

 *Palestine*  
Lutheran Church

Second Sunday after Epiphany/Lectionary 2

*Reaching Out in Christian Love to All*

1375 Highway 210

Huxley, IA 50124

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Church Website: [www.plchuxley.com](http://www.plchuxley.com)

**Lectionary 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany)**  
**January 17, 2021**

All the baptized have a calling in God's world. God calls not just pastors and deacons but also the youngest child, like Samuel. The story of the calling of Nathanael plays with the idea of place. Nathanael initially dismisses Jesus because he comes from Nazareth. But where we come from isn't important; it's where—or rather whom—we come to. Jesus refers to Jacob, who had a vision in a place he called “the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17). Jesus says he himself is the place where Nathanael will meet God.

\*=Stand as you are able    **Bold Print** = congregation responds  
    **ELW**=Red Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Ringling of the Bell and Prelude

**GATHERING** *The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**\*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father,  
and of the ✝ Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
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.**

**\*GATHERING SONG “I Love to Tell the Story” ELW 661 (vs. 1, 3)**

Text: Katherine Hankey, 1834-1911; Music: William E. Fischer, 1849-1936; public domain.

## I Love to Tell the Story

1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,  
 2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat  
 3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best

of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love,  
 what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!  
 seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;  
 I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard  
 And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,

it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do,  
 the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.  
 I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

*Softly*  
 I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo - ry

to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

## **\*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.**

## **\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**WORD** *God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### **FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]**

*At a time when visions are rare and unexpected, the LORD comes to Samuel and calls him to speak the divine word. Though just a boy, Samuel responds to God obediently, as Eli the priest has taught him to respond. This marks the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry.*

<sup>1</sup>Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

<sup>2</sup>At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup>the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" <sup>5</sup>and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay

down. <sup>6</sup>The LORD called again, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” <sup>7</sup>Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup>The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup>Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” [<sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to Samuel, “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup>On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup>Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever.”

<sup>15</sup>Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup>But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” He said, “Here I am.” <sup>17</sup>Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” <sup>18</sup>So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, “It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.”

<sup>19</sup>As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup>And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.]

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: 139:1-6, 13-18**

<sup>1</sup>LORD, you have searched me out;

**O LORD, you have known me.**

<sup>2</sup>You know my sitting down and my rising up;

**you discern my thoughts from afar.**

<sup>3</sup>You trace my journeys and my resting-places

**and are acquainted with all my ways.**

<sup>4</sup>Indeed, there is not a word on my lips,

**but you, O LORD, know it altogether.**

<sup>5</sup>You encompass me, behind and before,

**and lay your hand upon me.**

<sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

**it is so high that I cannot attain to it.**

<sup>13</sup>For you yourself created my inmost parts;

**you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

<sup>14</sup>I will thank you because I am marvelously made;

**your works are wonderful, and I know it well.**

<sup>15</sup>My body was not hidden from you,

**while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.**

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; all of them were written in your book;

**my days were fashioned before they came to be.**

<sup>17</sup>How deep I find your thoughts, O God!

**How great is the sum of them!**

<sup>18</sup>If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand;

**to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

*Paul helps the Corinthians understand that God has claimed the entirety of their lives through the death of Christ. Hence Christian relationships and conduct, including areas of human sexuality, are*

*to reflect the reality that we belong to Christ and that the Holy Spirit lives within us.*

<sup>12</sup>“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. <sup>13</sup>“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup>And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. <sup>15</sup>Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.” <sup>17</sup>But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup>Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. <sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL: John 1:43-51**

The holy gospel according to John the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In John's gospel, Jesus' ministry begins with the call of disciples, who then bring others to Jesus. Philip's friend Nathanael moves from skepticism to faith when he accepts the invitation to “Come and see.”*

<sup>43</sup>The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” <sup>44</sup>Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup>Philip found Nathanael and said to

him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.” <sup>46</sup>Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” <sup>47</sup>When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!” <sup>48</sup>Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.” <sup>49</sup>Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” <sup>50</sup>Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.” <sup>51</sup>And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE – *Please stay in your seats/pews***

### **SERMON**

### **REFLECTION SONG**

**“Will You Come and Follow Me”**

**ELW 798 (vs. 1, 4, 5)**

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949; Music: Scottish traditional; Text © 1987 Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc.. Reprinted under OneLicense.net 1-708142 All rights reserved.

