

4th Sunday after Epiphany
February 1st, 2026



Divine Service 9am

St. James Lutheran Church
1213 US Hwy 22
Phillipsburg, NJ

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 marks our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

If you are visiting today: Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks.

To the parents of our younger children please:

Sit towards the front so the little ones can see and hear all that is going on and quietly explain parts of the service and what pastor, ushers, etc. are doing. Don't sweat the small stuff-God gave your littles the wiggle, noise and energy they have and we don't want to suppress that in God's house! Children are always welcome here! If you feel as if you need to step out of the service with your child, feel free but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

To the members of our church please:

Welcome children and their parents-their presence is a sign our congregation is growing and a gift to us all.

Following along in the bulletin: *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

Presiding Minister
Assisting Minister
Musician

The Rev. Levi Q. Powers
Dan Gulick
Dave Miller

I. GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross ✝ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✝Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority alone, I forgive you the entirety of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ✝Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*GATHERING HYMN: TFF 292 – Give Thanks

Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,
 give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son,
 Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,
 give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am
 rich," be - the weak say, 'I am stroag. done for us. And
 now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am
 Give thanks!

rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

***GREETING**

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

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: GLORY TO GOD

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



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 OF THE DAY

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

II. WORD

FIRST READING: Micah 6:1-8

A reading from Micah.

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?

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 15

The Psalm is read responsively.

¹ O Lord, who may abide in your tent?
Who may dwell on your holy hill?

² **Those who walk blamelessly and do what is right
and speak the truth from their heart;**

³ who do not slander with their tongue
and do no evil to their friends
nor heap shame upon their neighbors;

⁴ **in whose eyes the wicked are despised
but who honor those who fear the Lord;
who stand by their oath even to their hurt;**

⁵ who do not lend money at interest
and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

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. 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 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.”

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. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:1-12

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 305 – I Lay My Sins on Jesus**

***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 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.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Each petition ends: “...Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**”

Prayers conclude: “Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.” **Amen.**

***Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

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.

III. THE LORD’S SUPPER

OFFERTORY



Scan the QR Code to give electronically.

An offering plate is in the back of the sanctuary if you wish to give check or cash. You are welcome to give to the ministry of St. James Lutheran Church freely and spontaneously. There is no guilt or shame. If you do give, give with a cheerful heart.

***OFFERING VERSE: ELW 188 – Create in Me a Clean Heart**

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

The image shows a musical score for the offering verse. It consists of five staves of music in a single system, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a common time signature 'C'. The music is written in a simple, melodic style with various note values including quarter, eighth, and half notes, and rests. The lyrics are: 'Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.'

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Together with the bread and the cup we receive the body and the blood of Christ. We invite all baptized Christians to this sacrament. Children and adults who do not yet receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward with arms folded for a blessing. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know. We commune in tables of 10-15 people. The pastor will give you the bread, an assistant will give you a cup. Then two will come to pour into your cup-the first with grape juice, the second with wine. Whoever partakes receives orally the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

