

# WORSHIP CELEBRATION

Epiphany Sunday  
January 10, 2021

11:15 am Modern Worship

**WELCOME TO THE FELLOWSHIP AND WORSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE.**

Our prayer is that you would be encouraged spiritually today . . .  
and that you would be encouraged in the fellowship of Jesus-followers.

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Charlotte, Michigan

## ***EPIPHANY***

You won't hear about it on national TV. You won't read about it in the paper . . .  
You quite possibly didn't even know about it. On January 6, the Christian church  
celebrated Epiphany. And what's that?

Epiphany means "showing forth" or "revealing." In the Christian church it refers to *the revealing of God himself to the world in the person of Jesus, who was born into this world in human flesh.* It is also often thought of as the *season of light* because God revealed light in the darkness of our world. Some churches think of January 6 as Jesus' birth date. Others think of it as the twelfth day of Christmas . . . or the revealing of Jesus to the wise men . . . or his revealing at his baptism, which occurred 30 years later. *Throughout the Epiphany season we see Jesus' divine nature revealed in various ways.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.  
Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made  
that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.  
The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.  
We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only,  
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*John 1:1-5, 14 (NIV)*

**PRAY FOR GOD'S BLESSING ON OUR CHURCH, OUR MEMBERS,  
OUR ASSOCIATES, AND OUR STAFF IN THIS NEW YEAR.**

# *The Order of Worship*

"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

1 John 4:9-1

## THE PREPARATION

### A PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND PRAISE

### THE GOSPEL WORD FOR TODAY – Matthew 2:1-12

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.

Pastor: Eternal God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
by the leading of a star You once made known to all nations . . .  
the arrival of our Savior, Jesus.

**All: We implore You, as Your people through faith,  
to lead us to greater faith and faithfulness.**

Pastor: While we totally believe God put a special, bold,  
leading star in the sky to lead the wisemen to Jesus – still an infant,

Jesus Himself claims the name “bright Morning Star” in the book of Revelation (22:16). Listen: “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”

**All: And we will see that Morning Star in heavenly glory . . . and will worship Him there, but also worship Him now.**

A SONG FOR REFLECTION AND PRAISE - “When the Stars Burn Down”

THE CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

A PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Pastor: Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol Him, all you peoples.

**All: We praise You, O Lord. Your love for us is great . . . and Your faithfulness endures forever.**

Pastor: Praise the LORD.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name.

**All: O Lord, we worship You in the splendor of Your holiness.**

## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING – Isaiah 43:15, 18-25 (NIV)

[God said:] "I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King." ... "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. <sup>19</sup> See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. <sup>20</sup> The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, <sup>21</sup> the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise. <sup>22</sup> Yet you have not called upon me, O Jacob, you have not wearied yourselves for me, O Israel. <sup>23</sup> You have not brought me sheep for burnt offerings, nor honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with grain offerings nor wearied you with demands for incense. <sup>24</sup> You have not bought any fragrant calamus for me, or lavished on me the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins and wearied me with your offenses. <sup>25</sup> I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Pastor: This is the word of the Lord.

**All: O Lord, help us apply this to our lives.**

## THE GOSPEL READING - Luke 2: 22-40

When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord<sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"),<sup>24</sup> and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.<sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.<sup>27</sup> Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,<sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:<sup>29</sup> "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.<sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation,<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."<sup>33</sup> The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.<sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,<sup>35</sup> so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,<sup>37</sup> and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.<sup>38</sup> Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Pastor: Simeon and Anna are examples of great trust in God – dependence on God and His word.

**All: O Lord, help us also trust You totally. Amen**

## OUR PRAYER IN SONG - "Build My Life"

### THE MESSAGE **All God's Promises Are "Yes" in Jesus!**

2 Corinthians 1:18-22 (NIV)

But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No."

<sup>19</sup> For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes."

<sup>20</sup> For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.

And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

<sup>21</sup> Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ.

He anointed us,<sup>22</sup> set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

## MESSAGE OUTLINE AND NOTE-TAKING GUIDE

1. How does trust grow in a person or entity?
2. St. Paul contends that \_\_\_\_\_ is faithful to His word. The Scriptures testify to His faithfulness and show us His faithfulness in His actions. He fulfills His \_\_\_\_\_ and keeps His \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. All of the promises of God are "yes" in \_\_\_\_\_ , that is, fulfilled in Christ. Another way of saying that is that Jesus is the "Amen."
4. What is the primary promise from God in our Old Testament text today? "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your \_\_\_\_\_ no more."
5. How is that promise fulfilled?
6. In whom or through whom is God's promise fulfilled?
7. Paul wrote: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are " \_\_\_\_\_ " in Christ.
8. When we say "Amen," what are we affirming in faith?
9. How has God put His seal of ownership on you and other Christians.
10. What is God's eternal promise to us as His people?
11. What is the promise of God already fulfilled for our fellow Christians who have "died" here while their souls live on?

