

Christ Lutheran Church  
337 Elknud Lane  
Johnstown, PA 15905  
(814) 255-1395



Moxham Lutheran Church  
500 Park Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15902  
(814) 539-8664



## Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Christ Lutheran 9:00 a.m. + Moxham Lutheran 10:30 a.m.  
February 1, 2026

Nations wage war, families quarrel, and communities of faith divide. We hear some say, “There is no other way.” In Jesus, the light of God’s kingdom draws near, and a new way shines for us to follow. Do you not perceive it?

In today’s gospel, Jesus first withdraws (Matt. 4:12). The word *anachoreo* (to withdraw) is used ten times in Matthew’s gospel—each time it was Jesus’ response to violence or conflict. This time, John the Baptist has been arrested, and tension is beginning to build. The way of God and the way of the world’s rulers are about to collide.

But in Jesus, a new kingdom has drawn near, a kingdom of nonviolence and non-retaliation. Jesus’ withdrawal is not simply passivity; instead, Jesus points us to an alternate way. In this new kingdom, its king rules not from a throne, but from within each heart. Jesus rules not with violence, abusive power, or through division but as he voluntarily empties himself of power, identifying with the oppressed and burdened, and healing those of us who are broken.

Into this new reign, Jesus calls the disciples to follow him, a way that appears foolish and weak to those who cannot discern it. To those God calls, it is the wisdom and strength, the light and power of God.

### Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

#### Prelude

#### Welcome

#### 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 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  $\dagger$  Jesus' name.  
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace.  
Amen.

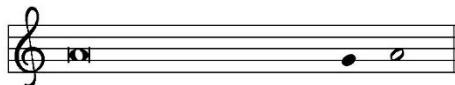
**Gathering Song: "Listen, God is Calling"**

**No. 513**

**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.**

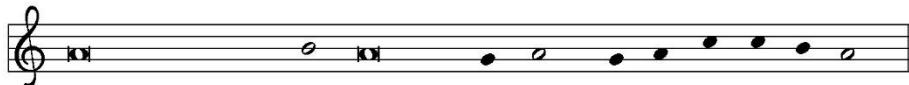
**Kyrie**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



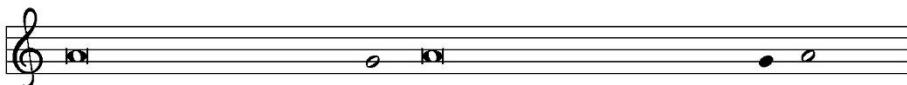
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



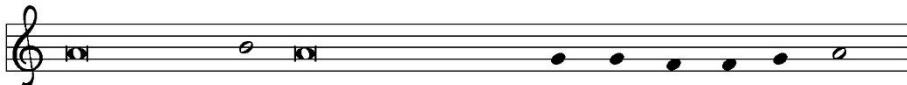
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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.

## Hymn of Praise



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

## Prayer for the Day

Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4

*The northern tribes of Israel - Zebulun and Naphtali - experienced the gloom of defeat by Assyrian military forces, but they are assured that their condition will be reversed when God makes a light-filled appearance. The joy they will experience will resemble celebrations of great harvests, because God will deliver them from everything that diminishes or oppresses them.*

<sup>1</sup> There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the Lord] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied exultation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

<sup>1</sup> The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

<sup>4</sup> **One thing I ask of the Lord; one thing I seek;**  
**that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life;**  
**to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek God in the temple.**

<sup>5</sup> For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,  
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high upon a rock.

<sup>6</sup> **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.**  
**Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing;**  
**I will sing and make music to the Lord.**

<sup>7</sup> Hear my voice, O Lord, when I call;  
have mercy on me and answer me.

<sup>8</sup> My heart speaks your message—“Seek my face.”  
Your face, O Lord, I will seek.

<sup>9</sup> Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.  
Cast me not away—you have been my helper;  
forsake me not, O God of my salvation.

## Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

*Paul calls on the Corinthians to end their dissensions and share the unified outlook of the gospel. Discord arises when we forget that we belong not to human leaders or institutions but to Christ. Indeed, the unifying word of the cross of Christ is the center of the gospel and the power of God’s salvation.*

<sup>10</sup> Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. <sup>11</sup> For it has been made clear to me by Chloe’s people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters.

<sup>12</sup> What I mean is that each of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” <sup>13</sup> Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup> I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, <sup>15</sup> so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. <sup>16</sup> I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. <sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

<sup>18</sup> For 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.

The word of the Lord.

