



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
January 2026

We glorify God by receiving the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and sharing that salvation through word and deed with those in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Now greet the swiftly changing year

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

“Now greet the swiftly changing year” is one version of beloved Lutheran hymnwriter Jaroslav J. Vajda’s 1968 translation of *Rok novy zase k nám prisel* (apparently more literally “A new year has come again to us”), the first line of a Slovak hymn text that Vajda said may be “the most traditional New Year’s and Name of Jesus hymn in Slovak hymnody”, and Vajda knew that of which he spoke, recalling childhood memories from Indiana Harbor (East Chicago), Indiana, of singing the hymn both with his family in the parsonage on New Year’s Eve and with the congregation in the church next door on New Year’s Day, which day, on the Church Calendar is the feast of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus.

I have a now-sainted Slovak uncle, and one of my friends from seminary served in the non-geographical Slovak District of the Missouri Synod, but that’s where my Slovak connection ends, as far as I know, anyway. But, that hymn text with a newer tune is appointed by *Lutheran Service Book* as one of two appointed choices for Hymn of the Day for the Circumcision and Name of Jesus, which we are observing again this year, even as it falls on a Thursday, and, while we are familiar with and have sung on previous observances the other hymn appointed (*LSB* 900), this year seemed like a good opportunity for us to learn and sing this hymn, one of the relatively few in *LSB* that we have not already learned and sing with some regularity. (The calendar attached to this newsletter uses the hymn’s complete first stanza [896:1] at its bottom.)

Vajda’s eight-stanza translation of the hymn’s original fifteen stanzas (including his conflating stanzas 2 and 3 of the original into a new stanza 2) was introduced to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with the 1969 *Worship Supplement*, where the English text was paired with the tune ROK NOVY, named for the Slovak text with which it was paired when the text was first published in 1602 or 1606, but both text and tune are thought to predate that publication. The 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship* and the related 1982 *Lutheran Worship* dropped one stanza of Vajda’s translation but kept the same tune. But, by the end of 1985, a new

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tune for the hymn by Alfred V. Fedak, SIXTH NIGHT (apparently so named since New Year's Day can be considered the sixth day after the Nativity of Our Lord), was both being distributed by Concordia Publishing House and being used by the latest Episcopal hymnal, and that tune was chosen to be used both in the 1998 *Hymnal Supplement '98* and in the 2006 *LSB*, with that tune's "dancelike rhythm" said to be "most suitable" for the text's "joyful character".

Our secular calendar's placement of New Year's Eve/Day, and so the change of the year, relates to the Circumcision and Name of Jesus, by Jewish reckoning eight days after His birth (Luke 2:21), though the first "year of the Lord" may have missed the mark by some six years before Christ. While *LSB* gives what are called "proprs" (Readings and such that are "proper" to that day) for both New Year's Eve and the Circumcision and Name of Jesus, the Feast of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus is one of what *LSB* calls "principal feasts of Christ" (see p.xi), at least some of which feasts Pilgrim has made some effort to observe with a Divine Service even on weekdays.

Nevertheless, we can—and perhaps to some extent should—make New Year's resolutions, trying to live our lives in the new year in some way or ways better than we lived our lives in the old year. We believe, teach, and confess our inability apart from God's Holy Spirit to turn from our sin and trust God to forgive us freely for the sake Jesus's death on the cross, and we believe, teach, and confess God's role transforming us through His Word and Sacraments and so His role in our living more-holy lives after we receive His forgiveness in His Word and Sacraments.

In January of 2026, we have two additional opportunities to receive His Word and Sacraments, with Divine Service not only on the Circumcision and Name of Jesus (January 1) but also on The Epiphany of Our Lord (January 6). One January Sunday is the Second Sunday after Christmas, another is The Baptism of Our Lord, and, instead of their being Sundays after Epiphany, the final two January Sundays will observe, respectively, The Confession of St. Peter and The Conversion of St. Paul, lesser feasts that this year fall on "green" Sundays, when we at Pilgrim have made some effort to observe them.

Whatever else may change as we "greet the swiftly changing year", my intention as Pilgrim's pastor is for us in 2026 to continue faithfully preaching the Gospel purely and administering the Sacraments rightly. May God continue to bless us with those who faithfully receive His Gospel and Sacraments and, in turn, faithfully support the work of His Kingdom in this place.

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

DAILY BIBLE READING

- 1 Luke 1:68-79
Mark 2
- 2 Psalm 30
Mark 3
- 3 Psalm 31
Mark 4
- 4 Psalm 32
Mark 5
- 5 Psalm 33
Mark 6
- 6 Psalm 34
Mark 7
- 7 Psalm 35
Mark 8
- 8 Psalm 36
Mark 9
- 9 Psalm 37
Mark 10
- 10 Psalm 38
Mark 11
- 11 Psalm 39
Mark 12
- 12 Psalm 40
Mark 13
- 13 Psalm 41
Mark 14
- 14 Psalm 42
Mark 15-16
- 15 Psalm 43
Genesis 1-3
- 16 Psalm 44
Genesis 4-6
- 17 Psalm 45
Genesis 7-9
- 18 Psalm 46
Genesis 10-12
- 19 Psalm 47
Genesis 13-15
- 20 Psalm 48
Genesis 16-18
- 21 Psalm 49
Genesis 19-21
- 22 Psalm 50
Genesis 22-24
- 23 Psalm 51
Genesis 25-27
- 24 Psalm 52
Genesis 28-30
- 25 Psalm 53
Genesis 31-33
- 26 Psalm 54
Genesis 34-36
- 27 Psalm 55
Genesis 37-39
- 28 Psalm 56
Genesis 40-42
- 29 Psalm 57
Genesis 43-45
- 30 Psalm 58
Genesis 46-48
- 31 Luke 1:68-79
Genesis 49-50

JANUARY 2026



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January 2026

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

www.pilgrimlc.org

903-984-4333

Pastor's Regular Study Hours

Tuesday 5:00-8:00 PM
 Wednesday-Friday 9:00 AM-Noon
 Saturday Noon-3:00 PM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Elder on Duty: Remo Gualtieri (Back-up: Jeromy McMurray)				1 CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS (W) 10:00 AM Divine Service	2	3 Fourth Quarter reports and agenda items due to Rita tomorrow Kathy Hudson (B)
4 2 ND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (W) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service (Install.) De-green-ing "15-2 Folk" Gathering	5 M/M Gardner (A)	6 THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD 7:00 PM Divine Service	7 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	8 7:40 AM KPD Dev 10:30 AM to 2:00 PM DFW Study Group 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis M/M Gage (A) M/M Knight (A)	9	10 (Willows Services are suspended)
11 THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD (W) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	12	13 NO Elders' Meeting	14 NO Midweek Bible Study	15 NO Catechesis	16	17
Pastor Galler is on vacation after the Divine Service 1/11 through midday 1/20. An Elder will monitor the Church Phone.						
18 THE CONFESSION OF ST. PETER (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Mary/Martha Society Gathering	19 Pastor Galler continues his vacation.	20	21 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study Remo Gualtieri (B)	22 7:40 AM KPD Devo. 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	23 Theodore Ford (B) Henry Ford (B)	24
25 THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL (W) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Church Council Meeting	26	27 3:00 PM Catechesis	28 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	29 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Circuit #14 Pastors' Meeting in Nac. 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	30	31

**“Now greet the swiftly changing year With joy and penitence sincere.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.” (LSB 896:1)**

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
713 Florey Street
Kilgore, Texas 75662-3503

The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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Rev. Dr. Jayson S. Galler, Pastor

pastor@pilgrimlc.org

903-984-4333

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