

As We Gather

We consider the mysteries highlighted by the Readings for the Feast of the Epiphany. The Wise Men, or Magi, mysteriously show up in Jerusalem, and these strangers are looking for the King of the Jews. The King of the Jews is mysteriously an infant, born to a humble family in Bethlehem, not in Jerusalem. And this King of the Jews mysteriously invites all people from all nations into His kingdom. These mysteries, hidden for the ages, is revealed in Jesus, the Light of the world.

PREPARATION

Opening Hymn 397 As with Gladness Men of Old

- 1 As with gladness men of old
 Did the guiding star behold;
 As with joy they hailed its light,
 Leading onward, beaming bright;
 So, most gracious Lord, may we
 Evermore be led by Thee.

- 2 As with joyful steps they sped,
 Savior, to Thy lowly bed,
 There to bend the knee before
 Thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
 So may we with willing feet
 Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

- 3 As they offered gifts most rare
 At Thy cradle, rude and bare,
 So may we with holy joy,
 Pure and free from sin's alloy,
 All our costliest treasures bring,
 Christ, to Thee, our heav'nly King.

- 4 Holy Jesus, ev'ry day
 Keep us in the narrow way;
 And when earthly things are past,
 Bring our ransomed souls at last
 Where they need no star to guide,
 Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

- 5 In the heav'nly country bright
 Need they no created light;
 Thou its light, its joy, its crown,
 Thou its sun which goes not down;
 There forever may we sing
 Alleluias to our King.

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Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

- P** Arise, shine, for your light has come!
C **Jesus Christ is the Light of the world.**
- P** All the nations shall come to the light of Christ.
C **Kings shall bring Him gifts.**
- P** For Christ reveals the mystery hidden through the ages,
C **that all nations are partakers of the promise in Jesus Christ.**

Confession and Absolution

- P** Through the Gospel, all people are fellow heirs of salvation and members of the same Body. Yet there have been times when we have failed to live in unity, when we have failed to treat our brothers and sisters in Christ with respect and honor. Our heavenly Father invites us to return to Him and ask for His forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

- P** Heavenly Father,
C **we confess that we have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have created division and discord. We have hidden the light of Christ from others. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us with the light of Christ, that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways. Amen.**
- P** Almighty God in His mercy sent His Son, Jesus, into our world to shine as a light for all people, including You. Jesus has died for your sins and is risen for your righteousness. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the \dagger Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen. We are partakers of the promise. We are forgiven in Christ.**

WORD

Introit

Psalm 45:6–8a; antiphon: v. 17

- P** I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations;
C **therefore nations will praise you forever and ever.**
- P** Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;
C **you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.**
- P** Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;
C **your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.**
- C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**
- P** I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations;
C **therefore nations will praise you forever and ever.**

Kyrie

LSB 152

- P** In peace let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

- C** Lord, have mercy.
P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C Amen.

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.
O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 60:1–6

¹Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
³And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned 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 bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

- P** This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Ephesians 3:1–12

¹For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

Matthew 2:2b

Alleluia. Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:1–12

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day 400 Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning

- 1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
- 2 Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.
- 3 Shall we not yield Him, in costly devotion,
Fragrance of Edom and off’rings divine,
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
- 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure.
Richer by far is the heart’s adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
 Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
 Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
 Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

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Sermon

Apostles' Creed

P God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the dead.
 He ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy Christian Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

Prayer of the Church

Response from LSB 400:1

P Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, there are many divisions in the church, divisions based on class, race, wealth, and age, divisions that need not exist. Bring unity where there is division, peace where there is discord, and reconciliation where there is conflict. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, comfort all those who are suffering in the darkness of grief. Comfort them with the hope and promise of the resurrection to eternal life. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, strengthen all marriages, encourage those who are single, and help us to recognize the value of each person, for Your redemption stretches to all people. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, bless all pastors, teachers, church planters, missionaries, musicians, and servants in Your Church. Embolden them as they seek to reflect Your light to all the nations. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, look with favor upon all who are sick, injured, and recovering, *especially* Erich and Hedy Beer, Kathleen, Alicia, Sallyann, Sheila, Lou, Jean Staffa, Dana, Kaylee, Leah, Terri, Rory, Jean, Brad Koelper, Ray Wirsing, Rod Isaacson, Sharlene, Fran, Jeanne Zundel, Doug, Paula, Wally Olson, Shar Baumann & Pastor Barber. Have mercy upon them, and heal them according to Your good and gracious will. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, shine Your light of hope upon all those who are caregivers. Send them rest and peace, knowing that in You their labor is not in vain. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

P Lord, we commend all of these things to Your caring hands, trusting in Your mercy to all people. Light of the world,
C **dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid.**

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
C **Amen.**

Closing Hymn 411 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus. Refrain

ref In Him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

2 I want to see the brightness of God.
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path,
And show me the way to the Father. Refrain

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
We shall know the joy of Jesus. Refrain

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