



January 2026



Have you been encouraged: “Merry Epiphany!” Probably not. For most Epiphany does not have the same celebrative ring as other ‘holy days’ in our faith life together. Yet there are vibrant images and stories of this rich season that guide our faith journey in profound ways. Epiphany is so welcome!

There are great reasons to become more excited about the Season of Epiphany. For one, it begins with the familiar, adventurous symbol—the arrival of the Magi (astrologers from the East). The traditional beginning date is Jan. 6th, marking the 12th day after Christmas; it concludes at Transfiguration of our Lord Sunday, Ash Weds follows closely). Matthew 2 tells us these magi (Greek word) were directed by angels and a star, bringing gifts, and wanting to bend their lives in reverence of this new revelation.

[Have you noticed, though, that we usually include ‘the wise men’ in the Christmas crèche, even though their arrival is understood to have taken place months, or up to two years, after the birth of Jesus—it took time to follow this star, traveling as far away as Persia, modern-day Iran.]

More importantly, as Epiphany season unfolds it becomes clearer that our community of faith is invited into incredibly large biblical themes: as the central meaning of wise men traveling from the far East—these wealthy spiritual seekers of greater wisdom and understanding emerge as icons for us of *‘the way of Christ to the gentiles’ (non-Jews)*. So even at its beginning, the voice of Epiphany is calling us—that we rekindle our seeking spirit; that we become a culture of faith attuned to our neighbors who are seeking real life, with safe and nurturing community...in these solitary days that are coined by experts as a ‘loneliness epidemic’, especially among young people (more on this downward side—the deceptive solitary influence of the internet—at another time).

‘What’s to love about Epiphany’...has its roots in the essential meaning of Christmas. We hear this announced and colored into the verses with the repeated phrase, **“God in flesh made manifest”** (from the hymn, *Songs of Thankfulness and Praise*):

from verse 1 – *manifested by the star, to the sages from afar;*

verse 2 – *manifest at Jordan’s stream (Jesus’ baptism); and at Cana wedding guest... changing water into wine;*

verse 3 – *manifest in making whole (the many healings of Jesus), ever bringing good from ill;*
and in verse 4 – *in Jesus’ teaching and embodiment of grace...that we learn to imitate Christ and be instruments and manifestations of God’s great epiphanies.*

I appreciate how Diane Roth invites Epiphany. She suggests: as when you are about your work, or study, or play, or regular Sunday morning worship...and suddenly, somehow, something will happen, and you will say, ‘aha’, and you will know, just know, who Jesus is: *“It could be as small a thing as a handful of water, shimmering, a line that leaps out at you from a book, or a song, a small piece of a small conversation that you had, just because you “showed up”.*

We will share stories in the weeks ahead that flesh out ‘how we embody Christ to one another and with our neighbor’.




Happy Epiphany! Pastor Tim



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January 2026 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 New Years' Day Office Closed AA 6:30pm 	2	3
4 Christmas 2 Bible Class 9 am Worship 10 am Worship Board Meets	5 Prayer Group 5:30 pm	6 Bible & Breakfast 8 am on Zoom Quilt 10 am Finance Board Mtg AA 6:30pm	7	8 AA 6:30pm	9 Church Rental	10 Church Rental
11 Baptism of Our Lord Bible Class 9 am Worship 10 am Council Meets	12 Prayer Group 5:30 pm	13 Bible & Breakfast 8 am on Zoom Quilt 10 am Women's Potluck Lunch & Bible Study 11:30 am AA 6:30pm	14	15 AA 6:30pm	16 Meet & Eat Potluck Dinner at 5:30 pm Annual Meeting Reports Due 	17
18 Epiphany 2 Bible Class 9 am Worship 10 am	19 Prayer Group 5:30 pm	20 Bible & Breakfast 8 am on Zoom Quilt 10 am AA 6:30pm	21	22 AA 6:30pm	23	24
25 Epiphany 3 Bible Class 9 am Worship 10 am Annual Meeting 	26 Prayer Group 5:30 pm	27 Bible & Breakfast 8 am on Zoom Quilt 10 am AA 6:30pm	28	29 AA 6:30pm	30	31

Annual Meeting

Church Meeting



Don't miss our Annual Church Meeting

taking place on

Sunday, January 25th

Your church's annual meeting is an important gathering for members to review the past year, vote on budgets, elect leaders, and set future goals, often combined with worship and celebration of the church's life and mission. You should attend to participate in decisions, hear reports, connect with your community, and get energized for the year ahead, though attendance isn't usually mandatory but highly encouraged for members.

And stay for the potluck meal afterwards!

Everyone is welcome to bring a dish to share at the meeting.

Board Chairs, Please get your end of the year committee reports into the office by **January 16th**.

