

Sunday, February 1, 2026
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Liturgy from Sundays and Seasons 2026



INTRODUCTION FOR 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.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

GATHERING

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

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,
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 Hymn: ELW #519 “Open Your Ears, O Faithful People”

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.

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.

Please be seated as the children come forward.

Children’s Time

THE WORD

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.

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?

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 15 (Read Responsively)

LORD, who may abide upon your holy hill? (Ps. 15:1)

- 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.



Special Music: "By Grace We Have Been Saved" Chancel Choir

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.

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.”

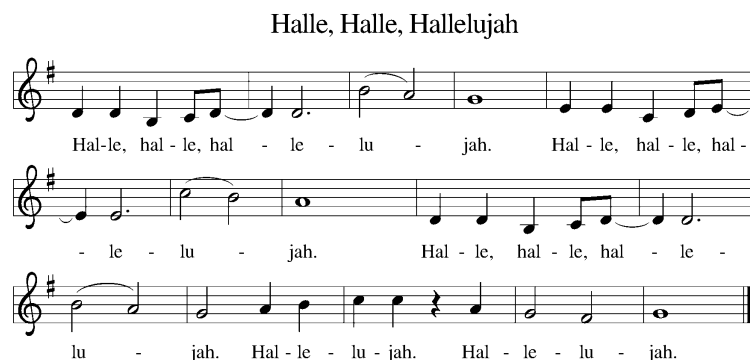
²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. 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.”

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Gospel Acclamation – ELW #172 “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah”



Music: Caribbean traditional



Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

The Gospel according to St. Matthew the 5th Chapter, beginning at the 1st verse. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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

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.**

Please be seated.

Sermon

Pastor Samuelson

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Hymn of the Day: ELW #728 “Blest Are They”

The 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 Intercession

Pastor: As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way *especially those we name aloud or in our hearts. We ask for healing prayers for Jan Rinderle who suffered a stroke on Wednesday. We also pray for eternal rest for Bob Young and ask for comfort and healing for Sandy Young, their children, grandchildren, family and friends. (A brief silence).* Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Pastor: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The Peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words. The assembly is seated.

Offering – Collection of our offerings.

Song during offering – Music Only – ELW #692 "We Are An Offering"

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray, together.

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.



THE MEAL

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.

PROPER PREFACE – for the Season of Epiphany

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:

Sanctus: Holy, Holy, Holy – ELW #189 “Holy, Holy, Holy”

Holy, Holy, Holy
Great Thanksgiving

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are: 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. The melody features several triplet markings over the notes.

Music: Paul D. Weber, b. 1949
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The Words of Institution

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.



The Lord's Prayer

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.

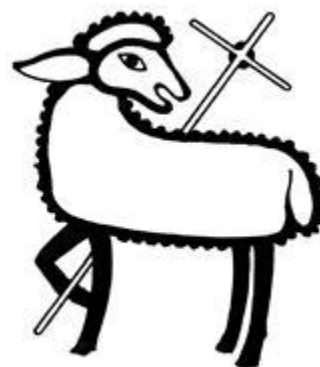
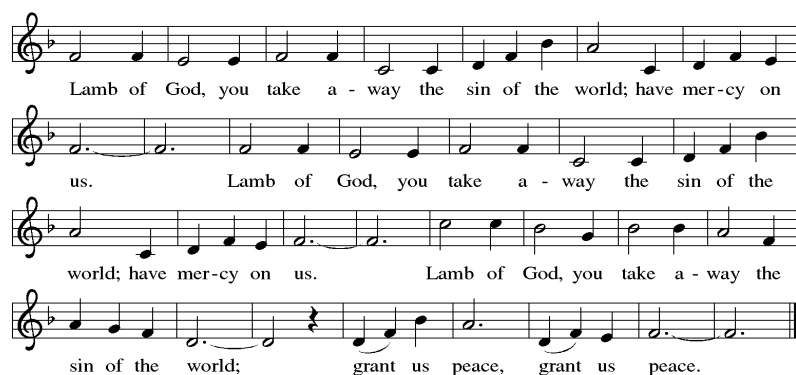
Invitation to Communion

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

Please be seated and wait to come forward for Holy Communion after the singing of The Lamb of God song.

Lamb of God – ELW #195 “Lamb of God”

Lamb of God



Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948
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Hymn During Communion: ELW #710 “Let Streams of Living Justice”

Blessing after Communion

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands. The presiding minister may say a table blessing; the assembly responds Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray, together.

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.

Sending 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: ELW #763 “My Life Flows On in Endless Song”

Dismissal

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Today's Lay Leaders

Lector: Bill Wakefield

Ushers: Sue Clark and Judy Goodwin

Communion Assistant: Jeanette Nowakowski

Altar Guild: Deanna Posig

Music & Worship Coordinator: Barb Regent

Adoration Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
3840 West Edgerton Avenue
Greenfield, WI 53221
Phone: 414.281.0414
www.adorationlc.com
adorationlutheran@gmail.com
Pastor Steve Kuhl, Interim Pastor
Crystal A. Roeder, Office Manager

