

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

Matthew 2:10

ORDER OF THE DIVINE SERVICE
FESTIVAL OF THE EPIPHANY
JANUARY 3, 2021 - 8:00 AM

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.

❖ Denotes times when the congregation is invited to stand.

The congregation is encouraged to quietly and prayerfully prepare for worship during the prelude.

PRELUDE

Celebrate the Child – arr. T. Fettke

Lecia Cecconi-Roberts, Instrumentalist

GREETING

❖ **INVOCATION**

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.**

❖ **ENTRANCE HYMN**

Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning

LSB 400, vs. 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.**

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❖ **CONFESSION OF SINS AND GOOD NEWS OF FORGIVENESS** *John 20:21-23*

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.
We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have
done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole
heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

C **We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment.
For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your Will and
walk in Your Ways to the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.**

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.**

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Revelation 22:1, 3b-5, 16

Then the angel showed me the river of the
water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing
from the Throne of God and of the
Lamb.

The Throne of God and of the Lamb will
be in the city, and His servants will serve
Him.

They will see His Face, and His Name will
be on their foreheads.

There will be no more night.

They will not need the light of a lamp or
the light of the sun, for the Lord God will
give them light.

And they will reign forever and ever.

"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."

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN RESPONSE

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

LSB 395, vs. 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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HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-2

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

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,
behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying,
“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.”

CAROL RESPONSE

Kings of Orient – arr. D. Willcocks

**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.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:3-11

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 Christ 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 be the Shepherd of 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 make a careful search 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 in the east 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 and of incense and of myrrh.

CAROL RESPONSE

Kings of Orient – arr. D. Willcocks

**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**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:12

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, O Christ

CAROL RESPONSE

Kings of Orient – arr. D. Willcocks

**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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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Jonathan Blanke

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Revelation 21:1-5, 22-26

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the Throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has

passed away." He Who was seated on the Throne said, "I Am making everything new!" Then He said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its Temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the Glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its Lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

A This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN RESPONSE

Arise and Shine in Splendor

LSB 396, vs. 1

**Arise and shine in splendor; Let night to day surrender.
Your light is drawing near. Above, the day is beaming,
In matchless beauty gleaming; The glory of the Lord is here.**

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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 arm. 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 praises of the LORD.

A This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN RESPONSE

The People that in Darkness Sat

LSB 412, vs. 1

**The people that in darkness sat A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long In shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been.**

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SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Lord God, on this day You revealed Your Son to the nations by the leading of a star.

C **Lead us now by faith to know Your Presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of Your Glory, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

SERMON

A Savior for 'Those "Far Away"'

Pastor Jonathan Blanke

Matthew 2:1-12

(For an outline of the sermon, see page 14 of this worship folder)



CREED *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.

❖ GREETING OF PEACE

All are invited to greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you,” as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (*Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3*) Any gesture accompanying this greeting (wave, hand over heart with slight bow, or handshake) is welcome.

OFFERING

The offerings of God’s people will be received through electronic giving at rlcary.org and in baskets located in the Narthex.

MUSICAL OFFERING

We Three Kings

Lecia Cecconi-Roberts, Instrumentalist

❖ PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and all people according to their needs.

After each portion of the prayers:

P Lord, in Your Mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Into Your Hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your Mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

P And we ask that You remember us in Your Kingdom and teach us to pray:

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**

MUSICAL OFFERING

Noel Festival

Lecia Cecconi-Roberts, Instrumentalist

❖ **BLESSING**

P May the Christ Child bring you and your family Epiphany light and joy;
and may His Love guide you each day of this new year.

The Peace of the Lord be with you.

C **And also with you. Amen.**

❖ **BENEDICTION**

Numbers 6:24-26

P Go forward in to a new day of a new year under the shelter of the Lord's
Benediction.

The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make His Face to shine on you and be gracious to you.

The LORD look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

❖ **CLOSING HYMN**

As with Gladness, Men of Old – arr. D. Willcocks

LSB 397, vs.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.

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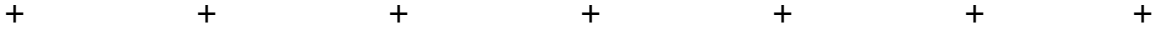
P Go in peace and serve the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Emmanuel – arr. M.W. Smith

Lecia Cecconi-Roberts, Instrumentalist



Acknowledgments

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Servants in Worship

Preacher.....	Rev. Dr. Jonathan Blanke
Liturgist.....	Vicar Alan Shaw
Organist/Pianist.....	Michael Haertling
Instrumentalist.....	Lecia Cecconi-Roberts
Lector.....	Brenda Peterson
Ushers.....	Bill & Jan Boyer
Greeter.....	Brenda Peterson
Altar Care.....	Jan Boyer
Coordinator.....	Jan Boyer
Camera Operator.....	Jill Hammergren
Sound Tech/Camera Operator.....	Garett Nigg
Live Stream Producer.....	Susan Moore

A Savior for Those “Far Away” (Matt 2:1–12)
Epiphany Sunday, Series B

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!**
 - a. God corrects false assumptions about the Savior through *the Scriptures*.
 - b. 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?
 - c. 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?**