



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
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Rev. Dr. John Rickert, Pastor

February 2022

Epiphany

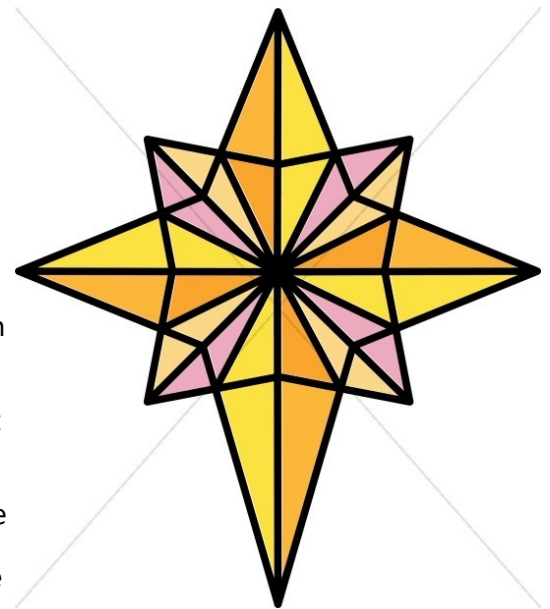
What does Epiphany mean? In everyday speaking, someone might say that they have had an "epiphany." What they mean is that they have had a sudden, intuitive, insight. It is not necessarily from God or about God. "Epiphany" is from the Greek language and means "manifestation." So an insight, that has suddenly manifested itself to the person, is called an epiphany.

In the Church, the word has a more narrow meaning. It is applied to events in the life of Jesus when the apparent human, Jesus, somehow has his divinity manifested. It is the name of both a day and a season. The Epiphany of our Lord is always January 6. For those who mark the day with a worship service, the Gospel lesson is always Matthew 2:1-12, which is the visit of the Wise Men. Their arrival, some two years after the birth of Jesus, as they followed the "Christmas" star, pointed to Jesus as someone much more than just another toddler in Bethlehem.

These Wise Men were not Jewish, so it seems appropriate that they cite a prophecy made by Balaam, who also was not a descendant of Jacob (Israel). This is found in Numbers 24:17, which reads:

I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near:
a star shall come out of Jacob,
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;
it shall crush the forehead of Moab
and break down all the sons of Sheth.

The "star" reference, in this prophecy, is obvious to us. The wise men say that the child shall be a ruler and shepherd of Israel. They pick this up, first from the "scepter" phrase in the Balaam prophecy (as kings carried scepters as a symbol of their office), and then couple it with the many other passages referring to the Messiah in the Old Testament. So the Wise Men and the Star manifest that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God come in human flesh to save humanity. The prophecy cited by Balaam, a non-Jew, and the arrival of the Wise Men (also non-Jews) indicate that Jesus was born for all who believe (not just the descendants of Jacob/Israel).



Manifesting who Jesus is and why he has come deserves more space on the calendar than one day, so the Sunday's following January became the Season of Epiphany. This season continues to what is called today "Shrove Tuesday." This day is also sometimes called "Fat Tuesday" or "Mardi Gras" (which is French for Fat Tuesday). Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The words "fat" and "shrove" are not related.

The season of Lent was a season of fasting. The nickname "Fat Tuesday" was given to the day as people feasted on all the things they needed to clear out of the home (to avoid being tempted) in order to keep the Lenten fast (i.e. no butter or dairy in general, fat, meat (except fish), wine, etc.) What was not eaten was thrown out. However the word "shrove" comes from Latin and means "to write" (*scribo*), in the sense of a prescription. It was a reference to confessing and receiving absolution prior to the beginning of the Lenten Fast. (i.e. what is prescribed for your penance).

The Epiphany season is one of the oldest on the church calendar, second only to the Easter season. In days gone by, it was on Epiphany that Christians exchanged gifts (in remembrance of the Wise Men). Before December 25th became established as Christmas, many celebrated the birth of Jesus on Epiphany.

