

# Epiphany of Our Lord

January 4, 2026 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 4



## Prelude Music

## Announcements

## Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

**C: Amen.**

P: Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection*

P: Reconciling God,

**C: ... we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace.**

**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear.**

**We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news.**

**Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.**

P: God's grace upon grace flows over you. ☩ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

**C: Amen**

## Gathering Song:

***We Are Marching in the Light***

***ELW 866***

## 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!**

## Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: 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.**

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

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **C: Amen.**

## 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.

## Children's Message

Pr Paul

## 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.*

1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. 2 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. 3 Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn. 4 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 in their nurses' arms. 5 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. 6 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.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C:** Thanks be to God

## Gospel Acclamation:

## Angels We Have Heard on High

ELW 289

(v. 1 & Refrain)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Glo-ria in excelsis De-o; glo-ria in excelsis De-o

## 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.

1 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." 3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, 4 and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They 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.' " 7 Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8 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." 9 When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

(continued on next page)

10 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 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. 12 And 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 Busekist*

## **Song of the Day:**

## ***We Three Kings of Orient Are***

**WOV 646**

We three kings of orient are; bearing gifts we traverse a-far, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright; westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again; king forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

Oh, 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, gladly raising, worshiping God Most High.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright; westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom; sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright; westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice; heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright; westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

## **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**


## **Offering**

## **Offering Song:**

*Zeke Clemons*

## Offertory:

### *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble  
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

## Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. Amen

## Words of Institution

### 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.

**Communion** (Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available)

### Communion Songs:

*As with Gladness Men of Old  
The First Noel*

**ELW 302**

**ELW 300**

## Final Blessing

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

C: Amen.

**Dismissal**

A: Glory to God in the highest!

**C: And peace to God's people on earth!**

A: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

**C: Thanks be to God.**



**Bethlehem** January 4, 2026  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

1050 Peninsula Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
(231) 947-9880  
[www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)

1/04—Maggie Russell

1/5—Jacque Rossfeld

1/5—David Glenn

1/6—Michael McCarty

1/8—Cecilia Lotan

1/10—Patti Friedli

**Worship Servants for January 4**

Preaching & Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Cindy Monroe

Lector—Chris Walter

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denise Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Tom & Jana Rockne in Celebration of son Pete's 40th birthday*

Hospitality: Phil Anderson / Susie Burton

A/V-- Jim Monroe / Paul Ton

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— Volunteer

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor—Craig & Maureen Bauer

Altar Guild—Mary Ann Tanis / Gail Goldsmith

Counters: Carl Lehto / Cindy Cuba

**Grief Group will meet tomorrow, January 5th at 3:30pm**

**January's XYZ potluck & presentation will be on Friday, January 9th.** After a delicious potluck lunch at noon, we will have a presentation by Connie Hintsula of Alliance for Senior Housing. Remember, XYZ is predominantly geared toward seniors but the time spent together and the wonderful presentations are enjoyable for adults of any age - we hope you can join us!

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church will be holding its Annual Budget Meeting** on Sunday, January 11, 2026 at 11:15am after the 10:00am service. Please plan to attend

**Creation Care Team update:** our next Creation Care core team meeting will be Monday, January 12th at 6pm in the Youth Room. Subcommittee members may be meeting before as needed. Contact Paul Wiemerslage, Tina Dohm or Pastor Paul for any updates.

**BOOK CLUB NEWS:** The next meeting for the book club will be 5:30 on January 14 at The Cottage. We will be discussing *The Winemaker's Wife*, an historical novel by Kristin Harmel. If interested in attending please contact Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net).

**Pancake Breakfast before the service on January 25th** – Please support the youth for their upcoming annual ski trip.

**Verse Ontap:** Join us on January 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm at a new location: Nocturnal Bloom Brewing, 3344 Cass Rd.

**Chair Yoga** meets at 3:00pm on Mondays - It is \$5 per class

**Choir News:** The choir has resumed its practice schedule on Mondays at 2:30. The next rehearsal is January 12th. Come and join in the musical fun!

**Blue Christmas Thank Yous:** The Blue Christmas dinner on December 18th was a wonderful feast. Thanks to all who made it happen: Phil Bossardet (the head chef), Peg Pepler, Linda Hansen, Nancy and Jay Pflasterer, Judi Block, Dan and Laura Hahn, Meredith Busekist, Cindy Monroe, Gail Goldsmith, Diane and Doug Cunningham, Kathi Ivany along with many others who made cookies. After the dinner, Phil packaged up enough food for 30 dinners and delivered that to Women's Resource.

**Salvation Army Bell Ringing Report:** The following people were Bethlehem's Salvation Army Bell Ringers on December 6 and 7, 2025: Frank and Pat Wall, Lindsay and Dave Susalski, Sue and Bill Allen, Don Sheehan, Tim Goebel, Dan and Laura Hahn, Mary Ann Tanis and Braxton, Pastor Paul and Parker, Jim Hinds, Jim and Cindy Monroe, Kathi Ivany, Jim Hutchison and Claire, Gail Tokie, and Carl and Suzanne Lehto. They stepped up and answered the call not knowing what the weather might be. The weather was quite cold and windy but bearable when suitably dressed. The total donations received for the two days of ringing was \$1,269.26. The first two hours of ringing on Friday were done by members of another church who had committed to ring before Bethlehem was assigned to ring on Friday and Saturday. We don't know how much was given during those first two hours but if we assume donations were made at a constant rate through out the day, then the donations during Bethlehem's bell ringing would be approximately \$160.00 less for a total of \$1,109.26. These funds will certainly put some extra cheer in the lives of several families in the Traverse City area during this Christmas season. Thanks for a job well done.

