

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
January 4, 2026 – The Second Sunday after Christmas
Pastor Julia Hanneman Schoenbach

Welcome / Announcements

Prelude

Ole Anderson

GATHERING
(Please Stand)

Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Reconciling God,

C: 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.

P: 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!

C: Amen.

The Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Gathering Hymn

We Three Kings

WOV 646 (1,2,3,4)

The Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Song

Jesus, Name Above All Names

WP 77

Cross-Generation Message

WORD

The First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

The Lord proclaims: Sing joyfully for the people of Jacob; shout for the leading nation. Raise your voices with praise and call out: "The Lord has saved his people, the remaining few in Israel!"

I'm going to bring them back from the north; I will gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the disabled, expectant mothers and those in labor; a great throng will return here. With tears of joy they will come; while they pray, I will bring them back. I will lead them by quiet streams and on smooth paths so they don't stumble. I will be Israel's father, Ephraim will be my oldest child.

Listen to the Lord's word, you nations, and announce it to the distant islands: The one who scattered Israel will gather them and keep them safe, as a shepherd his flock. The Lord will rescue the people of Jacob and deliver them from the power of those stronger than they are. They will come shouting for joy on the hills of Zion, jubilant over the Lord's gifts: grain, wine, oil, flocks, and herds. Their lives will be like a lush garden; they will grieve no more. Then the young women will dance for joy; the young and old men will join in. I will turn their mourning into laughter and their sadness into joy; I will comfort them. I will lavish the priests with abundance and shower my people with my gifts, declares the Lord.

A: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 147:1-11, 20c

The Psalm will be read responsively

A: Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion,

P: who has strengthened the bars of your gates and has blessed your children within you.

A: God has established peace on your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

P: God sends out a command to the earth, a word that runs very swiftly.

A: God gives snow like wool, scattering frost like ashes.

P: God scatters hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against God's cold?

A: The Lord sends forth the word and melts them; the wind blows, and the waters flow.

P: God declares the word to Jacob, statutes, and judgments to Israel.

A: The Lord has not done so to any other nation; they do not know God's judgments.

Hallelujah!

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-1

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ. You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

A: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

The congregation will please stand as able & comfortable

Gospel Verse

(Lights off after Gospel Verse)

Gospel Acclamation

ELW Setting 8, p. 188

The Gospel

P: The Holy Gospel according to: **John 1:[1-9] 10-18**

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Congregation will please be seated

The Sermon

Pastor Julia Hanneman Schoenbach

*The Congregation will please stand as able
(Lights on after Sermon)*

Hymn of the Day ***Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*** **ELW 270** (Vss. 1,2,3)

** Pass Info Slips to Side Aisle and Prayer cards to the inside aisle*

Apostles Creed

A: With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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 into 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.**

The Prayers

A: Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God, you reveal yourself wherever two or three are gathered in your name. Be with us now, not only in the infant Jesus and resurrected Christ, but in the beloved people of this assembly. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You reveal yourself in the waters of the womb; in brooks, ponds, and oceans; and in the waters of baptism. Grant us wisdom to tenderly care for the earth as a garden watered by your grace. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need your life-giving touch this day (*especially*). God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You reveal yourself in holy communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You may now offer a prayer petition either out loud or in your heart. (pause) God of Grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You promise to turn mourning into joy and to comfort those who weep. We remember those who have died and look to being united with them in your glory. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered

P: With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Offering

Special Music

Offertory

We Are An Offering

ELW 692

Offering Prayer

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

Communion

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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 the church on earth and the host of heaven we join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!

ELW 413 (Vs. 1)

P: 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

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

P: God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

(Please be seated)

Communion Distribution

Lamb of God

“Jesus Lamb of God”

W&P 76

Communion Hymns

***The First Noel
Come Let Us Eat
As We Gather at Your Table
For the Fruit of All Creation***

ELW 300 (1-3)

ELW 491 (1-4)

ELW 522 (1-3)

ELW 679 (1-3)

Prayer after Communion

P: 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.

C: Amen.

(The Congregation will please stand as able and comfortable)

Pastor's Blessing

Blessing

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn

God Be With You Till We Meet Again

ELW 536 (1-3)

Dismissal

P: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And peace to God's people on earth!

P: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

C: Thanks be to God.