

# Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church-E.L.C.A.



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.

**Epiphany Sunday**  
**Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Bulletin Donated By:

## **GATHERING**

Entrance and Wassailing The word “wassail” comes from the Anglo-Saxon, “Wes hail,” meaning “be whole” – a greeting for “good health!” The wassailers traveled from house to house singing, with a wassail cup which their hosts were expected to fill.

## **PROCESSION SONG**

Deck The Halls

Deck the halls with boughs of holly: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

'Tis the season to be jolly: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Don we now our gay apparel: Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la

Troll the ancient Yule-tide carol: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Strike the harp and join the chorus: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Follow me in merry measure: Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la

While I tell of Yule-tide treasure: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Fast away the old year passes: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Hail the new year, lads and lasses: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Sing we joyous, all together: Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la

Heedless of the wind and weather: Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

## **GREETING AND WELCOME**

P: Christ is with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany! The word “epiphany” means “manifestation” and comes from the Greek word for “reveal” or make known. Here in worship on Epiphany, we celebrate that Jesus is the manifestation or revealing or in-breaking of God’s light for all people of every time and place. That means, God’s light is for people years ago, people in the future who haven’t even been born yet, you and me, and everyone all over the world right now! God’s light, Jesus, is for everyone!

Because God’s light is for everyone, everyone is welcome in God’s house and family, and so are their gifts. Just as the magi showed their respect for Christ with gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we offer our gifts and talents to share God’s light with others. Whatever we bring—no matter how simple—God accepts and puts to good use.

Sharing our gifts with God and each other gives us lots of joy! So, I hope you’re ready to sing loud and share that joy today, and then to take the Light of Christ with you when you leave today to share it with the world around you today and every day.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.**

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

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 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.

**POEM: *The Silver Star* by Carl Sandberg**

The silver of one star  
Plays cross-lights against pine green  
And the play of this silver  
crosswise against the green  
Is an old story...  
thousands of years.

And sheep raisers on the hills by night  
Watching the wooly four-footed rambles,  
Watching a single silver star –  
Why does the story never wear out?

And a baby slung in a feed-box  
Back in a barn in a Bethlehem slum,  
A baby's first cry mixing with the crunch  
Of a mule's teeth on Bethlehem Christmas corn,  
Baby fists softer than snowflakes of Norway,

The vagabond Mother of Christ  
And the vagabond men of wisdom,  
All in a barn on a winter night,  
And a baby there in swaddling clothes on hay –  
Why does the story never wear out?

The sheen of it all  
Is a star silver and a pine green  
For the heart of a child asking a story,  
The red and hungry, red and hankering heart  
Calling for cross-lights of silver and green.

## **SONG**

*The First Noel*

ELW #300

Sung by All to Create a living nativity scene, by having different characters enter with each verse.

Verse 1: Angels and shepherds (and sheep, if you have a lot of people!)

Verse 2: Stars (carrying flashlights if you have a dark enough space to see their light)

Verse 3: Magi circle the space looking for the stable (binoculars could be a fun addition)

Verse 4: Holy Family appears and stars shine light on them

Verse 5: Magi arrive where Holy family are, kneel, and offer their gifts

## **GOSPEL**

**Mathew 2:1-12**

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. 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.'" 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.

## **MESSAGE**

### **OFFERING**

**OFFERING SONG**-Sung during collection

We Three Kings

Gray #288

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

L: Holy God, **ALL: We bring our gifts before you this morning. We have no gold, no frankincense, no myrrh—but what we have we give to you.**

L: Like foreign dignitaries paying homage to a king, **ALL: we place these offerings before you to benefit your kingdom because we know your reign is not contained to the heavens. You broke into our weary world and there is still so much joy to bring.**

L: Use our gifts of money to meet the needs of our community both inside and beyond these walls. **ALL: May the gold we bring make a tangible difference in the lives of your people.**

L: Bless our gifts of worship. **ALL: May our offerings of incense transform our hearts and stoke righteous fire within us, spurring us to action.**

L: Multiply our gifts of care for one another **ALL: as we anoint the sick, sit with the lonely, and listen to voices that are silenced.**

L: Incarnate God, you broke into our weary world and there is still so much joy to bring.  
**ALL: May it be so, amen.**

## Meal

### **GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – EPIPHANY**

L: God of today, tomorrow, and yesterday, As we begin this new year, we once again find ourselves looking for you. We long for the clarity of a star in the sky, or a voice in the clouds declaring your presence in our lives.

**ALL: So today we ask that you would make yourself known to us. Do what only you can do. Reach into our spirits to give us a boost of confidence that love is real and we are not alone. Remind us that we are beloved in your eyes.**

L: We know we're asking a lot for a group that brings very little.

**ALL: We don't have gold or Frankincense or Myrrh. We haven't thrown off our shoes to honor your holy ground. We haven't been baptized in the Jordan river. We haven't spent the last several days traveling here by camel. We're no Magi, Moses, or Messiah, but we're yours.**

L: Instead, we bring ourselves to this Table—to your Table—in hopes of catching a glimpse of you.

**ALL: Speak to us in this bread. Speak to us in the cup. Speak to us through these star words. Speak to us as you spoke through the clouds at Jesus's baptism, so that these star words may be a tool that helps us look for you in the coming year. Holy God, you call us beloved. You are with us in our joy. You are with us in our sorrow. Surely, even as we pray, you are with us here as well.**

L: So with grateful hearts, we remember the promise of our Lord Jesus, who, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread and gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying

**ALL: "Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."**

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

**ALL: "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."**

L: As we tell your story of good news, let us once again speak the prayer your son taught us to pray, saying:

**LORD'S PRAYER**

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**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**LAMB OF GOD**

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Communion Distribution (All Are Welcome to Receive Communion Here at GA Church)

**POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: God of open horizons and open roads, like the Magi so many years ago, we are here, seeking you. Step by step, we have wandered into this space with the hope of feeling you in our midst. Step by step, you have seen us, claimed us, and called us beloved. Today we have drawn star words. For some, these words are full of meaning, challenge, and invitation already. For others, these words are a blank canvas—inviting you into our lives. So as a new year dawns, we pray that just as you have spoken to the generations before us, you would speak to us again. Allow us to use these star words as a tool that might help us hear you more clearly. May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi. And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again, with mouths full of praise for the ways in which you have been present with us. Together we pray, with joy in our hearts.

**C: Amen.**

**BLESSING**

P: As the star guided the magi to Jesus, may the light of Christ be a beacon of God’s love and grace to you and all whom you encounter. And may the Holy one, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you safe. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

Shine, Jesus, Shine

ELW #671

**DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

**C: Share the Good News of God’s Word and serve the community and the world. Thanks be to God.**

Mission Statement of Gustaf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

**To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.**

*Matthew 22:39* ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

*Matthew 28:19* Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament.

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*Words for Worship for Advent–Baptism of the Lord Sunday Written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed*

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© Epiphany A Celebrate! Worship for Every Festival+ With Options for a Service of Holy Communion or for a Dinner Church