

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



Faith Lutheran Church

Look Here! Hear!

January 6, 2024

As We Gather: The Twelve Days of our Christmas celebration have come to an end. But the miraculous birth of the Son of God is only the beginning of the story. For though Jesus came as the fulfillment of all the promises to God's chosen people Israel, the promise to Abraham was clear that by his seed "all the families of the earth" would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). This is the mystery Paul speaks of in Ephesians 3, how "the Gentiles are fellow heirs . . . of the promise in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 3:6). Anything hidden remains a mystery until it is revealed. No one, Jew or Gentile, can come to faith in Christ without the Gospel being revealed. Another word for "reveal" is "epiphany." So today Matthew uses the word "behold," showing what may seem a surprise to some. "Behold, wise men from the east" (Matthew 2:1). "Behold, the star that they had seen" (Matthew 2:9). Today we say, behold, Christmas is a much bigger thing than many have thought. It encompasses nothing less than all our Lord's earthly ministry culminating in His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit. It is nothing less than the gift of salvation to all who believe. This epiphany has invaded your darkness through the water and the Word of your Holy Baptism, through the Word of God preached in your hearing, and through the receiving of our Lord's very body and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar to sustain that gift, that epiphany of faith to the end of days. By faith you have made a very good beginning.

PREPARATION

Opening Hymn Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling #650



1 Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er dwell - ing In the ho - liest
 2 Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er liv - ing As the Church's
 3 Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er work - ing Through the Church's



realms of light; Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er brood - ing
 ver - y life; Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er striv - ing
 min - is - try; Quick - 'ning, strength - 'ning, and ab - solv - ing,



O'er a world of gloom and night; Ho - ly Spir - it,
 Through us in a cease - less strife; Ho - ly Spir - it,
 Set - ting cap - tive sin - ners free; Ho - ly Spir - it,



ev - er rais - ing Those of earth to thrones on high; Liv - ing,
 ev - er form - ing In the Church the mind of Christ: You we
 ev - er bind - ing Age to age and soul to soul In com -



life - im - part - ing Spir - it, You we praise and mag - ni - fy.
 praise with end - less wor - ship For Your gifts and fruits un - priced.
 mu - nion nev - er end - ing, You we wor - ship and ex - tol.

Text: Timothy Rees, 1874–1939, alt. Tune: Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse . . . Contradanseu, c. 1710, Amsterdam
 Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 43:4; 124:8

P I will go to the altar of God,

C to God my exceeding joy.

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,

C who made heaven and earth.

Confession and Absolution

P I confess to almighty God,

C before all the company of heaven, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed through my fault, through my own fault, through my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, His Son, to

have mercy on me, forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life.

P Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Kyrie

LSB 204

C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

Hymn of Praise I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light #411



1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
2 I want to see the bright-ness of God.
3 I'm look - ing for the com - ing of Christ.



I want to fol - low Je - sus.
I want to look at Je - sus.
I want to be with Je - sus.



God set the stars to give light to the world.
Clear Sun of Righ - teous - ness, shine on my path,
When we have run with pa - tience the race,

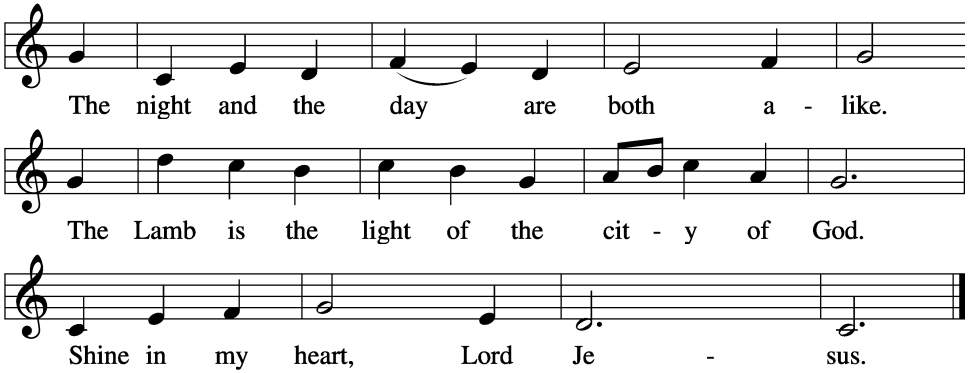


The star of my life is Je - sus.
And show me the way to the Fa - ther.
We shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In Him there is no dark - ness at all.



