



JANUARY 2021

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Study, Thank You, Ephiphany

From the Pastor...

This Jesus never ceases to amaze. From manger to cross, He goes about His work of salvation. Infant to toddler to child to man, He fulfills all that is placed before Him. The Old Testament is funny in that way. It is full of Christ: Christ present with His people to save. Christ foretold, even through prophecies that don't seem to be prophecies. Christ the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He doesn't change. His ways don't change. ... And so it should come as no surprise that Jesus does what He does with the Magi.

Though one may ask, "What exactly did Jesus do?" He is just a toddler and Matthew doesn't speak of Him doing anything at all. He is but a recipient of the adoration of the Magi. He does nothing active, only passive. ... And yet His star arose and these men from distant lands, with no affinity toward Judaism, with no Israelite blood running through their veins, with no lineage to Abraham or Isaac or Jacob; come to worship Him. He draws them to His Light even though they have no earthly reason to be drawn.

Paul talks about the mystery of Christ. And that mystery is two-fold. The mystery that was not made known to the previous generations of men was that the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the kingdom of God. They are all members of the same body, partakers of the same promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. That is not to say that the ways of God had changed, just that this particular part had been hidden. ... But it wasn't really all that hidden, for speckled throughout the Old Testament are accounts of non-Israelites being brought into the Light. This is so much so the truth that in the line of Jesus there were women who were not Israelites and therefore should have had no business bringing about the future Messiah. But there they were, pointing to the mystery of Jesus for all people. ... And here the Magi are as well, fulfilling what had been promised and showing in real time and space who Jesus is and what He has come to accomplish for all people.

And this speaks to the greatest mystery of Christ: that salvation resides in Him and Him alone. There is nothing in this world that makes one worthy of salvation and eternal life, save Christ Jesus. And that is a mystery that is still hidden amongst the generations of men. It is a mystery that is confusing and downright offensive: that there is nothing worthy in and of ourselves to bring about our salvation. It is the stumbling block to the Jews, and folly to the Gentiles, even still to this day.

For we live in a world of deep darkness that covers all people. It is the darkness of sin and death, it is the darkness that brings no comfort and offers no salvation. It is the darkness so full and complete that those within don't even recognize that there is anything of Light. For how can a blind man know in Himself what light is when he has never seen light before?

So here comes Jesus, the Light of the world, the Light that no darkness can overcome. Here comes Jesus to bring His people, all people, every people and race and nation and color into His Light of salvation. The Light is a mystery, and yet He and His salvation has been and always will be for all people. He comes to bring light into the darkness and send the darkness scattering away. He comes to draw all people to Himself: People like the Magi, like you and me, like your neighbors and friends and co-workers and family, even your enemies. Jesus is for all people. His cross and His

salvation, however foolish and stumbling it may be, is for all people. ... And this is nothing new. It has always been this way. Christ has always been this way; for all people.

This little toddler Jesus in our text for this evening sits before a group of men who should not be there, who should not know who He is, who should not fall down before Him in adoration and worship. And yet there they are and worship Him they do. And this is because He drew them to Himself, to His Light, to show once and for all that He is for them, that He is for you, that He is for this fallen world in order to cast out all the darkness of sin and death and the demons and that He brings us to the everlasting Light of His salvation. ... A blessed Epiphany Season to you!

*In the Name of Jesus,
Rev. Eli Lietzau*

Something Worth Reading

(All books are available in our church's library or may be borrowed from the pastor)

Faith Alone—The Heart of Everything (Sequel to "Hammer of God")

By: Bo Gierts

Translated by Bror Erickson

Martin and Anders both studied to become priests before their paths diverged with the advent of the Reformation. Now, as Sweden emerges from anarchy in a pitched rebellion against tyranny these two brothers navigate fields of battle as they fight to maintain faith through a dark night of the soul. Civil war tears them apart, but the Gospel brings them together when God's word becomes a lamp for their feet and a light to their paths.

(Bo Gierts (1905-1998) A Swedish Lutheran pastor and bishop, is often remembered for his novel, *The Hammer of God*, in his own day. However, he was known for his powerful preaching and teaching. As liberalism swept through the Church of Sweden, Gierts persisted in calling her back to the Word of God while always proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel. For this reason, he is remembered as one of Sweden's most influential modern theologians.)