**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.

## **Gospel: Matthew 4:12-23**

*Jesus begins his public ministry shortly after John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. He proclaims the nearness of God's reign and calls four fishermen to be his first disciples.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup> “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—

<sup>16</sup> the people who sat in darkness

have seen a great light,

and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death  
light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup> From that time, Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

<sup>18</sup> As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. <sup>19</sup> And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.”

<sup>20</sup> Immediately, they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately, they left the boat and their father and followed him.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day: “Will You Come and Follow Me”**

**No. 798**

## **Apostles' Creed**

Together with the whole church,  
we confess the faith into which we were baptized.

**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**

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.*

Holy One, you entrust the message of the cross and the mission of the gospel to the church in every land. Deepen the faith of all who follow Christ. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy Creator, you lavish creation with splendor, and we praise you for the gift of life. Teach us to live as wise stewards, sharing the earth's resources with all the inhabitants of this garden planet. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy Judge, your power is love, and you judge the nations by the measure of Christ. Free any who are unjustly accused or wrongly condemned, especially those harassed by government agencies in Minneapolis. We pray for those in authority that they may not seek their own glory, but the glory of caring for the marginalized. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy Lover, you care for vulnerable young children, frail elders, and those who are sick (*especially*). Provide for their needs and relieve their suffering. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy Giver, you gather, forgive, and shape us as disciples of Christ. Nurture in us a spirit of patience and respect, that we may love one another as you love us. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Holy Savior, you free us from the power of death. Lead and guide us until we come at last into the communion of all your saints in light. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

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.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*We share a sign of Christ's peace with others.*

## Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**Presentation of Gifts**    "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

**No. 798**



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach-ing out with a shout of joy:  
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,  
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.  
teach-ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.  
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im-man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!

*Refrain*

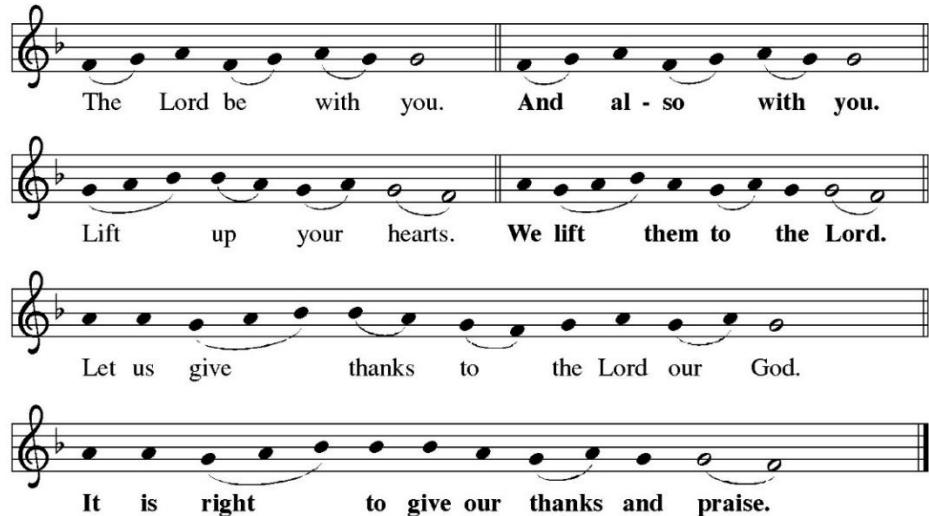


Je - sus lives a-gain, earth can breathe a-gain, pass the Word a-round: loaves a - bound!

## 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.**

## The Great Thanksgiving



The Lord be with you. And also with you.

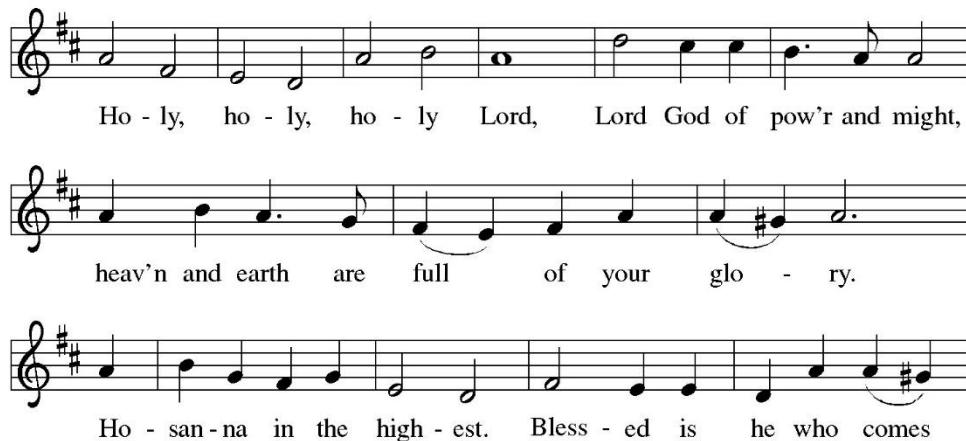
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

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.

