

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Your Light Has Come

January 6, 2022

Observed January 8 & 9, 2022

AS WE GATHER

Israel's fate seemed dark in Isaiah's day, but he provided a vision of the future: God would shed on them His glory and light, bright enough to attract other nations with their wealth and treasures. Likewise, until it dawned on Saul/Paul, God had sent the Messiah only to Israel. But Paul's ministry was to bring to light for everyone the mystery of Christ, that the Gentiles be partakers in the Gospel. The Magi saw a physical light in a certain portion of the sky and realized they should find the King it announced. And now our light has come, the light of God's love in Christ shining in our hearts. Today is a day to celebrate that God has left no one out of the Gospel message. We thank God and tell one another and all we meet, "Your light has come."



+ PREPARATION +

OPENING SENTENCES *Isaiah 60:1, 5-6; Matthew 2:2, 10-11*

P Arise, shine, for your light has come.

C **We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.**

P You shall see and be radiant.

C **They rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.**

P They shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

C **And they fell down and worshiped Him.**

OPENING HYMN LSB 554 "O JESUS, KING MOST WONDERFUL"

1 O Jesus, King most wonderful!

O Conqueror renowned!

O Source of peace ineffable,

In whom all joys are found:

2 When once You visit darkened hearts,

Then truth begins to shine,

Then earthly vanity departs,

Then kindles love divine.

3 O Jesus, light of all below,

The fount of life and fire,

Surpassing all the joys we know,

All that we can desire:

4 May ev'ry heart confess Your name,
Forever You adore,
And, seeking You, itself inflame
To seek You more and more!

5 Oh, may our tongues forever bless,
May we love You alone
And ever in our lives express
The image of Your own!

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INVOCATION

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

C **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 124:8; 130:3, adapt.; Ephesians 3:11–12*

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Although God has graciously showered the light of His love on us, we have not responded in lives of total devotion. But because He has graciously promised to forgive, let us go to Him in the name of “Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him.”

C **Gracious heavenly Father, we confess that we have let the distractions of this world turn our eyes from seeing the true Light. We have not loved You with our whole hearts. Forgive us and renew in us hearts to see, follow, and worship You alone.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, our heavenly Father sent His Son to take to His cross all our sins, and His Holy Spirit has graciously shined the light of faith in Christ into our hearts. Therefore you are forgiven of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

+ **WORD** +

KYRIE

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For peace shining down on us from above and for the salvation of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For peace so that the Church of God would more brightly shine the light of the Gospel in the nations of the world, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all who join us here to thank God for the unsearchable riches of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C **Amen.**

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS *LSB 187*

P Glory be to God on high:

C **and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.**

**We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee,
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.**

O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,

art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

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.

C **Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence;**

P 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*

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.**

GRADUAL *Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8*

P Praise the LORD, all nations!

C **Extol Him, all peoples!**

P For great is His steadfast love toward us,

C **and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.**

P Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;

C **bring an offering, and come into His courts!**

EPISTLE *Ephesians 3:1–12*

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.**

VERSE *Matthew 2:2b*

P Alleluia. Where is He who has been born king of the Jews?

C For we saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 2:1–12*

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 T everlasting. Amen.**

HYMN OF THE DAY LSB 395 “O MORNING STAR, HOW FAIR AND BRIGHT”

- 1 O Morning Star, how fair and bright!
You shine with God’s own truth and light,
Aglow with grace and mercy!
Of Jacob’s race, King David’s son,
Our Lord and master, You have won
Our hearts to serve You only!
Lowly, holy!
Great and glorious,
All victorious,
Rich in blessing!
Rule and might o’er all possessing!

- 2 Come, heav’nly Bridegroom, Light divine,
And deep within our hearts now shine;
There light a flame undying!
In Your one body let us be
As living branches of a tree,
Your life our lives supplying.
Now, though daily
Earth’s deep sadness
May perplex us
And distress us,
Yet with heav’nly joy You bless us.

- 3 Lord, when You look on us in love,
At once there falls from God above
A ray of purest pleasure.
Your Word and Spirit, flesh and blood
Refresh our souls with heav’nly food.
You are our dearest treasure!
Let Your mercy
Warm and cheer us!
O draw near us!
For You teach us
God’s own love through You has reached us.

- 4 Almighty Father, in Your Son
You loved us when not yet begun
Was this old earth’s foundation!
Your Son has ransomed us in love

To live in Him here and above:
This is Your great salvation.
Alleluia!
Christ the living,
To us giving
Life forever,
Keeps us Yours and fails us never!

