

# February 1, 2026

# Fourth Sunday after Epiphany



## Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church

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Pastor Kimberly Belken

## Welcome & Announcements

### 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.**

## Gathering Song: Let Streams of Living Justice (ELW 710)



1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;  
2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,  
3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;

give free - dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.  
for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.  
your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.

The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,  
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;  
Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,

the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.  
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.  
our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home-land bright - ly gleams.

Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;  
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;  
In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;

a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.  
dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.  
your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

### Greeting

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

**C** **And also with you.**

# Kyrie

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord.      Lord have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord.      A - men.

# Canticle of Praise

*Refrain*

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## Prayer of the Day

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.**

## First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

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.

<sup>1</sup> Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> “O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.”

<sup>6</sup> “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?  
<sup>7</sup> 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?"  
<sup>8</sup> 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?

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm: Psalm 15**

<sup>1</sup> Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?  
Who may abide upon your holy hill?  
<sup>2</sup> **Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart;**  
<sup>3</sup> they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.  
<sup>4</sup> **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.**

<sup>5</sup> 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**

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.

<sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup>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? <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup>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. <sup>27</sup>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; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

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

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

**P** The Gospel of the Lord

**C** **Praise to you O, Christ.**

## **Children's Sermon**

## **Sermon**

## Hymn of the Day: Build a Longer Table (ACS 1062)



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.

## Apostles' Creed

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 the People

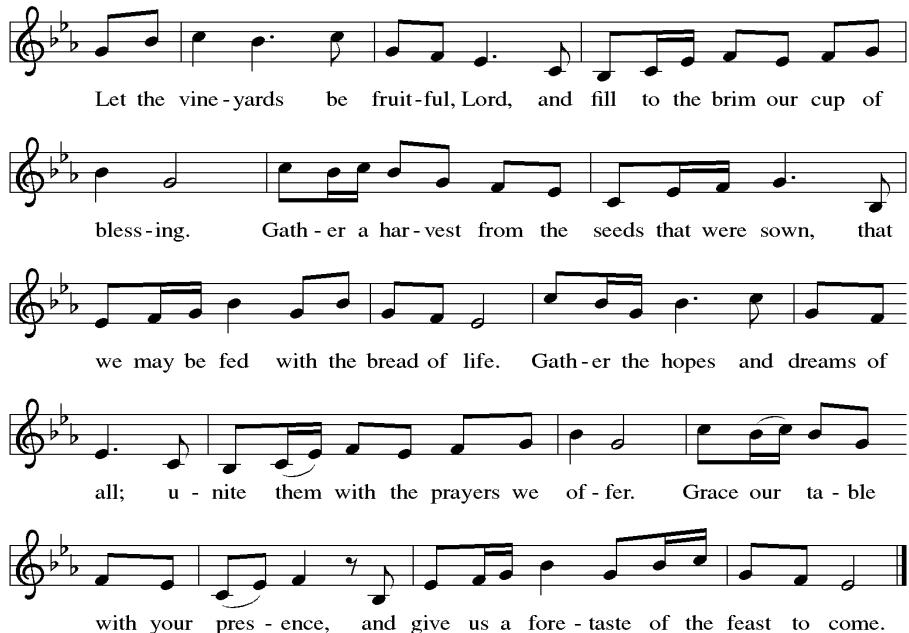
...merciful God, receive our prayer.

## Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

## Offering

### Offering: *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful* (ELW 184)



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble  
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## Offering Prayer

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.**

## Great Thanksgiving

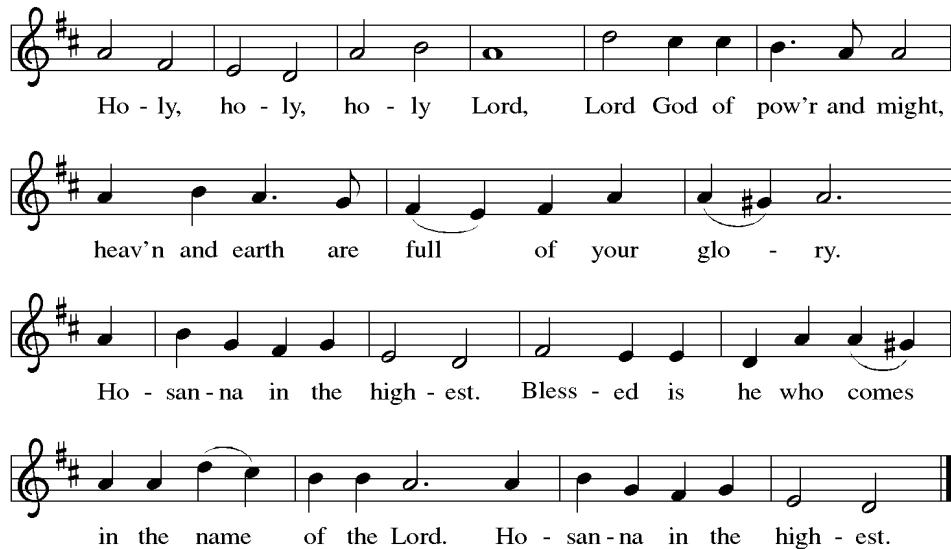
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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.**

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

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.

