

Baptism of Our Lord
January 11th, 2026



Divine Service 9am

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

908.454.2864

www.strawchurch.com

strawchurch@gmail.com



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. Dr. Timothy Wengert
Polly Newbold
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: LBW 90 - Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

*GREETING

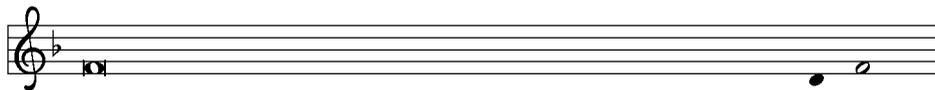
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



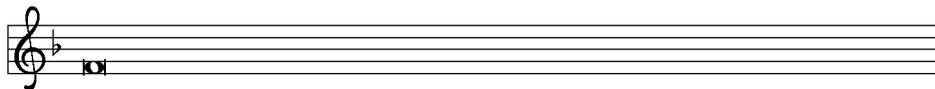
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



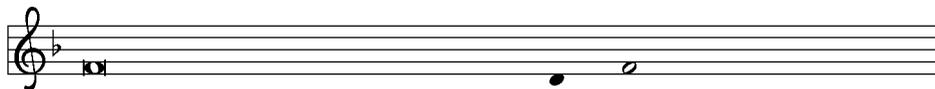
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



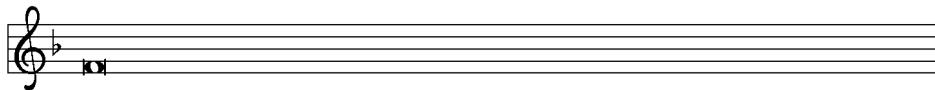
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



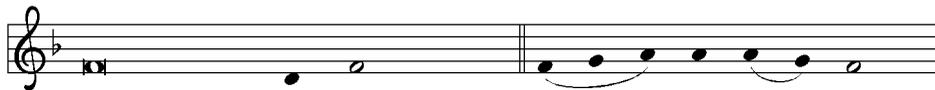
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



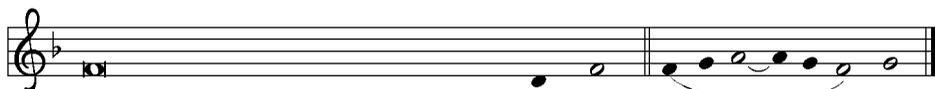
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. With your Spirit comfort us with your gospel, that in our own baptism we have received the full forgiveness of our sin. Empower us all with your Spirit in faith toward you and in fervent love toward our neighbor, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

II. WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 42:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry out or lift up his voice
or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth,
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶ I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸ I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.

⁹ See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 29

The Psalm is read responsively.

¹ Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name;
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

³ The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of ^l glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

⁴ **The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

⁶ **the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

⁷ The voice of the LORD
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

⁸ **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

⁹ The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, "Glory!"

¹⁰ **The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.**

¹¹ O LORD, give strength to your people;
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

SECOND READING: Acts 10:34-43

A reading from Acts.

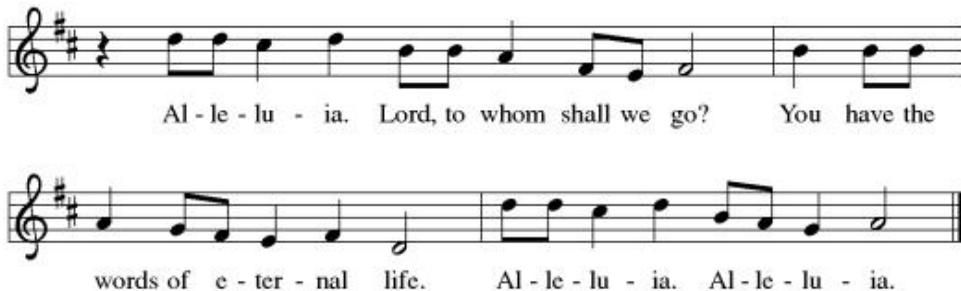
³⁴ Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all.

³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

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 3:13-17

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.

¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: WOV 684 - Spirit of Gentleness**

***NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. 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.

***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.

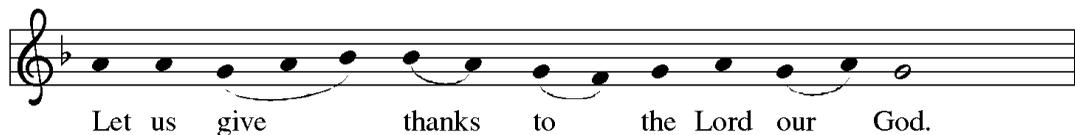
Then two will come to pour into your cup-the first with grape juice, the second with wine. Whoever partakes receives orally the body and blood of Jesus Christ.



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.

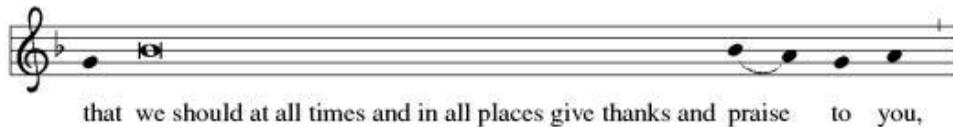


It is right to give our thanks and praise.