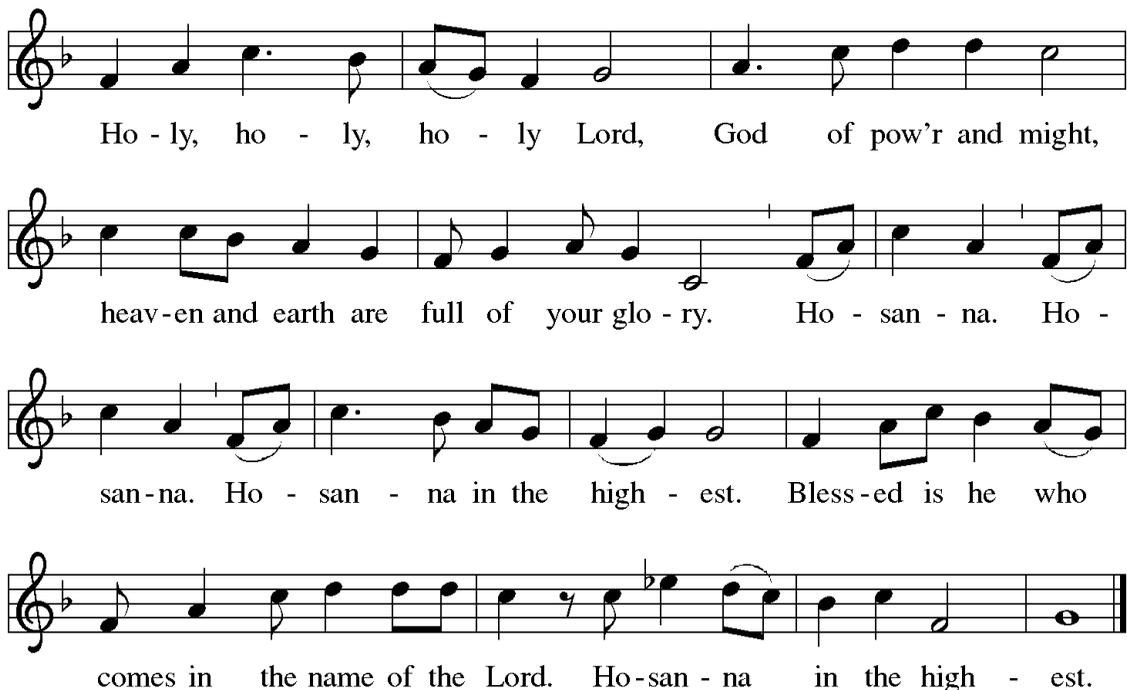
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

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...**Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding:** ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

