

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
JANUARY 25, 2026
NICODEMUS



WELCOME & GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP

The God who knit us together calls us now.
We come in wonder at God's profound words.
Let us hear and wrestle with God's Word together.
God, teach us your truth in new ways.

CENTERING HYMN | COME AND FILL OUR HEARTS (REPEAT 3X) ELW #528

GATHERING

Come and Fill Our Hearts
Confitemini Domino

528

Musical notation for the first system of the hymn, featuring a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no quo - ni - am bo-nus.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho - ly.

Musical notation for the second system of the hymn, featuring a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no. Al - le - lu - ia!
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al - le - lu - ia!

CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another.

(Pause for silence and reflection.)

God of grace and mercy, we who have seen the signs of Jesus' presence in the world still fall into doubt and despair. We put our trust in ourselves and in the powers of the world, in material goods and in finite and fallible people. In our fear, we act out against our neighbors and hurt those most in need of our help. Restore our faith, O God. Forgive us for our failings and make us one with our beloved siblings throughout creation.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Your God hears and answers, beloved children, and with love and tenderness washes away all your sins. As a called and ordained minister in the church of Christ, and by his power, I declare this good news: You are always whole, always loved, and always held, even in your doubts and failings. Go forth with joy in this knowledge. **Amen.**

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.**

FIRST READING: PSALM 139:13-18

(PLEASE READ RESPONSIVELY)

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

¹⁴**I 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.

¹⁶**Your 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!

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

HOLY GOSPEL: JOHN 3:1-21

Lector: Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He 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."

Pastor: Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

Lector: Nicodemus 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?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The 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.”

Pastor: Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For 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.

Lector: Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those 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.

Pastor: And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But 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.

SERMON

PASTOR JANET KETTERING

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Eternal God, you call us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY | LOVE DIVINE, ALL LOVES EXCELLING

ELW #631



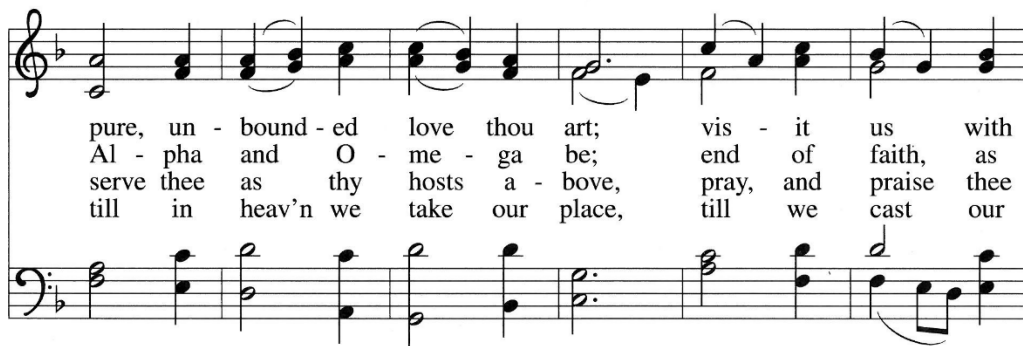
1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

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 to the dead.

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 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.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

(Please share a sign of God's love and peace with each other.)

OFFERING/OFFERING PRAYER

All that we have is yours, O God. Accept and use these gifts in ways we cannot begin to imagine, to reach those whom we will never meet, but to whom we are joined by your love for all humanity. For the sake of Jesus. Amen.

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY: SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks and praise to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We celebrate the Spirit of God, who hovered over creation and brought order out of formlessness. We celebrate the Spirit of God, who filled Jesus with power and wisdom and, through Him, made the life of God available to all. We celebrate the Spirit of God, who has been poured out on all people, and leads us into the reign of God. As we gather at the Lord's table, we recognize the Spirit's Presence among us and we open our hearts to Its influence.

Let us pray: **Most Holy and Gracious God, we pray not only for ourselves, but for others – known and unknown, named and unnamed. Deliver to all the comfort and peace of your love that surpasses all understanding.**

Bless our world, O Lord, and by your Spirit let your harmony and justice prevail. Bless our church, uniting us in the truth of your Word and empowering us in ministry to the world. Bless our family and friends, watching over and providing peace to them. Bless all who are suffering by embracing them in your loving arms. Bless each person here this morning, keeping us all faithful to you. Amen.

