Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church

Enough for everyone

www.lakenokomischurch.org 5011 31st Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55417 612-729-2323 info@lakenokomis.org

JANUARY 4, 2026

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

WELCOME

We gather in faith that there is **Enough for Everyone**. In worship and community, we seek to grow in love for God and for our neighbor. We trust that we are called and transformed to create a world of abundance. This faith community is committed to genuine, **inclusive welcome**. Our siblings of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions are welcomed and embraced here. And we continue our commitment to **work for racial equity**, firmly grounded in the belief that everyone is a beloved child of God. Visit **lakenokomischurch.org** to learn more.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

We love the joyful noises that little ones make! If your child needs a break or creative outlet, check out the carpeted space in the rear of the Sanctuary, or visit the **Kids' Corner** playroom near the Small Sanctuary. The livestream of worship is available there.

STORYTIME/SUNDAY SCHOOL

Kids of all ages are invited to up front for Storytime. After Storytime, children through 5th grade are invited to leave for Sunday School and return in time for communion. Youth and parents of youngest kids are welcome to join as helpers.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

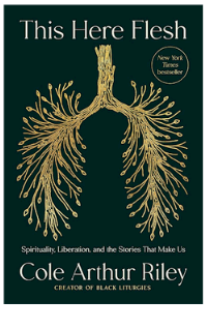
We acknowledge that Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church is located on the ancestral land of the Dakota people.

You can read the full Land Acknowledgment Statement by going to **lakenokomischurch.org/justice**

A CELEBRATION OF WELCOME

During worship on **Palm Sunday March 29**, we will take time to recognize and welcome new members into the life of our church. This moment is more than a formality—it is a celebration of belonging. If you're ready be recognized in this way, let Pastor Sara or Pastor Arthur know.

At the heart of our community is a simple and powerful vision: **Enough for Everyone**. Together, we commit to creating a church where grace is shared freely, where every person is valued, and where love extends beyond our walls to our neighbors near and far.



FAITH AND LIFE CONVERSATION

Begins January 7 - 5:30 pm Small Sanctuary

Join a 5 week conversation and prayer practice using **Cole Arthur Riley's** book *This Here Flesh*. We will dive deeper into the theme of justice during Wednesdays in Epiphany with this book discussion. The chapters in the book are paired with a liturgy from her book, *Black Liturgies*, and each discussion will begin with readings and prayers from one of these liturgies. **Order your copy of the book and join the first discussion and prayer on January 7**.

More at **colearthurriley.com/writing/book**

CURIOUS ABOUT FAITH? YOU'RE WELCOME HERE.

Are you new to church, exploring faith for the first time, or returning with questions? This **5-week class** is designed especially **for newcomers to Lake Nokomis Lutheran** and those who want to explore faith in a caring **community**—high schoolers and adults alike.
Together, we'll explore:

- **The Bible** – how to read it, question it, and find meaning in it today
- **Justice** – how faith connects to love, inclusion, and care for the world
- **Church History** – where Christianity comes from and how it has changed
- **Sacraments** – what practices like baptism and communion mean

Come to an interest meeting on **Sunday, January 11**, after worship. Class begins on **Sunday, February 22**, after worship and continues for the following 4 Sundays. For more information, please go to **lakenokomischurch.org/connect.**

*We are a New Branches partner, one of three unique worshiping communities under one roof. Learn more at **newbranchesmn.org**.*

