sunday School “I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy”

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8 (CEB)

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has “wearied” Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God’s service.

¹ Hear what the Lord is saying:

Arise, lay out the lawsuit before the mountains;
let the hills hear your voice!

² Hear, mountains, the lawsuit of the Lord!

Hear, eternal foundations of the earth!
The Lord has a lawsuit against his people;
with Israel he will argue.

³ “My people, what did I ever do to you?”

How have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴ I brought you up out of the land of Egypt;

I redeemed you from the house of slavery.

I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam before you.

⁵ My people, remember what Moab's King Balak had planned,

and how Balaam, Beor's son, answered him!

Remember everything from Shittim to Gilgal,

that you might learn to recognize the righteous acts of
the Lord!"

⁶ With what should I approach the Lord

and bow down before God on high?

Should I come before him with entirely burned offerings,

with year-old calves?

⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,

with many torrents of oil?

Should I give my oldest child for my crime;

the fruit of my body for the sin of my spirit?

⁸ He has told you, human one, what is good and

what the Lord requires from you:

to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with
your God.

Psalm: Psalm 15

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 upon 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 against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (CEB)

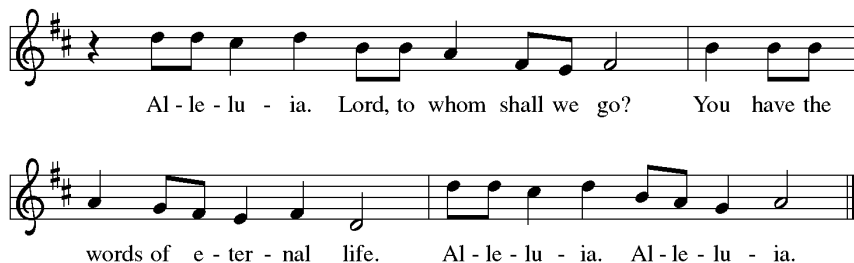
According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

¹⁸The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are being destroyed. But it is the power of God for those of us who are being saved. ¹⁹It is written in scripture: *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will reject the intelligence of the intelligent.* ²⁰Where are the wise? Where are the legal experts? Where are today's debaters? Hasn't God made the wisdom of the world foolish? ²¹In God's wisdom, he determined that the world wouldn't come to know him through its wisdom. Instead, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. ²²Jews ask for signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. ²⁴But to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. ²⁵This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

²⁶Look at your situation when you were called, brothers and sisters! By ordinary human standards not many were wise, not many were powerful, not many were from the upper class. ²⁷But God chose what the world considers foolish to shame the wise. God chose what the world considers weak to shame the strong. ²⁸And God chose what the world considers low-class and low-life—what is considered to be nothing—to reduce what is considered to be something to nothing. ²⁹So no human being can brag in God's presence. ³⁰It is because of God that you are in Christ Jesus. He

became wisdom from God for us. This means that he made us righteous and holy, and he delivered us.³¹ This is consistent with what was written: *The one who brags should brag in the Lord!*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12 (CEB)

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up a mountain. He sat down and his disciples came to him. ² He taught them, saying:

³ “Happy are people who are hopeless, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

⁴ “Happy are people who grieve, because they will be made glad.

⁵ “Happy are people who are humble, because they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full.

⁷ “Happy are people who show mercy, because they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Happy are people who have pure hearts, because they will see God.

⁹ “Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God’s children.

¹⁰ “Happy are people whose lives are harassed because they are righteous, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

¹¹ “Happy are you when people insult you and harass you and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of

me. ¹² Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. In the same way, people harassed the prophets who came before you.

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON "Reclaiming Happiness: From Cheap to Deep"

HYMN: #728 Blest Are They

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: Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

OFFERING

With what shall we come before the Lord this day? We come with a love of justice and a passion for sharing Christ's love. Let us walk in humble gratitude, offering to God a portion of the gifts that God freely shares with us, gifts for the healing of the world.

Offering Song: #186 Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Prayer: We thank you, God, that you have blessed us with an abundance of gifts for the flourishing of your world. May this offering of our life and labor reveal your love as we seek to share your promised reign with all creation. Amen.

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

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

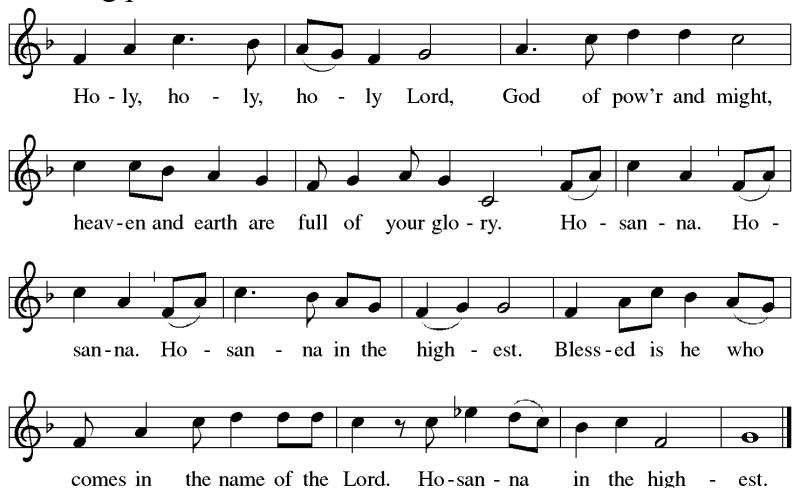
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, Lord God, for you have been everything you call us to be. You have been pure in heart, for you called Israel to be your people in whom all would find a blessing. You have been merciful, for in your tender mercy you made the dawn from on high to break upon your people, to guide us in the ways of peace. You have been a peacemaker, for in Jesus you broke down the dividing wall of hostility. And so we gladly thank you, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending praise:



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)

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see. 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: #522 As We Gather at Your Table
#714 O God of Mercy, God of Light

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.**

BLESSING

Now Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine brightly on your path as you walk the way of justice and peace. And the blessing of God—the Creator, Healer, and Giver of Life—bless you and keep you always. **Amen.**

HYMN: #669 Rise Up, O Saints of God!

CHARGE

In the spirit of the beatitudes, commit to leading a life of blessing, living in compassion, simplicity, and peace. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNDAY BULLETIN

St. Paul's Lutheran, Crookston, MN

February 1st, 2026

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

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
Dale Knotek	Nash Erdman	Barb Erdman
Mark Peterson	Lenny Devos	Glorrayne Casmey
Lucile Torkelson	Delores Sandager	Carol Chaffee
Kari L Trudeau	Stuart Hanson	Bev Montieth
Trevin Monahan	Dale Anderson	

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

Kathie Barnes and Marlys Demarais

Scripture Reader

Kathy Normandin

Communion Server

Paulette Wagner

Acolyte

Dominik Tronnes

Altar Guild

Ingrid Remick

Offering Counters

Dan Grunewald and Kathie Barnes

Livestream

Anna Peterson

Fellowship

WELCA

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES TEAM

Thank you, FEBURARY Worship Team, for your service support! Please sign up on the form posted on the bulletin board.

Bruce and Betty Arvidson

Kathie Barnes

Marlys Demarais

Wayne Schenck

Punky and Carol Johnson

Thank you to our Amazing January Worship Team for giving of your time this month!

SCRIPTURE READING FOR NEXT WEEK

Isa. 58:1-9a

Psalms 112:1-9

1 Cor. 2:1-12

Matthew 5:13-20

Readings for February 8th, 2026

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

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, February 1

8:45 am

10:00 am

11:00 am

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study

Worship and Communion

Fellowship

Monday, February 2

8:30 am

5:30 pm

LWR Quilting

Stewardship mtg.

