

4TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

PASTOR ED PEASE

FEBRUARY 1, 2026



Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

(*please stand as you are able)

(Congregation reads **bold print**)

Welcome & Announcements

*Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires 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 is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive 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 minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

*Opening Hymn "Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table" #977 ACS

*Greeting

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

*Kyrie p.138

*Prayer of the Day

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in 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.

First 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.

¹ Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ² 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.

³ "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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."

⁶ "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? ⁷ 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?" ⁸ 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?

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: 15

¹ LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill?

² **Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right, who speak the truth from their heart;**

³ they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴ **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.**

⁵ 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.

Second 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.

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ For it is written,

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

²⁰ 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? ²¹ 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. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ 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. ²⁷ 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; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation -- p. 142**

*The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 5th Chapter. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

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

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² 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, O Christ.**

Children's Message

Message

Hymn "Let Streams of Living Justice" #710

*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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries (*faith-based organizations may be named*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way (especially we pray for Scout, Barb, Carla, Barb, Diane, Bill, Ed, Pat, Jeni, Kenny, and Jayme). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. 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.

***Peace**

May the peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

Offering

***Offering Prayer**

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.

Amen.

***Great Thanksgiving**

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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***Holy, Holy, Holy** p. 144

***Thanksgiving at the Table** p.144

***Lord's Prayer**

***Invitation to Communion**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

Communion (table)

You will be ushered to the communion rail one group at a time. Pastor motions for those who wish to kneel. The bread/wafers (gluten free wafers are on the pedestal in front of the font) and wine/juice are distributed and children receive a blessing. Pastor blesses and dismisses each group together. Exit along the outside aisle, placing your empty cup in the holders there.

Distribution Hymns: #1062 ACS – Build a Longer Table; #714 – O God of Mercy, God of Light

***Prayer after Communion**

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

***Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

***Sending Hymn** "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve #551

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Baptized believers sent into God's world to share God's love and grace.

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Welcome! May you be blessed as we worship together!

Pastor Ed Pease:

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- A special welcome to any visitors! Please take the time this morning to fill out the visitor card located with the hymnals and either place it on the offering plate or give it to an usher.
- There is a confirmation sign-up sheet for adult volunteers on the usher's table.
- There is a sign up on the usher's table for the fellowship committee. If you are interested, please sign up on the usher's table.

This Week's Events: February 1-8

Today	9:00am	4th Sunday After Epiphany
Tues.	7:00pm	AA Meeting (Contact person is Larry S., 712-251-4207)
Wed.	3:30pm	KidZone
	6:00pm	Confirmation
Sun.	9:00am	5th Sunday After Epiphany – Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday
	10:15am	Council Meeting

Upcoming Events:

Wed. Feb 18 Ash Wednesday

Worship Assistants for February:

Organist: Ruth Chartier	Altar Guild: Rotating
Scripture Reader: Liz Wahlberg	Offertory Accountants: Blake & Sadie Stratton
Tech Assistant: Rebecca Brockhaus	
Greeters: Blake & Sadie Stratton	
Greeters Next Week: Jill & Casey Stratton	

Birthdays: 1 - Roy Dimmitt, Lisa Rippke; 2 - Amy Coulter, JoAnn Jahn; 3 - Konnor Brosamle; 6 - Bill Balk

Prayers

We pray for Scout Riediger (new daughter of Austin and Haley Riediger); Kenny Stroman; Barb Kunkel; Carla Boggs; Barb Allner; Diane Riediger; Bill Nagel; Ed Kunkel; those in addictions/recovery; all who are grieving; victims of extreme weather and natural disasters, violence and domestic abuse. For those battling cancer: Jayme Webb –breast cancer; Jeni Aman.

God's Work. Our gifts. Thank you to all who support our ministry!

Our budget needs each week: \$3,175

Electronic Giving	\$ 690.00
<u>General Fund</u>	<u>\$ 1,849.00</u>
Total	\$ 2,539.00