GATHER

Prelude

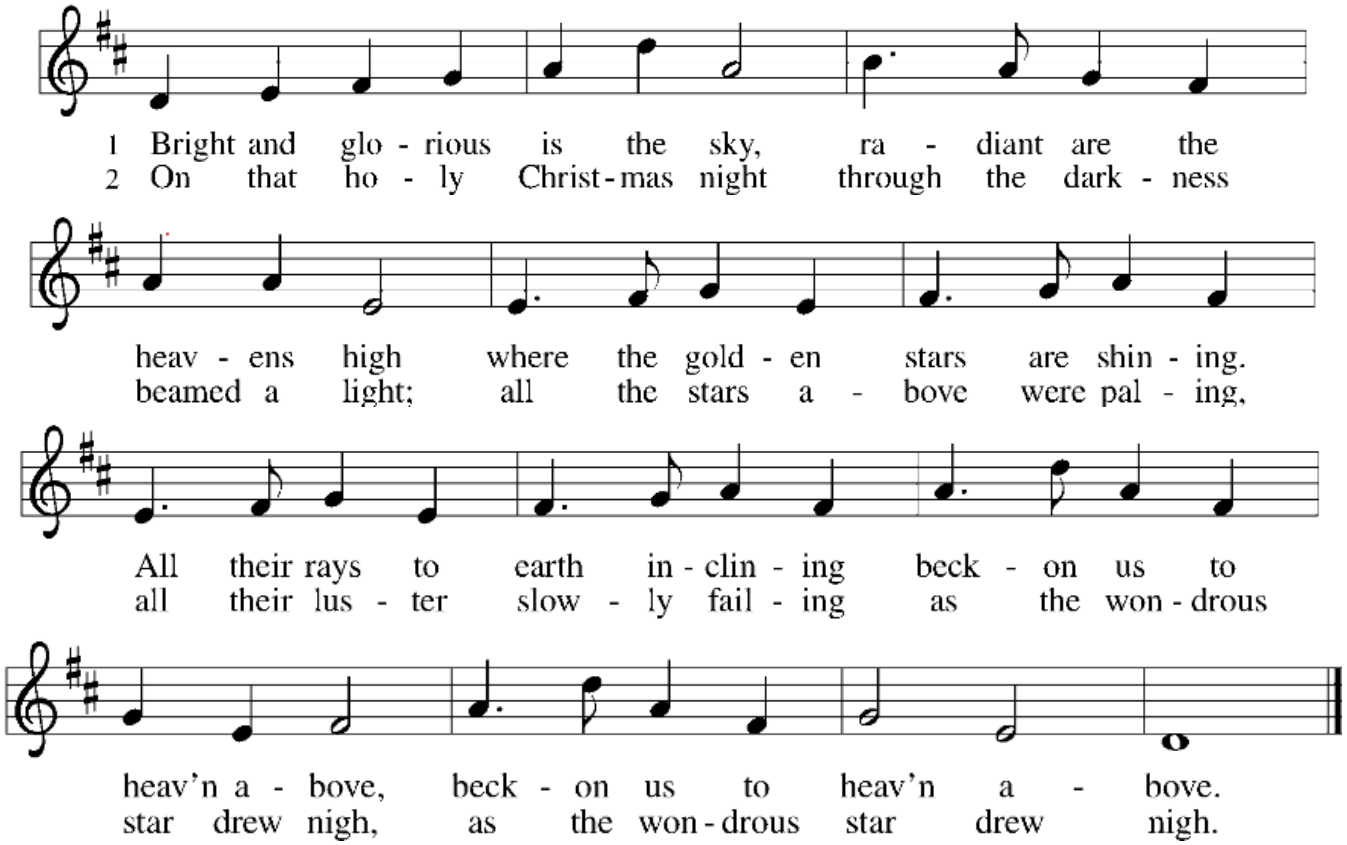
Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

In the dark of morning,
the stars still shine.
In the depth of winter,
the birds still climb.
At the start of the year,
tender and new,
God is here.
God is near.
Do not rest in your fear.
God is here.
So like the stars and the birds,
Let us worship holy God.

Song

Bright and Glorious Is the Sky



Call to Confession

Friends, on this Epiphany Sunday we stand at the start of a new year, and there is nothing better about a new year than the chance to begin again. That is exactly what we do in the Prayer of Confession.
We speak honestly with God and God surrounds us with grace. We are able to begin again.
So may we start this new year, this new season, this new week with God's grace.
Let us pray. Let us begin again.

Prayer of Confession

Ever-loving God,
we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy.
However, we know that is not how the world works.
Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again.
So today we pray—
forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks.
Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call.
Forgive us when fear is louder than love.
Show us how to turn our fear into action.
Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world.
With hope we pray, amen.