Lord, we come knowing that we depend on you for life and truth and love. We come knowing that you welcome us with open and accepting arms. We come ready to meet with you and be changed by the encounter, remembering that on that night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and drink; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

So now, we eat and we drink and we remember Jesus and his great love for us, praying the prayer he taught us:

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.

We do not need to sneak out to see Jesus in the dead of night. He stands on the mountaintop and proclaims for all to hear, "Come and be fed at this holy table!" Siblings in Christ, this invitation is for you, today and forever.

SHARING THE MEAL

This is the body of Christ, broken in love for you.

This is the blood of Christ, poured out in forgiveness of you.

COMMUNION HYMN | ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

ELW #496

496

One Bread, One Body

Refrain



One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all; one cup of



bles-ing which we bless, and we, though man-y



through-out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.



1 Gen - tile or Jew, ser - vant or free,
2 Man - y the gifts, man - y the works,
3 Grain for the fields, scat-tered and grown,



Refrain

wom - an or man, no more.
one in the Lord of all.
gath-ered to one for all.

Text: John Foley, SJ, b. 1939

Music: John Foley, SJ

Text and music © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ, and OCP Publications

ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

4 4 6 and refrain

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy, gracious God, here at this table your promise of life is made tangible. We have rested in the depth of your love and tasted your nourishing presence. At this table, you have offered us life. Together, by your grace, we accept that life and give you thanks. Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection, that all may know life and love in Jesus' name. Amen.

CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.**

SENDING HYMN | CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT

ELW #715



Christ, Be Our Light

715



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.



Refrain
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
 Music: Bernadette Farrell
 Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell, admin. OCP Publications

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT
 98 96 and refrain

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)

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SCRIPTURE READINGS — NEW REVISED STANDARD BIBLE, UPDATED EDITION

RESPONSE TO THE WORD — ERIC MILNER WHITE

APOSTLES CREED — EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP

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BLESSING & BENEDICTION — CAROL PENNER

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: CAROLINE MICHALAK

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

ASSISTING MINISTER: DICK WERPY

AUDIO TECHNICIAN: MARK "FUZZ" NEWKIRK

LECTOR: MICHELLE KIRCHOFF

PASTOR: REV. JANET KETTERING

PIANIST: MARGARET SCHARFF

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

SHEPHERD HAPPENINGS: JANUARY 25 – FEBRUARY 1, 2026

Sunday, January 25th – Nicodemus

9:30 a.m. – Hybrid In Person/Zoom Worship with Holy Communion

Coffee & 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 & Conversation immediately following Worship

DAILY NARRATIVE LECTIONARY READINGS: WEEK OF JANUARY 25, 2026

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>

Psalms 139:1-6

The Inescapable God I

Thursday, January 29, 2026

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

Psalms 139:7-12

The Inescapable God II

Friday, January 30, 2026

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

Psalms 139:13-18

The Inescapable God III

Saturday, January 31, 2026

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

Psalms 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:

MICHELLE KIRCHOFF, PRESIDENT

JANICE IRISH, VICE-PRESIDENT

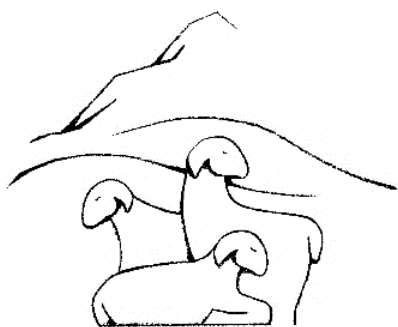
KELLY MAUER, SECRETARY

REV. PHIL KETTERING, TREASURER

JIM TIMMERMAN, BUILDING & MAINTENANCE

ERIC MICHALAK, CINDIE SCOBY & PASTOR JANET KETTERING

AUDIO TECHNICIAN: FUZZ NEWKIRK



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Marked by the Cross of Christ Forever, v
+ Gather in Love
+ Grow in Faith
+ Share God's Love & Grace
+ We are Empowered to BOLDLY
Proclaim & Witness God's Word



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