



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Epiphany 4 - Jesus' First Missionaries

February 1, 2026 10:30 Holy Communion

In today's gospel we hear Jesus' words of advice to his disciples as he sends them out on their first missionary journey. They are heading out with the amazing news of God's love. This is good news! People will greet them with open arms, right? Maybe not. Maybe this missionary work won't be so easy. The world is still just as much in need of the gospel as ever. We discover some of the same challenges the disciples faced. Therefore we have been warned, but we continue undaunted because of God's great faithfulness.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is available in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
(For music turn to Hymn 674 the Red Hymnal)

1. **Let us talents and tongues employ,
Reaching out with a shout of joy;
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.**

Refrain (sung twice after each verse)

**Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
Pass the Word around: loaves abound!**

2. **Christ is able to make us one,
At the table he sets the tone,
Teaching people to live to bless,
Love in word and in deed express.**

Refrain

3. **Jesus calls us in, sends us out
Bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Immanuel) ev'rywhere!**

Refrain

Text: Frank Kaan, b. 1929, Music: Jamaican Folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1925-1980, Copyright 1975 Hope Publishing Company

Confession and Forgiveness

P: 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.

C: Amen.

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

Silence for reflection and self-examination

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 Jesus' name.

May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,
and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise Now the Feast and Celebration
(For music turn to Hymn 789 in the Blue Hymnal)

Refrain

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom
praise and glory forevermore!**

**1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God.** *Refrain*

**2. Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ forever.** *Refrain*

**3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;
to make all things new.** *Refrain*

Text and music: Marty Haugen; Copyright 1990 GIA Publications Inc.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

B: ²⁶Consider 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. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Proverbs 11:23-30 (*read responsively*)

D: The desire of the righteous ends only in good;
the expectation of the wicked in wrath.

**C: Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;
others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.**

D: A generous person will be enriched,
and one who gives water will get water.

**C: The people curse those who hold back grain,
but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.**

D: Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,
but evil comes to the one who searches for it.

**C: Those who trust in their riches will wither,
but the righteous will flourish like green leaves.**

D: Those who trouble their households will inherit wind,
and the fool will be servant to the wise.

**C: The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
but violence takes lives away.**

Gospel Acclamation (*Matthew 10:37*)

C: Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;

³⁸**therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading Matthew 9:35-11:1

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 10th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

³⁵Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. ⁹Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. ¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹Brother will betray

brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²²and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! ²⁶“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. ³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ⁴⁰“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴²and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day This Little Light of Mine
(For music see Hymn 677 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **This little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine;
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**
2. **Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine;
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**
3. **Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'a let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'a let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'a let it shine;
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

Text and music: African American Spiritual

Apostles' Creed

P: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed

**C: 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.

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: We share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

Offertory and Gathering of Prayers and Offerings

You are invited to write a prayer concern on the small blank slip of paper in your worship bulletin. This slip will be collected by the ushers in the offering plates. The concerns raised will be prayed for later in the service.

Hymn of Thanksgiving Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful Lord

For music turn to page 35 in the Blue Hymnal

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.**

**Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.**

**Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.**

**Grace our table with your presence, Lord,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

Offertory Prayer

P: Let us pray: God of majesty,

C: no eye has seen, nor ear 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 kingdom of God come near,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Issues raised by the congregation are lifted in prayer.

The prayer concludes:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

† MEAL †

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son, and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. 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:

(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: 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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Come to the table; taste and see.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. We use wheat bread and wine for communion. If you would prefer a gluten free wafer instead of bread please tell the communion assistant. Also, if you prefer grape juice to wine, it is available pre-filled in the individual glasses. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

663 *Spread, Oh Spread, Almighty Word (Red Hymnal)*

666 *What Wondrous Love Is This (Red Hymnal)*

Communion Blessing *After all have communed the pastor will say:*

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray:

Radiant God,

we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the sacrament of his body and blood

you have drawn us to your heart.

Send us from this table with delight,

that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,

and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† SENDING †

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Will You Come and Follow Me

For music turn to Hymn 798 in the Red Hymnal

1. **“Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?”**
2. **“Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare,
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray’r in you and you in me?”**
3. **“Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris’ners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?”**
4. **“Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you’ve found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?”**
5. **Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I’ll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I’ll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **God's Work. Our Hands.**

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Sue Kaufmann
Acolyte	Alyssa Young
Altar Care	Linda Thompson
Communion Assistant	Greg Zuege
Counters	Bill and Katy Stimmel
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, February 8

Greeters and Ushers	Sunday School Children
Acolyte	Charlotte Stroup
Counters	Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Coffee Hour	

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St. John's Lutheran Church
888 County Road 9, Victor, NY 14564
stjohnsvictor.com (585) 924-5192
The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor
Dongwon Shin, Pianist