The Gospel readings between the Epiphany of our Lord and Ash Wednesday tend to focus on various ways Jesus manifested his true identity during his earthly ministry. At least in the LC-MS, the first Sunday after Epiphany is always the Baptism of our Lord and the Last Sunday in Epiphany is Transfiguration Sunday. In-between we have such accounts as the first miracle of Jesus, when he turned water into wine, Jesus curing lepers, gentiles believing in Jesus, Jesus as the Light of the World, and so on (John 2; Matthew 8; John 1, etc.) Since the introduction of the three-year lectionary, the readings for each Sunday from scripture during the Epiphany season vary but the theme remains the same: Who is Jesus. There can be up to nine Sundays in the Epiphany season, with the last Sunday being (as I've said) Transfiguration Sunday.

This year Ash Wednesday falls on March 2 so the Epiphany season will run through February and have eight Sunday (counting the Transfiguration of our Lord). The First Sunday in Lent this year will be March 6.

May the Lord bless you this Epiphany Season,

Pastor



DIGGING IN The Nicene Creed Second Article, Part 34

And [I believe] in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according

to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And **He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.**

Once again, we could go for months on this phrase of the Creed but, for this series, I'll be limiting my discussion to just one article so I can finish the series by August. This phrase deals with "eschatology," (the study of terminal issues; death, judgment, heaven, hell, and such). People have many questions about this that the Nicene Creed does not address. What will heaven be like? What will hell be like? What will be our state after death and before the Second Coming of Jesus? Is there such a thing as Purgatory? What will the Final Judgment be like? The list is longer. There are a lot of people willing to give answers to such questions, and more. We will focus mainly on what we confess in the Creed.

He (Jesus) will come again. This is the Second Coming of Jesus. Some people believe Jesus will return and take believers to be with him, leaving the world to continue spinning after they are gone. This is thought of as a pre-Last Day event. The Bible does not teach this. There are not two or more future comings of Jesus. There is only one Second Coming, which we confess in the Creed. "Again" indicates that he already has come, and that coming is confessed earlier in the creed with the words "who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man".

"With glory" is the glory he received when he ascended back into heaven and "sat" down at the right hand of the Father, as confessed earlier. No one will doubt that Jesus is the eternal God-Man and all who did doubt will know they were mistaken.

Jesus comes "to judge the living and the dead." "Living and the dead" refers to the general resurrection on the Last Day. There is no need to worry about people who have completely decomposed, or people who have been eaten by wild animals, or people buried at sea, or people who have perished in fire, or even someone who might be "buried" in space. God is all powerful. Everyone comes forth. This is a physical event. All will stand before the Son both body and soul.



The fact that Jesus is the judge might trouble some. This is clearly testified to in the Bible (John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; etc.). Matthew 24 & 25 are all about eschatological issues. The final judgment is well covered. Some are disturbed by the reference to our works being reviewed at this time. "We are saved by grace through faith," they say. "Works have no place in the Final Judgment!" They misunder-



stand the role of works in the judgment, and perhaps faith. The old saying is, "Faith alone saves, but faith is never alone." The review of our works (or lack thereof) is as a testimony to the faith the citizens of heaven have. Those who say ugly things about Christ's Church will be proven liars by the witness of the works Christ's Church. Those who say the Church is only interested in money (for example) will be proven false by the works of charity done by Christians. Space does not allow me to go on. Just remember that our works are a witness to our neighbors and remembered in glory.

"Whose kingdom will have no end" indicates that Christ's Kingdom is eternal. The Kingdom of Christ can be thought of in at least three ways, called by our theologians the Kingdom of Power, the Kingdom of Glory, and the Kingdom of Grace. The Kingdom of Power refers to the idea that all things belong to God and he rules them for the benefit of his Church. So, while Caesar Augustus had no idea how he would further the plan of salvation nor was it his intent to do that, nonetheless he order a census to be taken of the Roman world. This census moved the birth of Jesus from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The Kingdom of Grace refers to the hidden (or invisible) Church (which we confess in the third article of this creed). This is everybody who has received faith in Jesus, that is, Christians. The Kingdom of Glory refers to all who have died and gone to be with the Lord, along with all the residents of heaven, like angels. It also refers to the reality that God will establish after the Second Coming, the new heavens and earth (2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17; etc.). While we can think of all three aspects of the Kingdom of God here (and maybe we should for Hell, which is part of the Kingdom of Power, has no end), the primary understand for me is that we will live for eternity, beholding the face of our beautiful Savior.