**Dear Members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church,**

It's that time of year when the Finance Committee and the Church Council is preparing a budget for the next year. To help forecast income for 2026, please return your 2026 pledge card, if you have not already done so.

We are all grateful to have such abundant blessings with our location and our faithful members. It's important to remain dedicated to our Christian faith and do our best to follow through on our commitments. Thank you for prayerfully considering this appeal.

We appreciate your support and are grateful for all you do to make Bethlehem Lutheran Church a thriving community of believers.

Jim Monroe

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Financial Secretary

Phil Anderson

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Bookkeeper

**NEW MEMBERS:** If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chair Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net).

**Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education** hold their classes at 9:15am on Sunday. **The Wednesday Zoom**

**Book/Bible Study** meets at 1:30pm. The group will take a break for Christmas and New Year's and will start back on January 14th with a study of James with the book James: Walking in Wisdom by Lydia Brownback. Please see either Pr Paul or Barbara for more information.

**Bethlehem Supports Safe Harbor in January** It's January and Bethlehem volunteers are preparing to host Safe Harbor guests for dinner on the 24th, 25th, 27th, and 28th. Cindy Monroe, Tina Dohm, B.J. Christensen, and the Bair-Goebel Team are assembling their kitchen teams. If they need additional help in the kitchen I'll advise. We do have to have two dishwashers for each night! We will have sheets to sign-up to help with check-in (including a runner for contraband and meds), to dispense meds (it's an easy stationary job), and to provide welcome and assistance in the dining area. We will also have sheets to sign up to provide treats- fresh fruit, crackers, cookies, energy bars, etc. These must be "store bought" as only food made on site can be distributed. BLC Safe Harbor Coordinator Tom Rockne and other volunteers will be available on 4 JAN to answer your questions. Questions now? Reach Tom at [tomrockne@gmail.com](mailto:tomrockne@gmail.com) or 231-631-0040.

**Social Ministry/Outreach update:** Please step forward to volunteer when a call is put out for assistance with any of these activities:

Jan 24-28 Safe Harbor under the leadership of Tom Rockne.

Feb. 7 Northwest Michigan Action Agency Super Saturday event at the Career Tech Center on Parsons Rd (Carolyn Mann or Nancy Ammann)

Any time-If you feel the spirit calling you to volunteer at Jubilee House contact Pastor Derek Quinn at 231 947 2330 or email [dquinn@gracetc.org](mailto:dquinn@gracetc.org).

Monthly outreach meal: We already have a group of 6 volunteers to prepare a community meal the 4th Sunday of the month at Grace Episcopal. We would like to have 6 more volunteers so each volunteer is only needed 6 times per year. Please prayerfully consider this service so we can begin offering a meal in March or sooner.

If questions, concerns, or ideas contact Cindy Monroe or Jim Hutchison. Next meeting for the full group will be scheduled in late Feb or early March.

**Social Ministry and Outreach Group Activity Super Saturday February 7, 2026 - Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency.** More information is in the narthex. We need your name if you can volunteer. The reason for this early notice is that DHS needs to run a background check, which is required for those volunteering. They need the information well in advance of the event.

**Today's Prayer Recipients: Please send any changes or additions by email to [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org)**

Harper Wiemerslage,  
Jerry Hill,  
John Block,  
Roy DuMond,  
Mary Woodring,  
Norm Fred,  
Lynn,  
Steve,  
Sherry,  
Bob,  
Ron Hellenga,  
John Stretlien,  
Judy Fenton,  
Cindy Hitesman,  
Richard Fernholz,  
Julie Lapeer,  
Lee,

Chris,  
Dale and Cheryl,  
Leroy,  
Julie Barrett,  
Patti,  
Sharon,  
Kyle,  
Ben,  
Marianne,  
Christine,  
Janet,  
Cheryl  
Pat,  
Greg,  
Joan Maule,  
Jan Schmidt



**The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office ([admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.**

**Sunday, January 4**

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)  
9:15am—Sunday School  
10:00am—Worship Service (S)

**Monday, January 5**

3:00pm—Chair Yoga  
3:30pm—Grief Group (YR)

**Tuesday, January 6**

**Bulletin articles due today**

9:00am—Property Work Group  
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)  
10:45am—Staff Meeting (CR)

**Wednesday, January 7**

11:30am—Music Rehearsal

**Thursday, January 8**

9:00am—Baby Pantry Set-up (FH)  
10:00am—Baby Pantry (FH)  
1:00pm—Rebecca Anna Circle (Library)  
5:30pm—ACA (FH)

**Friday, January 9**

12:00pm—XYZ (FH)  
6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

**Saturday, January 10**

7:00pm—Contra Dance-Bayside Travellers (FH)

**Sunday, January 11**

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)  
9:15am—Sunday School  
10:00am—Traditional Worship Service (S)  
11:15am—Congregational Meeting (S)  
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)