The night and the day are both a - like.

The Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God.

Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text and tune: Kathleen Thomerson, 1934. Text and tune: © 1970, 1975 Celebration. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110006139

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.
O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 60:1–6* (The future glory of Israel)

- ¹Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
- ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
- ³And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.

⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle *Ephesians 3:1–12* (The mystery of the Gospel revealed)

¹For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers

and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel *Matthew 2:1–12* (The visit of the Wise Men)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures,

they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Sermon Hymn Jesus Shall Reign #832 *sts. 1, 3, 5*



1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun Does its suc -
 3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - 'ry tongue Dwell on His
 5 Let ev - 'ry crea - ture rise and bring Hon - ors pe -



ces - sive jour - neys run; His king - dom stretch from
 love with sweet - est song; And in - fant voic - es
 cu - liar to our King; An - gels de - scend with



shore to shore Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
 shall pro - claim Their ear - ly bless - ings on His name.
 songs a - gain, And earth re - peat the loud a - men.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Tune: attr. John C. Hatton, d. 1793. Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon "Arise, shine, for your light has come" - Isaiah 60:1-6

Offering and Hymn O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

#395 sts. 1, 3, 6



1 O Morn - ing Star, how fair and bright! You shine with God's
3 Lord, when You look on us in love, At once there falls
6 What joy to know, when life is past, The Lord we love



own truth and light, A - glow with grace and mer - cy!
from God a - bove A ray of pur - est plea - sure.
is first and last, The end and the be - gin - ning!



Of Ja - cob's race, King Da - vid's son, Our Lord and mas -
Your Word and Spir - it, flesh and blood Re - fresh our souls
He will one day, oh, glo - rious grace, Trans - port us to



ter, You have won Our hearts to serve You on - ly!
with heav'n - ly food. You are our dear - est trea - sure!
that hap - py place Be - yond all tears and sin - ning!



Low - ly, ho - ly! Great and glo - rious, All vic - to - rious,
Let Your mer - cy Warm and cheer us! O draw near us!
A - men! A - men! Come, Lord Je - sus! Crown of glad - ness!



Rich in bless - ing! Rule and might o'er all pos - sess - ing!
For You teach us God's own love through You has reached us.
We are yearn - ing For the day of Your re - turn - ing!

Text: tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt. Text and tune: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608. Text: © 1978
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The new members stand from their pews

Reception of Members by Transfer or Profession of Faith

P Today, we receive by Transfer from Redeemer Lutheran Church in St. Thomas Mr. Rudy and his wife Mrs. Norma Singh. I acknowledge publicly that you are members of this congregation. Receive the Lord's Supper and participate with us in all the blessings of salvation that our Lord has given to His Church, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

P The grace of our ✠ Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

C Amen.

The new members sit.

Installation of Congregational Officers

Those to be installed are presented before the altar. The pastor addresses the congregation:

P Beloved in the Lord, Holy Scripture admonishes us that “all things should be done decently and in order.”

To that end, the constitution and bylaws of this congregation establish various offices to which men and women are elected and appointed to serve. In so doing, the Church follows the example of the Early Christian Church as described in Acts, chapter six:

The twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

The apostle Peter writes in his first epistle:

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Each officer is named individually according to his or her respective office.

P [Name] has been [elected/appointed] to serve as [title of position].

The pastor addresses the officers-elect:

P You have been chosen to fill specific offices and positions of responsibility at [name of congregation]. You are to work with the pastor(s), that our life together in Christ may be orderly and pleasing in His sight.

You are to see that the services of God's house are held at the proper times, that the Word of God is purely preached and taught according to the Lutheran Confessions, that the Sacraments of Christ are administered according to His institution, that provision is made for the Christian instruction of young and old, that the erring are admonished, and that discipline is maintained.

You are to see that the temporal affairs of the congregation are properly administered and that proper support is provided for the workers of this congregation. You are to assist in caring for the poor and the sick, in cultivating harmony among the members, in promoting the general welfare of the congregation, and in furthering the kingdom of Christ here and throughout the world.