Clearly, much more could be said but I feel we need to press on. Next month we will turn our attention to the Third Article of the Creed. Until next month, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Amen



THROUGH THE WORSHIP WINDOW



Through The Worship Window

FEBRUARY—EPIPHANY

The focus in February begins with the calling of the Disciples. Jesus then announces four blessings and woes which would come to those who are faithful and the harm to those who are not. He continues with the admonition to love everyone so that God is pleased. Then the Lord sent out the twelve to preach the Gospel and heal the sick. Epiphany ends with the transfiguration of the Lord to launch Lent. The Old Testament begins with Isaiah called to be a prophet and his experience in the Lord's presence. Isaiah was to warn them of the result of their sins. Jeremiah is also called to warn of the results of human sin and rejection of the Lord. .

The Epistle lessons in this period begins with the reminder that the Spirit provides gifts to be used in the furtherance of the Gospel. Paul reminds them of the details of Christ's resurrection; the foundation of the hope we have. He also encourages them to provide orderly and uplifting services to all attendees. Finally Paul details the foundational importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to our faith. If Jesus was not raised we too are doomed to everlasting woe in payment of our sins. In Hebrews we are reminded that Jesus is greater than Moses whom the Jews so much rely on.

Arlen D. Besel– Worship

Call His Name Jesus

Your Strength

Advent Devotions were written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Nehemiah 8:1b, 5a, 8-10 - And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel. ... And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law.



Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Nehemiah and Ezra were the leaders of God's people when they came back to their own land after seventy years of exile. God sent both of them to serve but in very different ways. Ezra was a priest and teacher, and he concentrated on rebuilding

the temple and helping the people get back on track with worship and following God. Nehemiah was the royal governor, and he worked on rebuilding the city and protecting it from their enemies. He also stopped people from breaking the Sabbath as well as stopping people from cheating each other.

But both of them knew where to find the real strength to change and grow. They looked for it in God's Word. And so, Ezra read the first five books of the Bible to the people so they could hear and understand it.

That was sort of hard on them, because they were hearing, maybe for the first time, what God expected from His people. And they could see clearly how far they'd fallen short of God's will. That's why they started crying. But their leaders told them to dry their tears and celebrate instead, for "the joy of the Lord is your strength."

That's true for us too, isn't it? When we come up against our own wrongdoing and disobedience, it makes us sad. We know we are doing wrong, but we can't seem to stop ourselves—we sin, and then we feel guilty, and then we try harder, and we still sin, and the cycle repeats. Who can help us?

Only the Lord. Only Jesus, who came to set us free from the cycle of shame and guilt. He took all of our sin and guilt upon His own shoulders as our Savior, and He carried it all the way to the cross. He took it away from us, nailing it to His cross. And when He rose from the dead, He gave us much better gifts in its place: forgiveness, peace, and everlasting life as God's children. He gave us the Holy Spirit, to dwell in us and to keep us close to God at all times. Who else could do this but the Lord?

That is why He is our joy and our strength. Nobody else could overcome sin and death. But He could, and did. Now, because of Him, we too will live as forgiven, blessed, beloved children of God—forever.

Arlen D. Besel – Ambassador

Coming Soon

Ash Wednesday will be March 2nd this year. While more about the season will be in the March newsletter, it seemed advisable to put something in this newsletter because there will be such a limited time between the publication of our March newsletter and the beginning of Lent.

The tentative general theme for our mid-week worship services will be the Catechism and Easter. In earlier generations, Lent was often used to focus on the Catechism. As there will be six mid-week Lenten services and there are six chief parts of the Catechism, this works well.

The dates for our Wednesday Lenten services are March 2 (Ash Wednesday), 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6. We will have our usual Holy Week services (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday), but those services have not entered the planning stages yet.

So, mark those dates on your calendar and plan to join us, either in person or online.

Reminder—Pastor's Email Has Changed

Please update your files with Pastor's new email address as follows: pastor-orlcde@outlook.com In preparation for retirement, Pastor Rickert will no longer be using personal email. This change will allow the new pastor to have a working email in place from the start.

Offering Envelopes

If you have not yet done so, please pick up your 2022 offering envelopes from the overflow room located off the sanctuary. There are still a few waiting for pickup.

Build –A-Bag— Marybeth Cooley

Build-a-Bag Project will meet on Tuesdays February 1, 8, 15 and 22 at 10 a.m. (weather permitting). Build-a-Bag Project took an extra day off and restarted on Tuesday January 11.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who donated blankets, comforters and materials for the middle warmth layer of the sleeping bags. Lina and I spent two hours January 11 sorting and organizing your donations. Now the shelves are fully stocked with materials and we are ready to start making bags again on the 18th.



We observe the indoor mask mandate and are "social distancing" in our work area. If you would like to join the team, there's room for you - February 1, 8, 15, and 22 at 10 a.m. Marybeth

Thank You—Shared by Arlen

Thank you for bringing Epiphany celebration to our homes! We are sorry we cannot be with you all in church fellowship. We have been in Virginia helping our daughter, Julia, with Emma and Lucy (5 and 3 years old) for the past few months. TaWei has been working virtually since the onset of Covid March 2020 for Chemours and traveling between Delaware and Virginia. Jenna set up a computer monitor so he can set up shop here also. I've been mostly solo the past few months. We are especially cautious of Lucy and Andrew (born November 24th!) unprotected from Covid and every other variant. We have all been vaccinated and boosted, but some people have proven to be carriers of some of the above.

We are so grateful for everything you and Pastor do for Our Redeemer. And we especially appreciate that your service is still provided online. We miss our church family so much but am glad that we can worship with you near and far when away from Delaware. We hope you are well and continue to stay well and safe.

Hope you had a Blessed Christmas and are ready for a Happy Healthy New Year.

Gods Blessing to you all.

Sincerely HuiYing and TaWei and family

Property Board—Bob Cooley

I am updating the church's key control record. If you have any church keys, please drop him a note with your name and let him know what key(s) you have, what door lock(s) they go to and if there is a number stamped, what is the number? Number stamp would be from 1-100.

If you have a key that you no longer need and would like to return it, please provide the same information other than the number stamp so it has a record of being returned.

If you have a church key and have no idea what it goes to, get it to me to figure out. I will return the key if you still have a need for it or file it with the key inventory.

You can text or call me at 443-945-0267, or Email: nco2006163@aol.com, or leave in Property Board mailbox in the church office

Pastoral Call Process—Church Council

The church council would like to thank those who completed the member survey. We are in the process of reviewing the results and updating the Church Profile. We hope to have this completed soon in order to move along the call process. Once completed, a copy will be available in the church office to read.

Evangelism—Mike Cannatelli

I became chairperson of the ORLC Evangelism Committee in November shortly after my wife and I become members in October. The committee's first project was to send out post cards via the US Mail to all 444 homes in Chestnut Hill Estates, where ORLC is located. The cards listed the time and dates of our Wednesday evening Advent services, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve services, plus our Sunday morning worship time.

Next, we set the portable sign up next to our permanent sign on the corner of Johnson Road and Augusta Drive with the time for Christmas Eve worship and Sunday worship services. The wording can be changed as needed. The sign remains there with our Sunday worship time. Our committee will explore the possibility of mounting a permanent sign on the posts below the other sign so we can regularly change what's displayed, and not have it on a temporary sign.

All of us on the Evangelism Committee found out, the post card mailing was more costly than expected and was also labor intensive. We realized that to reach the entire 19713 area would be more costly than our committee's budget would allow and would take a lot of labor to do. I investigated the cost of putting an ad in the Newark Post. That was a very expensive option for only a tiny ad that would run a single time. So we will not pursue that.



I also thought about somehow getting a sign at the intersection of Chestnut Hill Road and Augusta Drive. Unfortunately, the entrance to the development, on Augusta Drive, is concrete so a yard type sign that would easily be stuck in the ground on Sunday morning and removed Sunday afternoon isn't possible due to the concrete.

I contacted Mindy Holland, the leader of the Lutheran Campus Ministry, asking her if she would provide info to any of her LCMS Lutheran students that ORLC is here, on the DART bus line, and welcome any of them to come and worship with us online, in person, or in their cars listening to our FM signal in the parking lot. I got a great reply from her. She was delighted to learn of our existence as she already is involved with Faith and Concordia Lutheran churches, our sister LCMS churches in New Castle County. We'll now have an opportunity to minister to some of the college ages folks at the U of D via LCM.



The Evangelism Committee with Kathy O'Malley, as the lead person on this project, is looking into ways ORLC can advertise our presence to the Brookside, Newark area of 19713 to let them know we're here, to welcome them and bring them the good news of Jesus Christ. That area has probably over 10,000 people living in the immediate two-mile length of Chestnut Hill Road that is our prime target area. Based on what Kathy has found out so far, it looks like the Evangelism Committee's budget could support buying some ads on Facebook to target our core neighborhood of 19713. Kathy and I plan on starting our ad campaign to target the Lent/Easter season.

Lastly, Laurel made a great suggestion that our committee investigate the possibility of getting a table at the Newark Community Days, if they have it this year. COVID caused it to not happen in 2020. ORLC hadn't participated in several years. This venue would let more folks know ORLC is here, in their neighborhood.

Facebook Page—Kathy O'Malley

Kathy has launched a new Business Facebook page for the church. It will run as an additional vehicle to reach out to a wider community via ads and other events. The profile page will continue as before in conjunction with the new page.. She encourages everyone to like the new business page along with the profile page.



God Himself is Love, and His Being is nothing but pure Love. Therefore if anyone wanted to draw and picture God in a telling way, he would have to draw a picture that shoed nothing but Love, as though the divine Nature were nothing but the intense fire and fervor of love that has filled heaven and earth. From *What Luther Says, A practical In-Home Anthology for the Active Christian* (1994) Concordia Publishing House



Very
Grateful
Incredibly
Thankful
Eternally
Blessed

Dear Pastor, Kitty, and Congregation,

Than you for the warm welcome, support and patience as I move forward working with Our Redeemer to help shine light to all we come in contact. Thank you for putting your faith in me. I am blessed.

Sharron Boyle

03 Paul Billy
19 Hannah Marie Kruelle





February 2022

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SERVING: Pastor—Rev. Dr. John Rickert Organists—Julie Hockersmith David Rash Ushers—Arlen Besel Dennis Boon Jim Rose	SERVING: Lectors— 02/06—Bob Cooley 2/13—Arlen Besel 2/20—Ken Gerzvske 2/27—Robin Billy	SERVING: Stream Team 02/06—Laurel Pearson 2/13—Bob Cooley 2/20—Emily DeBenedetto 2/27—	2	3 Winkle	4	5
6 Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am Communion 	7	8 Build-A-Bag 10 am	9	10 Junior Confirmation 5 pm	11	12
13 Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am	14	15 Build-A-Bag 10 am	16	17 Junior Confirmation 5 pm	18	19
20 Worship Service—Divine 10 am Communion Council Meeting, via Zoom, Noon Newsletter Info Due 	21 Presidents Day Office Closed	22 Build-A-Bag 10 am	23	24 Junior Confirmation 5 pm	25	26
27 Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am	March 1	2 Ash Wednesday Worship Service 7 pm	3	4 Junior Confirmation 5 pm	5	6

FEBRUARY BIBLE READINGS

- 1** Luke 2:29-32
Exodus 1-3
- 2** Psalm 59
Exodus 4-6
- 3** Psalm 60
Exodus 7-9
- 4** Psalm 61
Exodus 10-12
- 5** Psalm 62
Exodus 13-15
- 6** Psalm 63
Exodus 16-18
- 7** Psalm 64
Exodus 19-21
- 8** Psalm 65
Exodus 22-24
- 9** Psalm 66
Exodus 25-27
- 10** Psalm 67
Exodus 28-30
- 11** Psalm 68
Exodus 31-33
- 12** Psalm 69
Exodus 34-36
- 13** Psalm 70
Exodus 37-38
- 14** Psalm 71
Exodus 39-40
- 15** Psalm 72
Leviticus 1-3



**Through the Bible
in 1 Year**

- 16** Psalm 73
Leviticus 4-6
- 17** Psalm 74
Leviticus 7-9
- 18** Psalm 75
Leviticus 10-12
- 19** Psalm 76
Leviticus 13-15
- 20** Psalm 77
Leviticus 16-18
- 21** Psalm 78
Leviticus 19-21
- 22** Psalm 79
Leviticus 22-24
- 23** Psalm 80
Leviticus 25-27
- 24** Psalm 81
Numbers 1-3
- 25** Psalm 82
Numbers 4-6
- 26** Psalm 83
Numbers 7-9
- 27** Psalm 84
Numbers 10-12
- 28** Luke 2:29-32
Numbers 13-15