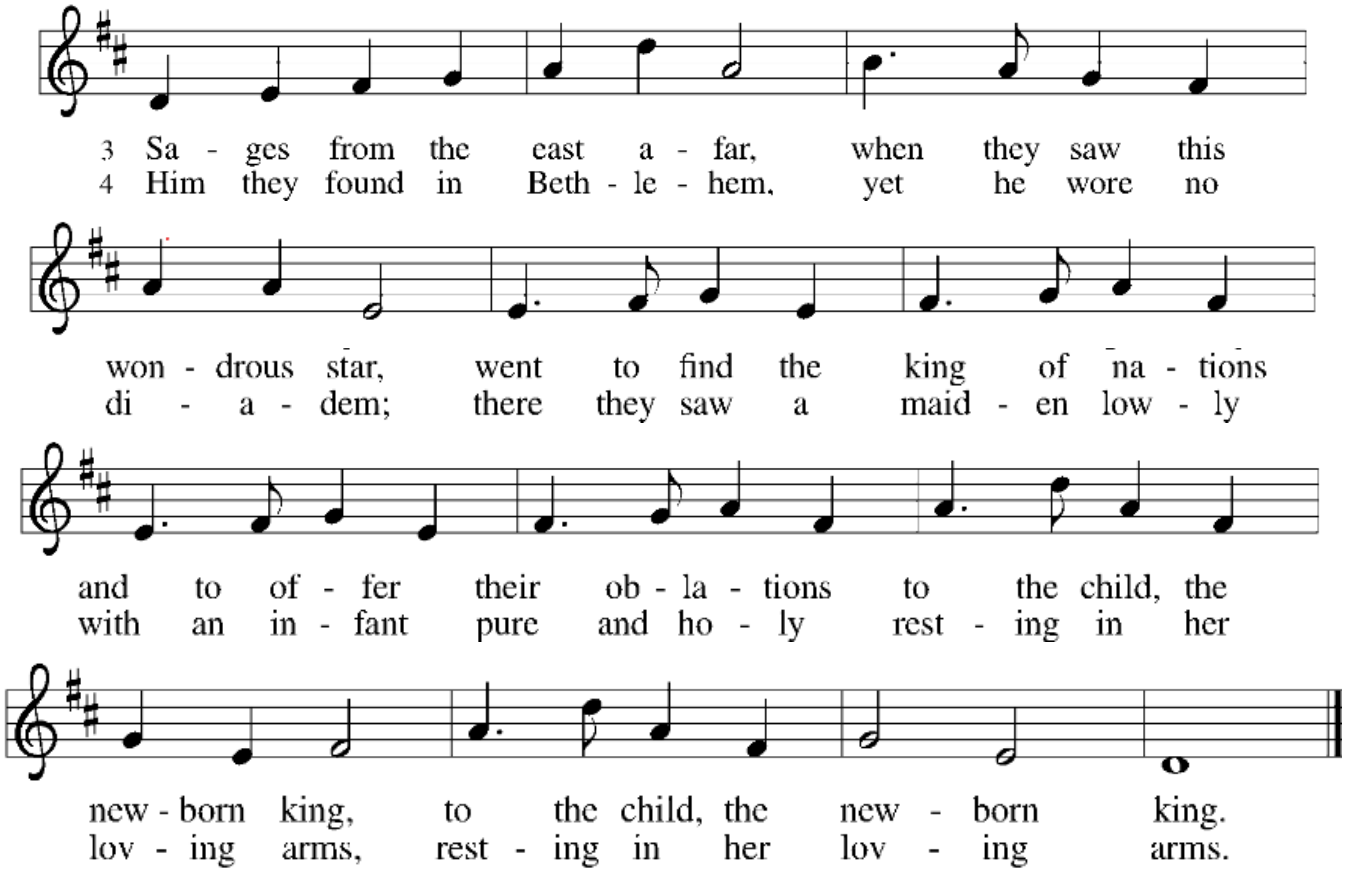
Words of Forgiveness

Family of Faith,
whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid,
God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:
Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless.
We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