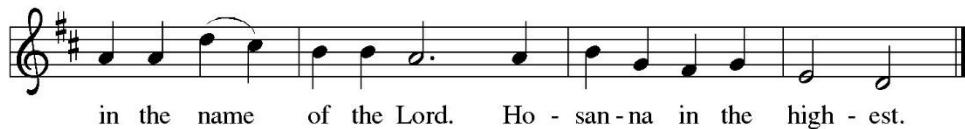
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;  
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;  
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, 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



## Thanksgiving at the Table

At the dawn of creation  
you were the light that split open the darkness  
and brought all things into being.  
You called a people to live in your presence  
and walk in the light of your law and prophets.  
In Jesus the Christ, you have proclaimed to us  
the good news of the nearness of heaven  
and called us to follow him as disciples.

### *Words of Institution*

With this bread and cup, we remember your Word made flesh,  
his dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.  
Holy God, we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us. Bless this meal.  
May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people.  
Fill us with the light of your Son, our Lord,  
who taught us when we pray to say:

## Lord's Prayer

**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.**

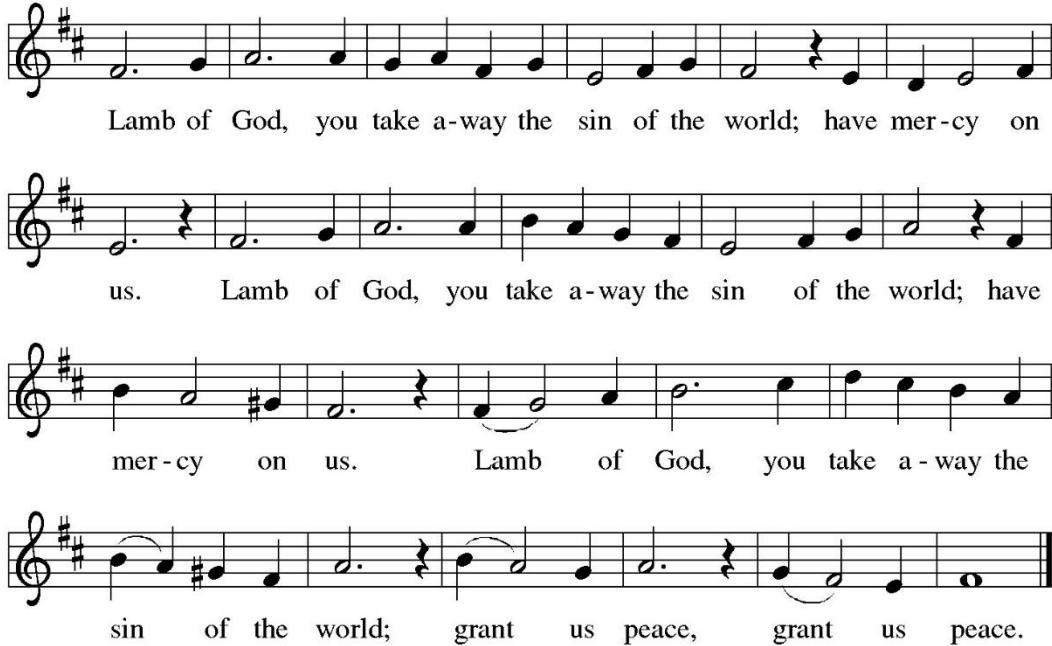
## Invitation to Communion

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Come to the table; taste and see.

**Thanks be to God.**

## 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, grant us peace.

## 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.**

## **Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### **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:** “Shine, Jesus, Shine”

**No. 671**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Living Waters Lutheran Parish Serving in Worship Today**

The Rev. James N. West, Interim Pastor  
Cindy Doherty, Assisting Minister

### **At Christ, Westmont**

**Director of Music and Live Streaming:** Mike Thomas

**Communion Assistants:** Denise Greco and Mike Crum

**Lector:** Linda Dobson

### **At Moxham, Johnstown**

**Organist:** Dan Gresh

**Lector:** Susan Bullock

**Council Rep:** Mike McCreary

**Communion Assistants:** Kim Williams and Kathie McCreary

**Greeter:** Rick Kirk