

**St. Olaf Lutheran Church**  
**Sunday, January 4, 2026**  
**Second Sunday of Christmas**

*Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.*

**Welcome & Announcements**

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty Savior,  
Prince of Peace.  
**Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,  
let us confess our sin.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God,  
**we yearn for your presence to transform  
our grief, pain, and despair.**  
**We confess that we have not always prepared  
room in our hearts for your love;  
we have not always recognized  
your presence among us;  
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**  
**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,  
oppression, and fear.**  
**We confess our failure to make room  
for those seeking refuge;  
our participation in violent systems  
that harm your innocent ones;**

**our reluctance to embody your good news.  
Be born in us today  
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.  
Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.  
✠ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.  
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!  
**Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**ELW 283**

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**

**pg 203**

**\*Come let us Join**

**pg 204**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

**O God our redeemer, you created light that we might live, and you illumine our world with your beloved Son. By your Spirit comfort us in all darkness, and turn us toward the light of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

**First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14**

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,  
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;  
proclaim, give praise, and say,  
“Save, O Lord, your people,  
the remnant of Israel.”

<sup>8</sup> See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north  
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,  
among them the blind and the lame,  
those with child and those in labor together;  
a great company, they shall return here.

<sup>9</sup> With weeping they shall come,

and with consolations I will lead them back;  
I will let them walk by brooks of water,  
in a straight path where they shall not stumble,  
for I have become a father to Israel,  
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,  
and declare it in the coastlands far away;  
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him  
and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock."

<sup>11</sup> For the Lord has ransomed Jacob  
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

<sup>12</sup> They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,  
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,  
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,  
and over the young of the flock and the herd;  
their life shall become like a watered garden,  
and they shall never languish again.

<sup>13</sup> Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,  
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy;  
I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.

<sup>14</sup> I will give the priests their fill of fatness,  
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,  
says the Lord.

L: Word of God. Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm: Psalm 147:12-20**

<sup>12</sup> Worship the Lord, | O Jerusalem;  
praise your | God, O Zion,

<sup>13</sup> **who has strengthened the bars | of your gates  
and has blessed your chil- | dren within you.**

<sup>14</sup> God has established peace | on your borders  
and satisfies you with the | finest wheat.

<sup>15</sup> **God sends out a command | to the earth,  
a word that runs | very swiftly.**

<sup>16</sup> God gives | snow like wool,  
scattering | frost like ashes.

<sup>17</sup> **God scatters | hail like bread crumbs.  
Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold?**

<sup>18</sup> The Lord sends forth the | word and melts them;

the wind blows, and the waters flow.

**<sup>19</sup> God declares the word to Jacob,  
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

<sup>20</sup> The Lord has not done so to any other nation;  
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

### **Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup> He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup> In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup> so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup> this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L: Word of God. Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God**

**\*Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)**

**pg 205**

**\*Gospel: John 1:1-18**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter

**C: Glory to you, O Lord**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone,

was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P: The gospel of our Lord

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

**Children's Sermon**

**Pastor Jim McColley**

**Sermon**

**Pastor Jim McColley**

**\*Hymn**

*What Child is This*

**ELW 296**

**\*Apostles Creed**

**pg 105**

**\* Prayers of Intercession**

Hear us, O God

**Your mercy is great.**

**\*Peace** (*Feel free to share a handshake or hug*)

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Please share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

**Offering:** *Please consider giving an offering for the mission and ministry of St. Olaf. We can continue to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ with your support and generosity. God bless you. Also, please pass the attendance sheets down your row and fill out your info.*

**\*Offering prayer**

God of glory,

great are your wonders among us

and many are the blessings you bestow.  
Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,  
that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,  
through Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

**\* Great Thanksgiving & Holy, Holy, Holy**

**pg 206-207**

**\*Words of Institution**

**\*Lord's Prayer**

**Holy Communion** God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

**Communion Hymns**

*Silent Night*

**ELW 281**

*The First Noel*

**ELW 300**

**\*Prayer After Communion**

Mothering God,  
you gathered us to your table  
and we drank deeply of your grace.  
Send us out by your Spirit  
to love our neighbors as ourselves  
and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.  
**Amen.**

**\*Blessing**

The triune God,  
glorious Mystery,  
holy Incarnate One,  
abiding Comforter,  
✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.  
**Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*Go Tell It on a Mountain*

**ELW 290**

**\*Dismissal**

Glory to God in the highest!  
**And peace to God's people on earth!**  
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Assisting in Worship**

Presider: Pastor Jim McColley

Organist: Jason Swedlund

Reader: Lynda Mumm

Ushers: Randy Puls, Vera Hartman, Doug Kinseth, Eileen Carroll

Communion: Vera Hartman, Lynda Mumm

Communion setup: Jolene Hall and Bev Fortney

Tech: Marc Matthes, Mark Oester, Bob Younie