

Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

February 1, 2026 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Connecting people to people • people to faith • faith to life

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(PLEASE POWER OFF OR AIRPLANE MODE YOUR DEVICES)

Here in Athens, in SE Ohio, we are occupying the traditional homeland of the Shawnee people. Before the Shawnee, this land was occupied by the Osage people, and by the Adena, Hopewell, and Fort Ancient cultures.



SERVING TODAY: Presider: Pastor Anne Pairan; Preacher: Jane Unger; Organist: George Weckman; Choir Director: Christian Yoder; Choir Accompanist: Donnalee Yoder; Pianist: Patricia Cambridge; Custodian: Nic Swain, Office: Danielle Huber, Lector: Greg Newton; Time with Children: Cheryl Huebner; Ushers: Marilyn Shealy, Linda Batey; Greeter: JoAnn Ball; Acolyte: Eliza; Tray Server: Susan Urano; Livestream: Sam Hanson

INTRODUCTION

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.

PRELUDE

CONFESSiON AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, [☩] one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace.

Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
**we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.**
**We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**
**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.**
**We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.**
**Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.**

Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

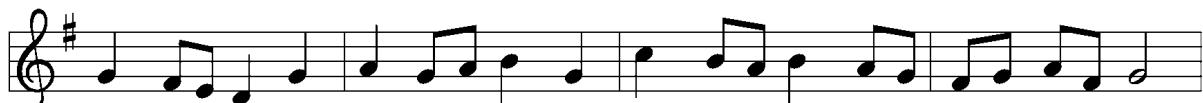
[☩] Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

Amen.

GATHERING SONG***As We Gather at Your Table (ELW 522)***

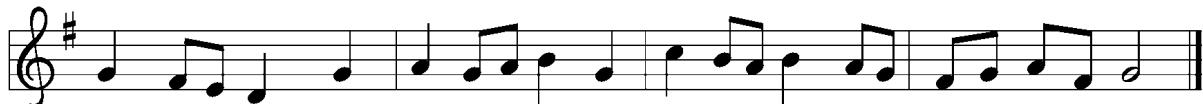
1 As we gath - er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor - ship in - to wit - ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth - er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour - ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
may we still be - hold your im - age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: IN BABILON, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollantse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710

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GREETING

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

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us
pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

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

A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Micah 6:1-8

A reading from Micah.

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?

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

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.

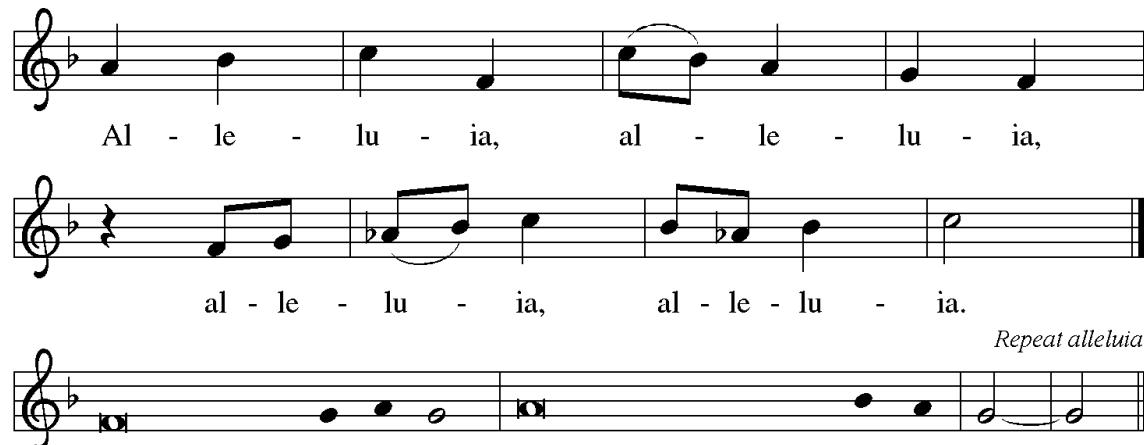
²⁵ For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

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.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e-ter-nal life.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

