

Nativity Evangelical Lutheran Church

“Our 92nd Year”

January 5, 2025



Welcome to Nativity Lutheran Church; please take a moment to fill out the visitor cards found in the pews. Prayer request can be filled out on the reverse side of the visitor card; you may place the card in the offering box or give them to Pastor Kuhl. The service today includes Holy Communion and all who desire to receive what our Lord offers in this meal, his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to partake. For your convenience, restrooms are located in Goetz Hall on the lower level; the staircases in the church building narthex access them. There is a semi handicapped, unisex restroom located through the left front door of the sanctuary.

Epiphany of Our Lord

Presiding Minister

The Rev. Dr. Steven C. Kuhl

Lector/Reader

Arlene Renard

Minister of Music/Organist

Dennis Jon Wolfgang

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.

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Prelude

Variations on ADESTE FIDELES – Raynor Taylor

Prelude on “The First Noel” – Paul Fey

O Hail this Brightest Day – Johann Sebastian Bach

Welcome and Announcements

Blessing of the Church at Epiphany

The Congregation faces the entrance as the minister leads them in the rite of blessing of the house of worship.

L: Peace be to this house of worship

C: and to all who enter here.

L: A reading from the Gospel of St. John: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

L: Let us pray: Gracious God, as a shining star once guided the magi to the birthplace of the infant Jesus, so enable those who dwell here to be your light in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. **C: Amen.**

The Inscription (20 + C M B + 24) is made over the doorway while speaking the following words.

The Magi of old, whom tradition has named
Caspar (C); Melchior (M) and Balthasar (B)
Followed the star of God's Son who came to dwell among
us

two thousand (20)
and twenty (24) years ago
Christ, bless (+) this house of worship,
and remain (+) with us throughout the new year.

L: Let us pray... O God, you revealed your Son to all people by the shining light of a star. We pray that you bless this house of worship and all who worship here with your gracious presence. May your love be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Christ Our Lord. **C: Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

The First Noel – ELW 300

Tune: THE FIRST NOEL

Confession and Forgiveness

**Please stand if able.*

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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

Amen.

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 our 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!

Amen.

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Kyrie and Gloria

Found in the St. James Christmas Service insert.

Prayer of the Day

P: 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. C: Amen.

**Please be seated for the Readings.*

Old Testaments Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6 --“Today’s Readings” Insert

This lauds the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem after the exile. Entire families will come from far, and non-Israelite peoples will recognize the glory of Jerusalem, bringing valuable gifts of gold and frankincense.

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60¹ 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.

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.

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.

R/: The Word of the Lord.

Response: **Thanks Be to God**

Psalmody

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 -- “Today’s Readings” Insert

All kings shall bow down before him. (Ps. 72:11)
Chanted using tone 1



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king’s son.

² **May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.**

³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

⁶

**May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷ In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts.**

¹¹ May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.

¹² **For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.**

¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

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

Epistle Reading

Ephesian 3:1-12 -- “*Today’s Readings*” Insert.

A recurring image in the letter is the power of light over darkness. This reading speaks of God’s grace as a “mystery” (the word recurs four times in this reading) that has shown “mystery” (the word recurs four times in this reading) that has shown forth in Christ Jesus.

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3This 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 to 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.

7 Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to 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.

R/: The Word of the Lord.

Response: **Thanks Be to God**

Gospel Acclamation - ELW No. 175

Taizé Alleluia – Verse proclaimed by the cantor.

Alleluia. Here I am, the servant ¹ of the Lord; let it be with me according ¹ to your word. Alleluia. (Luke 1:38)*

**Please stand if able.*

Gospel Reading

The Gospel is announced: Matthew 2:1-12

Response: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In this narrative, Eastern magi, perhaps Zoroastrian priests, recognize the cosmic significance of the birth of Jesus and offer him gifts that are appropriate for royalty, while Herod

recognizes that the destiny of Jesus is a threat to his power.
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2 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.”

7 Then 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.

R/: The Gospel of the Lord.

Concluding Response: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Steven Kuhl

Hymn of the Day

As with Gladness Men of Old – ELW 302

Tune: DIX

Please stand for the final verse.

Profession of Faith

The Nicene Creed – page 104

Prayers of the People

Response: Your mercy is great.

Sharing of Peace

Offering Hymn

Brightest and Best of the Stars – ELW 303

Tune: MORNING STAR

**Please be seated.*

Please place your offering in the white church found in the narthex of the church.

Offering Prayer

**Please stand if able.*

P: 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..

The Meal/Great Thanksgiving and Proper Preface

ELW page 107.

Holy, Holy, Holy

Found in the St. James Christmas Service insert.

Eucharistic Prayer III -- ELW page 110

Spoken Eucharistic Acclamations

Lord's Prayer – ELW Page 145

Lamb of God

Found in the St. James Christmas Service insert.