Tuesday, February 3

7:00 am

7:00 pm

Men's Coffee Fellowship

AA

Wednesday, February 4

7-8:30 pm

7:00 pm

Confirmation

Choir practice

Thursday, February 5

Friday, February 6

Church Office Closed

Pastor's Day Off

Sunday, February 8

8:45 am

10:00 am

11:00 am

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study

Worship

Annual Meeting

WEEKLY FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our Response to God's Love

January 18th & 25th

Attendance: 18th Canceled/25th 49

Our gifts towards Budget:

Sunday Envelopes	\$3,670.74
Loose Offering	\$ 2.06
Over and Above Benevolence	\$ 20.00
Gen. Treasury/No Benevolence	\$ 60.00
Initial Offering	\$ 5.00
General Fund (Ameripride Linen)	\$ 6.40

Other (non-budget) Receipts:

Improvement Fund	\$ 20.00
Food Shelf	\$ 20.00

Needed weekly towards 2025 Budget: \$4,959.61

Total received towards Budget \$3,764.20

Total (non-budget) Receipts \$ 40.00

Total Received \$3,804.20

The parsonage siding fund is \$24,835.63. Thank you for your ongoing and generous support of the siding fund, and all your financial gifts each week!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church				
MONTHLY TREASURER'S REPORT: December				
			Month	Y-T-D
Amount needed to meet budgeted items			\$ 21,491.66	\$ 257,899.92
Receipts toward budget			\$ 22,981.43	\$ 225,830.72
Other receipts			\$ 2,541.33	\$ 37,995.06
TOTAL RECEIPTS			\$ 25,522.76	\$ 263,825.78
Budgeted Disbursements			\$ 35,684.90	\$ 220,358.07
Other Disbursements			\$ 2,300.64	\$ 12,102.38
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			\$ 37,985.54	\$ 232,460.45
			Income/Loss YTD	\$ 5,472.65
			Due to Benevolence	\$ -
			Net Income YTD	\$ 5,472.65

SPECIAL MESSAGES

LENTEN SUPPERS

The Parish Fellowship Committee would appreciate it if you would consider serving one of the upcoming 6 Lenten suppers which will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 18th. We have relied on our church committees (Youth, CYF, Church Council, Choir Worship and Music, Quilters), as well as our church families, to help by pairing up to host a supper. Please consider volunteering! The signup sheet is posted on the Kiosk in the Fellowship Hall! Thank you!



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Please join us for the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Annual Meeting on **Sunday, February 8**, immediately following our 10:00 AM worship service. This is an important time for our community to gather, reflect on the past year, and look forward to our future ministry.

Our agenda includes:

- Receiving the 2025 Annual Report.
- Reviewing and approving the **2026 Budget**.
- Voting on new Church Council members. Our nominees are **John Vallager, Dan Halland, and Vicki Trudeau**.

Who Can Vote? All voting members are encouraged to attend. Per our constitution, voting members are confirmed members who have given an offering and received communion during the current or previous calendar year.

Get Ready: Copies of the Annual Report are available today in the narthex, allowing you one week to review the materials before the meeting.

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.

LENT/HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVERS

The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18th!

The congregation is invited to serve throughout the Lenten worship services during this valuable time of the year for Christians. Please visit the bulletin board to sign up for helping with this Lenten season, as well as Holy Week. Thank you very much for your time and dedication!

MOVIE NIGHT AT THE CHURCH

The Fellowship committee is hosting a movie event for everyone on February 22nd. Come and gather to watch "Soul on Fire" at 3:00 pm in the Church Fellowship Hall. This incredible and inspiring story of John O'Leary, who at 9 years old, suffered burns over **100%** of his body, highlights themes of triumph, faith, and community support.

ST. PAUL'S WOMEN'S BOOK READ

Our Book Read group will meet on February 15th, from 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Our February book read is - *"The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride"* by Joe Siple. Dana Johnson will lead our discussion, and Ingrid Remick will host.

SAFE-HOME SURVEY

The Crookston Fire Department is offering a Safe Home Survey, where they will come and check to see if your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are in good order. Call 218-281-4584 to set up an appointment.

CROOKSTON CARE AND SHARE

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 **218-281-2644**.

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 218-833-7105 to help have an influence on the lives of strangers.