- 5 O let the harps break forth in sound!
Our joy be all with music crowned,
Our voices gladly blending!
For Christ goes with us all the way—
Today, tomorrow, ev'ry day!
His love is never ending!
Sing out! Ring out!
Jubilation!
Exultation!
Tell the story!
Great is He, the King of Glory!

- 6 What joy to know, when life is past,
The Lord we love is first and last,
The end and the beginning!
He will one day, oh, glorious grace,
Transport us to that happy place
Beyond all tears and sinning!
Amen! Amen!
Come, Lord Jesus!
Crown of gladness!
We are yearning
For the day of Your returning!

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SERMON “An Arranged Union” Ephesians 3:1-12

Introduction:

Back in the good old days, congregations had mission festivals. It was a standard practice. We have had similar events such a dinner with a mission speaker. Maybe after this pandemic is over, there will be greater and freer movement of missionaries coming home for a respite.

I remember one particular mission event. After the service, the congregation gathered for a meal in the fellowship hall. I was privileged to get to sit by the pastor from Nigeria. Across from us sat a young couple engaged to be married.

The Pastor asked the couple if they were getting married. The couple graciously acknowledged they were. He then asked them why. “Why you getting married?”

The couple blushing answered, “Because we love each other.”

The Pastor replied smiling, “Not a good reason. Love is not a good reason to get married. My father picked out a wife for me. We learned to love each other. That is a good way to get married.”

This is a good way to think and understand the relationship between a pastor and the congregation. God has arranged a union between the congregation and the man He puts into office. And we approach a time when a new man will be in the office of the pastor here at Trinity, it is good to be reminded of the roles each plays in this union.

I. First the Apostles and Evangelist and preached by the Pastor

The role of the pastor is similar yet not the same of that of the Apostle Paul. While both are to be stewards of the mystery of God as reveal by God, Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to bring this Word to the Gentile. The pastor is not inspired by the Holy Spirit to bring the Word of God. He is to take the inspired word of God as revealed through Scriptures and proclaim, preach and teach it to the people.

Neither Paul nor the pastor has volunteered for this work. They are called, Paul by Christ Himself and the pastor by Christ through the Church. It is true that a man who desires to be a pastor desires a good thing. The Apostle Paul writes about the duties of the pastor in his letters to Timothy and Titus. But the work of the Pastor is to bring the revealed Word to the people. They are to teach and preach the Law and Gospel in a distinct manner so that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of people creating, sustaining and strengthening the faith in Christ.

They are to preach this to all people fulfilling the mystery that salvation is to be preached to Jew and Gentile alike.

II. The Church

The congregation is to think and hold this as the most important task their pastor is to have in the midst. They are to look to him for guidance in the Word, the announcement of forgiveness from God the Father through Christ Jesus and to be Christ’s representative in their midst as they worship; as they serve the Father and one another; and when at times of difficulties, sickness and times of grieving stand as a reminder that Christ is present.

The Church is to remember that God uses the Church to proclaim His Word and the good news of salvation to the world. They are to remember that in proclaiming this the angels in heaven hear this message and rejoice and the demons shutter in fear. This is the most pleasing sound in heaven along with the repentance of a sinner and the praise of the saints.

It is a union arranged by Christ. The pastor is not a hireling. He is not just filling a position in the Church. There is union between the pastor and the congregation. It is a union much like a marriage and that of being the head of the family.

The pastor and the congregation learn to love and serve each other. There is no dating period prior to the union. The time a pastor and congregation is together is when they get to know each. They learn how to love and forgive each other. They learn the others' character, their short comings and their benefit to the Church and to each other.

The Pastor as the head of the congregation goes through much the same things that the head of the family goes through. There is the joy of birth of a person when they first believe and are baptized. There is the sting when one of the family members is called to their heavenly home. There is the grief when one of the family members rejects the truth and the faith to go their own way. There is the struggle when one falls into the ways of the world much like that of seeing a child fall into an addiction and abandons the family. There is the joy of the prodigal son returning. There is the hatred of seeing siblings fighting and the pride when they work together for the good of the family. There is the sadness when one plans a family get together as in worship and being at the table of the Lord and the family members have other things to do. There is the prayers for those who are separate such those in the military hoping God will keep them safe and in faith till they are able to be reunited with the family. There is the balancing of the "honey-do" list and the time together in doing the task given by God.

Conclusion:

The relationship between a pastor and his congregation is like that of an arranged marriage/union. He is to be the representative of Christ to the Church and the Church is to obey him as one who has to give an accounting to the souls he is given charge over.

Keep this in mind as we continue to go through the process of calling and preparing to receive a new man in this office of the pastor. And may God grant us strength to wait on Him to provide the one He has prepared to be the pastor here.

+AMEN+

OFFERTORY *LSB 192*

**C Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *Ephesians 3:6-7, 10*

P Let us pray for ourselves, the Church around the world, and all people in their various circumstances.

For ourselves, that we thank God as a congregation and in our individual lives for revealing to us that we are all "partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel," let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all who minister “according to the gift of God’s grace” that has been given to them, people of faith who are in government, armed forces, local police departments, professional and volunteer caregivers, and workers in the health professions, that they serve those under their care in safety and with wisdom, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all for whom the mystery of Christ is still hidden, that through the Church here and around the world “the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known” to them, so that they approach God in confident faith for Jesus’ sake, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those near and dear to us, [*including . . .*], that they boldly bring their petitions to God in faith and that we open ourselves to be part of the answers that God so graciously provides, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those who have gone before us in faith—the Magi, the writers of the Scriptures, patriarchs, prophets, saints, martyrs, and those who brought the Good News to us, let us give thanks to the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P These and any other things You would have us ask of You, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray.

C **Amen.**

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN LSB 394 “SONGS OF THANKFULNESS AND PRAISE”*st. 1*

1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,
Jesus, Lord, to Thee we raise,
Manifested by the star
To the sages from afar,
Branch of royal David’s stem
In Thy birth at Bethlehem:
Anthems be to Thee addressed,
God in man made manifest.

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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.

HYMNS

LSB 400 "BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE STARS OF THE MORNING"

- 1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
 Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
 Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
 Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
- 2 Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;
 Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
 Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
 Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.
- 3 Shall we not yield Him, in costly devotion,
 Fragrance of Edom and off'rings divine,
 Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
 Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
- 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
 Vainly with gifts would His favor secure.
 Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
 Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
- 5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
 Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
 Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
 Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Text: Public domain

LSB 398 "*HAIL TO THE LORD'S ANOINTED*"

- 1 Hail to the Lord's anointed,
 Great David's greater Son!
 Hail, in the time appointed,
 His reign on earth begun!
 He comes to break oppression,
 To set the captive free,
 To take away transgression
 And rule in equity.

- 2 He comes with rescue speedy
 To those who suffer wrong,
 To help the poor and needy
 And bid the weak be strong;
 To give them songs for sighing,
 Their darkness turn to light,
 Whose souls, condemned and dying,
 Were precious in His sight.
- 3 He shall come down like showers
 Upon the fruitful earth;
 Love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
 Spring in His path to birth.
 Before Him on the mountains
 Shall peace, the herald, go;
 And righteousness in fountains
 From hill to valley flow.
- 4 Kings shall fall down before Him
 And gold and incense bring;
 All nations shall adore Him,
 His praise all people sing.
 To Him shall prayer unceasing
 And daily vows ascend;
 His kingdom still increasing,
 A kingdom without end.
- 5 O'er ev'ry foe victorious,
 He on His throne shall rest,
 From age to age more glorious,
 All blessing and all-blest.
 The tide of time shall never
 His covenant remove;
 His name shall stand forever—
 That name to us is Love.

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HYMN LSB 409 “*HAIL, O SOURCE OF EVERY BLESSING*”

- 1 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.

- 2 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.
- 3 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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NUNC DIMITTIS *LSB 199*

- C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word,
 for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all
 people,
 a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.
 Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

- P** My soul, give thanks to the Lord; all my being, bless His holy name.
C **My soul, give thanks to the Lord, and never forget all His blessings.**
- P** It is He who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion, who fills your life with good things, renewing your youth like an eagle's. Give thanks to the Lord, all His works, in every place where He rules.
C **My soul, give thanks to the Lord! Give praise to the Father Almighty; to His Son, Jesus Christ, the Lord; to the Spirit who dwells in our hearts, both now and forever. 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 T give you peace.
C **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace as You serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF DEPARTURE LSB 397 “AS WITH GLADNESS MEN OF OLD”

- 1 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 be led by Thee.

- 2 As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to Thy lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before
Thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

- 3 As they offered gifts most rare
At Thy cradle, rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee, our heav'nly King.

- 4 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 Thy glory hide.

- 5 In the heav'nly country bright
Need they no created light;
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,
Thou its sun which goes not down;
There forever may we sing
Alleluias to our King.

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