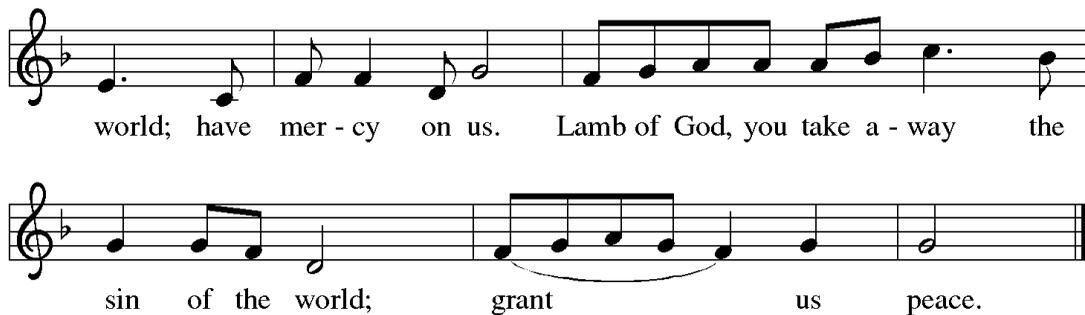


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

***THE WORDS OF GIFT**

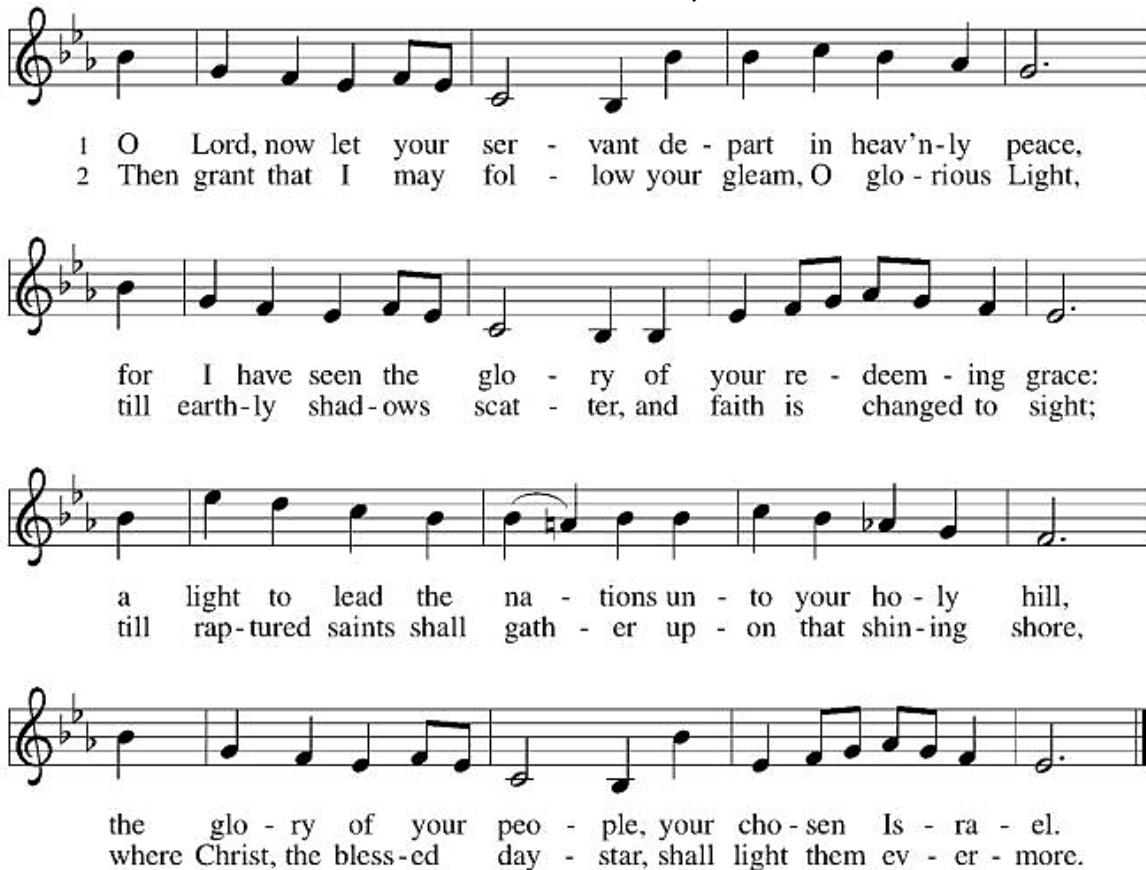
In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new testament in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

***POST COMMUNION SONG: ELW 313 – O Lord, Now Let Your Servant**



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,
2 Then grant that I may fol - low your gleam, O glo - rious Light,
for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
till earth-ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;
a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
till rap - tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin - ing shore,
the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
where Christ, the bless - ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

IV. SENDING

***BLESSING**

Blessing concludes: **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG: LBW 95 – Glory Be to Jesus**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Worship Helpers: Joanne Willauer will be coordinating the monthly schedule. Please contact her at 610-393-6317 or jdwillauer@rcn.com with your available dates!

Annual Congregation Meeting today at 11am, potluck immediately following church service.

Social Ministry Donation Collections for February:
Grains and Carbohydrates - These items are most needed for our local food pantries. Each month we will coordinate with them their needs.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Monday 2/2:** Worship & Music Committee 11:00am

UPCOMING

- **Saturday 2/6:** Church Breakfast 7am-10am
- **Tuesday 2/10:** Property Committee 10am at church
- **Wednesday 2/18:** Ash Wednesday service 7pm
 - Lenten Vespers 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18 and 3/25- 6:15pm soup supper and 7pm service. Soup sign up sheet on bulletin board in hallway.

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP HELPERS(2/1)

Usher/Greeter: Harvey Walters

Lector: Rick Brunsell

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Sandy Wismer & Jon Slaton

NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(2/7)

Usher/Greeter: Boy Scout Sunday

Lector: Boy Scout Sunday

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Steve Stocker

Let us remember in prayer:

The Family & Friends of Donald Grube, The Family & Friends of Keith Dunagan, The Family & Friends of Marian Steinly, The Family & Friends of Helen Steffel, The Family & Friends of Leo Pursell, The Friends & Family of Larry Vietro, The Family & Friends of Kevin Detrick, Debbie, Ron, Gordon, Anne, Keith, Sara, Bob, Patrick, John, Gary, Sharon and those unable to attend church service; Carol, Janet, Janice, Greg, Alayne and Elsie.