GIVING HEARTS DAY

The Benedictine Living Community-Crookston will be taking part in Giving Hearts Day on Thursday, February 12, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you'd like to make a monetary donation, drive through the heated garage at the south entrance and you will receive free donuts and a hot beverage. Funds will be used to install a modern, campus-wide video security system to replace outdated technology. Visit givingheartsdays.org for more information and to give a gift.

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:

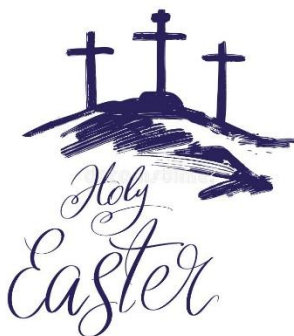
February

- **Sunday, February 8:** Annual Meeting—receive the annual report and vote on new church council members.
- **Wednesday, February 18:** Ash Wednesday
- **Sunday, February 22:** Movie event for everyone! Come watch "Soul on Fire" at 3:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

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!

FAITH FORMATION

Confirmation: Slavery and the Bible

This week in confirmation, our students engaged with a challenging and vital topic: **Slavery and the Bible**. The lesson focused on how Scripture was historically used both to defend and to dismantle the institution of slavery, especially in the American context.

Sunday School: Seeking God's Guidance This morning, our Sunday School students learned about **Matthias the Apostle**. After Judas left the group, the disciples didn't just pick a replacement at random—they turned to God in prayer for guidance. The children learned that just as God led the disciples to Matthias, we can always turn to God in prayer whenever we have important decisions to make in our own lives.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Questions for Reflection

How do we live in hope of a reality we cannot yet see or, at best, catch only fleeting glimpses? Where in your community's life of prayer and service do you see instances of God's justice, peace, and healing? Then give thanks, and ask God, where am I being called to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly into all blessedness in the ordinary course of my day?

Household Prayer: Morning

Blessed God, I yearn to see your vision of justice, love, and peace made real for me this day. Open my eyes to the way of love that I may see your brilliant light shining into the hidden places of my heart and the darkened corners of the world. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Loving God, you led me in the way of life this day and now call me to the way of rest. I give thanks for your light that illumined my path today. Now, it is night. As you beckon me to enter into

holy darkness where I am one with you in your realm of uncreated light, I open to you in peace. Amen.

Theological Reflection

The beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount have sometimes been used as "shoulds"—you should be meek, pure in heart, a peacemaker, so that you will receive a blessing from God. But Jesus' words offer us an opportunity to see how God blesses those who are doing their best to live out their faith in an imperfect world. We are all the people Jesus names, at one time or another. God blesses us as we go about our lives sharing Jesus' love to a world that desperately needs it.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY *Rebuilding from the Rubble*

An Overview of Ezra & Nehemiah

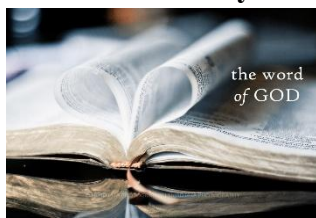
Wednesdays during Lent | Feb 18 – Mar 25

Following the 6:30 PM Lenten Service

What does it mean to come home after everything has changed? While we are focusing on a few select passages during our Lenten mid-week services, we invite you to stay for a deeper dive into the **complete story** of Ezra and Nehemiah.

These two books are often neglected in the church, but they offer a gritty, honest look at a community attempting to reconstruct its life, its safety, and its faith after a period of intense trauma. In this six-session overview, we will explore:

- **The Bravery of the Unknown:** What it takes to enter uncomfortable new spaces.



- **The Power of the Word:** How a community shifts its foundation from a physical building to the living Word of God.
- **The Crisis of the "Other":** Tough questions about identity, exclusion, and who truly "belongs".
- **Walls and Justice:** Nehemiah's dual mission to provide physical security while demanding economic justice for the poor.

Whether these scriptures are brand new to you or you are looking for a fresh perspective, come and discover how these ancient stories of "rebuilding" speak directly to our lives today.