Invitation To Communion

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

Distribution

**Please be seated.*

*All are Welcome to receive the Lord's Meal at His table.
Please come forward to the Communion Rail.*

Communion Music

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come –
Friedrich Wilhelm Zachau

Post Communion Canticle - ELW No. 313

O Lord, now let your servant

**Please stand if able.*

Prayer after Communion

P: Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **C: Amen.**

Benediction

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

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn

We Three Kings of Orient Are— WOV 646

Tune: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

Dismissal

P: Glory to God in the highest!

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

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

C: Thanks be to God

Postlude

Fugue on *Noel Nouvelet* – Richard Hudson

Fantasy in “He is Born, the Infant King” – Richard Hudson

Il est né, le Divin Enfant

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Nativity's Leadership

Rev. Dr. Steven C. Kuhl - Pastor

Dennis Jon Wolfgang – Director of Music/Organist
James Ribnek, III – President
Dr. Robert Saur – Vice President
Jill Mickelson – Treasurer
Nicole DeBack – Secretary

Church Council Members at Large

Sandra Larson, Dennis Jon Wolfgang

Prayer Concerns and Announcements

As a Community we pray: For those with immediate needs of healing and strength: Gary Brautigam, Marvelyn Cockroft, Gary Hanson, Cheryl Isotalo, Maureen Jones, James Larson, Sarah O'Brien, Rev. Mick Roschke, Marion Saur, Maureen Sopa, Jennifer Wigand and Rev. Dean Willich. If you know of individuals that need to be added to or taken off the list please let any Council Member know.

There are no Birthdays This Week.

The next **Nativity Church Council** is Sunday January 11th following worship. We will be finalizing the 2026 church budget. All members of Nativity are invited to attend Church Council meetings.

Mark your calendars for Sunday January 25th, we will hold our **Annual Meeting** following worship. If you need to submit an **Annual Report** please have it completed by January 11th.

2026 Nativity Lutheran Church Calendars are available in the narthex. They are supplied through the courtesy of **Schmidt and Bartelt** Funeral and Cremation Service, 10121 West North Avenue, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

The **Nativity Congregational Meeting** is Sunday, January 25th following our worshipservice. All members of Nativity are urged to attend. **Next Council Meeting** is January 11.

Stewardship/Offerings: We are always grateful for everyone's financial support, no matter how large or small the gift. If you cannot attend worship in person, you may mail your offerings and donations to the church at any time. The mailing address is on the back of this bulletin. Have you remembered Nativity Lutheran Church in your estate planning?

Future Dates

Sunday, January 11th – Nativity Council Meeting following worship.

Sunday, January 25th – Nativity Annual Meeting following worship.

Wednesday, February 18th Ash Wednesday

12 Noon Non-Communion Worship Service with Imposition of Ashes

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This Week's Calendar

Location Key: “S”=Sanctuary, “G”=Goetz Fellowship

Hall, “UC”=Upper Meeting/Conference Room,
“C”=Children’s Area

TODAY: 1/4 **/Epiphany**

11:00 AM “S” Nativity Worship
Service with Communion

Tuesday: 1/6 12:00 PM “G” S.A. 12-step

Wednesday: 1/7 9:00 AM “UC” Quilters

8:00 PM A.A. Al-Anon

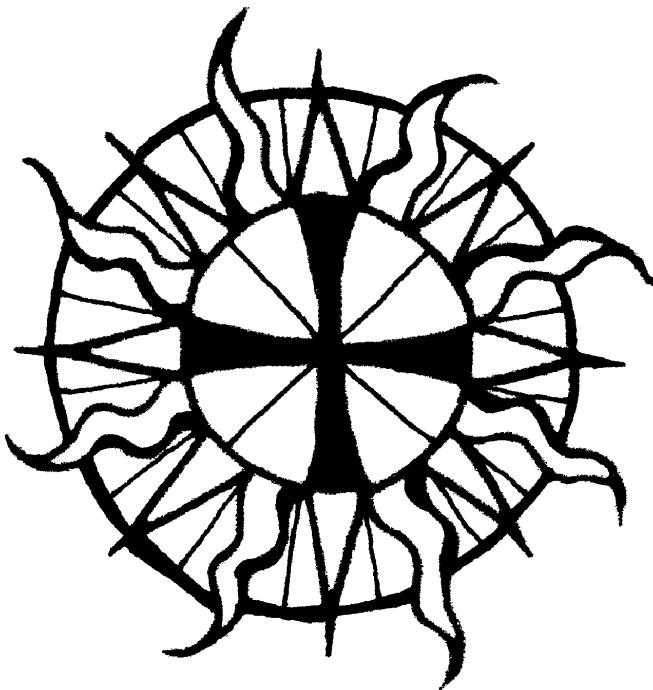
Friday: 1/9 12:00 PM “G” S.A. 12-step

Saturday 1/10 8:30 AM “S” Organ Lesson

Sunday: 1/11 **Baptism of Our Lord**

11:00 AM “S” Nativity Worship

Our Sunday Bulletin is now uploaded to our Website on Saturdays.



Nativity Evangelical Lutheran Church

**Traditional Worship Service
Sundays at 11:00 AM**

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Wauwatosa, WI 53213

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Goetz Fellowship Hall: 414-988-2622

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