

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026



PRELUDE

We arrive from many places as music gathers us into one shared moment in the Spirit.

WELCOME STATEMENT

Everyone is invited into God's story and the life of this community.

PROCESSIONAL

"Blest are They"

ELW 728

We journey together as a people called into God's story, walking in the way of Jesus.

GREETING

God names us as beloved and draws us into community.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We tell the truth about our lives and hear again that grace comes first.

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice, you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares:

Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We ask the Spirit to prepare our hearts for hearing God's word.

Let us pray.

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure of heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

God speaks across time and tradition: in promise, struggle, praise, and the life of Jesus.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Micah 6:1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.

A reading from Micah.

Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

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.

"O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!
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.
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."

"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?
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?"
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?

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God

PSALM RESPONSE

Psalm 15

We give voice to God's faithfulness, participating in the living story of God's mercy and love by echoing the ancient prayers of God's people.

LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill?

Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right, who speak the truth from their heart;

they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends; they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD. They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.

They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

A reading from First Corinthians.

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. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

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? 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. For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

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. 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; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Holy Wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

(The Assembly stands for the gospel.)

We sing in joy, welcoming the promises of God's love revealed in Jesus.

S 188

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, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

The gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
 for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
 for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 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, Lord Christ.

SERMON

Rev. Phillip Potaczek

We hear God's promise proclaimed to us, and the Spirit works in our hearts to make it real.

(The Assembly stands.)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Let Streams of Living Justice"

ELW 710

We respond to the promises of God in song.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

ELW pg 105

We join the wider church in naming the story that holds us.

**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 INTERCESSION

We entrust all into God's care.

After each prayer petition, please respond: Merciful God. **Receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

We offer signs of Christ's peace, joining God's work of reconciliation.

May the peace of the Lord be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We have seen the light of Christ!

Thanks be to God! We offer what we have and who we are, that God's light may be shared with the world.

OFFERING/ OFFERING MUSIC

"I Am Yours"

Darlene Zschech

We return our gifts to God, offering ourselves for the life of the world.

Verse 1

God of grace God of love
God of mercy all glorious
In Your Presence I remain
Your love filling me again
I am Yours I am Yours

Verse 2

God of peace God of strength
God of wonders my defense
I will worship at Your throne
Your sacrifice has made me whole
I am Yours I am Yours

Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God
Who takes away my sin
Lord Jesus crucified for me
This love that knows no end
Your love has set me free
To You I give my all
I am Yours

Verse 3

God of hope God of life
God forever be lifted high
Jesus Christ revealed in me
My whole life an offering
I am Yours I am Yours

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OFFERING PRAYER

God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

We lift our hearts and give thanks for God's life-giving work.

The Lord be with you. **And also 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

We remember God's faithfulness and join heaven and earth in praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy ... And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW Setting 1, pg 108

We join the song of heaven and earth, proclaiming God's glory and holiness as we prepare to receive Christ's presence at the table.

5108

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

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

We recall the story of Jesus and ask the Spirit to make us one.

Holy God, you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star.....we proclaim with all creation the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Modern Version

We pray as Jesus taught, trusting God for what we need.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as our Savior taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome to God's table of grace, receiving Christ's presence as nourishment for the journey.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All who wish to know the love of God in Jesus Christ are invited to Holy Communion. Inform a communion assistant if you need a gluten-free host. Grape juice is located in the center ring of the tray. If you are not receiving the sacrament today, please come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing.

COMMUNION HYMN

“We Come to the Hungry Feast”

ELW 479

Singing in response to God's gift, we enter more deeply into the presence of Christ.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We ask for strength to live what we have received.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We share news and opportunities to live God's love together as a community.

BLESSING

God's promise goes with us into whatever comes next.

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise † bless you now and forever.

Amen.

RECESSIONAL

“We Are Called”

ELW 720

With hearts lifted, we turn toward the world as Christ's people.

SENDING

We are sent to love, serve, and live the story we have shared.

Our Eucharist has ended. Now it must be lived.

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Give Thanks”

Henry Smith

As worship concludes, music strengthens and inspires us for the journey ahead.

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*****Trinity at a Glance*****

- **Today, February 1st, is our Annual Congregational Meeting at 11 am** immediately after Holy Communion. A quorum of 50 congregation members is needed. Please plan to attend. Thank you!
- **Worship Assistants are needed for March.** If you would like to help serve in this capacity, please sign up by Java Junction in the Worship Assistant book.
- **First Communion Class Registration has started!** To register please contact the office at 815-434-0596 or by emailing Pastor Phil at pastorphil@trinitylutheranottawa.com. Individuals who have not yet received the Sacrament of Holy Communion who are aged 7 or older are invited!
- **We have a couple of 2026 calendars left (\$20). Profits go to the Growing Project.** Please contact the office during regular business hours if you would like one. Marj Nelson 815-973-1286 and Kate Reed 815-830-2061 also have copies available.
- **The next Blood Drive will be on Wednesday, February 11, 2026.** Contact Carol Wahlstrom if interested in helping or donating.
- **First Communion Classes** are scheduled for **9am-9:50am on Sunday, March 15th & March 29th, 2026.** We meet in Fellowship Hall, beneath the Sanctuary. **First Communion Sunday is Sunday, April 12th, 2026.**
- There is a **Lost and Found** bin by the coat rack in the Sanctuary. There is also a ring found and held in the office. If items are not claimed, they will be donated to the garage sale. If the ring is yours, please call the office 815-434-0596 or send an email to tlcoffice@trinitylutheranottawa.com.
- **CURRENT FINANCIAL REPORT:**
 - Dec Income =19,284.48 (Income YTD = \$234,353.29)
 - Dec Expense = \$18,099.46 (Expense YTD = \$40,134.30)
 - Income Less Expense = \$1,185.02 (Income Less Expense YTD = -\$5,781.01)
 - Loan Payment = \$2,943.30
 - Principal Payment = \$1,000.00
 - Left On Loan = \$406.68