## THE SERVICE OF RESPONSE

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH — the Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth . . .  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,  
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by Whom all things were made;  
Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven . . .  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary . . .  
and was made man;  
and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried,**

and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures . . .  
 and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father.  
 And He shall come again with glory . . .  
 to judge both the living and the dead,  
 Whose kingdom shall have no end.  
 And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
 Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
 Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
 Who spoke by the prophets.  
 And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church.  
 I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins,  
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### OUR CONFESSION OF SINS AND OF FAITH

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord. The Bible tells us: "We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ... By one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." (Hebrews 10:10, 14) This is good news which encourages us to confess our sinfulness and sin. Let us draw near with true hearts and confess our sins to God our Father, imploring Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**All: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.**  
 (Psalm 124:8)

Pastor: We know that God forgives our sinfulness and sin.  
 We can say with the psalmist:

**All: I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord . . .**  
**and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.** (Psalm 32:5)

Pastor: Let's examine ourselves. Do we see our sinfulness?  
 Are we truly remorseful for our sin? *(pause for reflection)*

Pastor: Let's acknowledge our sinfulness and express our remorse.

**All: O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner,**  
**confess to You all my sins and iniquities . . .**  
**with which I have ever offended You . . .**  
**and justly deserved Your punishment now and forever.**  
**But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them,**  
**and I pray You of Your boundless mercy . . .**  
**and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings**  
**and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious**  
**and merciful to me, a poor sinful being. Amen**

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOD'S GRACE

OUR SONG OF PRAISE – "Great Are You, Lord"

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

THE PRAYER OUR LORD TAUGHT

**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**

## **THE CLOSING WORSHIP**

REMINDERS OF OUR CONNECTIONS TO GOD AND TO ONE ANOTHER  
AND OF THE PRIVILEGE WE HAVE AS GOD'S RESCUED PEOPLE

What a privilege to be chosen ones of only true God – Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit. He is our creator and provider, Savior, and Sanctifier. All our needs are met through His benevolence. In giving our tithes and offerings, we simply return some of what He has given to us to acknowledge His gifts and express our trust and thanksgiving and our desire to share the gospel message around the world.

A REMINDER OF WHO WE ARE – "Our First Lutheran Foundation Statement"  
*. . . a statement of who we are and how we function together . . .*

**We are people of God, graciously saved by God through  
the sacrificial death of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.**

**In relationship with God as His family,  
recognizing His love for us, in faith we seek Him whole-heartedly,  
worship and commune faithfully,  
absorb God's word, pray to Him, and obey Him.**

**In relationship to others both inside and outside our family of God,  
as people enlightened by the Holy Spirit to the atoning work of God's Son,  
Jesus Christ, we encourage, serve, and care for others.  
Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we evangelize, witness,  
and share with a desire to make all people disciples of Jesus.**

THE INSTALLATION OF CHURCH OFFICERS AND BOARD CHAIRPEOPLE

OUR CLOSING PRAISE IN SONG – “Your Grace Is Enough”

THE BLESSING

*Silent Prayer*  
*Announcements*

.....  
**TO GOD BE THE GLORY**  
**THANKS FOR WORSHIPPING**

We are thankful you worshiped at First Lutheran Church today.  
We pray that your participation has renewed your spirit and enlightened you.

Credits

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**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**

We are thankful that the Lord, our God, is so merciful and gracious and that He looked on us with His favor and came to this world to save us. His love for us has won us over and brought us to faith. We are His and we are in His kingdom of grace. Hallelujah!

Since He is in us and we are in Him our lives are changed. We eagerly and willingly serve Him. In the Advent and Christmas season we saw many around our congregation serving the Lord and serving others with reading and leading singing, coordinating and helping with the Children's Christmas Service, decorating, cleaning, putting together worship folders, preparing the chancel, preparing mailings, leading Bible classes, providing and serving refreshments, giving gifts of many different kinds, etc. Thank you for letting the Light of Christ shine through you.

**Make It Your Daily Prayer to Thank Your Lord and Savior  
for His sacrificial, steadfast, and unconditional love.**

**OUR DAILY PRAYER**

O Lord God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, give US undivided hearts . . .  
that are centered on You and are totally attached to You. Help every one of  
us trust You and Your word fully. Help us love You above all people and things. Help  
us all revere You as the true God – our creator, provider, and protector,  
our savior-rescuer and model, and our sanctifier and enabler. Help us make You our  
Number 1 Priority. Protect us from evil and the evil one  
because we are Yours, O Lord. Amen