Greeting

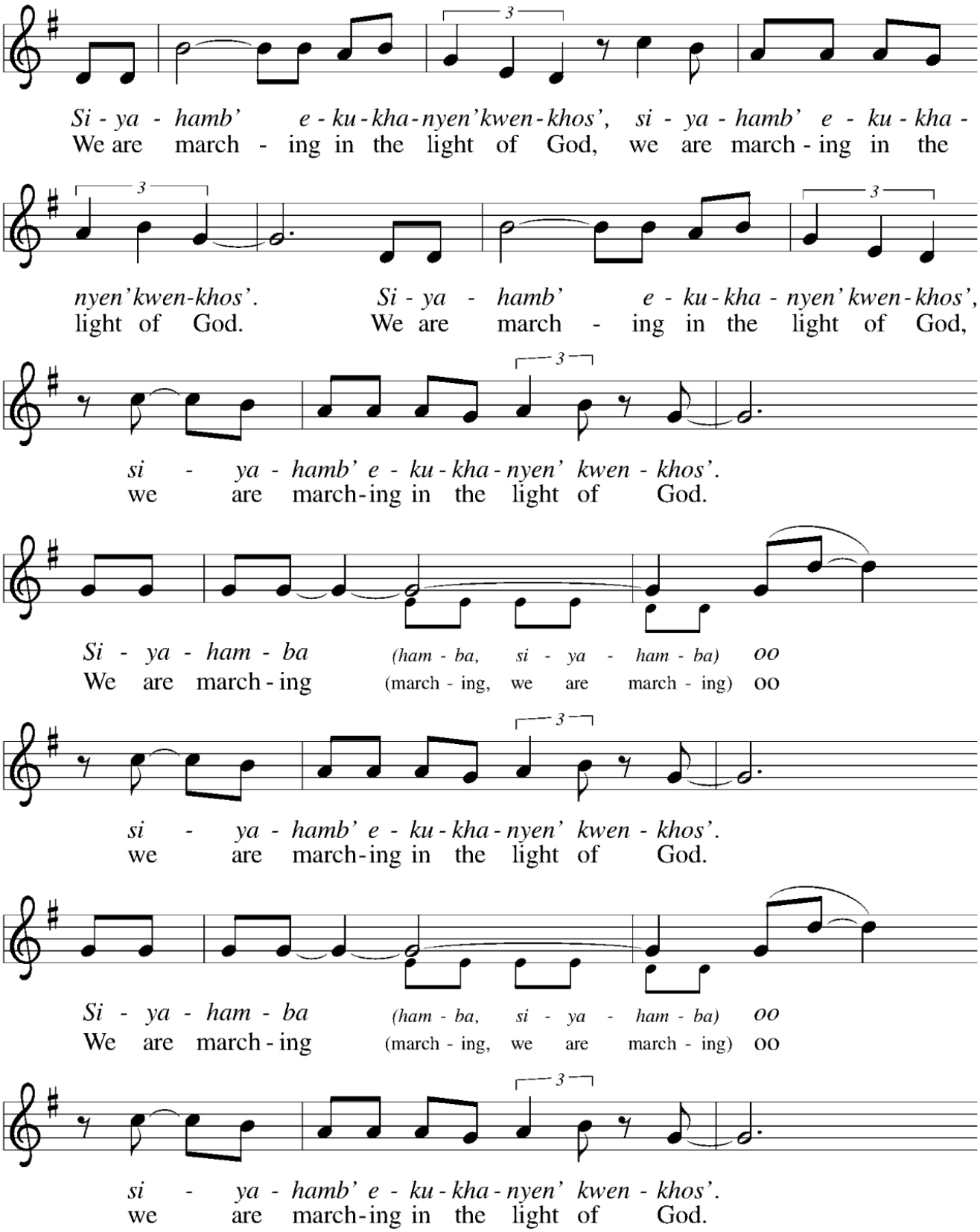
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Song *Bright and Glorious Is the Sky*



Prayer of the Day

God of the Stars,
like the magi, we come to this place searching for you.
So today, just like every day,
we ask that you would remove any barricades that keep us from your Spirit.
Clear out the distractions. Wipe away the doubt.
Open up our hearts, and speak to us through these ancient words.
And as you do, we will keep walking.
As you do, we will move toward you.
With hope we pray, **amen.**



Additional stanzas ad lib.:
We are dancing …
We are praying …
We are singing …

WORD

Storytime

Children of all ages are invited to come forward. After Storytime, children through 5th grade will leave for Sunday School and return in time for communion. Youth and parents of the youngest kids are welcome to join as helpers.

