

Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 18, 2026 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 4

Prelude Music

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Mighty God, lover of justice,

C: ...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.

P: 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 \ddagger Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

Sending Song: *Miracles*

The One who made the blind to see is moving here in front of me, moving here in front of me.

The One who made the deaf to hear is silencing my every fear, silencing my every fear.

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

The One who does impossible is reaching out to make me whole, reaching out to make me whole.

The One who put death in its place, His life is flowing through my veins, His life is flowing through my veins!

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

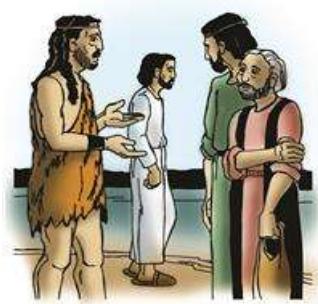
I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

The God who was and is to come, the power of the Risen One, the God who brings the dead to life:
You're the God of miracles! You're the God of miracles!

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.

I believe in You. I believe in You. You're the God of miracles.



Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

C: And also with you!

Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. C: Lord, have mercy.

A: 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. C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by your Spirit hold us forever, that through your grace we may worship you and faithfully serve you, follow you and joyfully find you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Children's Message

Pr Paul

First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

Here the servant, identified as Israel, speaks for herself and describes her honored mission. Called before her birth like Jeremiah and John the Baptist, the servant is not only to restore Israel. The servant's ultimate assignment is to bring news of God's victory to the ends of the earth. God in faithfulness has chosen Israel for this task.

1 Listen to me, O coastlands; pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born; while I was in my mother's womb he named me. 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. 3 And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." 4 But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord and my reward with my God." 5 And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—6 he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." 7 Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand up; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation:**Alleluia**

S 151a

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
 You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: John 1:29-42

John the Baptist's witness to Jesus initiates a chain of testimony as his disciples begin to share with others what they have found.

P: A reading from... C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

29 John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ 31 I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” 32 And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.” 35 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” 37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. 40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). 42 He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:**Lift Every Voice and Sing**

ELW 841

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 Church / Sign of the Peace (Let us give one another a sign of peace according to your comfort level.)

Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta - ble
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: 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.

Words of Institution

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.

Communion (Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available)

Communion Songs:

Lamb of God
Amazing Grace

ELW 336

ELW 779

Final Blessing

P: May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise + bless you now and forever. **C: Amen.**

Sending Song: *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*

I have decided...to follow Jesus, I have decided...to follow Jesus,
I have decided...to follow Jesus; no turning back...no turning back.,

Though I may wonder, still I will follow; though I may wonder, still I will follow;
...though I may wonder, still I will follow; no lookin' back, no lookin' back!

The world around me, the Lord before me, the world around me, the Lord before me,
...the world around me, the Lord before me, I'm movin' on, I'm movin' on!

I have decided...to follow Jesus, I have decided...to follow Jesus,
I have decided...to follow Jesus; no turning back...no turning back.

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 18, 2026

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1/18—Kathleen Endline
1/19—Ron Dork

1/19—Tracey Moyer
1/23—Lee Russell

1/25—Laura Hahn
1/25—Jane Kurkowski

Worship Servants for January 18

Preaching & Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Doug Cunningham

Lector—Jan Stretlien

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: By Jim & Dorene Boyd in Celebration of their 45th Wedding Anniversary
By Barbara Oster in Memory of her father, Richard Oster

Hospitality: Jim & Dorene Boyd
A/V—Dale Wentzloff / Jim Hinds
Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis
Welcome Table—Volunteer
Bell Ringer—Gail Goldsmith
Front Door Monitor—Tom & Jana Rockne
Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter / Barbara Oster
Counters: Carl Lehto / Barb Graf

Grief Group will meet tomorrow, January 19th at 3:30pm

Alanna's Back! I've missed you all! I will be working in the office on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30am - 12:30pm, and on Wednesdays from 11:30am - 2:30pm on all other weeks. I will also work from home throughout the week, and my first Sunday back in church will be January 18th. I will keep an updated work schedule on the outside of my cubicle. Thank you for giving me time at home with my sweet Ellie girl (and Sammy!) over the last two months - it was such precious time, and now I'm excited to be back!

Safe Harbor: Next weekend- starting the 24JAN- Bethlehem hosts at Safe Harbor with food service and assistance to the staff in a number of other ways. We still have opportunities for you to be involved. Check the sign-up sheets on the table in the Gathering Space. Need to get these filled today! Thank you! Tom Rockne, BLC Safe Harbor Coordinator 231-631-0040 or tomrockne@gmail.com.



Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser! Support Bethlehem's youth by enjoying a delicious pancake breakfast on January 25th before church! The youth will be cooking and serving to raise funds for their upcoming ski trip!

Have you always wondered a little about Scottish heritage and their world renown poet, Robert Burns? If so, please come to the BLC fellowship hall on Sunday Jan 25 at 2:00 to celebrate his birthday. We will have live gentle background music on a Celtic harp, and a little of the LOUD sound from the bagpipes. We are asking you to bring a dish to pass if possible. Already on the menu are: haggis, glazed ham, cock' a leeky soup, Scottish mince with potatoes, Scottish shortbread. (You don't have to try the haggis if you don't want to.) All tableware will be provided unless you prefer to bring your own. PLEASE RSVP to cmonroe@chartermi.net or 231 631 0887 so we know how many tables we should set up for the meal.

Please join the Creation Care Vision Committee on Saturday, January 31

as we hike at Camp Greilick. We will meet at the trailhead at 9:30a.

We will plan to hike for approximately 1-1.5 hours. 4754 Scout Camp Rd, Traverse City, MI 49696. If you have snowshoes, please bring them.

We will have extra pair on hand, as well. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.



Souper Bowl Sunday – February 8, 2026 Immediately following the church service, join us for our first annual Souper Bowl Sunday – a delicious way to fight hunger in our community! Looking for a few “souper volunteers” to bring a crockpot or large pot of your favorite homemade soup (enough to share). This will be a take-out only event offering containers filled with warm soups, breads, and desserts. All free-will donations will benefit our Food Pantry. To volunteer by bringing soup, sign up in the Gathering Space or contact Peg Peppler at peppler6088@gmail.com or 585-414-8200.

Choir News: The choir has resumed its practice schedule on Mondays at 2:30.. Come and join in the musical fun!



Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education hold their classes at 9:15am on Sunday. **The Wednesday Zoom Book/Bible Study** meets at 1:30pm with a study of James using the book *James: Walking in Wisdom* by Lydia Brownback. Please see either Pr Paul or Barbara for more information.

Verse Ontap: The January 25th event has been postponed.

Social Ministry and Outreach Group Activity Super Saturday February 7, 2026 - Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency. More information is in the narthex. We need your name if you can volunteer. The reason for this early notice is that DHS needs to run a background check, which is required for those volunteering. They need the information well in advance of the event.

NEW MEMBERS: The new member meeting will be on Sunday, February 1st immediately after the service. If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chair Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net.

Chair Yoga will continue meeting at 3:00pm on Mondays only. It is still \$5 per class



Social Ministry/Outreach update: Please step forward to volunteer when a call is put out for assistance with any of these activities:

Jan 24-28 Safe Harbor under the leadership of Tom Rockne.

Feb. 7 Northwest Michigan Action Agency Super Saturday event at the Career Tech Center on Parsons Rd (Carolyn Mann or Nancy Ammann)

Any time-If you feel the spirit calling you to volunteer at Jubilee House contact Pastor Derek Quinn at 231 947 2330 or email dquinn@gracetc.org.

Monthly outreach meal: We already have a group of 6 volunteers to prepare a community meal the 4th Sunday of the month at Grace Episcopal. We would like to have 6 more volunteers so each volunteer is only needed 6 times per year. Please prayerfully consider this service so we can begin offering a meal in March or sooner.

If questions, concerns, or ideas contact Cindy Monroe or Jim Hutchison. Next meeting for the full group will be scheduled in March.

SAVE YOUR PAPER SACKS: Please check the nooks and crannies of your home for paper sacks. The Baby Pantry fills requests from preschool teachers for their students whose parents cannot make it to the pantry. Paper sacks are the perfect size to place the needed items for each child. Just place your bags on the Care table in the coat room. Thank you!!

Coffee and Cookies: Our wonderful volunteers Mary Ann Tanis and Diane Cunningham have indicated a willingness to continue offering this after the Sunday service as long as there are volunteers who bring the goodies and help with clean-up after. Our thanks to these two women for their wonderful display of the goodies and the clean-up after. Thanks to all of you who have shared goodies, and please feel free to continue to do so.

A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips. We received a check from Oleson's for \$207.55 for a total of \$1031.80 so far this year. Olesons' slips never expire. Please continue to turn in your Oleson's receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks so much!!! Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair or any other grocery store. We just collect for Olesons

Volunteers for Watching the Front Door During Worship: The Safety and Security Committee has the new sign up sheets available. We need volunteers who can be available to stay in the Gathering Space to lock the doors and let in late comers for Sundays. We appreciate all of the volunteers. If you have any questions, the committee members are Gail Goldsmith, Maureen Bauer, Jana Rockne, and Dave Peppler.



