

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Epiphany of Our Lord - Observed - January 10, 2021

"In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem asking, '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.'" - Matthew 2: 1-2

There are times when God shines a light into the murkiness of our lives and we miss it completely. There are times when God shines a light into the darkness of our days and we fail to give it the attention it deserves. This season of Epiphany begins with wise men. Foreigners, unschooled in the faith of Israel. What causes them to embark on their long and arduous journey across the desert?

"We observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

His star ... They look up and a brilliant light transfixes their gaze. Focused and determined, they pursue this light to the point where they recognize its significance more than those who really should know. It's a revelation, a breakthrough. An Epiphany. They arrive in the holy city and what they already know, the religious scholars have to look up in their scrolls! References to a light. A birth. A king. A Savior. Amazing. He looks like the son of common peasants. Still, the wise ones kneel as they offer their finest gifts to the infant Jesus, believing that he is the Promised One who will be light and life for all people.

How little these magi know about Jesus, yet what a monumental effort they make to find Him! How little they know, yet what costly gifts they bring! "We have come to pay him homage." In its purest form, worship is a celebration of Jesus - the Light of Life, who alone dispels the darkness of our world and of our own hearts. When we sing "this is the feast," we're saying that worship is a victory party. But we need to understand that while we share the victory, it's not our party. Too many Christians judge worship by what they get out of it. "It didn't touch me. The hymns were unfamiliar. The sermon was too long. The acolytes were fidgety."

You can't honor God with a consumer mentality. The true measure of worship is not how many people showed up or how much you liked it. The true measure of worship is, "What did you put into it?" and "Was the Lord pleased?" We have come to pay him homage... to seek the light that has first sought us. Amen.

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NEW! Livestreaming Service

Bible Lutheran is now livestreaming the 10am worship service every week.

This allows those who cannot come to the building to participate in the service in "real time" by accessing a video livestream through a link on the website. The service is also recorded and posted on the website (worship page) for viewing at any time.

www.biblelutheranchurch.org

The Sunday bulletin and children's bulletin are posted on the website each week and can be downloaded and printed out.

The "family service" sheet is no longer available.

**If you need help accessing the Livestream Service,
call Pastor Dave: (912) 661-8735.**

Fellow Heirs

Find the 29 bold words from Ephesians 3:1-12 (ESV)

N O I T A L E V E R E S M S O
Y S D D Q P W D E M E R P R O
L T R D A R O S A L E W R E J
O Y U E I E I S I H V W O B E
H Z R T K M R T T Y H G P M S
Y S T E O A N O C L E O H E U
E E P R T E T H V N E V E M S
N C P I G S R R E C R S T B R
W B A S R I Y R A G E J S V F
O O A R S I A M B P N W R U E
N D G T G T T H R O U G H L
K Y E P I Q T H G I S N I S L
O J A O R P E R C E I V E V O
O U N L E P S O G N R Z U E W
L S H E I R S I T B P S D O G

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you,

how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which 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.

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

The Rising Star

Find the 37 bold words from Matthew 2:4-10 (ESV)

D E R A W R M W N H F R D D R
H E X O P C U R I E O I K R E
E C R C H P O L I S L N Z E J
R D R I E B E H E I E E A H O
O O L A U E C A G R F T S P I
D D L U E Q D E R P D T S E C
G N I R B S N I R E S I E H E
A S C E R T A I N E D R M S D
T T N P L C E O R G V W B W L
A A E Y H S M J O Y L O L O O
E R M R T M J U D E A Y I R H
R Y I S U S E B I R C S N S E
G S B S E C R E T L Y Z G H B
T M E H E L H T E B H G N I K
L E A R S I P R O P H E T P K

And assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, [Herod] inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: '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.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And 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." After 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.