

Epiphany of Our Lord

January 3, 2021



Greeting and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

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.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection

P: 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.

The First Noel

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

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

Verse 3

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

Verse 4

This star drew near to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

Verse 5

Then entered in those wise men three, full rev'rently upon the knee, and offered there in his presence their gold and myrrh, and frankincense. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

C: And also with you!

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: 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: 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.

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In 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: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷Of 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. ⁸Although 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, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so 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. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalmody: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

¹Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives, and precious is their blood in his sight.**

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.

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "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." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'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.'" ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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." ⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – Pastor Paul

Apostles 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 to the dead. 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.

Prayers of the Church / Sign of the Peace

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.

Final 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 you this day ✠ through the Word made flesh.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Adore

Verse 1

You stepped down from heaven. Humbly, You came. God of all creation here with us. In a starlit manger, Emmanuel, Light of the world here to save.

Chorus

Adore, come let us adore, O come let us adore Him! The Lord, worship Christ the Lord. Let all that is within us adore.

Verse 2

Wise men bring their treasures, shepherds bow low, angel voices sing of peace on earth. What have I to offer to heaven's King? I will bring my life, my love, my all.

Chorus

Adore, come let us adore, O come let us adore Him! The Lord, worship Christ the Lord. Let all that is within us adore.

Bridge

Angels sing, praises ring to the newborn King. Peace on earth here with us, joy awakening. At Your feet, we fall.
Angels sing, praises ring to the newborn King. Peace on earth here with us, joy awakening. At Your feet, we fall.

Chorus

Adore, come let us adore, O come let us adore Him! The Lord, worship Christ the Lord. Let all that is within us adore.



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

January 3, 2021

Stewardship Encouragement 2021 is Underway! Many pledge cards have been received. Even though the due date (December 1st) is now past, it is not too late to send your pledge in. You can either mail the envelope to BLC or provide it with your offering during Parking Lot Communion at church (Sundays 11-11:45 a.m.) Many thanks and God bless!

Covid hits our congregation! Please keep praying for all who are being hit by this illness especially one of our own council members. Even though all in that household were being careful, someone who was ill came to their home without wearing a mask and all are now very sick. Through the wonders of ZOOM this person was able to participate in the most recent council meeting, and the rest of us saw how ill someone could be even without being hospitalized. Another council member had to be in work/home only quarantine for 2 weeks due to recent multiple exposures in that person's essential job. Know *that any of the tough decisions that the council is making are with the well-being of all members in mind.*

The DECEMBER issue of the STAR is ready! The STAR is no longer being subsidized by anonymous donors. We thank them for the generosity for three months and their hard work in preparing it for mailing. (There is even a rolling pin involved!!!) The cost of postage for the STAR is now being taken from the general fund. If anyone wants to make an extra donation towards postage due to the monthly cost of keeping all members informed, a notation can be made on any check or envelope. If you read the STAR on line and have not told us, please make certain you contact the office so we are not sending out copies needlessly. Printed STARS will also be available in the "Shooting Star box" outside the church entry later this week. Feel free to check online at www.bethlehemtc.org < About Us > "The Online Bethlehem Star" or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>

The outdoor "**Shooting STAR Dispenser**" at BLC is **now full** with several paper publications, including the December STAR and the current week's worship folder/bulletin. If you would like a copy of a DVD, please contact the church and one will be produced for you.

Calling all Knitters!!: There is an overabundance of yarn skeins in the bin under the mailboxes in the narthex. PLEASE feel free to grab some to make hats, mittens, prayer shawls, etc.! The yarn is sorted according to kind, so you can be sure to find something appropriate for whatever project you have in mind. Questions? Call Betty R. (947-1013)

Christ in Our Home Devotionals for January/February/March. They can be picked up at the name tag table on Sunday mornings, from the STAR box below the outside mailbox, or during parking lot communion. The newest *Living Lutheran* magazine is also available in the same locations.

