



When they saw the star,
they rejoiced
exceedingly with
with great joy.

Matthew 2:10

**RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH
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January 3, 2021 – Festival of the Epiphany

A warm welcome to all worshipping with Resurrection Lutheran Church today. In May of 2020, Resurrection Lutheran Church celebrated forty-two years of ministry. Celebrating our Savior's love continues today in the faithful gathering of God's people, whether we are together in God's house or as you watch online from the comfort of your home.

Lessons and Liturgy Today

Epiphany is the day which the Church has designated to remember and to celebrate the visit of the Wise men to the Christ Child. It is sometimes called "the Christmas of the Gentiles." In many parts of the world, January 6 is the day on which Christmas is celebrated and gifts are exchanged.

At Christmas God gave His very best Gift. **Epiphany** is the unwrapping of that Gift to see what God has given; to thank Him for His Gift; and to put His Gift to use. Jesus Christ is God's Gift to all of humanity. As the Son of God, He is ever "God of God" and "Light of Light." He is the Light of the world who enlightens everyone. By faith in Him we also become Light. In Him we are called to arise and shine forth the light of God's Salvation.

The Welcome and Sharing of the Peace

P The Peace of the Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

Musical Offering, Opening Song: Arise, Shine

The Invocation

Confession of Sins and Good News of Forgiveness

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Most Holy and Merciful Father,

C We need Your grace. We are desperate for peace. As people born in sin, no matter where we turn, our pursuits to find wholeness leave us feeling empty and alone.

P Only in You, dear Father, are we made complete.

C Only in You, dear Lord Jesus, are we forgiven.

P Only in You, dear Holy Spirit, are we restored.

C Draw us near to Calvary's cross that we may learn again of the sacrifice made once and for all.

P Rejoice greatly, sons and daughters of the King of Glory! God is with us.
I announce to you Good News.

As a called and ordained servant of the Word; and by the Command of our Lord Jesus Christ, and for His Sake, I forgive you all your sins in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Musical Offering, Song of Praise: We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are; Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star:

Refrain

O – star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a king on Bethlehem plain, Gold I bring, to crown him again –
King for ever, ceasing never, Over us all to reign:

Refrain

O – star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

Frankincense to offer have I; Incense owns a deity nigh:
Prayer and praising, all men raising, Worship him, God most high:

Refrain

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Sealed in the stone-cold tomb:

Refrain

Glorious now, behold him arise, King, and God, and sacrifice!
Heaven sings alleluia, Alleluia the earth replies:

Refrain

O – star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

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Old Testament Prophecy

Isaiah 60:1-6

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. “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. 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. 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.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Epistle *Ephesians 3:1-12*

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then,

you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 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." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 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. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "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.'" Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 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." 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. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, Lord Christ.

Children's Message – MaryAnn Unger

Musical Offering, Song of the Day: One Small Child

1. One small Child in a land of a thousand,
one small dream of a Savior tonight,
one small hand reaching out to the starlight
-one small city of life - O!
2. One king bringing his gold and riches,
one king ruling an army of might
one king kneeling with incense and candlelight
one King bringing us life - O!

Refrain 1

See Him lying, a cradle beneath Him,
See Him smiling in the stall,
See His mother praising His Father;
See His tiny eyelids fall...

3. One small light from the flame of a candle,
one small light from a city of might;
one small light from the stars in the endless night,
one small light from a face - O!

Refrain 2

See the shepherds kneeling before Him,
See the kings on bended knee,
See His mother praising His Father;
See the blessed Infant sleep...

4. One small Child in a land of a thousand,
One small dream in a people of might;
One small hand reaching out to the starlight,
One small Savior of life - O!

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Message – Pastor Jonathan Blanke

A Savior for Those “Far Away” (Matt 2:1–12)

If last Sunday was all about God sightings experienced by those at the established “center” of the salvation story (Simeon and Anna), Epiphany is all about God’s mercy to people on the margins, those led from “afar” to the blessing of repentance and worship of the true King. God’s Kingdom comes not just to Israel...but to the nations: to sinners like us and (through us) to other sinners, too!

1. **God’s revelation to people “far away” starts by what _____ : in this case, a _____ (2:2)!**
 - a. Though traditionally the church has envisioned *three* visitors, there is no mention of only three people in our text, but rather three *gifts* given.
 - b. Those looking for the Christ child did not come from the *Orient* as that place is understood today, but from “the East” or “the rising of the sun,” which could have been almost anywhere.
 - c. The text does not mention the arrival of “kings,” but “Magi” who, according to Acts 13:6-11, are neither scientists nor godly men, but primarily sorcerers and dream interpreters (cf. Acts 13:6–11). These were the last people anyone would expect to come worship the Savior!

2. **God’s revelation to people “far away” continues through _____ (2:5–6); in this case, it leads foreigners to _____, Jesus’ birthplace!**
- God corrects false assumptions about the Savior through *the Scriptures*.
 - Micah 5:2 becomes meaningful for the Magi because that text was first meaningful for Israel. What false assumptions about God and God’s Son still need correcting by God’s Word today?
 - Jesus’ birth—and his death/resurrection—demonstrate that God is not only for “insiders”...but for all, even those who feel God is “far away”!
3. **God’s revelation to us, people who were “far away,” leads us, as it does the Magi, to _____ and _____ (2:11; cf. Romans 12:1).**
 What will each of us, presenting ourselves as “living sacrifices,” look like in 2021?

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.

The Prayers of the Church

After each additional petition:

P Lord, in Your Mercy...

C **Hear our prayer, and grant us joy.**

The 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

The Blessing and Benediction

Musical offering, Closing Song: What Child is This

1. What child is this who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherd's watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud -
the Babe, the Son of Mary!
2. Why lies He in such mean estate,
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear, for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through.
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe,
the son of Mary!

3. So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of Kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Tune: GREENSLEEVES. Text and Music Public domain

Offering

(The offerings of Gods people will be received through electronic giving, rlcary.org, by postal mail and in baskets located in the FLC lobby)

In Service Today:

Proclaimer: Rev. Dr. Jonathan Blanke

Liturgist: Vicar Alan Shaw

Keyboards/Vocals: Robert Unger

Sound Technician: Jason Piontek

Video Tech: Luigi Moscatello

Lay Reader: Melinda Stephani

Ushers: Steve Meyer

Greeter: Kathy Rasmussen

Camera Operators: Jill Hammergren, Garrett Nigg

Live Stream Producer: Susan Moore