

January 18, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Present to Us

The Lamb of God? Of what lamb did John speak? Might it have been the paschal lamb, offered at Passover to remember God's saving act in the exodus from Egypt? This was the lamb whose blood Hebrew slaves had streaked onto their doorposts to mark their houses as safe from the angel of death.

At this moment of recognition, John knew Jesus as one who was set apart. John knew Jesus was the one for whom he had prepared the way. John baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. John gave witness to his faith. He shone the light on Jesus--he helped others see. His call was to reveal Jesus to Israel.

Because of John's choice of images, we could imagine Jesus as a sacrificial victim. Indeed many Christians throughout history have been moved by this image. But we could also see Jesus, the Lamb of God, as God's presence among us. Jesus is provided by God, and he is the one who marks us as safe from the angel of death.

Of course, we know that faith does not exempt us from physical death. We will all die. But in Jesus, we see that we are borne into death, not alone, but held by God's unfailing love for us. Baptized by the Spirit, we believe that the Spirit descends on us and "remains" on us, as John testified the Spirit did for Jesus. The Spirit *abides* with us, to use another translation of the same term. The Spirit walks with us into any death we face, whether it be daily pains and disappointments or our ultimate passage from this life.

Can we share John's excitement about this Jesus? Can we also become ones who reveal him to those around us, shining a light on the wonder of God's presence in him?

First St. John Lutheran Church

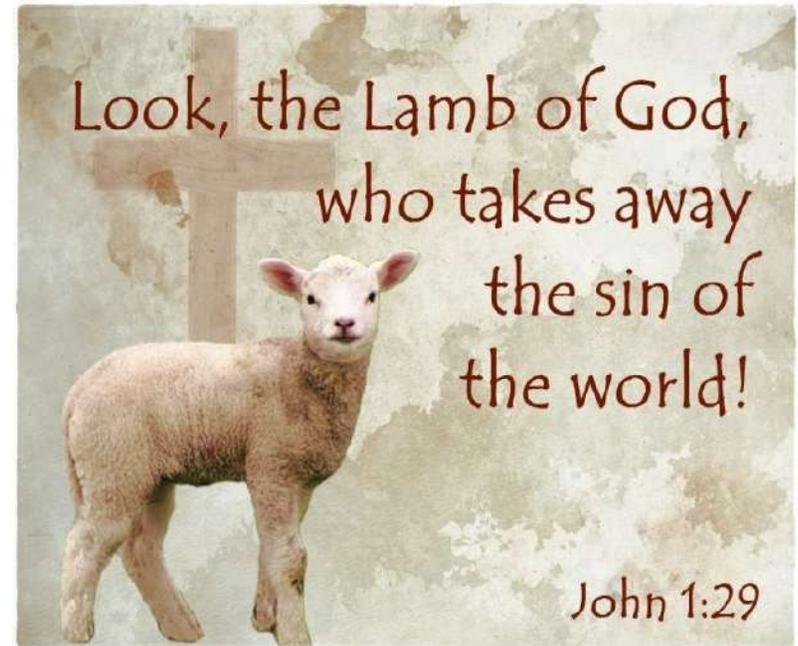
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician
Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Director of Music
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director
Jessica Miller, Office Manager



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

January 18, 2026 - 10:30 am

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism (starting soon). Our regular Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	JAM Sunday School
9:15 am	Adult Sunday School
10:30 am	Late Worship
2:00 pm	Chapel Communion

(2nd Sunday of the month)

LIVESTREAM AND RECORDED WORSHIP: We livestream the service on our church website at www.firststjohn.com. Also, the service will be recorded and published to the website

SMILE! YOU'RE ON CAMERA: Please remember you may be on camera during the livestream and the recording of the service.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remember to silence your cell phone before church begins. Thanks!

SUNDAY SCHOOL & CATECHISM JAM Sunday School (church basement) and Adult Sunday School (lounge) meet each Sunday at 9:15 am. First year catechism will start soon! If you have a child in 6-7th grade interested please let Pastor Rayl know.

NURSERY is in the church basement and is now available during 2nd Service each week; you are welcome to sit with your child as well. A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

RESTROOMS are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take either set of steps to the basement hallway. The ladies room is at one end, and the men's room is at the other.

FLOWERS: If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, there is a book in the lounge. Or, you can call the church office during the week to check on availability.

MEMORIALS: If you wish to give a memorial in honor or memory of a loved one, you may mail it in or pick up a memorial card in the church office.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

Please purchase full size items.

dish soap	shampoo, child	disposable razors
paper towel	laundry soap	toothbrush, adult
toilet paper	fabric softener sheets	toothpaste, adult
tissues	body lotion	sanitary pads
deodorant	body soap	band aids
shampoo, adult		

This is a list of the items that will provide a month's worth of hygiene supplies to families or individuals in our neighborhood to help them stay clean and healthy. We always welcome any donations from our congregation members.

