

**Third Sunday after Epiphany
Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church - ELCA
January 25, 2026, 10 am**

*“Encouraging faith and proclaiming God’s love
by Gathering, Growing, Giving.”*



Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreement to be on our live broadcast.

INTRODUCTION

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

Please stand for the parts of the service designated with †

The congregation’s parts are in **bold type**.

GATHERING

The Holy spirit calls us together as the people of God.

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 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**

“Holy Spirit Ever Dwelling”

LBW 523

† **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**

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.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

A reading from the 1st chapter of ISAIAH

The northern tribes of 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.

¹There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [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. ²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For 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 27:1, 4-9

Please join in reading responsively from Psalm 27.

¹The 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?

**⁴ 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.**

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.**

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

⁸ My heart speaks your message— “Seek my face.”

Your face, O Lord, I will seek.

⁹ 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

A reading from the 1st chapter of 1st Corinthians

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.

¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe’s people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² 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.” ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ 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 and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.

Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.

Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

† GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:12-33

The Holy Gospel according to the 4th chapter of Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles— ¹⁶ 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." ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ 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. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. ²³ 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.

CHILDRENS MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pastor Natalie Leske

† 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 hell.

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. Guide the newly baptized and 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 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. We pray for those in authority. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Holy Lover, you care for vulnerable young children, frail elders, and any who are sick (*especially*). We pray for all who are affected by natural disasters. 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.**

† GREETING OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share God's peace saying, "Peace be with you" or similar words.

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, thorough your Word 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.**

† 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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

† 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.**

† DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Presiding Leader

Musician

Acolyte

Usher

Video

Reader

Pastor Natalie Leske

Lorin Divine

Deklan Peterson

Dave Blicher, Bob Dempshi

Billy Heltne

Linda Dempshi

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

113th SOTH Annual Meeting today following worship!
Annual reports were emailed out and are available on the bulletin table.

Giving Through our Website

Our website provides the opportunity to give donations online at any time without banking information. Even if you only watch our streaming of worship services, you will now have the flexibility to make offerings from your home!

Ushers, readers, communion assistants and livestream helpers are needed.

Helping to lead worship is a very rewarding way to use your talents and gifts. Training and support are offered for all positions. To volunteer or if you have questions, please reach out to Head Usher Tim Jenson for ushering, Kris Jenson, the church secretary for reading and communion assisting, and to Billy Heltne or Tim Jenson for livestreaming.

Thank you for prayerfully considering these forms of discipleship.

If you are a VISITOR with us today, we are so grateful that God brought you here. Please share your name and contact info in either the Guest Book or a Visitor info sheet found in the Gathering Area.

Pastor Natalie's Office Hours:

Pastor Natalie's office hours are Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm or by appointment. You may call Pastor Natalie's cell phone 715-829-8324 to see if she can meet you Monday - Thursday.

THIS WEEK AT CHURCH AND BEYOND OUR DOORS

SUNDAY	1/25	8:45 am	- Sunday School
		10 am	- 3 rd Sunday after Epiphany
		11 am	- SOTH 113 th Annual Meeting
MONDAY	1/26	6 pm	- AA Meeting
TUESDAY	1/27	4-6 pm	- Food Pantry
WEDNESDAY	1/28	3:20 pm	- Confirmation
FRIDAY	1/30	10-noon	- Food Pantry
SUNDAY	2/1	8:45 am	- Sunday School
		10 am	- 4 th Sunday after Epiphany, communion

Mailing Addresses of folks to send words of sympathy, care or cheer.
Please let the secretary know if you would like to be added.

- Carol Stuckert: 216 Mound Park Dr. Elk Mound, WI 54739
- Liz Troyer: 209 E Menomonie St. #185 Elk Mound, WI 54739

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Sunday School Coordinators: Jaime Folczyk

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and Holly Sweeney

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Giving questions contact: Barb Vadnais

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