# Will You Come and Follow Me

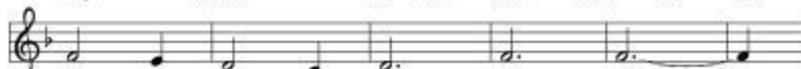
## *The Summons*



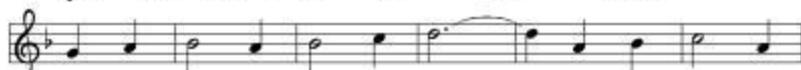
1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call  
 2 "Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call  
 3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call  
 4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call  
 5 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when you but call



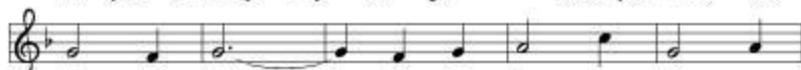
your name? Will you go where you don't  
 your name? Will you care for cruel and  
 your name? Will you set the pris - 'ners  
 your name? Will you quell the fear in -  
 my name. Let me turn and fol - low



know and nev - er be the same?  
 kind and nev - er be the same?  
 free and nev - er be the same?  
 side and nev - er be the same?  
 you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my  
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare, should your life at -  
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as  
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the  
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and



name be known, will you let my life be  
 tract or scare? Will you let me an - swer  
 this un - seen, and ad - mit to what I  
 world a - round, through my sight and touch and  
 foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and live and



grown in you and you in me?<sup>??</sup>  
 pray'r in you and you in me?<sup>??</sup>  
 mean in you and you in me?<sup>??</sup>  
 sound in you and you in me?<sup>??</sup>  
 grow in you and you in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

Musik: KELVINGROVE, Scottish traditional

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## **\*APOSTLES' CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

For the body of Christ gathered throughout the world and for all servants of the gospel, that following Jesus, the church lives out its calling every day,

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For the well-being of creation, for plants and animals, and for all that God has marvelously made, that we serve as wise stewards of Earth, our home,

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For police officers and firefighters, for attorneys and paralegals, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable,

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For those lacking food or shelter, for those who are sick or grieving, and for those who are imprisoned or homebound (*especially*):

|  |                   |                  |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>Prayer Requests:</b>                                    | Tyler Anderson    | Anita Brendeland |
| Darrell Brown  | Dick Brown        | Penny Brown      |
| Joan Carson  | Alisha Cox        | Bev Echtenkamp   |
| Jackie Greene  | Dolores Hauge     | Christa Hartsook |
| Warren Johnson   | Kevin Klingbeil   | Alvina Larson    |
| Ardell Lundgren  | Merlin Lyon       | Mary Martin      |
| Loree Ness   | Deidre Qual       | Shannon Tope     |
| Joyce Volz   | Sarah JoAnn Young | Phil Zeller      |
| <b><i>Emergency workers, health workers, neighbors</i></b> |                   |                  |

that God console all who suffer,

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For our neighborhood, for visitors joining us for the first time or returning, and for those absent from our assembly, that all who seek to know God are nourished by word and sacrament,

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the saints who have gone before us, (*especially*):

**Family & friends of:** Angie Claude, Arlene Wee, Judy Smith, Sharon Mortenson, Valerie Brendeland, Sue Ihle, Ralph Kalsem, Dean Simmons, Charles Brendeland, Tanner Houseman, Jimmy Young, Darrell Rout, John Maier, Travis Ellis, John Johnson, Mae Rivard, Doris Ness, Nathan Stupka, Bart Mason, Lowell Elliott, Kaytie Anderson, Harold Long, Brian Sykes, Debbie Bollmeyer

that their lives give us a vision of the gospel in action,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent,  
for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus  
Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

**\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL** *God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**OFFERING**

**Hymn of the Month “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” ELW 311**

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.; Music: Leonhart Schröter, 1540–1602; public domain.

## Hail to the Lord's Anointed



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!  
 2 You come with res - cue speed - y to those who suf - fer wrong,  
 3 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;  
 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore you, and gold and in - cense bring;



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!  
 to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;  
 love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth,  
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, your praise all peo - ple sing.



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive  
 to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark - ness turn to  
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains, shall peace, the her - ald,  
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as -



free, to take a - way trans - gres - sion and  
 light, whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, are  
 go; and righ - teous - ness in foun - tains from  
 cend; your king - dom still in - creas - ing, a



rule in eq - ui - ty,  
 pre - cious in your sight,  
 hill to val - ley flow.  
 king - dom with - out end.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.

Music: FREUT EUCH, IHR LIEBEN, Leonhart Schröter, 1540–1602

## **\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

### **DIALOGUE**

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**

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 (spoken):

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heav'n 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,  
hosanna in the highest.**

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

## **COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**Amen.**

### **Holy Communion Distribution for Today**

1. ***Congregation will remain seated and commune from their seats using the prepackaged wafers and cups.***
2. ***Ushers, Musicians and Technology ministers will commune with the congregation from their seats together with the Pastor.***
3. ***Pastor will do a children's blessing while children remain in the pews with the help of parents.***
4. ***Please dispose of empty communion cups in trash after service.***

## **\*TABLE BLESSING**

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

**Amen.**

## **\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

**O God, our life, our strength, our food, we give you thanks for sustaining us with the body and blood of your Son. By your Holy Spirit, enliven us to be his body in the world, that more and more we will give you praise and serve your earth and its many peoples, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

**SENDING** *God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## \*BLESSING

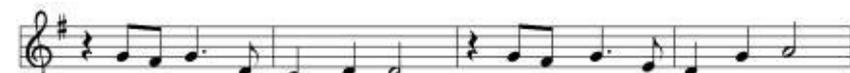
Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

## SENDING SONG "Here I Am Lord" ELW 574 (vs. 1, 3)

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946; Music: Daniel L. Schutte; Text and music © 1981 OCP Publications, Inc. Reprinted under OneLicense.net 1-708142 All rights reserved.

