

January 18, 2026

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The Pathlight

*Your Word Is A Lamp To My Feet
and a Light To My Path.
Ps 119:105*

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Plain But So Powerful

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’” Matthew 3:13-15

John the Baptist was right, you know. Jesus didn't need to be baptized. Jesus is God made Man. Jesus is the God-Man! He is righteousness in the flesh. Shouldn't Jesus be baptizing this prophet strangely dressed and coming out of the wilderness? John understands how much of a sinner he is, and he knows that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the One who takes away the sin of the world. So, Jesus ought to be the One who baptizes!

Oh my! Here once again we can see the overwhelming grace of God at work for you and me! At first this seems totally ludicrous that Jesus insists on John baptizing Him “to fulfill all righteousness.” But if we look at this from the perspective of Jesus, Jesus being the only One who can do what you and I can't, well then it makes perfect sense.

The Second Person of the Trinity began His humiliation at His very conception. At His Baptism, Jesus goes even further into His State of Humiliation, setting aside His Divine glory even more by going down into the waters of the Jordan River. Going into that muddy water He begins to be the “sponge” that will soak up every sin, washed away at every font, by every Baptism that has happened ever since. Jesus is fulfilling the righteous will of God the Father by absorbing into Himself every sin ever committed. This is the moment when Jesus picks up your sinfulness, and every single sin you commit, and begins the path of taking them to His cross on Golgotha.

It's still hard to comprehend. “No, Jesus! I don't want you to have to carry my sin! Why should you sacrifice Your life for me?” Because that is exactly what Jesus was born to do—to take from you what you cannot fix and restore it to perfect righteousness. To keep the Law perfectly, which you cannot. To love your neighbors more sincerely than you ever could. To remake you into His perfect creation, worthy of life with Him for all eternity.

All of that happens in the most boring, lackluster way imaginable - by plain water. But that water is joined with power of God's almighty Word. His word that has the power to create all there is out of nothing. That plain water combined with the words “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Righteousness, is fulfilled for you.

Pastor Christensen

For now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 1 Cor. 13:12

Lutheran Service Book Order of Worship

HYMN # 397 "As with Gladness Men of Old"

LITURGY Divine Service (setting Four) pg. 203 with Communion

CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTiON

INTROIT Bulletin Insert

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 49:1-7

EPiSTLE: 1Corinthians 1:1-9

HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:29-42a

NICiENE CREED pg. 206

HYMN # 402 "The Only Son from Heaven"

SERMON

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT pg. 208

HYMN # 619 'Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior'

399 "The Star Proclaims the King Is Here"

NUNC DiMiTTiS pg.211

COLLECT

BENEDICTION pg. 212

HYMN # 400 "Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning"

Servants today

St.Paul

Organist – Jeanie Boehm

Ushers /Greeters- Brad Ehmke/Murl Abts

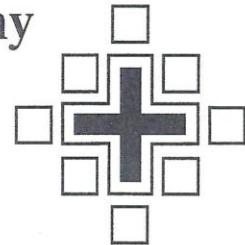
Zion

Organist-Jeanie Boehm

Ushers/Greeters-Dayton & Jodi, Altar Guild-Shelle & Jodi

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

January 18, 2026



INTROIT *Ps. 19:1–4a, b; antiphon: Ps. 19:14*

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable | in your sight,*

O LORD, my rock and my re- | deemer.
The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,*
and the sky above proclaims his | handiwork.
Day to day | pours out speech,*
and night to night reveals | knowledge.
There is no speech, nor | are there words,*
whose voice | is not heard.

Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and their words
to the end | of the world.*

In them he has set a tent | for the sun.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable | in your sight,*

O LORD, my rock and my re- | deemer.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our
days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

GRADUAL *Ps. 117:1–2a; 96:8*

Praise the LORD, all | nations!*
Extol him, all | peoples!
For great is his steadfast | love toward us,*
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures for- | ever.
Ascribe to the LORD the glory | due his name;*
bring an offering, and come in- | to his courts!

DAILY READINGS

January 18: Ezek. 40:1–4; 43:1–12; Rom. 8:18–39; **19:** Ezek. 44:1–16, 23–29; Rom. 9:1–18; **20:** Ezek. 47:1–14, 21–23; Rom. 9:19–33; **21:** Joel 1:1–20; Rom. 10:1–21; **22:** Joel 2:1–17; Rom. 11:1–24; **23:** Joel 2:18–32; Rom. 11:25–12:13; **24:** Joel 3:1–21; Rom. 12:14–13:14.

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Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from
afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named
my name.
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,
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 right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God."
5 And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from 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 eyes 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 bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for 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
nation,
the servant of rulers:
"Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate
themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen
you."

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

1 Paul, called by the will of God to be
an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our
brother Sosthenes,
2 To the church of God that is in Corinth,

to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to
be saints together with all those who in every
place call upon 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 was given
you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in every way you
were enriched in him in all speech and all
knowledge—6 even as the testimony about
Christ was confirmed among you—7 so that
you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as
you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus
Christ, 8 who will sustain you to the end,
guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 God is faithful, by whom you were called
into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Holy Gospel: John 1:29-42a

29 The next day [John] saw Jesus coming
toward him, and said, "Behold, 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 before me, because he was
before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but
for this purpose I came baptizing with water,
that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And
John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend
from heaven like a dove, and it remained on
him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he
who sent me to baptize with water said to me,
'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and
remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy
Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne
witness that this is the Son of God."

35 The next day again John was standing
with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked at
Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the
Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard
him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus
turned and saw them following and said to
them, "What are you seeking?" And they
said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher),
"where are you staying?" 39 He said to them,
"Come and you will see." So they came and
saw where he was staying, and they stayed
with him that day, for it was about the tenth
hour. 40 One of the two who heard John speak
and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon
Peter's brother. 41 He first found his own
brother Simon and said to him, "We have
found the Messiah" (which means Christ).
42a He brought him to Jesus.



Calendar of Events

St. Paul

Jan. 19-9:00AM-Bible Study
7:00PM- Council Meeting
Jan. 21 -5:00PM- Catechism
Jan. 25-8:00AM-Bible Study
9:00AM-Worship Service

Servants for Worship Service-Brian Lanckriet/Gayle Newth/Jeanie Boehm

Zion

Dec. 19-3:30PM-Midweek
Dec. 25-10:00AM-Sunday School
11:00AM-Worship Service/Voters Meeting

Servants for Worship Service- Dayton & Jodi/Shelle & Jodi/Jeanie Boehm



January 22-Tom & Tonia Spyke



January 21-Charlene Landis, Gerald Priest

January 25-Craig Nicolaus

Dear Members of St. Paul,

We so appreciate your food and cash donations to our Big Springs food pantry. We purchased special bread for their Thanksgiving meal. Blessings, Billie Shaw

On Sunday, January 25 at Zion, there will be a Voters Meeting following Worship Service.

All members are invited to stay after the service for our congregational Voters Meeting. Lunch will be provided for everyone. Following the meeting, we will also be taking down the Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work, and all are welcome to join in fellowship and service.

☀️ Bible Brain Teaser: Epiphany Fact-Check Challenge ☀️

On the Second Sunday after Epiphany, we hear four rich readings:

- **Isaiah 49:1–7**
- **Psalm 40:1–11**
- **1 Corinthians 1:1–9**
- **John 1:29–42**

Each passage reveals something about calling, witness, and the light of Christ.

But below is a summary that contains 10 deliberate mistakes — wrong details, mixed-up facts, or things that simply don't appear in the readings at all.

Your challenge:

Spot all 10 errors and correct them using your Bible!

ἱ Epiphany Fact-Check Paragraph (Find 10 Errors!)

Read carefully:

On the Second Sunday after Epiphany, Isaiah describes a servant whom God first notices late in life, after he has already become a famous teacher among Israel. God says this servant will be a light only to the people of Jerusalem, not to any other nations.

In Psalm 40, the psalmist says he rushed impatiently toward God and climbed out of the pit by his own strength, before writing an old song that no one else hears. He insists that God is most pleased with endless animal sacrifices and burnt offerings, far more than with obedience or trust. In 1 Corinthians, Paul writes to the church in Rome, giving thanks that they have received just one small spiritual gift and will probably struggle until Christ is revealed. He warns them that God might abandon them if they are not perfectly strong.

In the Gospel from John, John the Baptist points to Jesus and cries, “Behold, the Lion of Judah, who takes away the sins of the world!” He says he recognized Jesus because of the fiery eagle that descended and remained on him. Two of John’s disciples follow Jesus and ask where he is going to preach that night at midnight; Jesus replies, “Wait and see,” and sends them away alone. Andrew never brings his brother to Jesus, and Simon never receives a new name.