What We Believe—Augsburg Confession

Article XVII—Christ's Return for Judgment

Note: This article affirms the biblical view of the end times. It pointedly rejects any speculation or opinion about believers ruling the world before the final resurrection of the dead. It also rejects all theories about a "millennial" earthly rule of Christ as contrary to God's Word. (See also Ap XVII)

Our churches teach that at the end of the world Christ will appear for judgment and will raise all the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:13—5:2). He will give the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys, but He will condemn ungodly people and the devils to be tormented without end (Matthew 25:31-46).

Our churches condemn the Anabaptists, who think that there will be an end to the punishments of condemned men and devils.

Our churches also condemn those who are spreading certain Jewish opinions, that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed.



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

"Be Still"

Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10

Mission Statement of LWML

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

**The Next Meeting of LWML will be Saturday, January 9th at 9:00 am.
ALL women of the congregation are invited to join us.**

A Sincere and Heartfelt Thank You from Family Tree

"Thank you so much for your involvement and partnership during what has been a difficult year for many. Despite all the challenges presented, Family Tree has been able to sustain and grow services thanks to organizations like yours.

The presents are so much more than just items. They say, "you are not forgotten" and "you are important." For many of these individuals it may be as simple as a name brand of shampoo or conditioner, a new hat, or hair dryer or an item from their wish list. These gifts, that may seem insignificant or small to others, often help impart a sense of worth and joy as well as thankfulness.

We look forward to a continued partnership with you in 2021, working together to bring these life-changing services to families and individuals throughout the Denver Metro Area."

MISSION GRANT - \$8,000 - Bringing Christ's Light to Those Living in Darkness - Lutheran Braille Workers is prayerfully requesting a grant to offset the costs within the Ministry Production Centers across the United States, primarily within the Rocky Mountain District. These funds would help with the production of over 1,000 volumes of material in Braille and will help thousands of people world-wide know about Jesus in a manner which serves their needs.



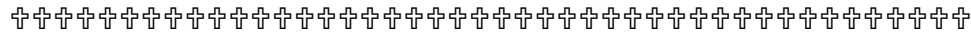
MITE BOX SUNDAY IS JANUARY 17TH

Pray for our LWML mission grants that share Jesus with the world.
Fill your Mite Box!

STEWARDSHIP TODAY:

From the financial stewardship standpoint, it cannot be denied that the Lord has indeed given the steward the injunction to provide for the ministry of the Gospel. Proportional giving that is done freely and willingly, which may or may not be ten percent, is how this provision is carried out. This is done not by compulsion but from faithful response to God's radical generosity in the gift of Jesus Christ. (from: StewardCAST-LCMS)

CONCLUSION: "You are no longer faced with an argument which demands your assent, but with a Person who demands your confidence." (from: C.S. Lewis, "On Obstinacy in Belief")



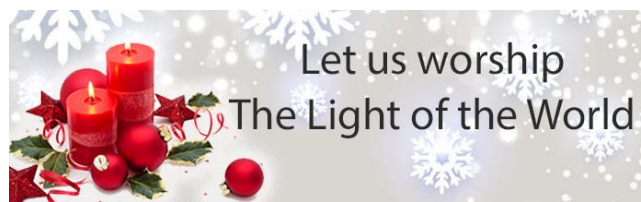
BIBLE STUDY

Join us for Bible Study every Sunday in between Divine Services (10:05am). Beginning January 3, we will be beginning a new study in the book of Revelation. If you have not had the chance to join us for Bible Study, and if you are comfortable with gathering together, please use this opportunity to begin fresh with all the rest of us as we delve into this often misunderstood book.



Thank you to members of Wheat Ridge Lutheran for all your love and support while serving our Lord in the church office. It's been such an honor and privilege to work with you, especially Pastor Eli! And thank you for the cards and prayers.

~Janet Krogh



**Come worship with us on
EPIPHANY
Worship and Holy Communion
Wednesday, January 6, 2020
6:30 pm**

The predominant image of Epiphany is light, with its brightness and its warmth, good news for dark days and long, cold nights. The star over Bethlehem witnesses that Christ the light has come to those in all dark places of earth. They are called to a new life, a life of righteousness, obedience and discipline. Their dedication must be like that of Christ. God will forgive, comfort, and protect them and bless their efforts.