

GOD'S LOVE AND LAW AND GOSPEL CALL US TO REPENTANCE!

WORSHIP CELEBRATION

The First Sunday after Epiphany

Late Service – 11:15 am

January 9, 2022

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 January 6 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 beginning His ministry and we see His divine nature revealed in various ways.*

THE APOSTLE JOHN WROTE IN HIS GOSPEL – JOHN 1:16-18

Out of his (Jesus') fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.

¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

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

The Order of Worship

The First Sunday after Epiphany

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 4:9-11

THE PREPARATION

A PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND PRAISE

THE GOSPEL WORD FOR TODAY – Matthew 2:1-2, 10-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² 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. [They were sent to Bethlehem.]¹⁰ When they saw the star [leading them again], they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house [in Bethlehem], 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. ¹² 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.
Through Your mighty protection . . .
preserve us in both body and soul . . now and forever. Amen**

OUR OPENING SONG OF WORSHIP – "Build My Life"

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

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 FIRST OLD TESTAMENT READING – Deuteronomy 18:17-19 (NIV)

[Moses reported to the Israelites.] The LORD said to me: “What they say is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name.

Pastor: This is a prophecy about the Messiah coming – “a prophet” as Moses was told and announced to the Israelites.

THE SECOND OLD TESTAMENT READING – Malachi 4:1-6 (NIV)

[Yahweh spoke to Malachi.] “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. ² But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. ³ Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty. ⁴ “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵ See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

Pastor: This is a prophecy about the Messiah coming again, but it is also a prophecy about John the Baptist – the second Elijah, as Jesus Himself reveals. (Matthew 11:13-14)

All: God keeps His promises.

THE GOSPEL READING – John 1:6-8, 15, 19-28 (NIV)

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. . . . ¹⁵ (John) testified

concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" ... ¹⁹ Now this was John [the baptist's] testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹ They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" ²⁴ Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Pastor: In questioning John the Baptist, the Jewish leaders ask if he was Elijah, referencing the prophecy in Malachi. They asked if he was the prophet, referencing a prophecy God gave to Moses: They also asked if he was the Messiah. He answered, "No." When they asked "Who are you?" He answered in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

All: **John certainly knew his role . . . and Jesus' role.**

THE MESSAGE

"Repentance! What Is That?"

Matthew 3:1-3

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight paths for him.'"

Matthew 3:5-6

People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:7-10

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'

I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

Luke 3:8

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Matthew 3:17

A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

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 SONG OF FAITH AND PRAISE – “Jesus Messiah”

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 THANKSGIVING – “His Glory Appears”

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 NEW CHURCH OFFICERS AND BOARD CHAIRPEOPLE AND THE RENEWAL OF VOWS FOR THOSE CONTINUING IN LEADERSHIP

OUR CLOSING PRAISE IN SONG – “Hosanna” (Praise is Rising)

THE BLESSING

*Silent Prayer
Announcements*

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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.**

MY PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

O Lord, I know that all of us humans are sinners.
I have been sinful from the time I was conceived.
I sin against You in a great variety of ways
with sins of commission and sins of omission
and sins of thoughts, word, and deeds.

O God, You have had mercy on me.
You sent Jesus to rescue me and all humans everywhere.
Your mercy and grace compel me to live for You.
I want to live my life for You. I want to live a holy life.
By Your word and Spirit work in me to change me
and enable me to live sacrificially totally for You. Amen