Reading

Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
  are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
  who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
  wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
  she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

The Word of God, for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Message

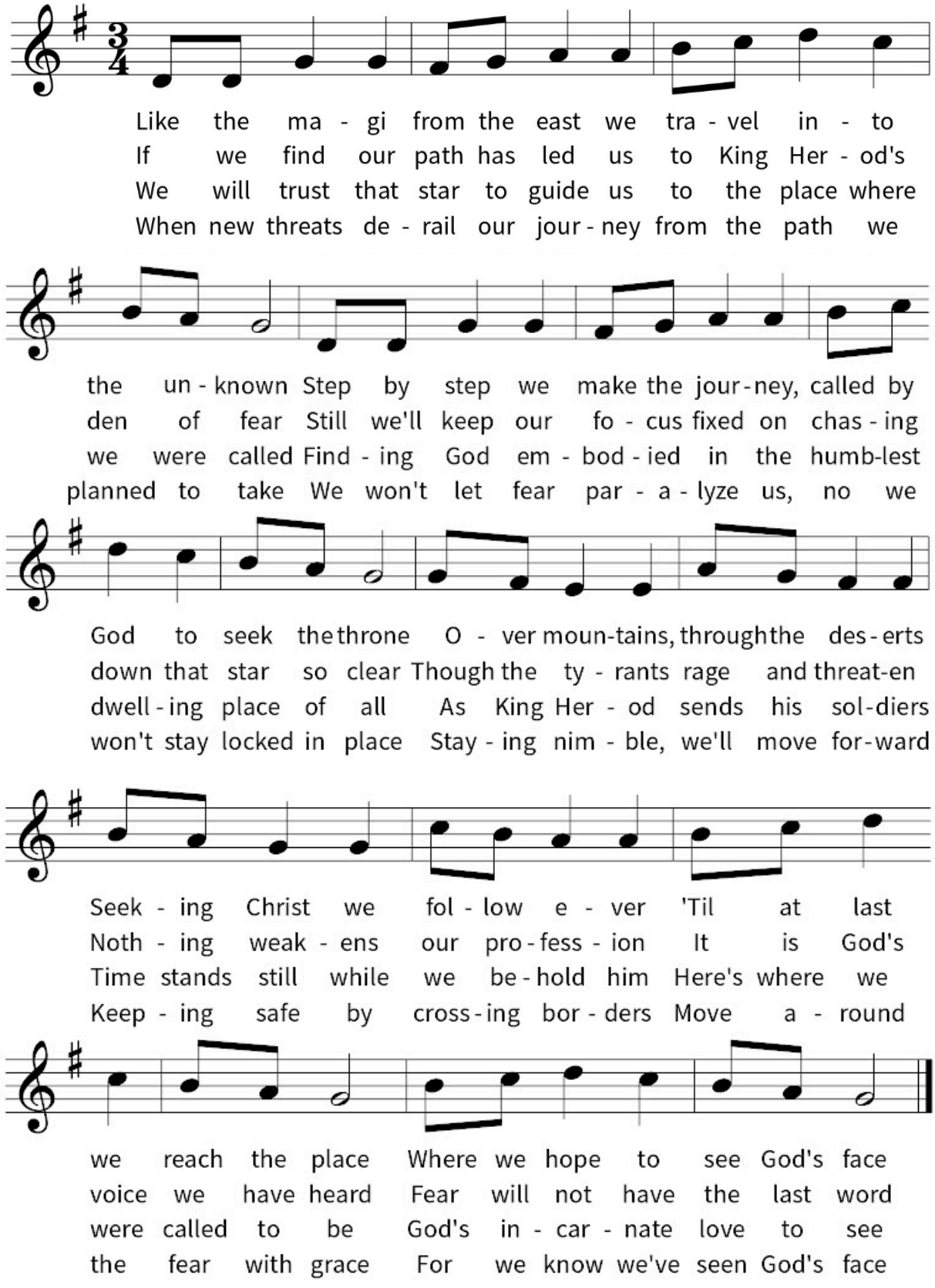
Pastor Sara Spohr

Star Words

Holy God,
you always show up.
Even in our fear,
even in times of uncertainty,
even when we can't seem to take the next step,
you are with us.
You are behind us, before us, and beside us,
hemming us in with your love.
As we sit with these star words,
open our hearts to the wisdom they hold.
Keep our minds nimble and flexible,
awake to the constellation of meanings we may find in a single word.
May they challenge us, comfort us,
and call us forward.
Let these words be a reminder of your presence with us.
May they give us courage and guidance for the year ahead.
Let them shine in the dark, pointing us toward you.