The January issue of the STAR is available. If you receive the weekly email, your January issue was emailed on January 4th. The shut-ins will receive an issue by mail. There will also be a few copies available on the counter by the mailboxes. You may also contact the office at 947-9880 to request that mail delivery continues. For current issues of the Star, feel free to check online at <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>.

Offerings: Even though the offering plates are passed during the service, you may use the vase in the back of the Sanctuary if you prefer not to touch the offering plate.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: We often find the front door and/or the kitchen door unlocked when there is no one in the building. Please be sure that the doors are locked when you leave.

Please Note:

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Please note that Phil will work these days until next summer

Alanna Steffunick-Boomer/Ministry Coordinator working in the office on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30am - 12:30pm, and on Wednesdays from 11:30am - 2:30pm on all other weeks. She will also work from home throughout the week.

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes? Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council: bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes OR you may call the office to request a copy.



Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar: Please call Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or admin@bethlehemtc.org

Celebrate a new child in your life with a rose on the baptismal font! Cost \$10.00 per rose. Contact Barbara Oster at beo6475@yahoo.com or 231.668.7038.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. **Leave them in plastic bags by the garage.** These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations? It is now located inside the coat room to the right. Your donations are very much appreciated.

LOST AND FOUND: If you lose something in the church building, please check our Lost and Found box located in the Coat Room. Also, if you find something, please put it in the box.

Yarn Available: There is yarn available free for the taking located in the cabinets located under the mailboxes in the Narthex. Take what you need.

Name tags: Your name tags are in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and with so many recent new members it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

Have something important going on at Bethlehem that you'd like others to know about? Maybe a Small Group? A Club Event? Feature it on the Screen Announcements, weekly emails and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included in any of these, please reach out to Alanna.Steffunick@bethlehemtc.org **If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna at her email above.**

Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. Please use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$45. The check should be payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the offering plate on Sunday morning (Preferable) or during the week, in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either "in honor" or "in memory" or "to celebrate". If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

Today's Prayer Recipients: Please send any changes or additions by email to admin@bethlehemtc.org

Harper Wiemerslage,
Jerry Hill,
John Block,
Roy DuMond,
Mary Woodring,
Norm Fred,
Lynn,
Steve,
Sherry,
Bob,
Ron Hellenga,
John Stretlien,

Judy Fenton,
Cindy Hitesman,
Richard Fernholz,
Julie Lapeer,
Lee,
Chris,
Dale and Cheryl,
Leroy,
Julie Barrett,
Patti,
Sharon,
Kyle,

Ben,
Marianne,
Christine,
Janet,
Cheryl
Pat,
Greg,
Joan Maule,
Jan Schmidt
Pat Burton



The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, January 18

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)

Thursday, January 22

5:30pm—ACA (FH)
7:00pm—Solar Faithful Webinar

Friday, January 23

STAR Articles Due
6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

Saturday, January 24

8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, January 25

8:45am—Pancake Breakfast (FH)
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
2:00pm—St Andrews Society (FH)

Monday, January 19

10:00am—Sustaining Endowment (CR)
2:30pm—Choir (S)
3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)
3:30pm—Grief Group

Tuesday, January 20

Bulletin articles due today
9:00am—Property Work Group
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)
1:00pm—Friendship Bible Study (Offsite)
6:30pm—Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 21

11:30am—Music Rehearsal
1:30pm—Book/Bible Study (Zoom & YR)



SOLAR FAITHFUL

Share Bethlehem's "solar story" and spread the word for others to check it out:

Webinar

for interested churches or nonprofits – Thursday, 1/22 at 7pm

Do you know of a congregation or faith-based nonprofit who would like to install clean, renewable solar power and:

- Do their part to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change,
- Become energy independent,
- Save money on their utility bills.

Solar Faithful has been providing technical and financial expertise since 2023. Let us show you how you can join the many organizations we have already helped.

Solar Faithful has created a webinar specifically for and with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. They have encouraged us to invite folks of all denominations and faiths.

We hope to see you online on Thursday 1/22 at 7:00PM (Eastern). Register on the synod website (www.mittensynod.org), here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fBGsGUiS5ipiUoEQ2vFJQ> or

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fBGsGUiS5ipiUoEQ2vFJQ#/registration>

