

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS AT HOME WORSHIP

JANUARY 25, 2026

NICODEMUS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and make us new creations each day, born again out of your eternal love for us. Invite us deeper into the mystery of your world-transforming presence, that we might follow you more closely. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



SCRIPTURE READINGS: FIRST READING: PSALM 139:13-18

¹³For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.

¹⁷How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸I try to count them – they are more than the sand; I come to the end – I am still with you.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL: JOHN 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

This is the Gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

REFLECTION BY ASSISTING MINISTER DICK WERP

I have often wondered about how we as Christians talk about heaven and the afterlife. How Christians talk about the end times and what will come after. And I wonder, how can we know? Will we walk streets paved in gold in our mortal bodies? Will there be a rapture? Or will things be entirely different? I have read multiple authors and prayed a lot about my lack of understanding. Then I read Kurt Gödel.

Kurt Gödel was a brilliant mathematician and logician who worked closely with Albert Einstein. The two were friends and often walked together, talking about deep questions of truth, time, and meaning. Gödel is best known for showing that no system—no matter how smart or well-designed—can fully explain itself. There will always be truths that exist beyond what the system can prove. This kind of thinking mattered deeply to Einstein, and it also fits closely with what Jesus is teaching Nicodemus in John 3. Both Gödel and Jesus challenge the idea that human knowledge alone is enough to understand ultimate truth.

Both Gödel’s ideas and John 3:1–21 point to the limits of human understanding. Gödel showed that logic and reason, as powerful as they are, eventually reach a boundary where they cannot go any further. In John’s Gospel, Nicodemus represents this same limit.

He is a respected religious leader who knows the law and traditions well, yet he cannot understand what Jesus means by being “born from above.” In both cases, human systems—whether math, logic, or religion—are shown to be incomplete on their own.

Another similarity is the call to humility. Gödel’s work reminds us that humans cannot fully control or explain truth. We must admit that there is more to reality than what we can measure or prove. Jesus makes the same point with Nicodemus. Being born again is not something Nicodemus can achieve through learning or effort. It is something God does. Both Gödel and Jesus invite us to let go of pride and certainty and to become open to something greater than ourselves.

Finally, both Gödel’s thinking and Jesus’ words point toward hope beyond our limits. Gödel believed that if the universe is meaningful, then human life must have purpose beyond death. In John 3, Jesus speaks clearly about this hope when he says that God loves the world and offers eternal life. Our limits do not lead to despair; instead, they open the door to faith. Where Gödel shows that truth exists beyond our systems, Jesus reveals that this truth comes from God and brings new life to those who believe.

May God grant us new life in his spirit. AMEN

HYMN OF THE DAY | LOVE DIVINE, ALL LOVES EXCELLING

ELW #631

<https://youtu.be/m4npsZmRhRU?si=AXlBmTaPV4D4Mngx>

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Called together by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

(A brief silence)

God of revelation, nothing can be hidden from you. Shed light on all the corners of our lives, and make us honest to bring our whole selves to you. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of new beginnings, you revealed your light to the world through Jesus Christ. Renew your church in this new year. Open our hearts to fresh vision. Deepen our faith and help us follow where you lead, even when the path is unfamiliar. Make us bold witnesses to your grace and truth. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, you make all things new. As this year begins, bring healing to the earth. Guide those who care for land, water, and air. Inspire all people to live as faithful stewards of your gifts. Where creation groans, bring restoration and hope. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, you call leaders to serve with wisdom and humility. At the start of this year, grant renewed commitment to justice, peace, and the common good. We lift up regions in conflict, especially Iran, Venezuela, Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, Israel, and all others known to you. Turn hearts away from fear and division, and toward mercy, cooperation, and compassion for all people. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of mercy, you meet us at every turning point. We pray for those longing for a fresh start: for people facing illness, grief, unemployment, broken relationships, or uncertainty about the future, especially Bruce and Scott Letz and the family and friends of Ron. Where there is weariness, give strength; where there is despair, bring hope; where there is fear, speak peace. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, we pray for members of our faith community who are sick, healing, or facing hard news. We lift up Pastor Phil, Matt, Brett, Rick and Kelly, Terry, Jim and Sally, Dave, Dorothy, Clover, and all those named on our Prayer Chain. We also pray for those who care for them – family, doctors, nurses, and caregivers – especially James and Chris Elkins and Kirk, Clare, and Gwen Fallon. Surround them with your peace and healing love. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of community, you place us in families, friendships, and neighborhoods. As this new year unfolds, help us grow in love for one another. Heal old wounds, open new possibilities for reconciliation, and teach us to see each day as an opportunity to serve with joy. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

God of wholeness, we pray for the work of the Joshua School. May our relationship with them reflect your love and care for those with special needs. We pray that all those on the Autism Spectrum, especially those in our faith family, might find fulfillment, joy, and love. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of promise, we remember those who have gone before us in faith. As they now rest in your eternal care, strengthen us to trust your future for us, confident that you are always at work bringing life out of death and hope out of endings. God of new beginnings, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your renewing love made known to us in Jesus Christ our Savior, **Amen.**

BLESSING & BENEDICTION

By the tender mercy of our God love has broken upon us! Light is given where once there was darkness and hope where there was only death. We go into this season knowing that God will guide our feet into the way of peace. **Amen.**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.
Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all.
Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

CLICK LINK TO ACCESS READINGS, SERMONS & SPECIAL EVENTS FROM PAST SUNDAYS:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/@SHEPHERDOFTHEHILLSLUTHERAN6221/VIDEOS](https://www.youtube.com/@SHEPHERDOFTHEHILLSLUTHERAN6221/VIDEOS)

