**Worship Plan for Friday, January 6, 2023** **\* Epiphany of Our Lord**

**Introduction to 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.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**

When God speaks to you in a dream, you listen. Talk to Jacob, Joseph, or Daniel about this. Just a quick chapter ago in Matthew’s gospel, Joseph was told in a dream to stick by Mary and to name their child “Jesus,” meaning “savior.” Shortly after today’s account of the magi, Joseph will be guided in a dream to take refuge in Egypt, and again will be directed to a safe and secure place to call home at Nazareth in Galilee.

The magi also took to their travels via a vision. They observed a star and took it on faith that they should follow. The star led them to both promise and danger, and to a rather dubious audience with the sitting king. Despite the challenges, the magi continued, with courage and trust, to follow their vision to its end, to the place where Jesus was. It was in another dream that these travelers were guided to a better route home. This was both a detour out of harm’s way, in a real sense, and also a symbolic way of walking the world differently after having encountered Christ.

For and about what do you dream—not just your dreams in sleep, but your waking dreams and visions as well? When your heart beats in time with God’s hopes and dreams for the world, what will it take for you to follow that vision? What risks will you take? What challenges will you be called to confront? How will you be changed when you encounter God in the flesh, God among us?

By stars, visions, and faith itself, we are always being led by God toward hope and life, and we are being drawn to new pathways of forgiveness, compassion, and justice. We dream. And then we follow.

**Gathering:** The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Greeting**

Welcome to worship today, we are glad to have you with our Faith Lutheran Church community. I'm Pr. John Barton and I will be leading our service today. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Announcements**

Monday, the 9th: Loni Knowles funeral at 11:00 at Rose Hills in Whittier; Executive Board meets at 1:00 in person and on Zoom

Tuesday, the 10th: Lydia Circle meets at 10:00 in the library; Endowment meets at 1:30 on Zoom; Outreach meets at 3:00 in person

Wednesday, the 11th: Mary Circle meets at 10:00 in person and on Zoom; Hymn Planners meet at 11:00 on Zoom

Thursday, the 12th: Fellowship meets at 11:00 in person

Friday, the 13th: Al-Anon meets at 10:30 in the library

Saturday, the 14th: All hands on deck! All are invited to help the Altar Guild take down and put away the Christmas decorations (tree, wreaths, etc.).  Please join us on the 14th at 10:00 am. Many hands will make light work of our task. Coffee and donuts will be served.

Sunday, the 15th: Un-Birthday Party after the worship service.

The 2023 Member Directory has been completed and is in your box! Please bring it home with you today.

We are looking for volunteers to pick up people on Sunday mornings who aren’t able to transport themselves and bring them to church! We would like to build a list of people who are willing and able to be part of this important ministry! Please let the church office know if we can add you to our list.

The offering envelopes for 2023 are in your box. Please pick them up after the service today.

The 2023 sign-up sheet for flowers for our worship services is now up and hanging next to the office door. Please go ahead and start filling up those dates before your favorite occasions and holidays get taken by someone else!

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office. You can also go to the narthex and sign up to have the Forecaster and weekly announcements sent to you via email or via phone call. Thank you!

**Gathering Song:*As with Gladness Men of Old* (ELW 302)**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

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

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**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.**

**Children's Chat**

**Word:** God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:** Isaiah 60:1-6

1Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. 2For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. 3Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. 4Lift 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. 5Then 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. 6A 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.

The word of the Lord.

**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.**

**Amen.**

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

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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 151)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

**Gospel:** Matthew 2:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**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.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**And now please turn to hymn 301**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day: *Bright and Glorious Is the Sky* (ELW 301)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**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.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ’s coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

Guide the whole church with your wisdom, revealing God. Nurture ecumenical and interreligious understanding around the globe, especially in places of ethnic and religious strife. We pray for Lutheran World Relief and other organizations that provide humanitarian aid, disaster relief, and health care. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Restore your glory to the earth, creating God. Protect fragile ecosystems: rain forests, coral reefs, wetlands, prairies, and shorelines. Guide us to treasure the rich variety of animals and plants that share the world with us, especially those that are endangered. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Bring the nations into the way of justice and peace, righteous God. Strengthen those who work for human rights, equality, and the protection of the most vulnerable. We pray for all in public office, that they may serve with honesty and honor. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Help those who have no helper, delivering God. Rescue any who suffer from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Deliver adults and children who are caught in cycles of poverty. Transform social systems that enable racism and discrimination of any kind. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Accompany the ministries of this congregation in the coming year, abiding God. Inspire those who lead worship, teach, visit, pray, administer, and serve. Keep us mindful of the needs of others in our communities and neighborhoods, especially Nancy Blackmer; JoLynne Buehring; Arnette Calkins; Vicki Crow; Carole Erickson; Kally Homchick; Brian Kniss and family; Dale and Sharon Lawyer and family; Sandra Miller; Carol Morris; Sheila Neal; Wilma Parker; Andrew Quinn; JoAnne Schriock; Bill and Dee Seel; Amy Sinclair; Joyce Stromberg; Dennis and Carol Sutherland; Diana Ward; the homebound; the Emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery/tests.  We especially pray for those affected by COVID-19 and those who have lost loved ones. At this time we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Reveal your promise by the witness of those who died trusting in you, redeeming God. Receive our thanks for their witness and faith, and guide us by their example until we are gathered with them into your eternal presence. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship. Whether you give of your time, talents, or treasures, a combination of them, or are discerning how you can give to God's beloved community, thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Musical Offering: *He is Born***

**Meal:** God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

As you are comfortable, you are invited to come forward to receive communion. All of God's children are welcome to Christ's table.

You may kneel or stand at the altar rail, I will distribute the communion elements or if you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may commune yourself once you've received the communion elements. If you are concerned about spillage, place a napkin in your hand, commune the bread first, turn over the vessel and then carefully open the grape juice. There is also a gluten free option available, ask me at the rail. Please deposit empty cups in the provided baskets on your way back to your seat.

If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets’ hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary’s openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**Invitation to Communion**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**During Distribution:*In the Singing* (ELW 466)**

**During Distribution:*Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life* (ELW 472)**

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**EPIPHANY BLESSING**

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

**And now please turn to hymn 314**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song:*Arise, Your Light Has Come!* (ELW 314)**

**Doxology*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* (ELW 884)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation**

The Church Council Members and I would like to invite guests and visitors to come and meet us in the narthex as you exit so that we can meet and welcome you. 

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