January Meet & Eat

Our January Meet & Eat will be

“hors d'oeuvres”

Friday, January 16th

5:30 pm

Taking place at church

Bring your favorite hors d'oeuvres to share and a friend



Women's Bible Study in January



The January Women's Bible Study will take place on

Tuesday, Jan 13th

from 11:30 to 12:15

The women will focus on

'Faith in the Depths' - a study based on Psalm 22

The group will be continuing the series on Faithfulness

Our Church Boards Need You!



Do you have some time or a talent and passion that you could give to your church family or the community? Now is the time to think about how you can be good stewards at Shepherd of the Mountains and those who live among us.

Boards where help is needed in 2026 include **Fellowship, Management, Outreach, Worship, Youth & Education & Stewardship.**

Where do your talents lie? Descriptions of each board, along with an opportunity to sign up, will be posted in soon in the narthex. Please take this time to think about how you can serve the church.

UKD Tumaini Lutheran School Scholarships

When our Tanzanian guests, Pastor Wilson Nyakachewa and Pastor Ezekiel Mwambungu visited us in October, they talked to us about the Tumaini Lutheran Bible School in Tanzania. Both pastors enlightened us regarding the need for scholarships for young boys & girls to attend the school, as well as the need for solar panels in their kitchen, which will enable them to cook food for the school without the open fire and smoke.

While discussions regarding funds for the solar panels are still ongoing, a scholarship fund for girls (and boys) to attend the Lutheran school is already in place. Through a Mission Investment Fund and through ongoing donations from churches and individuals they have been able to sponsor children every year. It now takes \$800 for each child to go to school.

If you would like to take part in this outreach mission with our companion synod in Tanzania, you can donate using our jar at the back of the church. If you wish to make out a check, please make it payable to: NWIM Synod, with a note "Scholarship Fund" on the check.

All donations go directly to our Synod office, which then puts the money into the Mission Investment Fund to cover the cost of tuition, room & board for each student.

To date we have raised \$1055.00 toward sending a girl to school!



Angel Tree Thank You



This year, Bailey Morley worked with First Baptist Church on planning an Angel Tree. Bailey organized our tree at SMLC so that members of our church could participate. She was so amazed at everyone's generosity toward purchasing items for a family of 5 in our community. Many people approached her to thank her for bringing the Angel Tree to the congregation this year. Her favorite was when Rose told her that it was "a very fun group project"!

Bailey hopes to continue partnering with First Baptist in the future.

Stewardship Wrap Up



**Thanks
for Your
Support!**

It is still not too late to get your Commitment Cards in for our 2026 stewardship campaign. Commitment cards are available in the narthex and in the November newsletter. You may also call or email the church office with your commitment for 2026.

To date we have received

29 commitment cards for 2026 totaling \$98,560.00.

Thank you all for your commitment to your church family!

Sunday Bible Classes



Sunday Morning Faith Nurture Class

Sundays at 9:00am

Come and join us while you enjoy your morning coffee or tea and some friendship. The class takes place in a living room style of faith conversation while exploring the scriptures in the Season of Epiphany and a new year.

Thank You

This month we will recognize a few of our church heroes for their steadfast fellowship and love to our church family.



- Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who helped to make our Christmas services so special.
- Thank you to Pastor Tim for leading our congregation in 2025!
- Thank you to our amazing church boards for keeping us so vibrant.
- Thank you to our members of Council, who steer us in the right direction.
- Thank you to our amazing musicians for your gift of beautiful music.
- Thank you to all who donated to help send a girl to school in Tanzania. You may continue to give toward this mission all year long.

Prayers & Thanksgivings



- The family & friends of Rev. Roger Krause, father of Bob Krause.
- Steffan Freeman, health
- Robyn Lunsford, health
- To those who are lonely or alone this holiday season.
- Prayers for those suffering with illness.

For prayers or prayer updates please email or call the church office.

Church Council

Church Council

Please know that your Church Council is always here to serve you and listen to your questions and concerns.

Feel free to contact a member of the Church Council or chat with them after church on Sundays.

President:

Lorrie Lee
alliswellnow@bresnan.net

Vice President:

Pam Zernis
zcircus3@yahoo.com

Secretary:

Nikki Thompson
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Council Members:

Chris Moulder
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Rusty Mizelle
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Steffan Freeman
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Brook Redwine
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John Parisee
jparisee1@yahoo.com

Pastor Tim Stadem
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Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays & Anniversaries



Jo Schmillen on January 7th
Tracie Welch on January 15th
Diane Brendsel on January 15th

Please contact the church office if you would like your birthday or anniversary listed in our newsletter.

So Much To Be Grateful For!

Greening of the Church

Below: Jolene Moulder & Eduardo Lindenmeyer Toso join in the festivities of getting our church ready for Christmas.



Advent Worship

Left: Beverly Charette, accompanied by Pastor Tim, help to enrich our Advent worship with Beverly's solo "Mary Did You Know" on December 14th.

Christmas Eve

Fun was had by all at our Intergenerational Christmas Pageant that took place during our Christmas Eve service.