SHEPHERD HAPPENINGS: JANUARY 25 – FEBRUARY 1, 2025

Sunday, January 25th – Nicodemus

9:30 a.m. – Hybrid In Person/Zoom Worship with Holy Communion
Coffee and Conversation immediately following Worship
Thrivent Warm Winter Items & Coat Drive Sorting Event

Wednesday, January 28th

11:00 a.m. - Amazing Grace Bible Study

Friday, January 30th

7:00 a.m. – Men's Zoom Breakfast Bible Study
5:00 p.m. – Friday Night Perspectives Zoom Gathering

Sunday, February 1st – The Woman at the Well

9:30 a.m. – Hybrid In Person/Zoom Worship with Holy Communion
Coffee and Conversation immediately following Worship

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY
BIRTHDAYS**

MARY M. 1/27
DAVE N. 1/27
JANICE I. 2/6
ELIZABETH H. 2/15
KATHY W. 2/15
BECCA B. 2/21
CAROLINE M. 2/24



DAILY NARRATIVE LECTIONARY READINGS: WEEK OF JANUARY 25, 2025

Monday, January 26, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/john-322-30-jesus-and-john-the-baptist2026>

John 3:22-30 Jesus and John the Baptist

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/john-331-36-the-one-who-comes-from-heaven2026>

John 3:31-36 The One Who Comes From Heaven

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-1391-6-the-inescapable-god-i2026>

Psalm 139:1-6 The Inescapable God I

Thursday, January 29, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-1397-12-the-inescapable-god-ii2026>

Psalm 139:7-12 The Inescapable God II

Friday, January 30, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-13913-18-the-inescapable-god-iii2026>

Psalm 139:13-18 The Inescapable God III

Saturday, January 31, 2026

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-13919-24-the-inescapable-god-iv2026>

Psalm 139:19-24 The Inescapable God IV

Sunday, February 1, 2026

John 4:1-42 The Woman at the Well

WELCOME! *Thank you for worshiping with us today!*

GUESTS

Please sign our Guestbook and/or fill out the brightly-colored Info Slip and place it in the offering plate. This helps us get to know you better so that we can serve you more effectively.

DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NEED PRAYERS?

Prayer Changes Things. The Shepherd Prayer Chain members stand by ready to help. You'll find our Prayer Box on the table to your left as you enter the building, as well as paper and pencils. Please write your prayer request and place it in the box. *You are not required to sign your request or give the name of the person for whom we will pray, unless you wish.* If you desire a private conversation with Pastor Janet, please contact the Church Office or call her on her cell phone at 507-360-1625. **All prayer requests will remain confidential.**

CHILDREN ARE CHERISHED AT SHEPHERD!

In our Sanctuary, you'll see a coloring table and soft toys. Children's bulletins are available on the table just outside the Sanctuary. If at any time you wish to take your child out for some quiet time, our Nursery/Library is stocked with supplies for playing, coloring, studying the Children's Bulletin, or reading.

REMEMBRANCE

On the north wall of the Sanctuary a table is set with candles. You are invited to light a candle in memory of a loved one at any time before, during, or after our worship service.

COMMUNION

At Shepherd of the Hills, we recognize that the Table of Communion is not our table. It is not a Lutheran table. It is our Lord's Table — a meal prepared for all — prepared in love. *Please come.* All who long for the Good News in Jesus Christ are truly welcome at this table. As Jesus called children to be close to him, we, likewise, extend this invitation to all children. Should you not feel comfortable receiving the Sacrament, please come forward indicating that you wish to receive a blessing by folding your arms over your chest.

COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF WORSHIP

Arrangements can be made to bring communion to you at a time convenient for you. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend normal services, such as a hospital stay or for personal reasons, and wish to have communion brought to you, please contact the Church Office, Pastor Janet at 507-360-1625, or Dick Werpy at 720-771-6767.

MEMBERSHIP

At Shepherd, we worship as one Faith Family. If you wish to extend your worship to include membership, please see Pastor Janet.

Shepherd of the Hills

LUTHERAN CHURCH

PARTNERS IN WORSHIP

THE MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE

PASTOR: REV. JANET COLBY KETTERING

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: CAROLINE MICHALAK

ALTAR GUILD: KEN & GERRY MOORHEAD, LYNN TRUMBLE & KAY WERPY

ASSISTING MINISTERS: TIM KIRCHOFF & DICK WERPY

PIANIST: MARGARET SCHARFF

PRAYER CHAIN ADMINISTRATOR: KATHY WOOTTON

SHEPHERD COUNCIL:

JOHN YARBERRY, PRESIDENT

DICK WERPY, VICE-PRESIDENT

KELLY MAUER, SECRETARY

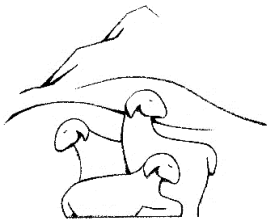
TERRY SCOBY, TREASURER

WAYNE OTTO & JIM TIMMERMANN, BUILDING & MAINTENANCE

JANICE IRISH, MICHELLE KIRCHOFF, CINDIE SCOBY & PASTOR JANET KETTERING

ZOOM TECHNICIAN: FUZZ NEWKIRK

OUR MISSION STATEMENT



Marked by the Cross of Christ Forever, we

† *Gather in Love*

† *Grow in Faith*

† *Share God's Love & Grace*

† *We are Empowered to BOLDLY*

Proclaim & Witness God's Word



7077 Harvest Road, Boulder, CO 80301 Office: 303-530-4422
Email: shepherdboulder@gmail.com Website: www.shepherdboulder.org
Check out our Facebook page at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran