

Epiphany
Sunday, January 7th, 2024
Holy Communion 10 am



Introduction

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation,
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.

ST. PETER’S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
121 N. SPRING STREET, MIDDLETOWN, PA 17057
Sunday Worship 10:00am and Wednesday 10:00am

THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH

THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU HERE

St. Peter's is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Reconciling in Christ congregation joining with Reconciling Works.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome and invite all of God's people regardless of age, race, ethnicity, physical or mental abilities, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or economic status.

SERVING OUR CHURCH

January 7th, 2024

Preaching & Presiding:

Pr. Molly Haggerty

Musicians:

Spirit & Truth

Reader:

Daniel Kemper

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

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

GREETING AND RESPONSE

The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of life,

you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security.

We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.

Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In ✠ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God. **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN: Angels from the Realms of Glory
ELW 275 v 1, 2 & 4

GREETING

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.
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.

Kyrie: ELW page 184 Setting 8 v 3 & 4

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

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.

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.

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

The Psalm will be read responsively.

PSALM: 72:1-7, 10-14

All kings shall bow down before him. (Ps. 72:11)

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

**that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,

and the hills, in righteousness.

**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

In his time may the righteous flourish;

and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon
shall be no more.

**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.

**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.

**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

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}a 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 page 188 Setting 8

Please stand as you are able.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew the second chapter.

Glory to you O, Lord

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.

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 our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON SERMON

HOD: We Three Kings of Orient Are ELW v 1, 2 & 3

**1. We three kings of orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain
Moor and mountain
Following yonder star**

CHORUS:

**O star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light**

**2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown Him again
King for ever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign**

CHORUS

**3. Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh
Prayer and praising
All men raising
Worship Him, God most high**



CHORUS

Please stand as you are able.

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.

Please be seated for the prayers. We will say the response together.

+PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Merciful God,. Receive our prayer.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you all

C: and also with you

P: share that peace with one another

OFFERING SONG: The First Noel ELW 300 v 1

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you.
In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table,
that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus,
in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

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...

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



SANCTUS: ELW page 190 Setting 8

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We will say the Lord's Prayer together.

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and
see.

*All are invited to share in communion. It is Christ's table and all are welcome. The
Ushers will bring you forward. The Pastor will give you the bread and the communion*

assistant will have a tray of wine. Please take one cup and drink it. An Acolyte will collect the empty cup. You can go to the rail for a silent prayer or return to your seat.

COMMUNION SONGS

Give Me Jesus ELW 770

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light ELW 815

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of glory, ✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Standing is optional.

SENDING: Shine, Jesus, Shine ELW 671 v 1 & 2

DISMISSAL:

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: You're My Best Friend *by Queen*

The bulletins are dedicated in honor of a New Year in love and community by the St. Peter's Congregation.

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St. Peter's News

Our prayers and the comfort the Christian faith are extended to the family and friends of Diana Arnold and of Jeannie Ammon, who have entered the church triumphant in recent days.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

New to our prayer list this month:

Cheryl Schlum, Mae Stum, Josie Brewster, Alex Mabee, Thelma Thomas, Dorthy Murphy, Doris Arnold, Regina Heagy, Lucinda Sheaffer, Ben Chappell, and Richard Brandt.

Those friends and members in need of continued prayers: Karen Ainsley, Ida Kramer, Betty Wise, Stephanie Kastelik, Brenda Stum, Kiersten Kwiatkowski, George Fuoti, Linda Holmes, Jim Hurst, Marjorie Peiffer, and Tina Polito.

****SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES****

Gabriel Goldsborough, Jordane Cleckner, Edgar Lopez, Hunter Magaro, John Pappas, Corbin Stetler, Colton Stone, Aaron Williams

COMMUNITY NEED

A member of our community has reached out in need of furniture. If you have furniture you'd like to donate, please email Jen what you have and whether you are able to bring it to the church. Thank you! JKemper@stpetersmiddletown.org

SIGN UP TO READ

A new sign-up sheet to read in the new year has been posted near the office. Please consider signing up to read! Email Jen at JKemper@StPetersMiddletown.org to request the readings in advance, in large print, or with another accommodation in mind.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Middletown is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.