## **Thanksgiving at the Table**

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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## **Lord's Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us,

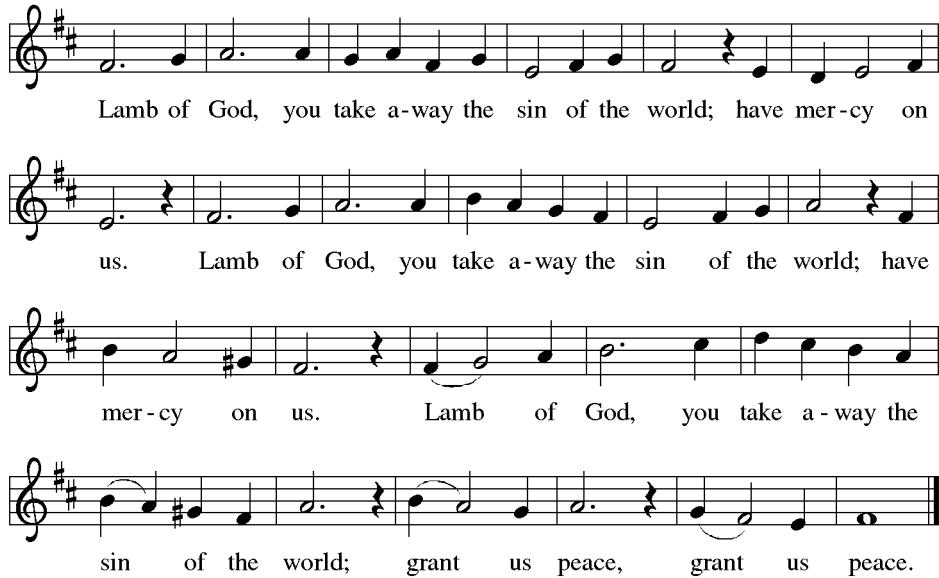
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## **Invitation to Communion**

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

## **Holy Communion**

## Communion Song:



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.

## Post Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Amen.**

## 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

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.**

## Sending Song: The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve (ELW 551)

The musical score consists of three staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle staff is in bass clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are arranged in four stanzas, with the first two stanzas on the top staff and the last two stanzas on the middle staff. The music features a mix of quarter and eighth notes, with some sustained notes and rests. The lyrics describe the spirit sending us forth to serve, going to comfort those who mourn, and being sent to scatter the gospel. The second stanza continues with the joy of the resurrection, the third stanza with sharing God's dream, and the fourth stanza with the final verse.

1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in  
2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the  
3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to the scatter  
4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gospel  
Je - sus' name to bring glad tid - ings  
bur - dened free; where hope is dim, to  
joy like seed and, all Spir - it days, has  
to pro - claim. God's to to  
share a dream and fa - vor to blind pro - claim.  
cher - ish life, to help do the the to see.  
pow - ered us; we go in lov - ing sus', to ing deed.  
to the in Je name.

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

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## Announcements

- **Lenten Worship Services** will begin on Ash Wednesday, Wednesday February 18 at 5:30pm.
- **Introducing Bread Breakers**, a fellowship group for seniors and retired folk who like to eat together! We will have our first luncheon on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at noon at Mt. Olivet. Lunch will be a Valentine's potluck so bring a dish to share and enjoy some time with your church family.
- **All Synod Book Study:** You are invited to participate in Southeastern Iowa Synod's *All Synod Reads* during Lent. Church members across our synod will all be reading the book *Sacred Self Care: Daily Practices for Nurturing Our Whole Selves* by Dr. Chaneqa Walker-Barnes. We will have our own group at Mt. Olivet to discuss the book together and will meet weekly on Monday nights at 7pm during Lent (first meeting is Monday, Feb. 23). If you are interested in participating, please let Pastor Kimberly know. She has books available for purchase for \$16 and you can pay her directly for yours and take it home today. Spend a little time this Lent with this devotional resource and discussing it in community to deepen your faith life.
- **Complete Lenten Worship Survey!** If you have not already done so, please complete a Lenten worship survey and help us plan our midweek Lent services. Services will be at 5:30pm on Wednesdays during Lent. If you need a survey, please see our worship hosts
- **Office Hours:** Pastor Kimberly is in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays. Thursdays she will be splitting her time between Immanuel and Mt. Olivet, so if you would like to see her on that day, please call ahead so she can be sure to be in town. You can call the church number (515) 465- 5298 and it will ring to Pastor's cell phone if she is not in the office.