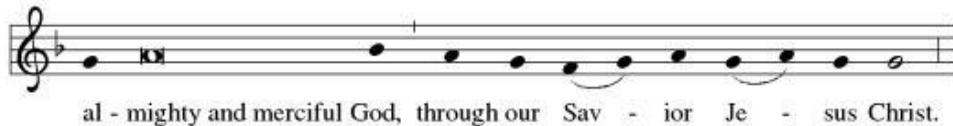
Preface(sung by the pastor)



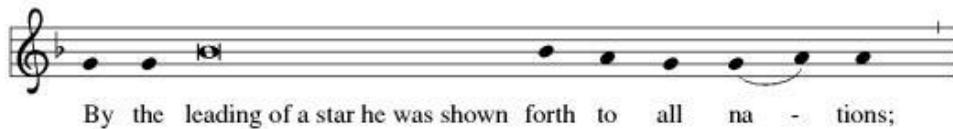
It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,



that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,



al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.



By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all na - tions;



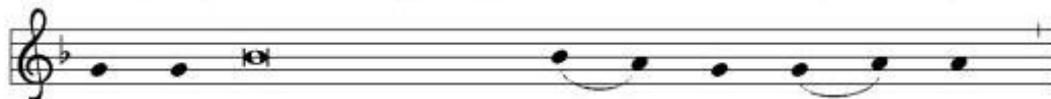
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your be - lov - ed Son,



and in the miracle of water turned to wine he re - vealed your glo - ry.



And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,

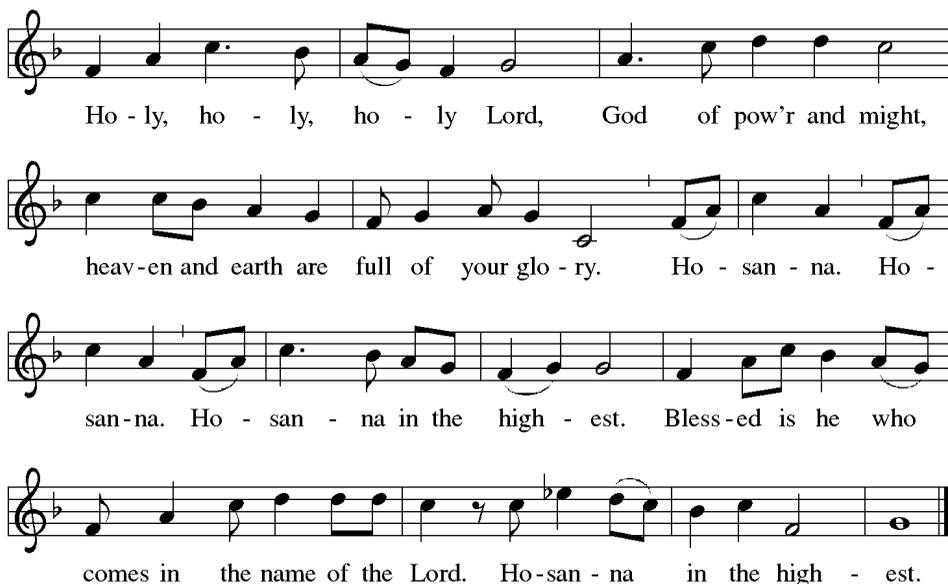


with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,



we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

From *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* copyright © 2006. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Augsburg Fortress under license # _____



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.

***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**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond

Amen.

COMMUNION TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our risen Lord Jesus Christ strengthens you and preserves you into eternal life. **Amen.**

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.

***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**

The Lord blesses you and keeps you, the Lord's face shines on you with grace and mercy, the Lord looks upon you with +favor and gives you peace. **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG: LBW 400 - God, Whose Almighty Word**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

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!

Social Ministry Donation Collections for January:

Canned meats, spices, seasonings, & condiments. Examples: hearty soups, stews, chili, tuna & chicken. These items are most needed for our local food pantries. Each month we will coordinate with them their needs.

Thanks to Pastor Tim Wengert for preaching and presiding while our pastor is away.

Giving Envelopes: 2026 envelopes will be available by the first week of January for pickup in the Lobby. If you did not receive giving envelopes for 2025, and you do not already give electronically – please let Dan Gulick know to include in his planning for 2026 envelopes.

Please sign up for potluck to take place after church on January 18th before the Annual Congregational Meeting that starts at 11am.

Pastor Levi will be away January 11th through 14th for continuing education. If you are in need of emergency pastoral care, reach church president Jon Slaton at 908-319-3992, and he will put you in touch with the on-call pastor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Tuesday 1/13:** Social Ministry Committee meeting 10am at church
- **Thursday 1/16 :** Evangelism Committee's Line Dancing Event from 7pm to 9pm at the church. All Skill Levels Welcome, No Partner Required, Food and Refreshments, a Free Event
- **Sunday 1/18:** Annual Church Congregational meeting, 11am. All are encouraged to attend, in search of new council members!

UPCOMING

- **Tuesday 1/20:** Church Council meeting 7pm at the church
- **Saturday 2/6:** Church Breakfst 7am-10am

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP HELPERS

Usher/Greeter: Doris Lauer

Lector: Harvey Walters

Altar Guild: Barbara and Jim Sikra

Tellers: Sandy Wismer/Don Willauer

NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(1/18)

Usher/Greeter: Bob Agans

Lector: Jamie McRoberts

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Carol & Lois Steible

Let us remember in prayer:

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, Anne, Keith, Sara, Bob, Patrick, John, Gary, Sharon and those unable to attend church service; Carol, Janet, Janice, Greg, Alayne and Elsie.