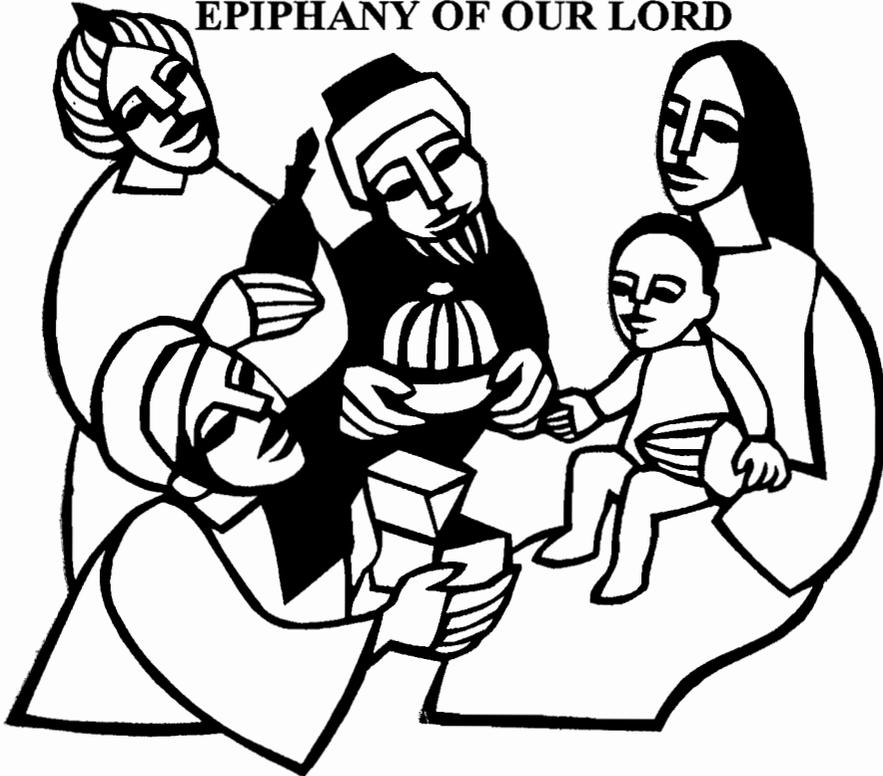


JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2013  
EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



**BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO**

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Church Web Site: [blcmalmo.org](http://blcmalmo.org)

Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen

Church Secretary: Evelyn Richter

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, C 320-684-2846

Patti Honnold, RN CNP 320-676-8421

Kathy Berland RN ANP 320-495-3988

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

**MISSION STATEMENT**

We will grow spiritually and in numbers as we serve Christ. We will reach out and address the hurts and hopes in our community. We will maintain a church home that is reverently joyous and extend a welcome to all who seek to join us in our mission.

**Hearing Assistance is available during the service.**

**Please notify usher if you would like assistance**

# Sunday, January 6, 2013/Epiphany of Our Lord Holy Communion

## INTRODUCTION

*Epiphany means "manifestation." On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles—that is, to all nations. Some Christian traditions celebrate three great epiphanies on this day: the magi's adoration of the Christ child, Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle in which he changes water into wine. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God's grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst.*

## PRELUDE

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**OPENING HYMN:** "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" # 886 ELW

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

**P:** God of Christmas who came to us, may we now come before you to confess our shortcomings, and to hear once again of your undying love for us.

**C:** **Jesus, we turn our backs to your promises; we ignore the many signs you have given to our generation. We confess that we try to do it alone and we fail miserably. We hear the message to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we do not act on its meaning. We let the flame of Christmas love go out of our lives, only to be replaced by the winter chill of disappointment. God of unbroken promises, we come to be set ablaze by your words of love and forgiveness. Hear the cry of our hearts for forgiveness. (A time of silence to ask God to forgive our sins.)**

**P:** Let us hear the Good News of Christmas. Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd, who is willing to die for the sheep." The cross is the ultimate goal of Christmas. Jesus came to earth as a little child to take away the sins of the world. God gave Christ as a sacrifice for our sins and through Christ, we can live eternally as a new child of God. Praise God for the Christmas promise of everlasting life.

**C: Amen.**

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. 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 your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1–6**

*Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her, because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.*

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;

but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you;

your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,

because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,

the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A 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 proclaim the praise of the

LORD.

**PSALM: Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14**

*Refrain: All kings shall bow down before him. (Ps. 72:11)*

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;  
**that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**  
that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.  
**Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the  
oppressor. R**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.  
**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,  
like showers that water the earth.**

In his time may the righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,  
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. R**

May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,  
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.  
**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,  
and precious is their blood in his sight. R**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1–12**

*God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king.  
Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

**'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'**

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**HYMN:**                    **"You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore"**                    **# 817 ELW**

**SERMON:**                    **The Glow of a Star**

### **OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray for the church, the earth, and all those in need, in the name of Jesus Christ, who was born in a manger, died on a cross, and rose from the grave.