And at the end of this year, may we look back at the paths we took
and see how in every moment, you journeyed with us.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

Song

We've Seen God's Face



MEAL

Offering

Your gifts make a difference. Thank you for supporting our shared ministry and outreach. Scan the QR code to take advantage of our *Simply Giving* mobile option or *Venmo*. You'll also find baskets in the rear of the Sanctuary for offerings and prayer cards.

vanco venmo

Prayers of the People

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

You are invited to pray the Lord's Prayer using these printed words, or the words of your heart's choosing.

Our Father/Mother/Parent in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

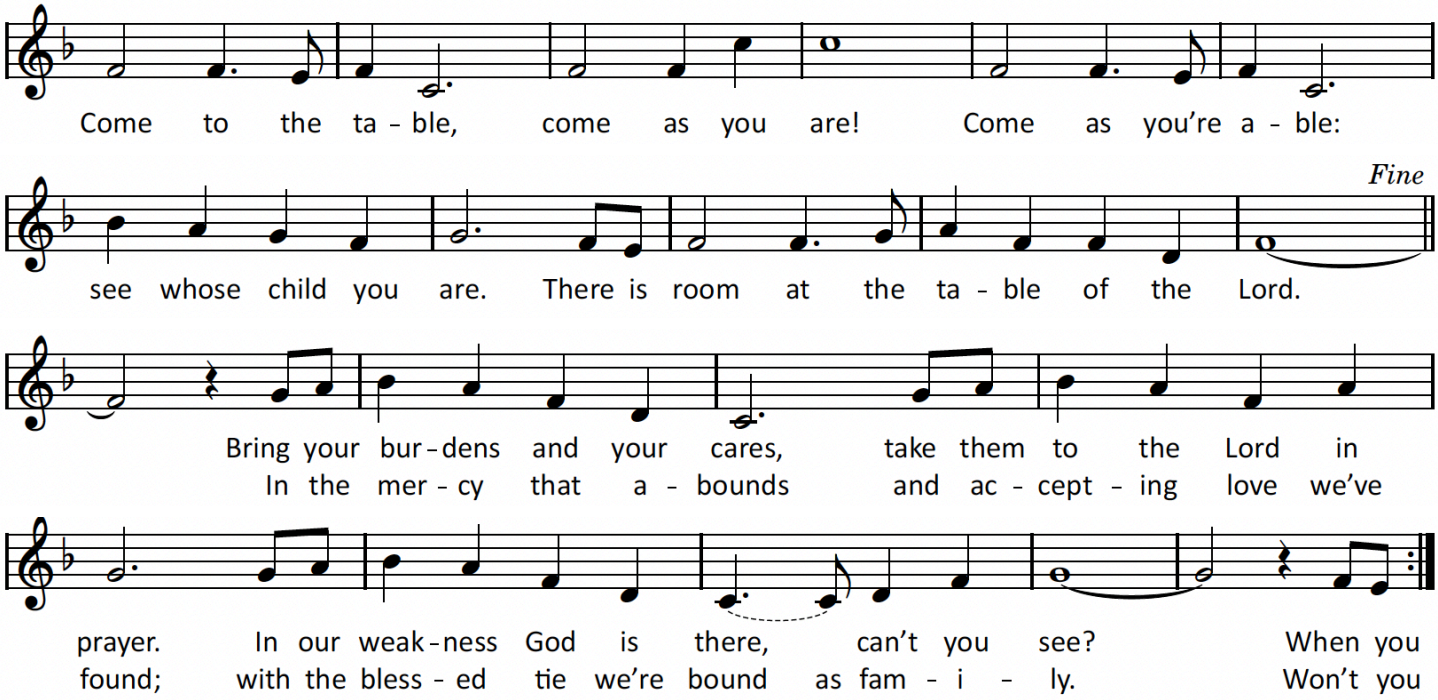
Everyone is invited to receive the gift of Holy Communion, offered every Sunday. Children are welcome to commune or come forward for a blessing. An usher will direct you to the front. Let them know if you'd like to be served from where you're seated.

