

# *The Light of Wisdom: A Service for Epiphany*



Where is the wise person? ... Has not God made  
foolish the wisdom of the world?  
1 Corinthians 1:20

January 6, 2024 No Saturday Service

January 7, 2024  
8 a.m. Emmanuel  
10 a.m. St. John's

Pastor Peter Zietlow

## Pastor's Greeting

What does "Epiphany" mean? It comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, which means "shining forth," "manifestation," or "revelation." The Epiphany of our Lord is the Christian festival that celebrates the many ways through signs, miracles, and preaching that Jesus revealed Himself to the world as Christ, God incarnate, and King of Kings. Four incidents that manifested the mission and divinity of Christ are commemorated during the season of Epiphany: First, the visit of the Magi; second, the baptism of Jesus; third, the miracle at Cana; and fourth, the Transfiguration. Today we celebrate the visit of the Magi or wise men, who were gentiles, which is why we often think of Epiphany as the Christmas of the gentiles.

### **Congregational Hymn 372, As With Gladness Men of Old, Verses 1, 3, 4, 5**

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore your followers be.

As they offered gifts most rare at your cradle, rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heav'nly King.

Holy Jesus, ev'ry day keep us in the narrow way;  
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glory hide.

In the heav'nly country bright need they no created light;  
You its light, its joy, its crown, you its sun which goes not down.  
There forever may we sing alleluias to our King!

The **Responsive Reading** (from Psalm 111:1-4, 9-10)  
spoken responsively by the Pastor and the congregation.

P: Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

**C: Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.**

P: Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

**C: He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

P: He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.

**C: Holy and awesome is his name!**

P: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.

**C: His praise endures forever!**

The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the Pastor and the congregation.

P: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but so often we forsake that wisdom and seek the foolishness and temptations of the world. Let us confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness.

**C: Almighty God, we turn away from the wisdom of your holy Word and instead follow the temptations of the devil, the world, and our own sinful desires. We sin against you each day in our thoughts, words, and actions. Have mercy on us and forgive us for the sake of Jesus our Lord.**

P: Christ our Lord, the Child of Bethlehem, was born to save us. He carried our sins in his own body to the cross. For his sake and by his command, I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.  
His praise endures forever!**

### **The Prayer of the Day**

Lord Jesus, Light of the world, a bright star proclaimed your birth and led the wise men to find and worship you, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Lead us by your holy Word that we too might be filled with your wisdom and walk in your light. Teach us by your Spirit to love and serve others in your name. As the star announced your birth, may we too proclaim the good news of your birth, life, death, and resurrection to a world trapped by its own foolish wisdom and lost in the darkness of sin. Amen

### **The Old Testament Reading** Isaiah 60:1-6

<sup>1</sup>"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. <sup>2</sup>See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. <sup>3</sup>Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. <sup>4</sup>"Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. <sup>5</sup>Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. <sup>6</sup>Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

### **Congregational Hymn** 386, Songs of Thankfulness and Praise, Verses 1 and 5

Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to you we raise,  
Manifested by the star to the Magi from afar,

Branch of royal David's stem, in your birth at Bethlehem.  
Anthems be to you addressed, God in man made manifest.

Grant us grace to see you, Lord, mirrored in your holy Word.  
May our lives and all we do imitate and honor you  
That we all like you may be at your great epiphany  
And may praise you, ever blest, God in man made manifest.

### The **Epistle Reading**, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

<sup>18</sup>For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." <sup>20</sup>Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Stand for the **Gospel Reading**,  
**Setting One: Gospel Acclamation**, p.161

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia  
Jesus is the light of the world; in him we have the light of life. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

### **Gospel Reading**, Matthew 2:1-12

<sup>1</sup>After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to

Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: <sup>6</sup> “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

### **C: Praise be to you, O Christ!**

Be seated for The **Sermon Hymn** 373, “Brightest and Best”, Verses 1, 3

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.

Star of the East, the Horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Shall we not yield him in costly devotion  
Rarest of fragrances, tribute divine,  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?

The **Sermon** Matthew 2:1-12 (The Gospel Lesson)  
**“Take a Walk in the Light of the Star” By going to...**

1. The East 2. Investigate 3. Worship

### **Rise for The Apostle’s Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.**

**Congregational Hymn 92 “Brightest and Best”, Verses 4 and 5**

Vainly we bring him the finest of off’rings,  
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure,  
Richer by far is the praise that the heart brings;  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.

Star of the East, the Horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

### **Epiphany, Intercessory, and Lord's Prayers**

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.

