



THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

“We Have Come to Worship Him”

*Open Bible Evangelical Lutheran Church
Oxford, FL*

*January 3, 2021
9:30 am*

NOTES ON TODAY’S SERVICE

Epiphany (revealing Jesus to the world) The readings during the Epiphany season carry forward the emphasis in the readings for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the theme of Jesus revealing himself to us as God and Savior. At the same time the readings present us with a real conundrum. The conundrum is that he hides the manifestations of his deity, so that his glory remains a secret and a mystery, even while he is revealing it. All the riddles are present in the readings for the Feast of the Epiphany. The theme present in all of the Epiphany readings is: He shows his hidden glory to those he calls.

WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS AND VISITORS THIS MORNING! We are honored by your presence and invite you to return to worship with us again. If you do not have a church home, consider making ours – yours! If you would like more information about Open Bible Lutheran Church, please feel free to speak to Pastor Schulz or to one of the Greeters. You may reach Pastor Schulz at 352-753-9038. Or go to our web site: www.openbiblelutheranchurch.com.

FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Restrooms can be found on the right side of the Welcome Center.

Personal Hearing Assistance Devices are available. Ask an usher.

Also “The Hearing Loop System” is installed. Please turn you hearing aid or cochlear implant to “T” (Telephone.)

Please turn off all cell phones Personal and other electronic devices. Thank you.



† For respect of those who use the sanctuary for meditation before the service, please refrain from any unnecessary noise once the pre-service music has begun. †

WE GATHER FOR PRAISE

Welcome and introduction

Greet Your Neighbor (Please practice social distancing)

OPENING HYMN:

COME AND JOURNEY WITH A SAVIOR

Herbert O'Driscoll, alt.

Marty Haugen

Verses



1. Come and jour - ney with a Sav - ior Who has
 2. Come and jour - ney jour - ney in - ward, Come and
 3. Come and jour - ney, jour - ney out - ward, Tell - ing
 4. Come and jour - ney, jour - ney out - ward, Where that
 5. Come and jour - ney, jour - ney up - ward, Sing his
 6. Come and jour - ney, jour - ney on - ward, All our



called us from our birth, Who has washed us in the
 seek him deep with - in, Where he meets us in our
 oth - ers of his name, Tell - ing oth - ers of his
 cross calls us to care, Where in - jus - tice and where
 prais - es, of - fer prayer. In the storm and in the
 gifts we now shall bring, To the build - ing of a



wa - ters, And who loved us on the earth.
 liv - ing, In our striv - ing and our sin.
 glo - ry, Of his cross and of the shame.
 hun - ger And the poor call us to share.
 still - ness, Find his pres - ence ev - 'ry - where.
 cit - y That is ho - ly, Christ its king.

Refrain



Come and jour - ney, come and jour - ney with a Sav - ior who has



come. We are all God's sons and daugh - ters. In the



Spir - it we are one. In the Spir - it we are one.

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P: We begin our worship in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS

P: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

C: **He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.**

P: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am troubled by them?

C: **I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?**

P: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

C: **I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.**

P: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

C: **His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.**

P: As a called servant in Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

CW# 82 “Songs of Thankfulness and Praise” vs 1

*Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to you we raise
Manifested by the star to the Magi from afar,
Branch of royal David’s stem, in your birth at Bethlehem.
Anthems be to you addressed, God in man made manifest.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray:

Lord God, by the leading of a star you once made known to the nations your one and only Son. Guide us, also, who know him now by faith, to come at last to the perfect joy of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen!**

WE GATHER AROUND HIS WORD

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: ISAIAH 60:1-6

page 1124

Isaiah would catch a glimpse of the glory of Christ. Many would come from all over the world to the brightness of the Light of the world. Our faces shine for joy reflecting that Light. We are rescued by this Jesus from the damning darkness of unbelief. He alone is our Savior; he alone is our God and Lord!

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. “Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm. Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

RESPONSE: CW# 291 “We Have a Sure Prophetic Word” vs 1

*We have a sure prophetic Word
By inspiration of the Lord,
And, though assailed on every hand,
Jehovah’s Word shall ever stand.*

THE EPISTLE LESSON: EPHESIANS 3:2-12

page 1761

It’s all a mystery. No one can penetrate that mystery but the ones to whom God makes it known. God has sent those who have the words of the apostles and prophets to the ends of the world to make known to Jews and Gentile alike the mystery of salvation hidden in Jesus. Perhaps you wonder if you are included; the Epiphany Gospel says, yes!

Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this

grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

RESPONSE: CW# 291 “We Have a Sure Prophetic Word” vs 2

*By powers of empire banned and burned,
By pagan pride rejected, spurned,
The Word still stands, the Christian’s trust,
While haughty empires lie in dust.*

THE GOSPEL LESSON: MATTHEW 2:1-12

page 1450

(Please stand out of reverence for Christ)

The Savior has come for the poor and lowly without leaving out the wise and the rich; he has come for the Jewish descendants of David and for all the rest of us, too. Give thanks that you know the whole story of redemption.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully

for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

RESPONSE: CW# 291 “We Have a Sure Prophetic Word” vs 4

*Abiding, steadfast, firm, and sure,
The teachings of the Word endure.
Blest all who trust this steadfast Word;
Their anchor holds in Christ, the Lord.*

Sermon Hymn: CW #80 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

SERMON: Matthew 2:1-12
“Walk the Way of the Wisemen!”
Pastor Mark M. Schulz

NICENE CREED (please stand) Tune CW# 484

*I believe in God, the Father maker of the heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, our Savior, God’s own Son, of human birth.
Virgin-born, the Lord incarnate, Whom the Spirit did conceive.
Suffered under Pontius Pilate: He’s the God whom I believe.*

*Crucified, was dead and buried; Down to hell in victory;
From the dead he rose the third day; Up to heaven triumphantly.
There at God’s right hand he’s ruling; By his will the world is led.
He will come to judge the nation, Both the living and the dead.*

*I believe in God the Spirit, In his church, his chosen band.
They are joined in sweet communion: Holy in his sight they stand.
I believe in sins forgiven; I believe I'll rise again;
I believe in life eternal. Amen! Amen! Amen!*

WELS CONNECTION:

Offering: *If you'd like to give an offering, please place it in the wooden offering box on the table located outside the sanctuary door. Thank you.*

WE GATHER FOR THANKSGIVING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Brief silence

We come to You, holy Father, with great joy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Through Him we beg You to accept and bless the prayers and offerings we bring, even as You were pleased with the gold, frankincense and myrrh offered to Your Son by the Magi of old. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember, Lord, Your Holy Church. Watch over her and guide her. Grant her peace and unity throughout the world. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember, Lord, our Synod president, Mark Schroeder; our district presidents; and all pastors, and servants of the Church. Grant them to hold and teach the faith that comes to us from the holy prophets and apostles. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember, Lord, our president, our public servants and all in our armed forces. Guide, bless, protect and uphold them in honor. Bring all nations into the ways of peace and justice. In Your kindness and love, grant us seasonable weather and an abundance of the fruits of the earth. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember, Lord, all who suffer for Your name, all who are in prison, the hungry and ill-clad, the poor and the lonely, those who travel, and all who cry out to You in their time of need [*especially _____*]. Take each hurting heart under Your tender care and grant them Your peace and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remember, Lord, all who are gathered here before You, our living and true God. We pray for our well-being and redemption. Order our days in Your peace, deliver us from the danger of eternal death, and number us among Your chosen flock. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy Father, in communion with the whole Church we give You thanks for Your saints, in whom You have given us a mirror of Your mercy and grace. This holy day we especially thank You for the Magi, the firstfruits of the Gentiles to kneel in worship before Your Son. Give us grace to walk before You with faith like theirs, and grant us a share in their heavenly fellowship. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through Him and with Him and in Him all honor and glory is Yours, O God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (*contemporary*)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

WE GATHER FOR DISMISSAL INTO OUR MISSION FIELD

P: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: **AMEN!**

CLOSING HYMN: CW # 83 “As with Gladness Men of Old”

Memo to all church offering envelope holders: The 2021 Contribution Envelopes will be placed in your church mailbox or available at the Welcome Center Desk for those without a mailbox. Also, the contribution statements for 2020 will be available mid-January 2021. Because this year has created a new scope of behavior restrictions for all of us, our Financial Secretary wishes to remind you that the statements will be placed in your church mailbox...unless we receive other instructions via regular mail to the church or email (OpenBibleTheVillages@gmail.com.) If you should request us to mail your statement, please be sure that we have your current address/location.

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"Growing in Christ through the Word, making His Salvation Known"

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