The BLC book club is excited that another author is going to join us for a discussion of their book on ZOOM. On Tuesday Jan 26 at 5:30 we will discuss *The Marsh King's Daughter* by Karen Dionne. The author lives part of the time in northern Michigan and the setting of the book is in Michigan. There are still 2 library copies of the book in the big box on the ground by the front door of the church if you want to borrow one. Just let Cindy Monroe know if you take one or if you want to join in the fun of the discussion at cmonroe@chartermi.net

The daughter of one of our members, Kathi Ivany-Mort, is in need of a vehicle. She is a single parent of three children, two of which have special needs. She has limited funds but would be open to a fair price and/or payment plan if desired. If you have a vehicle that would seat five people and possibly AWD or 4WD, please contact Kathi on her cell at 231-313-1647 or Kathi's husband, Jef Mort, at their home phone 231-929-4911.

From Kathi Ivany: "Praise the Lord! And a special thank you to Margo for your kind and generous gift for my daughter! Erica and her family can certainly use it at this time of the year....I have recently discovered that Erica is trying to save money for an internet connection, so that her children can receive an "inter-face connection" with their schools."

As an aside, an internet company in Rapid City is charging very high fees now to install internet in homes, and though Erica has tried to contest this, it looks like this is the reality these days. Continued prayers for all those trying to stay connected in these challenging times. - Pr. Paul

A big thank you to those who have turned in Oleson's receipts. We just received a check from them for \$266.87. Please continue saving your Oleson's receipts for Bethlehem.

Keep "Hope Spreading": Don't forget our blog "Hope Spreads Further" is still going strong! We've had many very inspiring entries and hope to read more. We invite you to help us build this blog or just read current entries at <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/hope-spreads-further>. Reach out to *Pastor Paul* at paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org or *Sharon* at admin@bethlehemtc.org if you'd like to contribute to the blog!

"Zoom Bible Study" will take a Christmas break on Dec 30th. We will resume on Jan 6th, gathering via Zoom is going strong each Wednesday from noon until about 1:15pm, and each week we are having great conversation and fellowship. We are using the Augsburg Fortress study of two of Paul's letters: 1st and 2nd Corinthians. Please contact Pr. Paul if you are interested in joining.

Administrative Assistant Needed at Father Fred: This is a full-time Administrative Assistant position with benefits. The person filling this role must be flexible, able to function well in a highly stimulating environment, respond to interruptions as they occur and work independently to accomplish assigned tasks. The overall function of this role is to provide organizational, clerical and Executive level support.

Entry Requirements:

Education: Minimum two yr. college degree required

Experience: Three to five years of administrative/executive assistant level experience in a professional environment / Previous accounting experience preferred /Advanced level knowledge of Microsoft Office programs / Familiarity with QuickBooks preferred

More details visit fatherfred.org

Send Resume to Executive Director, Candice Hamel chamel@fatherfred.org

This is a year when we cannot visit many of our members to bless them with our Christmas carols. Instead please pull out your BLC directory and take a moment to make a phone call to one or two of them or send a card wishing for a better New Year. Not sure who needs a call or card? How about you choose members whose last name is closest in the alphabet to your own?

List of Home Bound Members of BLC 2020
BLC = Directory

Marlene Baesch BLC

Marinan Bradford in Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI

Carol Collins – Burcham Assisted Living 2700 Burcham Dr. East Lansing, MI 48823

Brenda Denoyer at home BLC

Richard Fernholz BLC

Jo Hasse she is in French Manor BLC

Corinne Hill BLC

Christian Stretlien and Julie LaPeer 14720 Mc Coll Ave. Thompsonville, MI 49683

Tom and Lee Miller BLC

Marilyn Skay BLC

Nancy Smith BLC

Lois Stretlien (Jan's sister in-law) in Traverse Manor Room #24

Ellie Tacke BLC

Inge Thomas BLC

Priscilla Thomas @ Samaritas Assisted Living 4354 Mt. Hope Rd. Williamsburg MI 49690 BLC

Jan and Butch Waisanen BLC

Dee and Bill Springer Boardman Lake Glens 1400 Brigadoon Ct. TC 49684 BLC

Marjorie Whitney in Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI BLC