### **At St. John's, Soloist Sings: "Star of the East"**

#### **The Offering**

**Prayer** As the wise ones of old came bearing gifts, so we come to you, God, with our gifts. Accept and transform them in the light of the gospel, that the world might believe and come to know Him whom to know is life eternal, Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen

#### **The Blessing**

Gracious God, let your servants depart in peace; your word has been fulfilled. We have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all people as a light to reveal you to the nations.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

#### **C: Amen**

The **Closing Hymn**, Sung to the tune of Hymn 534  
Hail, O Source of Every Blessing, 3 verses

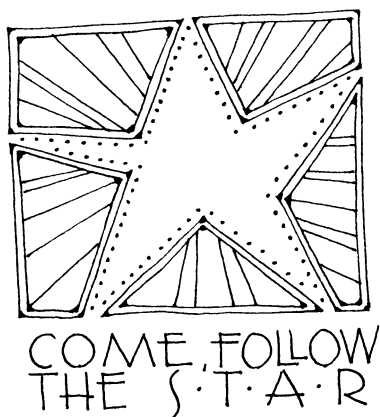


Hail, O Source of ev'ry blessing, Father of our human race!  
 Gentiles now, your grace possessing, in your courts obtain a  
 place;  
 Grateful now, we fall before you, in your Church rejoice to live,  
 See your glory and adore you, thankful for the grace you give.

Once far off but now invited, we approach your sacred throne,  
 In your covenant united, reconciled, redeemed, made one.  
 Now revealed to eastern sages, see the star of mercy shine,  
 Myst'ry hid in former ages, myst'ry great of love divine.

Hail, O all-inviting Savior! Gentiles now their off'rings bring, In  
 your temples seek your favor, Jesus Christ, our Lord and King.  
 May we, body, soul, and spirit, live devoted to your praise,  
 Glorious realms of bliss inherit, grateful anthems ever raise.

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## INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

- For the sick and others facing trials, including: Chuck Boetcher, Gale "Blackie" Boyd, Bob Buehrens, Michael Cox (Marjorie Fabian's brother), Vicki Davis (Marilyn Riemer's sister), Edith Duesterhoeft, Ken Elmer (Sally's husband), Earl Ewert, Judy Fandrey, John Gaedke (Dan Finger's uncle), Donna Gatzke, Dennis Gray (Mary Dahlke's brother), Dennis Gromowski (Josh's father, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), Kelleen Grucza (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Kim Hanko (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Del & Jean Henke, Maureen Hillmer, Drake Hunter, Jerry & Darlene Hunter (Bonnie Chapman's parents), Xzander Jahr, Kris Kemp (Diane Hintz' daughter), Dale Kozlowski, Jeff Krueger (Diane Hintz's son), Gemma Lewis (Maureen Hillmer's granddaughter), Debbie & Steve Parrish, Darlene Phillips (Ken Elmer's mother), Melissa Prater, Karen Radke, Roxanne Schmanke, Ashley Schroeder, Eloise Schultz, Lynn Sellnow, Bob Sluga (Sherry's husband), Annette St. Onge, Amanda Stalker, Tom Stempniak, Dominick Thoman (the father of Janessa Roberts, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), James & Suzanne Weber, Paul Weldon (added this week: Lynn Sellnow)

- For today's Little Lambs director/teacher Call meeting and Voter's meeting at St. John's

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### This Week: January 7-13, 2024

Today	11:00am	SJ Voters Meeting/LL Call Meeting
Monday	2:30pm	HIP Meeting SJ
	6:30pm	Adult Choir SJ
	7:30pm	ABS at SJ
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	Joint Elders Meeting SJ
	6:30 p.m.	Worship Meeting SJ
Wednesday	10:00am	MCC Devotion
	10:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Study SJ
	5:00 p.m.	Public School Catechism SJ
Thursday	6:00pm	GriefShare SJ
Saturday	4:30 p.m.	NO SJ Worship

### Next Sunday: January 14, 2024

8:00 a.m.	Emmanuel Worship
8:30 a.m.	St. John's Sunday School
8:45 a.m.	Adult Bible Study St. John's
9:00 a.m.	Emmanuel Council Meeting
10:00 a.m.	St. John's Worship

### Attendance

Date	EM	SJ
12/31/23	25	76
1/1/24	-	31



Green Lake: Mondays 6:00pm

Princeton: Tuesdays 6:00pm

Montello: Thursdays 6:00pm

Please text Mark at 608-697-1600 for information and if you plan to attend.

St. John's Little Lambs NO LONGER NEEDS MILK JUGS!!! The igloo project is almost complete. Thanks to everyone who donated them!!!

## Women's Bible Study – Time: It's a Gift

*Time: It's a Gift* is a 4-week women's Bible study providing a rich foundation of Scripture, both law and gospel, to guide us as we open up and look into using God's gift of time. The goal is to equip us in the midst of a "no limits" society to make wise decisions in scheduling each day; to live biblically in all the seasons of our lives. God speaks clearly saying "Live in peace and be content." We say, "How is that possible?" We'll look at those possibilities. We also note that nowhere does God say, "Now here's a great way to live a harried life!" Even in the midst of full schedules or time-on-our-hands schedules, may we say with the Psalmist David "My times are in your hands" (Psalm 31:15).

Join us Wednesday evenings for this 4 week study. We will meet at 6:30 at St. John's Montello, starting on January 17th. Questions can be directed to Christa VanTreeck or Lynn Sellnow.

## ***Help us stay in touch!***

*Scan the code below using your smartphone camera and fill out the prompted information. Don't have a smartphone? That's ok! Fill out an attendance card located at the end of each pew and place it in the offering plate located at the entry of each church.*



**Welcome to our visitors!**

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