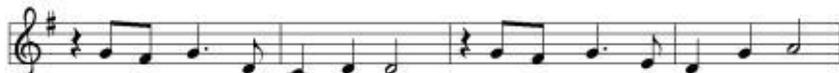
### Here I Am, Lord



- 1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.  
2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.  
3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.  
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.  
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

## **\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Ringing of the Bell

Postlude

For streaming and printing:

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### **Those Serving in Today's Service**

Pastor: Eric Klimpel

Accompanist: Mindy DeVries

Youth Liaison: Nels Dovre

*Technicians:* Brent Emerson, Austin Klimpel

### **This Week at Palestine**

Today, January 17, 2021 *Lectionary 2*

8:00 a.m. ZOOM Dawn Dialog

9:30 a.m. Worship (*Live streamed*); Holy communion

Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021

6:30 p.m. ZOOM Bible study

Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study

12:00 noon ZOOM Prayer time

1:00 p.m. Quilters

6:30 p.m. Confirmation

Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 *Third Sunday after Epiphany/Lectionary 3*

9:30 a.m. Worship; (*Live streamed*)

10:45 a.m. Annual Meeting

Lectionary texts: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31;

Mark 1:14-20

**Southeast Iowa Synod E-News Prayer:** Jesus invited Philip to follow him as a disciple, and Philip, in turn, invited Nathanael. Ask God to help us be faithful followers, students and, at the same time, disciples eager to invite others to join in God's good work in the world.

**Thank you for your Gifts for Ministry**

THANK YOU!!! We celebrate your generosity and thank you in advance for your support as we strive to reach our average weekly offering goal of \$4,427 for current expenses and \$68 for benevolence.

## Tithes & Offering

Palestine will accept your offering!

1. **Bring** to worship service with you and place in offering plates.
2. **Mail** check to:  
Palestine Lutheran Church  
1375 HWY 210  
Huxley, IA 50124
3. **Give online through Easy Tithe.**

Go to our website [www.plchuxley.com](http://www.plchuxley.com) and click on the bright red ONLINE GIVING tab on the right located above our "Reaching out in Christian love to all" statement.

*Thank you. Continue to pray and know God is with us.*



Please pick up your envelopes from fellowship hall!  
Thank you for your support and donations.

# ANNUAL MEETING



The annual meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2021 after worship service.

We will attempt to livestream this meeting so all can be involved and start a message board on our facebook site so those not present can ask questions/comment.



**Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>  
3-7 p.m. @ the church**

**Sign up one of two ways:**

- ♥ By calling Deb Moore at 515-460-1037
- ♥ Via the LifeServe website: [www.lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://www.lifeservebloodcenter.org)

*By Appointment only*



*Floral arrangement on the altar is courtesy from the funeral of Debbie Bollmeyer (1-11-21) (sister of Kris Polich)*

**Welcome to Worship!** We're glad you're here (physically or virtually), guests and members alike, and pray that you will find in our worship an opportunity to praise God and hear God's Word.

All baptized Christians who believe that Christ Jesus is truly present in the sacrament to forgive, strengthen and bless us, are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

### **Where Nothing Is Expected (Based on John 1)**

At one of his life's worst intersections, when legs trembled and steps were mired in bogs of doubt, his companion looked into the man's hollowing eyes and said, "I believe in you. I know you." Have you ever needed such a word?

The list is painfully long that names all of the circumstances and places from which it is assumed nothing good can come. Perhaps you have compiled your own catalog of those who fall short, the irredeemable neighborhoods, or the situations beyond hope in the life of others. Perhaps you find yourself on someone else's list, among those whose life and plight has been dismissed as "nothing good." So it was thought of Jesus, whose life was rooted in the hillside soil of a sidetracked town—Nazareth—where nothing remarkable, not much at all, was expected to grow up. That town and its people were on the "unfavorable" list.

It is a riddle of scripture that the likes of Philip (or Peter, John, James, and Andrew—those gospel familiars) would, seemingly without discernment or a second thought, leave everything when Jesus interrupted his settled life and bid him, "Follow me." For Nathanael, it was different. He took an honest and reasonable step back. He knew all the talk about nothing good coming from Nazareth.

So many of our stories wither and so much of who we are dies when we are confronted with the "I know about you" list of painful failures instead of a loving, hopeful invitation to "come and see" (John 1:46).

There is a mighty mercy, an opening of heaven itself before our very eyes, a retelling of each "Nazareth" in our lives if we dare to "come and see" Jesus. Then that painful, long, imposed or self-inflicted list is no longer our truth because we, in seeing Jesus, begin to see ourselves and others as Jesus does. An epiphany happens: "I believe in you."