

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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The Reverend Ronald Bright	Pastor
The Reverend Reholma McCants	Pastor Emeritus
Douglas Skalka	Organist
Steve Stern	Worship Assistant
Joyce Purucker	Lector

Missionaries: The Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann

Sunday bulletins, news, puzzles, and sermons are available on our website listed above.
Video recordings of our weekly services can be viewed on our You Tube channel, *Christ Lutheran Forest Hills Pa*. Services are live-streamed on our Facebook page.

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Epiphany Sunday

January 3, 2021

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

Christmas Meditation

Lester H. Groom

RINGING OF THE BELLS/ WELCOME

OPENING HYMN (*please rise and sing*)

Songs of thankfulness and Praise

Hymnal p. 394

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.

Manifest at Jordan's stream, Prophet, Priest, and King supreme;
And at Cana wedding guest In Thy Godhead manifest;
Manifest in pow'r divine, Changing water into wine;
Anthems be to Thee addressed, God in man made manifest.
Manifest in making whole Palsied limbs and fainting soul;
Manifest in valiant fight, Quelling all the devil's might;
Manifest in gracious will, Ever bringing good from ill;
Anthems be to Thee addressed, God in man made manifest.

Sun and moon shall darkened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;
Christ will then like lightning shine, All will see His glorious sign;
All will then the trumpet hear, All will see the Judge appear;
Thou by all wilt be confessed, God in man made manifest.
Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Present in Thy holy Word--
Grace to imitate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;
That we might become like Thee At Thy great epiphany
And may praise Thee, ever blest, God in man made manifest.

Text and music: Public domain

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

CONFESSION¹

P: Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, You have brought us together into Your presence to set forth Your praise, to hear Your Holy Word, and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. Prepare our hearts and minds to worship You and receive Your gifts by giving us the spirit of repentance. Help us to approach the mercy seat of Christ, and sincerely confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by Your infinite goodness and mercy.

C: Amen.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9)

(We take a moment of silence before the Lord as we call to mind how we have not properly loved Him, ourselves, or other people.)

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C: Most merciful God, I confess that I am by nature sinful and unclean. I have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what I have done and by what I have left undone. I have not loved You with my whole heart; I have not loved my neighbors as myself. I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. Forgive me, renew me, and lead me, so that I may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

KYRIE

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

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

C: **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

Hymnal p. 155

This Is the Feast

Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
Whose blood set us free to be people of God. *Refrain***

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor,
blessing, and glory are His. *Refrain***

**Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all Creation:
Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and
the Lamb forever. *Amen. Refrain***

**For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign.
*Alleluia. Refrain***

COLLECT

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: O God, by the leading of a star You made known to the Gentiles Your only-begotten Son. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1–6

L: The first reading for Epiphany Sunday is from chapter sixty of Isaiah.

The people of the nations come to worship the King.

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For 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. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift 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. Then 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. 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 bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY

Jesus Shall Reign

Hymnal p. 832

**Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does its successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.**

**To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head;
His Name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.**

**People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim**

**Their early blessings on His Name.
Blessings abound wherever He reigns;
The pris'ners leap, unloose their chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all who suffer want are blest.
Let ev'ry creature rise and bring
Honors peculiar to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud amen!**

Text and music: Public Domain

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1–12

L: The second reading is from chapter three of Ephesians.

The mystery of Christ revealed: good news for all people.

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which 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. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of 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. To 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, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that He has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him.

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (*please rise and sing*)

Hymnal p. 157

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1–12

P: The Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew, chapter two.

C: (*sung*) **Glory to You, O Lord.**

The Wise Men visit the child Jesus and His mother, Mary.

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." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

" '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.' "

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And 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." After 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly

with great joy. And 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. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Following the reading...

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: *(sung)* Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED²

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.

HYMN OF THE DAY

As with Gladness Men of Old

Hymnal p. 397

**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.**

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

**As they offered gifts most rare At Thy radle, 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.**

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 o guide, Where no clouds Thy glory hide.
In the heav'nly country bright Need they no created light;
Thou its lightm its joy, its crown, Thou its sun which goes not down;
There forever may we sing Alleluias to our King.

SERMON³

VERSE

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Your presence,
and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation,
and uphold me with Your free Spirit.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Let us pray for ourselves, the church, and the world.

Following each petition:

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BENEDICTION

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

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 His favor and (†) give you His peace.

C: (*sung*)Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

The Star Proclaims the King Is Here

Hymnal p. 399

**The star proclaims the King is here;
But, Herod, why this senseless fear?
For He who offers heav'nly birth
Seeks not the kingdoms of this earth.**

**The eastern sages saw from far
And followed on His guiding star;
And, led by light, to light they trod
And by their gifts confessed their God.**

**Within the Jordan's sacred flood
The heav'nly Lamb in meekness stood
That He, of whom so sin was known,
Might cleanse His people from their own.**

**And oh, what miracle divine,
When water reddened into wine!
He spoke the word, and forth it flowed
In streams that nature ne'er bestowed.**

**For this Thy glad epiphany
All glory, Jesus, be to Thee,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit evermore.**

Text & music: Public domain

POSTLUDE

Brightest and Best

John M. Rasley

¹*The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* John 20:22-23. We take heart that the absolution proclaimed by the pastor is as from the Lord Himself.

²*It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.* Romans 10:10. Our response to the Word of God that has just been read is our confession of faith in the one, true, triune God.

³Martin Luther teaches us about hearing the Word: "Know, therefore, that you must be concerned not only about hearing, but also about learning and retaining it in memory, and do not think that it is optional with you or of no great importance, but that it is God's commandment, who will require of you how you have heard, learned, and honored His Word." (Large Catechism) *Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!* Luke 11:28

OFFERING ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ONLINE VIEWERS

For those worshipping with us online and those sheltering in place, we encourage you to bring your tithes and offerings to the church office open M-F mornings from 9-12, or mail your check in to church, or for those who bank online, simply instruct your bank to send us a check in the mail.

We all owe God our tithes and offerings and we encourage everyone to continue in the joy that is found in faithful financial stewardship.

Thank you.

Christ Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.