

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 7 & MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2018**

**FROM PASTOR HAEUSSLER**

**Christmas and Epiphany.** The Church Year Season of Christmas lasts for twelve days always ending on January 5<sup>th</sup>. (As illustrated quite lavishly in the song, “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” I am writing this on Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, the Eleventh Day of Christmas.) January 6<sup>th</sup> is The Epiphany of our Lord.

Epiphany means “to manifest,” “to make known,” “to reveal,” and at Epiphany and during the following Season of Epiphany our worship features readings from the Bible that reveal the Child born to Mary as the Son of God, the Spirit of God in human flesh born to be our Savior. The Gospel for Epiphany is usually the account of the Magi, the wise men, who come to worship the Toddler Jesus as the Savior promised to the world. (They were most likely from the lands that are presently Iran and Iraq. They knew the prophesy of the special star that would suddenly appear when the Savior was born from Numbers 24 yet they did not know the prophecy that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem from Micah 5 - and archeology has confirmed the presence in these lands of only the first five books of the Old Testament. This explains why they first arrived in Jerusalem looking for the Savior. And this journey would have taken them at least two years so Jesus was no longer a Baby, but a Toddler, when they arrived.) The Old Testament for Epiphany is from Isaiah 60 and focuses upon perhaps the major theme for Epiphany: into the darkness of this sinful and broken world shine the divine light of God through the Savior promised to all the world, Jesus Christ. The First Sunday after the Epiphany usually focuses upon Baptism: the Baptism of Jesus and then our own Baptism. When Jesus was Baptized, the Voice of God the Father said, “You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased!” The Voice of God the Father was pleased that Jesus was still living in the perfection into which He was conceived and born and was on His way to sacrificing that perfect life for the forgiveness of all sins. When we are Baptized in the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit, we received this perfect life along with the forgiveness of sins assuring us that the very Spirit of God now dwells within us that we may live a new life in the power of His Spirit.

When the Christian Church was first organized, Epiphany was one of the four major Festivals of the Church Year (along with Christmas Day, Easter and Pentecost). Sadly, the celebration of Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup> has been lost by most churches and it is a shame to miss these readings along with their emphases. This is why our worship this Sunday/Monday features readings and elements from both Epiphany and The Baptism of our Lord. Special thanks to Pastor Green for working both of these emphases into his message!

**GOD’S LOVE SHINING THROUGH US . . . OPENING DOORS AND CHANGING LIVES!**

**\*\*\* WORSHIP SCHEDULE \*\*\***

Sunday Worship at 8:00 & 10:45 A.M.  
(Communion late on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, early on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays)  
Sunday Adult Education Hour at 9:20 A.M.  
KREW (Kids Receiving Everlasting Wisdom) at 9:30 A.M.  
Monday Worship at 7:00 P.M. (Communion on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekends)

**NEXT SUNDAY & MONDAY** - Second Sunday after the Epiphany. How are things going at the beginning of this new year? “HOPE!” is the big life and long term view from John 1 Sunday at 8:00 A.M. - Traditional Worship with Communion. Sunday at 10:45 A.M. - Contemporary Worship. Monday at 7:00 P.M. - Uplifting Worship.

**WE ARE FRIENDLY!** But do our visitors know this? Let’s go out of our way to greet those we do not recognize. May the love of God SHINE brightly through us to one another!

**CONFIRMATION CLASS ASSIGNMENTS** - Assignments for Thursday, January 11.

**FIRST YEAR CONFIRMATION** - Read Questions 114-121 on pages 120-125 of Luther’s Small Catechism. Read Chapter Thirteen of The Story: The King Who Had It All. Complete a Worship Summary Form. Read Mark chapter 12 from the Bible. Mentor Question: “The First Sunday after the Epiphany focuses upon Baptism. Martin Luther calls us to daily remember our Baptism. Why is this important?”

**SECOND YEAR CONFIRMATION** - Read Questions 114-121 on pages 120-125 of Luther’s Small Catechism. Complete Lesson Sixteen (The Names Jesus and Christ; The Two Natures of Christ - I) from Exploring Luther’s Small Catechism. Complete a Worship Summary Form. Read Matthew chapter 12 from the Bible. Mentor Question: “The First Sunday after the Epiphany focuses upon Baptism. Martin Luther calls us to daily remember our Baptism. Why is this important?”