If you would like to donate items, please donate only full size products as sample sizes will not last a month. If you would prefer a Pantry volunteer to do the shopping for you, we welcome monetary donations. Please make out checks to First St. John Lutheran Church and write Personal Needs Pantry on the memo line.



P: We pray in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, your gift to all the world.

C: Amen.

(The elders will direct families by pew to come forward to the altar to receive a blessing. After everyone has returned to their seats, the service continues as the congregation stands.)

P: Let us pray. Triune God, whose will it is that humans live in community, bless family life everywhere and fill all homes with respect, joy, laughter, and prayer. Strengthen the commitment of husbands and wives to one another, that they may mirror your covenant faithfulness; pour out your Spirit on parents, that through them children may experience your unconditional love; and empower all family members to live in your grace and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing

P: May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, (+) Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn *“Blessed Now, O God, the Journey”* No. 326

Dismissal

P: Go in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY’S SERVICE

ELDERS

John Roth
Bob Haar

READER

Susie Purewal

SOUND BOARD

Amy Nelson

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ringling of the Bell

Opening Hymn *“Alleluia, Song Of Gladness”* No. 318

Invocation

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, (+) one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

C: Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Trusting in God’s steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: Mighty God, lover of justice,

C: 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.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

The congregation may greet one another by shaking hands, fist bumping, or any other form of greeting with the words, “Peace be with you.” We conclude the sharing of the peace by singing:

**Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,
present in thy holy word;
grace to imitate thee now
and be pure, as pure art thou;
that we might become like thee
at thy great epiphany,
and may praise thee, ever blest,
God in flesh made manifest.**

- Songs of Thankfulness and Praise ELW 310 (verse 4)

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray, 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.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Special Music

*“Amazing Grace”
“Let There Be Peace on Earth”*

--Cheri Sergent, Bells

Introduction

Today's gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy we come and see Christ revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made known among us.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 49:1-7

Here the servant, identified as Israel, speaks for herself and describes her honored mission. Called before her birth like Jeremiah and John the Baptist, the servant is not only to restore Israel. The servant's ultimate assignment is to bring news of God's victory to the ends of the earth. God in faithfulness has chosen Israel for this task.

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,

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.

Litany for Blessing Our Families

P: How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

C: My soul longs for the courts of the Lord, my heart sings for joy to the living God.

P: Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest where she may keep her young.

C: Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.

P: No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.

C: O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

P: Mothers, fathers, grandparents, and friends,

C: aunts, uncles, sons, and daughters,

P: People who reach out to nurture and love,

C: people who live by water and word –

P: God adopts us and names us and claims us.

C: God renews us, uplifts and restores us.

P: Generations from Abraham to David to Joseph,

C: to Jesus, son of Mary, Son of God;

P: Our generations too, and all those to come:

C: We are joined in the family of God.

P: O God for whom we long, we thank you for the gift of family and friends. Strengthen the ties that bind us together, that we may sing the song of Mary:

C: “My soul magnifies you, and holy is your name. You shower mercy from generation to generation.”

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

“Fling Wide the Door”

No. 259

(Please stand)

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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.

(Please be seated)

The Offering

Musical Offertory

“How Great Thou Art”

Aubrey Hess

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the need of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Hear us, O Lord,

C: your mercy is great.

P: Hear us as we pray:

The Lord’s Prayer *(prayed by all)*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

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.”

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 40:1-11

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord;

he inclined to me and heard my cry.

² **He drew me up from the desolate pit,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.**

³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear
and put their trust in the Lord.

⁴ **Happy are those who make
the Lord their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after false gods.**

⁵ You have multiplied, O Lord my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with you.

Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
they would be more than can be counted.
**6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,
but you have given me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering
you have not required.**

7 Then I said, "Here I am;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

**8 I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."**

9 I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O Lord.

**10 I have not hidden your saving help within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.**

11 Do not, O Lord, withhold
your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness
keep me safe forever.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Though God's church in Corinth is a fractious congregation beset with many conflicts, Paul opens this letter by spotlighting the multiple ways God has enriched and sustained its life as part of the divine call into the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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.

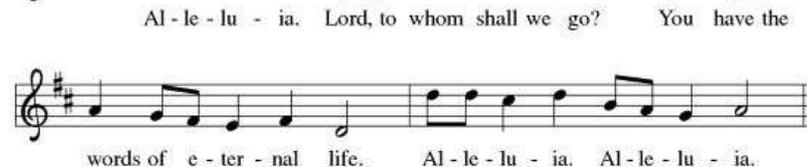
⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any 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.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation (sung by the congregation)



Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. John Chapter 1.

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

GOSPEL: John 1:29-42

John the Baptist's witness to Jesus initiates a chain of testimony as his disciples begin to share with others what they have found.

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).

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

(Please be seated)