

**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church
13564 St. Andrews Drive
Seal Beach, CA 90740
(562) 598-8697**

**e-mail: redeemer_lutheran@verizon.net
website: www.redeemerlutheransealbeach.com**



*Celebration, Worship, and Communion Service
Epiphany Celebration
January 7, 2024*

PRELUDE

Piano Duets

Cedric Elmer and Sharon Heck

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN

LBW [Green Book] # 50

“Angels from the Realms of Glory”

GREETING

P Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

C **Amen.**

P Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

C **God of life, you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We have nurtured conflict and built barriers. We have neglected the needs of our neighbors and ignored the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we have been self-centered, forgive us and open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

P Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God’s promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In + Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

C **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C Everlasting God, the radiance of all faithful people, you brought the nations to the brightness of your rising. Fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all the world through him who is the true light and the bright morning star, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

INTRODUCTION

The feast of Epiphany (a word meaning "manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.

The First Lesson is from Isaiah chapter 60 verses 1-6

Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

²For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

³Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴Lift 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 on their nurses' arms.

⁵Then 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.

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 proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

All kings shall bow down before him. (Ps. 72:11)

- ¹Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;
²that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;
³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
⁴Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.
⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.
⁶Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.
⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace
till the moon shall be no more.
¹⁰May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
¹¹May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.
¹²For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.
¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.
¹⁴From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.

The Second Lesson is from Ephesians chapter 3 verses 1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.

⁵In 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: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of 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. ⁸Although 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, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so 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. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

1 Time Before the Gospel
1 Time after the Gospel

Congregation:

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia!

Optional Repeat

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

Holy Gospel – Epiphany of Our Lord for Sunday, January 7, 2024

God's promises shine bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. These strangers from a faraway land travel great distances to worship and bring gifts to the long-awaited Messiah of Israel. The early childhood narrative of Jesus takes a tragic turn as a despot king, filled with jealousy, rage, and horribly destructive power, orders the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem, wanting to rid his kingdom of one he thought would threaten his throne. Joseph continues to listen and obey to the voice of Lord, who comes to him in his dreams, and this faithful man protects his wife and baby as they become refugees in a foreign land. Matthew's childhood story of Jesus ends with the return of the holy family to their home in Nazareth.

Matthew 2: ¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "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." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They 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."

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. ¹³Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead. ²¹Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

L The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON

"A Refugee King"

Bishop Murray Finck

CHOIR ANTHEM

"Shine, Jesus Shine"

APOSTLES' CREED

L I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L ... Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

OFFERTORY

“We Three Kings”

OFFERING PRAYER

P God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, revealed and poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LBW [Green Book] Page 71

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

Communion Distribution (The Congregation is invited to come forward by the ushers to receive Communion. If you are unable to come to the altar, Communion will be brought to you in the pew. All baptized and believing Christians are invited to the table. Anyone with any questions can speak to the Pastor. The inside circle of glasses contains grape juice.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

C God our Redeemer, **you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

P God bless us and keep us, + Jesus grant us grace and truth, and the Holy Spirit send peace upon our hearts, now and forever.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine, I’m goin’a let it shine,
This little light of mine, I’m goin’a let it shine
This little light of mine, I’m goin’a let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Everywhere I go, I’m goin’a let it shine
Everywhere I go, I’m goin’a let it shine
Everywhere I go, I’m goin’a let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Jesus gave it to me, I’m goin’a let it shine,
Jesus gave it to me, I’m goin’a let it shine,
Jesus gave it to me, I’m goin’a let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

DISMISSAL

P Christ the Savior is born! Let us go in peace and proclaim this Good News.

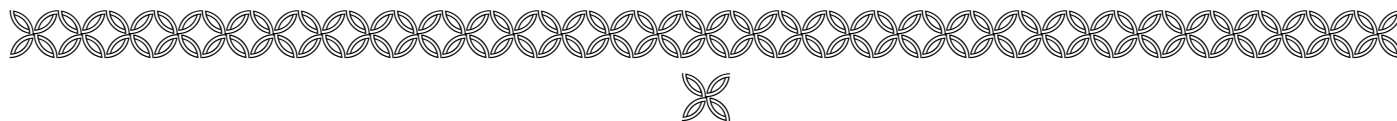
C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

played by organist

Music reprinted with Permission under One License #A-709179

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. Scripture quotations (except psalms) from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Worship Coordinator: Jerry Brady (714) 534-2673