Distribution

Communion is served by intinction: receive the bread in your hand and then dip it in wine or juice.The bread is gluten-free and made with eggs, olive oil, honey, molasses, Bob's Red Mill gluten-free Wonderful bread mix, Bob's Red Mill gluten-free baking soda, and water. Both wine and grape juice are available. Pre-packaged individual cups are also available (gluten-free wafer and juice).

Communion Song

Come to the Table
by Daniel Pederson



Communion Blessing

SEND

Blessing

In a fearful world,
may you look for God's spirit.
May you reach for each other's hands.
May you choose courage whenever you can.
And in all things, may you remember
that good news is louder than fear.
In the name of the one who calls,
the one who sends,
and the one who journeys with —
go in peace and
be not afraid.
Amen.

Sending Song

This Little Light of Mine

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine;
this little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine;
this little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Text: African American spiritual

Dismissal

Go in peace, share the good news.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

We are glad you're here!
We want to get a chance to know you.
Please fill this sheet out and place it in the offering basket. Introduce yourself to those around you.
Stay for fellowship afterwards!

Date: ___/___/___

Name(s): _____

_____

_____

Best Email Address: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

How did you hear about Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church?

(please check all that apply)

I am:
- ☐ new here
- ☐ visiting again
- ☐ here with friends and family
- ☐ active in another church
- ☐ looking for a church home

I would:
- ☐ like to receive the weekly newsletter
- ☐ like to connect by phone
- ☐ like to connect by email

Find out more about Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church by going to www.lakenokomischurch.org

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Pastors
Sara Spohr, Arthur Murray

Reader
Eric Grube

Ushers
Jerry Winzig

Altar Guild
Jill Boncher, Barb Tauferner

Sunday School
Ruth Patzloff, Kat Vann

Musicians
Kathryn Selin, Becky Sun

Worship Media
John Walsh, Will Awe

Each week Lake Nokomis sends out an electronic newsletter, and sometimes there is more "stuff" in it. If you would like to receive that, then please contact **info@lakenokomis.org**, and you will be placed on the list. You can view archived newsletters by going to lakenokomischurch.org/newsletter.

SAVE THE DATE
Youth Lock-In
January 16-17

- Spend the night in the church
- Games, snacks, movies
- What else needs to be said?

JUSTICE AND MERCY TEAM

Thursday, January 8 - 6:00 pm
Library
If you have a heart for justice and community building, then please come. For more information, please contact Kat Vann: **katvann222@yahoo.com**.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

Tuesdays at 5 pm
Large Sanctuary
What is Pray Without Ceasing? It is a prayer movement with a mission of uplifting and uniting communities in prayer, during a time of significant change. We meet for 30 minutes.

NEW BRANCHES COFFEE HOUR

Wednesday, January 14 - 10:00 am
The Commons
Come hang with some of our beloved folx from the New Branches faith communities. Coffee, stories, laughs, and so much more!

SYNOD YOUTH CHOIR

Youth from participating congregations will gather once a month from January through April 2026 to learn songs, connect with other young people from Lutheran congregations, and prepare to sing together at the Synod Assembly on **Saturday, May 2nd @ 9am.**

Rehearsal Schedule: 10:00 a.m. on the last Saturday of each month (January–April: 1/24, 2/28, 3/28, 4/25).

Sign up at
mpls-synod.org/community/synod-youth-choir

Prayer for the People

Reach out to the prayer team with your requests, or to join your prayers with others on the team, please email **prayer@lakenokomis.org**

If you have a prayer request, write it below and place it in the offering basket. Please let us know how you would like to share it.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

- ☐ Read aloud today in worship
- ☐ Share with pastor only
- ☐ Share with prayer chain

Name & Contact Info: _____