



# **A SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER**

**Epiphany of Our Lord**

**January 3, 2021**

## **LIVING WATERS LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**11 Old York Road ~ Ringoes, NJ 08551**

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*In this time of world-wide crisis, Living Waters Lutheran Church respects the guidance of our Bishop and government agencies and therefore calls the faithful together for a time of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving through on-line venues. Because we love God and neighbor during a time of rising COVID cases and increasing spread, we choose to behave cautiously. To help tend the public health during this pandemic: (1) Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. (2) Wear a face covering. (3) Wash your hands, and regularly clean surfaces. (4) Reduce exposure time to areas with potentially high aerosol concentration, (5) Limit group encounters. (6) Encourage everyone who feels sick or uncomfortable/vulnerable in group settings to please stay home and consult a healthcare provider.*

*The church is all God's baptized people. Those who worship, pray, study, and connect for fellowship and service from their homes are very much "the church". The Good News of God's reign continues to be fully proclaimed with power and authority on-line in this new time.*

## **GATHERING**

### **PASTOR VIDEO**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTION OF THE DAY**

The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.

#### **GREETING**

**P:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who was in the beginning,  
who makes a dwelling among us,  
who covers us with justice and mercy.

**C: Amen.**

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of goodness and lovingkindness,

**C: we confess that we have sinned against you  
and our neighbors.**

**We have turned away from your invitation to new life.**

**We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.**

**In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,  
those we know and those known only to you,  
for the sake of the one who came to live among us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

P: Hear the good news of peace and salvation!

God forgives us all our sins,

not through our own work,

but through ☩ Jesus Christ, made known to all people.

With all who come to the manger,

rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.

**C: Amen.**

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**C: The light shines in the darkness, the darkness has not overcome it.**

P: Those who lived in the land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

**C: We have seen Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

P: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**C: In Him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Almighty and ever-living God, you revealed the incarnation of your Son by the brilliant shining of a star. Shine the light of your justice always in our hearts and over all lands, and accept our lives as the treasure we offer in your praise and for your service, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

### **VIDEO HYMN OF PRAISE**

HYMN OF PRAISE: ELW 275 "Angels from the realms of glory"

1 Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
once you sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship,

worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 2      Shepherds, in the fields abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant light.  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4

## **WORD**

### **VIDEO LECTOR**

#### **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.*

<sup>1</sup>Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>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.

<sup>6</sup>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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### **Second Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12**

*What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.*

<sup>1</sup>This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—<sup>2</sup>for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, <sup>3</sup>and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, <sup>4</sup>a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup>In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup>that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

<sup>7</sup>Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup>Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; <sup>10</sup>so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

<sup>11</sup>This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup>in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## VIDEO PASTOR

### Gospel Acclamation

**C: Alleluia. A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Alleluia. (Matt. 3:17)**

### 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.*

<sup>1</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>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." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>'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.' "

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>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." <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they

were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **SERMON**

#### **VIDEO HYMN OF THE DAY**

#### **HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 300 "THE FIRST NOEL"**

- 1       The first Noel the angel did say  
          was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
          in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
          on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

#### *Refrain*

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.

- 2       They looked up and saw a star  
          shining in the east beyond them far;  
          and to the earth it gave great light,  
          and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

#### **VIDEO PASTOR**

#### **THE CREDO LITANY**

P: People of God, what do you believe?

**C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty  
maker and owner of all things  
seen and unseen-known and still undiscovered.**

P: People of God, what do you believe?

**C: We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God.  
Through him all things were made.**

P: People of God, what do you believe?

**C: We believe that Jesus came for us  
and for our salvation.  
He became human.  
He suffered death and was buried.**

P: People of God, what do you believe?

**C: On the third day he rose again,**

**He ascended into heaven.  
We believe that he will come again  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

P: People of God, what do you believe?

**C: We believe in the Holy Spirit, the giver of life,  
who works as one with the Father and Son.  
We believe the Holy Spirit is at work  
in the Old Testament and the New.  
We believe the Spirit of God is constantly at work  
in and through the church.**

### **PEACE**

Children of God, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace with God and one another. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

### **OFFERING, SERVING, CARING**

We share with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Living Waters is a generous people offering ourselves to God and neighbor, and with the Church through all the ages, giving thanks for the saving love in Jesus.

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

P: O God,  
receive these gifts as you receive us:  
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.  
Nourish us anew in your tender care,  
and empower us in faithful service  
to tend to others with this same love,  
through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.  
**Amen.**

## **SENDING**

### **THE PRAYERS**

Let us pray that everyone will receive the blessings of Epiphany, responding to each bid with the words "Hear our prayer."

*A brief silence.*

A: For all the baptized, that even in hardship we grow deeper into the mystery of God, we pray:  
O God, shining with grace, in your mercy,  
**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For believers in all the world's religions, that God welcome also their devotion, we pray: O God, greater than the church, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For the earth, that each season provide sustenance for plants and animals, we pray: O God, preserver of creation, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For scientists, that they probe what is both beyond and within what we see, we pray: O God, keeper of all knowledge, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For the leaders of nations, that they strive for peace and justice, we pray: O God, monarch of all peoples, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For the Congress of the United States, that God grant it wisdom for its tasks, we pray: O God, guidance for government, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For all persons who have means, that they assist those who have little, we pray: O God, great in generosity, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For victims of injustice and prejudice, that their cries be heeded, we pray: O God, compassionate savior, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For children, that they be protected from harm, we pray: O God, loving parent, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

A: For all who are suffering from the coronavirus, that they come to health and wholeness, we pray: O God, giver of life, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

For those who have asked for our prayers especially:

Peter  
Vera  
Martje  
Resch family grieving  
Katherine  
Eric Sr and Suzanne

Cathy  
Martin  
Linda  
Lisa  
Cecelia  
Diane

Izzie  
Dave  
Kallan  
Bill and Mary  
Brand  
Betty

and for those we too often forget, that God meet their multitude of needs, we pray:  
O God, refuge of the downhearted, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

For each of us, that as if with a star God guide us throughout the journey of life, we pray:  
O God, light of holiness, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving for all who have died in the faith, that at our end we join them in life with God:  
O God, goal of our days, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

That God will receive these prayers, for the sake of the divine infant before whom we kneel, we pray, now and forever.

**Amen.**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

**C: Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

#### **BLESSING**

P: Almighty God,  
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,  
proclaimed joy through the angels,  
sent the shepherds with good news,  
and led the magi by a star,  
bless us this day + through the Word made flesh.

**C: Amen**

#### **DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C: Thanks be to God



## VIDEO SENDING SONG

### **SENDING SONG ELW 314 "ARISE, YOUR LIGHT HAS COME!!"**

- 1 Arise, your light has come!  
The Spirit's call obey;  
show forth the glory of your God  
which shines on you today.
- 2 Arise, your light has come!  
Fling wide the prison door;  
proclaim the captive's liberty,  
good tidings to the poor.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947 Text © 1992 GIA Publications, Inc

## VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR "SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE" AT 7:00 pm EVERY SUNDAY  
FOLLOW THIS LINK

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS, or Android: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9088928299>

1<sup>ST</sup> Sunday: Confirmation

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: "Can I Get a Witness" (Highs/Lows in a Hope-Filled Future)

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Adult Forum or Lutheran 101

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Virtual Fellowship Hall

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday: "Live and Remote" Worship

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