# January 4, 2025 ☩
# Epiphany

***We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!***
*"God's Work. Our Hands. To serve ALL people."*

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold.**

*P: Indicates the Presider. AM: Indicates the Assisting Minister.*

## *We Gather*

**Prelude** –

**Words of Welcome**

***Gathering Hymn** - no. 665 "Rise, Shine, You People!"

***Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.
**Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God, **we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you. ☩ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
**Amen.**

***Apostolic Greeting** P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**Kyrie** - page 3, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

***Prayer of the Day**

P: O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## *We Listen to God's Word*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 60:1-6

1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 2 For
darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples, but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you. 3 Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness
of your dawn.

4 Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together; they come to you; your sons shall
come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms. 5 Then you shall
see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be
brought to you; the wealth of the nations shall come to you. 6 A 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 proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14** - *The psalm will be sung responsively by whole verse.*

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;
2 **that he may rule your people righteously**
**and the poor with justice;**
3 that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
4 **Let him defend the needy among the people,**
**rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**
5 May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

6 **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,**
**like showers that water the earth.**
7 In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
10 **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,**
**and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**
11 May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.
12 **For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,**
**the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**
13 He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.
14 **From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,**
**and precious is their blood in his sight.**

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 3:1-12

1 This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, 2 for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you 3 and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, 4 a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. 5 In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: 6 that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. 8 Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ 9 and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 10 so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** – page 7, *Now the Feast and Celebration* "Alleluia"

***Gospel:** Matthew 2:1-12

The Gospel of Mathew, the 2nd Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east
came to Jerusalem, 2 asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we
observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." 3 When King Herod heard this,
he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, 4 and calling together all the chief priests and
scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They told him,
"In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:
6 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "
7 Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star
had appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child,
and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him
homage." 9 When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star
that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they
saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 On entering the house, they
saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening
their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And having been
warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** Pastor Chris Culuris

***Hymn** – no. 815 "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

***Nicene Creed** – page 104, *ELW*

***Prayers of Intercession**

AM: Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *After each petition*: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

AM: With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

*__Sign of Peace__ P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.

**Offering** – For electronic giving scan the QR code below and ***Thank you!***

Offering QR Code **Offering music** - "In the Bleak Midwinter" G. Holst, arr. David Bussick

*__Offering Prayer__ AM: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## *We Share God's Holy Meal*

*__Great Thanksgiving and Preface__ - *(sung)* page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise… (*Here the minister continues with the proper preface, concluding):* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*__Holy, Holy, Holy__ – page 10, *Now the Feast and Celebration*

*__Words of Institution__ –

*__The Lord's Prayer__

**Our Father in heaven,**
**hallowed be your name,**
**your kingdom come,**
**your will be done,**
**on earth as in heaven.**
**Give us today our daily bread.**
**Forgive us our sins**
**as we forgive those**
**who sin against us.**
**Save us from the time of trial**
**and deliver us from evil.**
**For the kingdom, the power,**
**and the glory are yours,**
**now and forever. Amen**

*__Invitation to the Table__ – P: God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

**Distribution of Communion** - *we will be serving communion continuously.*
**Lamb of God** – page 13, *Now the Feast and Celebration*
Hymn – no. 294 "In the Bleak Midwinter"
Hymn – no. 300 "The First Noel"

**Prayer After Communion**
P: Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **Amen.**

## *We Go in Peace*

**Announcements**

*__Sending Hymn__ – no. 291 "Let Our Gladness Have No End"

*__Blessing & Dismissal__

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ☩ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

AM: Glory to God in the highest!
**And peace to God's people on earth!**
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.
**Thanks be to God.**

*__Postlude__ - Jingle Bells, James Pierpont and arr. David Bussick/Whichpond Music

In Worship Today
Pastor: Chris Culuris
Organist: Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson
Assisting Minister: Aileen Bipes

Director of Choirs: Sarah Chambers
Ushers: Pat Pehrson
Bread Baker: Diane Stewart

Communion Preparer: Keith & Carrie Stelter
Communion Server: Shirb Sylvester
Audio/Video – Brett Petersen

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Gretchen Bray, Byron Larson, Lenore Schnobrich, Gloria Kane, Harvey Kane, Lisa Handel-Dalvand, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Laurie Dietrich, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Chaplain Ben Hilding, Mary Ann Scharf, David Ribar, Nate Tuener (family friend of Bob and Rhoda Stenson) and Sandy Grochow.

Acknowledgments

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## FLC Refrigerator Page

### Worship, Education and Service:

- Betty Thompson and Carol Solberg will be serving **fellowship** after worship today.
- **Wednesday Meal Sign Up:** We are looking for cooks, servers, and clean-up crew for our upcoming meals in January and February. Ready to pitch in? Sign up in the narthex bit.ly/flcmeals12
- **Wednesday Night activities resume this week.**
- **Our next First Forum** will be held following worship on January 11. Please come and hear about the good work being done at the St. Peter Food Shelf.

### Events at FLC and around the area:

- **Thank you for your generous donations!** If you have yet to make your payment to the Mortgage Retirement Fund, please do so by January 15. Questions: please call Karen in the office.

**Bible Study:** Will resume on January 12.

**JEREMIAH IN JANUARY**–This month, Pastor Ted Kunze will lead our Adult Study Wednesdays at 6:45 PM in the Pioneer Parlor. He will introduce the prophet Jeremiah–one of the most "creative" of the Old Testament prophets. We'll start this week with "What is a prophet?" And "Why was Jeremiah called?" All are welcome! Bring your Bible, or use one of ours.