Organist: Sharon Heck

Flowers are given by: *Poinsettias.*

THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY

Presider: Bishop Murray Finck

Communion Assistant Carmen Leslie

Reader / Prayer Leader: Carol Costello

Financial Team: Wendy Alfageme and Sylvia Makus

THIS WEEK

Sunday: 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service

CHURCH COUNCIL

Officers to be elected at January meeting: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer

Members: Wendy Alfageme, Nancy Anderson, Sandy Langdale, Betty Lucero, Phyllis Mackey, Sylvia Makus, Kay Pushman, Michael Vanvales, and Doris Weinert

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Jean, Kathy, Wendy, Beverly, Dena, Nancy, Evelyn, Shirlene, Jerry, Dondi, Carol, Mickey, Evelyn, Gloria, Christa, Alice, Barbara, Cedric, Lucy, Karen, Kelly, Raymond, Dick, Marilyn, Brian, Carl, Jessica, Carol, Rose, Ken, Sandra, Elaine, Carmen, Barbara, Betty, Nancy, Phyllis, Sylvia, Gil, Flo, Eileen, Erich, Leslie, Linda, Ronnie, Kay, Violet, Linda, Ron, Collette, Lisa, Patty, Barbara, Joan, Dee, Susan, Anita, Norma, Lathy, Juanita, Clarence, Debbie, Joan, Anne, Doris, Linda, Bruce, Alma, Martha, Marianne, Robert, Laura, Jim, Loretta, Ray, Patty, Delrie, Bill, Betty, Lorna, M. Teresa, Joan, Mike, Frankie, Donna, Ernie, Eileen, Darlene, Sharon, Danota, Lynne, Ethan, Kurt, Brinly, McCall, Kathy, Nayleen, Nicole, Donald, Maria, Andy, Owen, Tom, Anastasia, Claire, Fran, Chris, Kyle, Michele, Bill, Wes, Sam, Kolt, Maeve, Brigid, Joanna, Dale, Karla, Sands, Gloria, Tom, Rosalia, Wendy, and Rhoda.

Please contact the church to add people to the prayer list.

Please pray for our Bishop David Nagler, (ELCA) and Bishop John Taylor (ECUSA), the victims of the Ukrainian/Russian and Israel/Hamas conflicts, and victims and families of all violence and natural disasters.

Gracious God, none who trust in your Son can be separated from your love. Give to those who live alone peace and contentment in their solitude, hope and fulfillment in their love of you, and joy and companionship in their relations with others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Announcements

- ✝ Welcome everyone this morning, and especially to our guests and visitors.
- ✝ Thank you to Bishop Murray Finck for Presiding for today's Service. He continues exploring with the congregation an in-depth understanding of the nativity, infancy, and childhood of Jesus. Today is Part Six of a Six-Part series. We are honored that Bishop Finck is with us to celebrate.
- ✝ Those who donated for the poinsettias may pick them up today after our Service.
- ✝ Thank you to Barbara Long for providing the delicious baked goodies for the bake sale fundraiser which initially raised about \$83.00. Thank you to all who bought and donated to this bake sale.
- ✝ We are again trying to plan an acceptance of new members! Bishop Finck has agreed to accept new members for us so please speak to him. We need to plan a date so please pick up a member's form from the entryway and return it as soon as possible.
- ✝ At this time, we are encouraging people to consider wearing a mask again, especially in Church, due to the spike in Covid-19 cases. Initial symptoms are headache and fever. Please consult with your doctor if you are experiencing these or other symptoms. We continue to have masks available in the entryway for your use. We need to join together to keep everyone safe and healthy.
- ✝ Please take a moment and fill out the attendance slip found in the rack in the pews. Please place it in the offertory plate. Thank you!
- ✝ The NEW Flower Chart is available for sign-ups in the entryway. One bouquet is \$15.00. Both are \$30.00. Please include any dedication for your flower request when signing up or include a note beforehand if there is a dedication.
- ✝ Printed copies of our current newsletter are available in the entryway. It is online on our website at: www.redeemerasealbeach.com. It is sent out via email, if we have your email address. If you are not receiving it, please let us know so we can confirm your address.