

A Glimpse of God-Made-Flesh

This gospel text is wordy to the point of feeling almost otherworldly. There's no real story here; there's no narrative to follow. To illustrate this text for children, for example, seems nearly impossible.

"The Word became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14). How is this gospel text—this gospel truth—made manifest, here and now? Where do you see God, in the flesh, walking the earth? How do you experience God-made-flesh speaking to you, caring for you, guiding you?

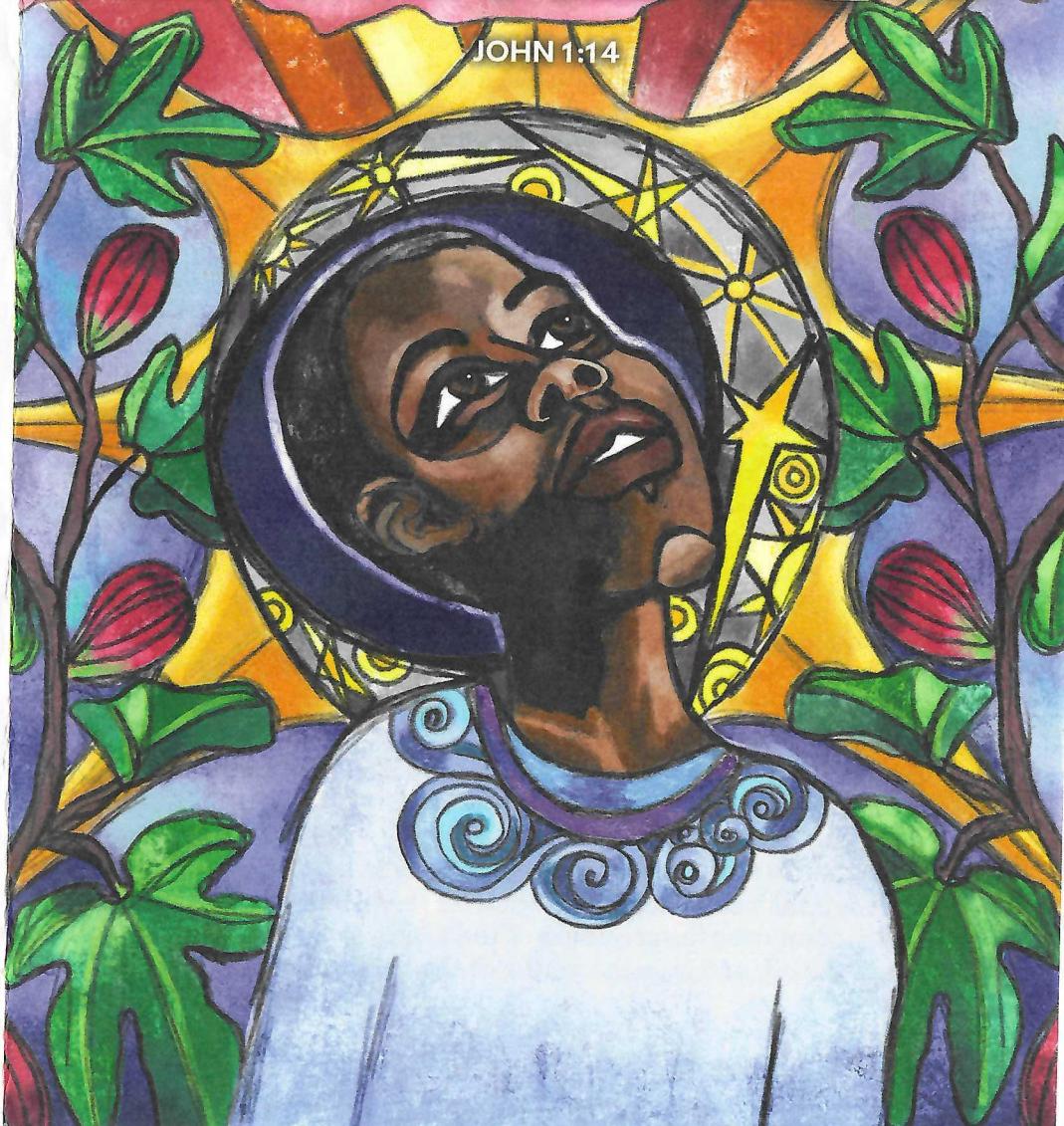
Surely God is present, in the flesh, even in the unlikeliest of places—as unlikely as a baby lying in a manger. Surely God is still here today in some form or fashion. The Word is no longer flesh and living among us, at least not in the same way as when Jesus himself was walking the earth. But *we* are flesh, and *we* are here. Surely *you* are God made manifest for someone; surely *your* presence here on earth is a glorious display of the presence of God for a neighbor or friend or colleague or family member—maybe even for someone you'd never expect to name you in this way.