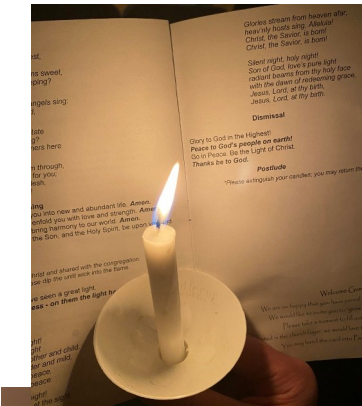
It was mentioned that some of the participants wore the same costumes when they were youngsters many years ago.



Left: Margie Aeckerle, Kim Hunt, Steffan Freeman, Christina Mizelle, Juliet & Scott Alberts gather around the baby Jesus while the congregation sings.



Above, Ethan & Lucas Moulder, along with Aksel and Lincoln, proceed up front as shepherds.



Above: Lincoln, Juliet & Aksel get excited about taking part in the Christmas play.

Above Left: Ethan & Lucas Moulder get serious about their parts as shepherds.

Left: Robyn Lunsford does a beautiful job with the readings.

Right: Angels Kim Hunt and Juliet have fun playing their part.



December Church Council Meeting

Council Highlights – December 14 meeting

- 1) Preparing for 2025 Annual Meeting - Jan 25, 2026
- 2) 2025 budget review and 2026 Proposal discussed
- 3) Helping Congregations Thrive - agreement to use this resource for inspiring constructive change and strength in 2026



Community Outreach at SMLC

On December 14th, Shepherd of the Mountains hosted “Our Common Ground” a Community Interfaith Choir Concert at our church. Many came out to listen to the Interfaith Choir sing as well as enjoy the creche displays that were set up in our narthex. This event was free to the public.

Our Common Ground is an interdenominational volunteer group that, since 2003, has been displaying Christmas Nativity sets from the community in various churches each December. This year’s event was accompanied by a wonderful interfaith choir to sing in association with the display.



Above: Close to 150 were in attendance to hear the choir sing at our church.

Right: The Interfaith Choir entertains members of the community with one of it’s many beautiful holiday songs.

Thank you to Pastor Tim, along with volunteers from our church, who made this outreach event possible. Please watch our upcoming newsletters and weekly emails for more musical events coming to our church in 2026.

If you would like to be a part of our Outreach Board, or help with these events, please talk to Pastor Tim.



2026 Church Directory Coming Soon



The office is almost ready to launch a new church directory for 2026. In the coming weeks, we will begin taking updated photos of our church members and families. If you have not had your photo taken within the last year for the directory, please talk to Nancy Parisee or call the church office.

Hard copies will be available soon in the narthex. PDF versions will be available, for those who want their directory online.

If for any reason you do not want your name or photo published in our membership directory, please contact the church office.

Giving



Welcome to our online Giving platform.

Through online giving you can pay by credit, debit, or by online checking. You can also give by texting

SMLCJH to the number 73256

To give or set up payments online, simply click on the link below and you're on your way!

<https://onrealm.org/ShepherdMountainJH/Give>

You may mail your donations to

Shepherd of the Mountains

P.O. Box 3257

Jackson, WY 83001

Your financial support is important to us!

Church Office Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Giving While You Shop at Smith's

Link your Smith's card to Shepherd of the Mountains Lutheran Church.

The church will receive a check for .5% of your purchases!

It's easy:

1. Sign in to your account and choose "My Account" in the top right corner.
2. This brings up a list on the left. Choose "Inspiring Donations."
3. Look for our organization number—YJ339



Volunteering Each Week

Sunday Servants

Sign up to assist or read

There is now a physical sign-up sheet in the church narthex.

You can also call the church office if you wish to sign up.

December 2025

December 3 - Holden EP	24	N/A
December 7	35	\$5,035.00
December 14	39	\$2,915.00
December 21	31	\$866.00
December 24 - Christmas Eve	59	\$977.50
December 25 - Christmas Day	7	\$215.00
December 28	15	\$2,148.00

\$3,275.00 is needed weekly
your donations matter!

	January 4 Christmas 2	January 11 Baptism of Our Lord	January 18 Epiphany 2	January 25 Epiphany 3
Preacher	Pastor Tim Stadem	Pastor Tim Stadem	Pastor Ben Nardi	Pastor Tim Stadem
Musician	Ozzy Ucak	Xinlu Huang	Beverly Charette	TBD
Assistant Minister	Nancy Parisee	Rusty Mizelle	Nancy Parisee	Brook Redwine
Reader	Jolene Moulder	Christina Mizelle	John Parisee	David Svendsen
Greeter/Ushers	John Parisee	Robyn Lunsford	Tim Cline	Karen Schroeder
Head Offering Counter	Pam Zernis	Jolene Moulder	Sherry Kinsella	Brook Redwine
Altar Guild	Brook Redwine	Pam Zernis	Sherry Kinsella	Pam Zernis
Coffee Maker	Lorrie Lee	Pastor Tim	John Parisee	Brook Redwine