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

HYMN OF THE DAY

Blest Are They (ELW 728)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray for the church, the world, and all people according to their needs.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Your loving grace is poured out even though we are undeserving. We have sinned and pray for forgiveness. Teach us to turn away from judging people by categories and fearing those who are different. Help us appreciate the complexity and diversity of everyone since we are all Your children and made in Your image. Fill us with the power of the Holy Spirit to listen to others, forgive and love them, and share the Gospel. Send us out to reflect our renewed relationships, to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. We pray for wholeness and peace throughout our broken and violent world. Where there is revenge, bring reconciliation. Where there is hatred, spread your love. Where there is terror, bring safety and healing. Bestow wisdom on all leaders to be peacemakers. We pray you will protect military personnel, sustain veterans, comfort military families, and keep safe all refugees. Bring relief to those who have been affected by disasters. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. We are deeply grateful for the many blessings in our lives. We pray for the insight to become righteous, pure, and meek. May we learn to share our abundance and turn from our greed. Lead us to be careful stewards of your beautiful world, teaching us to care for everything in nature and to use the Earth's resources wisely. Bless all pastors, bishops, and lay leaders. We also rejoice with those who are celebrating anniversaries, birthdays, and other joyous occasions. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. We pray for healing for anyone who is ill in mind, body, or spirit. Restore to wholeness those who are struggling with addictions. Strengthen all who deal with long-term diagnoses, such as cancer, dementia, and mental health issues. Bless our shut-ins and help us bring them joy and companionship. Grant wisdom and skill to all medical personnel, researchers, and caregivers so they may provide the best care. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God of mercy, listen now as we offer other prayers, either silently or aloud..... Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. We pray for those to whom death draws near. Rest your peace, comfort, and hope on all grieving family and friends. Remind us of the promise of eternal life with you. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING – THANK YOU! YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES OUR MINISTRY POSSIBLE.

Giving is easy online through our website at <https://www.clcathens.org/give>

There you will also find instructions for how you can text to give or by downloading our church app!

MUSICAL OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Come Now, O Prince of Peace



O - so - sō o - so - sō, pyong - hwa - ūi - im - gūm
1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.
4 Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y.



u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sō.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.

Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope

Music: OSCOSO, Geonyong Lee, b. 1947

Text and music © Geonyong Lee

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

PREFACE

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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,

heav-en 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.
Remembering, therefore,

his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

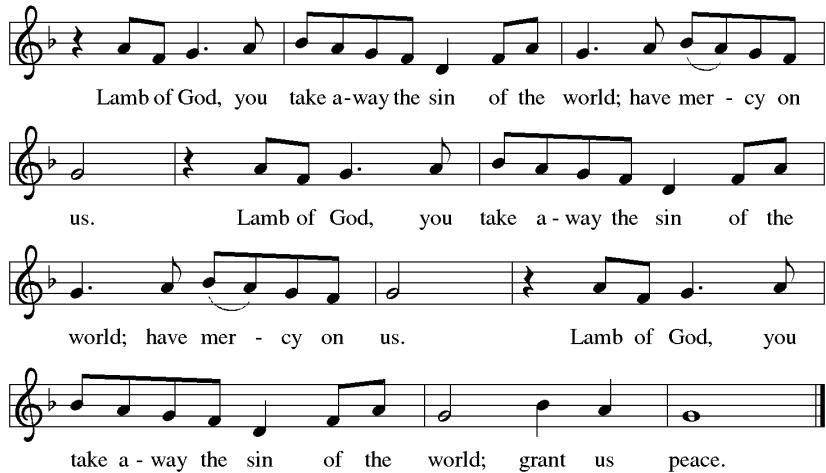
Give us today our daily bread.

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.

LAMB OF GOD



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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing.

Come to the feast of joy!

Thanks be to God!

COMMUNION

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The triune God,
glorious Mystery,
holy Incarnate One,
abiding Comforter,

☩ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.

SENDING SONG***In Christ There Is No East or West (ELW 650)***

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - 'ry - where their high com - mu - nion find;
3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com - mu - ni - ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser - vice is the gold - en cord close bind - ing hu - man - kind.
All chil - dren of the liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852–1941, alt.

Music: MCKEE, African American spiritual; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866–1949

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.