In baptism, God commissions us to "proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace" (ELW, p. 228). This is the work of the Word made flesh; this is the work of providing a glimpse of God to a world in need of grace, hope, and new life.

How blessed we are to live in the promise of God-made-flesh. How blessed we are to live in response to that promise!

**The Word
became flesh
and lived among us**

JOHN 1:14



FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Second Sunday of Christmas ✡ January 4, 2026

* Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

Liturgy and hymns are in the green hymnal unless indicated.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CONFESSiON AND FORGIVENESS

P. 56

*HYMN "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

P. 44

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Spoken in unison.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

*HYMN OF PRAISE "Praise to the Father"

Praise to the Father for his loving kindness, Tenderly caring for his erring children; Praise him, all angels; praise him in the Heaven; Praise to the Father!

FIRST READING Jeremiah 31:7-14

⁷Thus 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." ⁸See, 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. ⁹With 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. ¹⁰Hear 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." ¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. ¹²They 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

Prayer Corner

December 7: Jennifer Waltmeyer

Today's Leaders

Service, Pastor Suzanne Elliot Lector, Ann Miller Counters, Janet & Ron Radel Head Usher, Rodney Troutman Ushers, Christy Leiter, Damaris Merwine, Ed Teitsworth Greeters, Cindy & Larry Klinger.

Flowers – In honor of Pat Miller and in memory of her son, Scott Miller by Ruth.

Bulletin – In memory of Tracy Kilinger, Love Jean and family.

Attendance: 19 (12/28/2025)

Offering. December 28, 2025	– Current Exp.:	\$885.00
	Other Offering:	\$60.00
	Total:	\$945.00

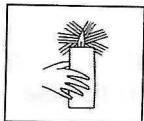
Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,362.87

Volunteers the Week of 1/11/2026 - Service, Pastor Barry Spatz Lector, Ann Miller Lay Assistant, Melody Schwartz Counters, Kathryn Otto, TBD Head Usher, Rodney Troutman Usher, Ben Wetzel, Jason Wolfgang, Mike Deiter Greeters, Ruth Wetzel & Orpha Troutman.

FRIEDENS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Website: [HTTPS://www.thefriedenslutheran.com](https://www.thefriedenslutheran.com)
Church e-mail: friedenslutheran4@gmail.com
Designated Pastor: Pastor Lee A. Diefenderfer, 1295 Red Dale Road,
 Orwigsburg, PA 17961, 610-858-4136
Council President: Damaris Merwine, 570-985-0644
Worship time – 10:30 AM

In the name of Jesus Christ, we strive to serve all people in our community and world. We extend a warm welcome to all visitors who are worshipping with us today. Please sign the guest register in the narthex and complete a visitor's pew card, placing it in the offering plate.

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.

Calendar

Todays Service, Pastor Suszanne Elliott
 January 11, Pastor Barry Spatz with Holy Communion.
 January 18, Pastor Barry Spatz.
 January 25, Karen Koppenhaver.

Announcements

- 1/6/2026 – Craft Faire Mtg., 6:30 PM.
- 1/14/2026 – Council Mtg., 6:00 PM.

herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.¹³ 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. ¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

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

PSALM 147:12-20

¹² Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion,
¹³ **who has strengthened the bars of your gates and has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁴ God has established peace on your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵ **God sends out a command to the earth, a word that runs very swiftly.**

¹⁶ God gives snow like wool, scattering frost like ashes.

¹⁷ **God scatters hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against God's cold?**

¹⁸ The Lord sends forth the word and melts them; the wind blows, and the waters flow.

¹⁹ **God declares the word to Jacob, statutes and judgements to Israel.**

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

SECOND READING Ephesians 1:3-14

³ 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, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ 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, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ 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;¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

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

The Holy Gospel according to John **Glory to you, O Lord.**

***GOSPEL** John [1-9] 10-18

[¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ (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.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ 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.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE – Pastor Suzanne Elliott

HYMN "What Child Is This"

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***NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became

incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

***PRAYERS** Hear us, Oh God. **Your mercy is great.**

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

***BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

***SENDING HYMN** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

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***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God**