*A time for silent prayer.*

**God our true light, we pray for the great company of the baptized. Lift up our eyes so that we see the brightness of your rising. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

**God our shepherd, we pray for the earth; for rain in areas affected by drought; for sun in flooded lands; and for peace in places suffering from natural disasters. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

God our guide, we pray for all nations and their rulers; for merchants and schoolteachers; for victims of human trafficking; for relief organizations; and for the poor. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God our bread, we pray for those who are hungry and cold today; for the mentally ill and physically disabled; for those far from home and those without homes; and for the sick (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God our treasure, we pray for this congregation; for the council and musicians; for the altar guild and those who care for our building; for our education and outreach ministries. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be made.*

God our bright morning star, we thank you for the saints who have made their final journey home to you. Give strength to us who have here no lasting city. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, who shines light into darkness, receive these prayers and the prayers of our hearts through the power of the Spirit, in Jesus' name.  
**Amen.**

## **APOSTLE'S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **COMMUNION**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

**Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **CLOSING HYMN:**

**“Shine, Jesus, Shine”**

**# 671 ELW**

## **THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2013**

**Organist:** Marlys Beavers  
**Greeters:** Bob & Kathy Carlson  
**Ushers:** Dick & Sandy Pullen  
**Lector:** Lynn Hansen  
**Coffee Servers:** Jerry & Pat Becker, Dennis & Lynne Meidlinger

## **RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (12/30/12)**

**Attendance:** 10:00 – 117

**Offering:** \$ 5,161.45                      **Building Fund:** \$ 975.00

**\$ 3,077.00 – Weekly amount needed for operating expenses.**

**\$ 580.00 – Weekly amount (building fund) needed for mortgage payment.**

## **THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> THRU JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2013**

|                                     |                   |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Mon., Jan. 7<sup>th</sup></b>    | <b>7:00 p.m.</b>  | <b>AA &amp; Alanon</b>                 |
| <b>Tues., Jan. 8<sup>th</sup></b>   | <b>9:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Quilters</b>                        |
|                                     | <b>9:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Bells</b>                           |
| <b>Wed., Jan. 9<sup>th</sup></b>    | <b>8:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Bible Study</b>                     |
|                                     | <b>9:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Hardanger</b>                       |
|                                     | <b>11:00 a.m.</b> | <b>Bible Study</b>                     |
|                                     | <b>6:00 p.m.</b>  | <b>Praise Team</b>                     |
| <b>Thurs., Jan. 10<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>8:00 a.m.</b>  | <b>R.O.M.E.O.S.</b>                    |
|                                     | <b>10:00 a.m.</b> | <b>Take down Christmas decorations</b> |
|                                     | <b>1:00 p.m.</b>  | <b>Funtimers</b>                       |

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ARE YOU INTERSTED IN ATTENDING THE OLD LOG THEATER ON JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>?** Contact John at 218-927-7130. Also inform him that you would like to have the bus pick you up at Bethesda.

**USHERS:** For the months of January & February ushers for the 8:30 a.m. service will usher at the 9:00 a.m. service. NO ushers needed at 10:00 a.m. until March.

**COFFEE SERVERS NEEDED FOR JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup> & 24<sup>TH</sup>.** Sign up sheets are next to the servicing window of the kitchen.

**CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS TO BE TAKEN DOWN** on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome to come and help.

**TODAY IS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH WHICH MEANS IT IS TIME FOR THE BLESSING BOX TO BE PASSED AROUND FOLLOWING THE REGULAR OFFERING.** As God has blessed you let us be a blessing to others. The monies received are used for Bethesda's Wish List. In the past we've bought a water softener and water heater, repaired & insulated front doors and paid for emergency furnace repairs. On our current Wish List are: Working Microphones, an upgraded Phone System, Video cameras for the Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, Door Mats, Library Furniture (book shelves, seating) and Additional Cabinets for Classrooms.

**2013 OFFERING ENVELOPES** are ready to be picked up. They are on the table at the entrance to the Fellowship Hall. Please pick yours up before you leave today.

**POINSETTIAS** in the Narthex are in need of a home so if you would like to take one home with you after service today please do so.

**QUILTERS** will meet on Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.

## WHAT IS EPIPHANY?

In North America almost everyone is familiar with Christmas and Easter. Many Christians are at least somewhat familiar with Advent and Lent. Epiphany, on the other hand, has not captured our imaginations to quite the same extent. Imagine informally surveying your neighborhood and asking what Epiphany means or signifies. The most likely response would be a blank stare.

The marginalization of Epiphany as a major festival in North America is a pity, but there is probably at least one practical cause: it is a moveable feast that doesn't always fall on a Sunday. A few churches observe the tradition of chalking the doors to mark the occasion, but like Ascension and a few other neglected but liturgically rich holy days, it is simply not well known.

So if you are reading this, you are invited to make it your mission to raise Epiphany awareness. This needn't be difficult; some of the most beloved "Christmas" hymns are actually for Epiphany, such as "We three kings." And today's gospel text, the magi's presentation of "gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" to the Christ child (Matt. 2:11), is a story beloved by children and adults alike.

Tell the story of light made manifest (*epi-phanos* means "manifestation" in Greek). There is that light in the sky, a star, that the magi follow on their journey. Then there is the true Light himself, Christ, who shines for them while they pay him homage. This is the manifestation of a Light so radical that it threatens Herod and sends the holy family off as refugees to Egypt.

Epiphany is a time to remember that faith itself is a journey and that Light which manifests in the darkness is always welcome.

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