How many can you find?

Circle each error and write the correction!

Answer Key

1. God calls the servant **from the womb**, not late in life.
2. The servant is not a **famous teacher**; he feels he has labored in vain.
3. He is a **light to the nations**, not only Jerusalem.
4. The psalmist **waited patiently**, not rushed impatiently.
5. God gives a **new song**, not an old unheard one.
6. God does **not** desire sacrifices first; He desires obedience and delight in His will.
7. Paul writes to **Corinth**, not Rome.
8. They are **not lacking in any spiritual gift**, not limited to one.
9. God **will strengthen** them; He will not abandon them.

10. **Gospel errors:**

- Jesus is **the Lamb of God**, not the Lion.
- The Spirit descends like a **dove**, not an eagle.
- It was about the **tenth hour** (4 p.m.), not midnight.
- Jesus says "**Come and see**" and they **stay with Him**.
- Andrew **does** bring Simon, and Simon **does** receive the name Cephas/Pete

“Come and See”

Before your name was ever known,
before your heart had fully grown,
the Lord who shaped you tenderly
had whispered, “Child, I’m calling thee.”
Before the waiting wore you thin,
before you sank in doubt again,
God who hears the patient plea
was lifting you from misery.
Before you feared you lacked the grace
to walk the path or run the race,
the Spirit spoke with quiet plea:
“You’re gifted more than you can see.”
And when you followed from afar,
uncertain where His footsteps are,
the Lamb of God turned ’round to you

and asked, “What is your heart pursuing?”
He did not ask for strength or show,
or proof of faith you didn’t know.
He simply said, with gentle plea,
“Come walk with Me — come, come and
see.”
So in this Epiphany light,
when shadows fade and hearts grow bright,
the Savior turns His face to you
and says, “My child, I’m calling too.”
Come bring your questions, hopes, and fear;
come trust the One who draws you near.
For Christ still whispers tenderly:
“You’re loved. You’re mine. Come, come
and see.”



Devotion for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

“When Jesus Turned Around”

There's a quiet moment in the Gospel for the Second Sunday after Epiphany that carries more weight than any miracle. John the Baptist points to Jesus and calls Him the Lamb of God, and two of John's disciples begin to follow. But they don't call out. They don't introduce themselves. They simply walk behind Him — close enough to hope, far enough to hide.

And then Jesus does something that reveals His heart.

He turns around.

He doesn't wait for them to be confident.

He doesn't demand a declaration of faith.

He doesn't ask them to prove anything.

He simply turns toward them and asks, “What are you looking for?”

A man in our congregation once told me that this verse was the first time he ever felt seen by God. He had been carrying a private grief for years — the kind that doesn't show up on prayer lists or hospital charts. He said, “I felt like I was following Jesus from a distance, hoping He wouldn't notice how lost I was.”

Then one Sunday, during this Gospel reading, he heard those words: Jesus turned around.

And he said it felt like Jesus turned toward him — toward the man who didn't know how to pray anymore, toward the man who wasn't sure he belonged in church, toward the man who felt like a disappointment to God.

He said, “I realized I wasn't chasing Jesus. Jesus was already facing me.”

That's the heart of Epiphany.

A God who reveals Himself not through thunder, but through turning.

A Savior who notices the hesitant footsteps of people who aren't sure they deserve to be seen.

A Lord who asks questions not to test us, but to draw us closer.

And then comes the invitation: “Come and see.”

Not “Come and perform.”

Not “Come and explain yourself.”

Not “Come and be perfect.”

Just come.

Just see.

Just be near Him.

Maybe you're carrying questions you can't name.

Maybe you're following at a distance because life has bruised your confidence.

Maybe you're trying to believe again after a long season of silence or disappointment.

Hear this truth:

Jesus has already turned around.

He sees you — the real you, the tired you, the hopeful you, the uncertain you.

And He invites you not to impress Him, but to walk with Him.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for turning toward us before we even know how to speak. Thank You for seeing the quiet places of our hearts and inviting us to come and see. Draw us near. Heal what is hurting. Strengthen what is weary. And let Your gentle presence lead us into the light. Amen.