While holiness of life and obedience to Christ are expected of all members of the congregation, it is especially important that you, as office-bearers in His Church, show yourselves, by word and example, to be faithful to Him in service and Christian devotion.

In the presence of God and of this congregation, I therefore ask you: Do you accept the office(s) entrusted to you, and do you promise faithfully to carry out your duties, trusting in the Lord and conforming yourself to His Word in accordance with the faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church? If so, then answer: I do.

R *I do.*

The pastor addresses the congregation:

P Beloved in the Lord, you have heard the promises of faithfulness spoken by these men and women whom you have selected to serve as officers of [name of congregation]. Do you promise to support them in their work, to remember them in your prayers, and to work with them to the best of the abilities that God has given you, so that He may be glorified and His work be done in our midst? If so, then answer: We do.

C **We do.**

The pastor addresses the officers-elect:

P Brothers and sisters in Christ, I install you as officers of [name of congregation] in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P The almighty and most merciful God enlighten and strengthen you in your offices that you may be good and faithful stewards to the glory of His name and the good of His people.

C **Amen.**

P

Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks that You have raised up these servants for work among Your people. We humbly implore You to grant them, by Your Holy Spirit, those gifts needed for the faithful carrying out of their tasks, most especially wisdom, strength, and willing hearts. Let Your blessing rest on this congregation. Strengthen the faith, quicken the love, and enkindle the zeal of its members, that Your name may be glorified and that here and in all places under heaven the kingdom of Your Son may be advanced. We remember with thanksgiving those who have faithfully served Your people and have now completed their time of service. We pray that in the end of days we, with all Your faithful people, may hear the voice of Christ saying: "Come, you who are blessed by My Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C

Amen.

If this rite is used apart from the Divine Service or Daily Office, the Lord's Prayer may be prayed.

P

Go in the name of the Lord. Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. The Almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C

Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P

O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God of our fathers in faith, and God of light, we praise You and give You thanks, above all for revealing Your gracious will of salvation through

the lamp of Your Word, through the light of Your Christ. In Jesus, the light of Your salvation has shone in the hearts of people of all nations. Hear our prayers for the life and salvation of all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious Lord, as the star spread the news of Your Son's birth over distant lands, so make Your Church and her people to be a shining witness of the Gospel of salvation to all people, both near and far. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Extend Your reign, O Christ, over the whole earth so that oppression may be transformed to freedom and justice. Give wisdom to those who lead. Grant that they rule justly and with wisdom, according to Your gracious will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord Jesus, bless all those who are ill, injured, or in mourning, [especially . . .]. Fill them with the assurance of Your promises and grant that we may be of help and encouragement to them. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord, accept our humble praise and thanksgiving for the blessings given to our brothers and sisters who rejoice for celebrating their birthday this week, [*especially . . .*]. Lord, be with them and they acknowledge You as the source of all goodness and magnify Your name with all the gifts You give. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

Other Petitions. Lord, in Your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

P Savior of the nations, we thank You for the blessed memory

of those who have died in the faith whom You have gathered into Your heavenly kingdom. Grant that we always look to the future with hope and confidence in the reunion that is ours when You transport us to that glorious place that is beyond all tears and sinning. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

C **Amen.**

Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

Benediction

P 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.

C **Amen.**

Closing Hymn Songs of Thankfulness and Praise #394



1 Songs of thank - ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to Thee we raise,
2 Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, Proph - et, Priest, and King su - preme;
3 Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole Pal - sied limbs and faint - ing soul;
4 Sun and moon shall dark - ened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;
5 Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Pres - ent in Thy ho - ly Word—



Man - i - fest - ed by the star To the sa - ges from a - far,
And at Ca - na wed - ding guest In Thy God - head man - i - fest;
Man - i - fest in val - iant fight, Quell - ing all the dev - il's might;
Christ will then like light - ning shine, All will see His glo - rious sign;
Grace to im - i - tate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;



Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem In Thy birth at Beth - le - hem:
Man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, Chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;
Man - i - fest in gra - cious will, Ev - er bring - ing good from ill;
All will then the trum - pet hear, All will see the Judge ap - pear;
That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
Thou by all wilt be con - fessed, God in man made man - i - fest.
And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807–85, alt. Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–93. Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgment

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