

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Epiphany of Our Lord

January 7, 2024

The feast of Epiphany ("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.

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof

†

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

C: **Amen**

P: Trusting the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin. God of life,

C: **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 nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, 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 name we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

C: **Amen**

Gathering Hymn

"Angels, from the realms of glory"

ELW #275

Kyrie

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Gloria in Excelsis

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

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.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Katherine Kelly

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

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.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Tone 9

¹Give the king your jus-¹ tice, O God,
 and your righteousness to¹ the king's son;
²**that he may rule your¹ people righteously
 and the¹ poor with justice;**
³that the mountains may bring prosperity¹ to the people,
 and the¹ hills, in righteousness.
⁴**Let him defend the needy a-¹ mong the people,
 rescue the poor, and crush¹ the oppressor.**
⁵May he live as long as the sun and¹ moon endure,
 from one generation¹ to another.
⁶**Let him come down like rain upon¹ the mown field,
 like showers that wa-¹ ter the earth.**
⁷In his time may the¹ righteous flourish;
 and let there be an abundance of peace
 till the moon shall¹ be no more.
¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the¹ isles pay tribute,
 and the kings of Sheba and Seba¹ offer gifts.**
¹¹May all kings bow¹ down before him,
 and all the nations¹ do him service.
¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out¹ in distress,
 the oppressed, and those who¹ have no helper.**
¹³He has compassion on the low-¹ ly and poor,
 and preserves the lives¹ of the needy.
¹⁴**From oppression and violence he re-¹ deems their lives,
 and precious is their blood¹ in his sight.**

Second Reading

Ephesians 3:1-12

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.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

† Gospel Acclamation

“ Alleluia ”

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Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2nd Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

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:

⁶And 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.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Manifestation

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

†Hymn of the Day

"Brightest and best of the stars"

ELW #303

Affirmation of Baptism

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Choose to stand, kneel, or sit for prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

A: Humble the hearts of your faithful people, that we seek to be servants of your gospel and witnesses to your mysteries. Give us boldness in faith, that we make the good news of Christ's birth known to all people.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Establish justice on earth for all its inhabitants. Lead us to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Empower the work of all who research, engineer, and make accessible alternative and renewable sources of energy. Make us careful stewards of your creation.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Nations shall come to your light and kings to your dawning. Remove corruption and fear from the hearts of leaders and authorities. Lead governments to expand policies and resources that care for refugees and all migrants. Strengthen the work of resettlement agencies.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Defend the cause of all who are in need, all facing poverty, and all who are oppressed. Come quickly to those who feel that their lives and livelihoods are fragile. Give them strength and lead them forth with hope.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: As the magi offered gifts to the Christ child, empower us to give generously. Prosper the work of ministry partnerships in our community. Together, help us share what we have to ensure that our neighbors have enough food, resources, and opportunities. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: For all those who have asked us to pray for them...

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You have redeemed the lives of your faithful departed, especially WJ Barrs. Through the love of Christ, gather us into one body with them, and reveal to us the mystery hidden for ages in the One who created all things. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C: Amen

MEAL

Congregational Hymn

"The first Noel"

ELW#300

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: 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, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen

† Great Thanksgiving

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Holy, Holy, Holy

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Acclamation

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Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..."

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Lamb of God

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Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond Amen

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen**

† Prayer after Communion

A: 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.

C: **Amen**

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

“Shine, Jesus, shine”

ELW #671

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

The Memorial Book Is Open Today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Gary Poe, 2004

READINGS AND PSALM
SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 2024

1 Samuel 3:1-10
 Psalm 139:1-6
 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
 John 1:43-51



“The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me.” —Martin Luther

December 31, 2023
First Sunday of Christmas

ATTENDANCE — 52
 (IN-PERSON— 52 , ZOOM - 0)

Thankfully offered

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$ 2,711.50
Building	\$ 117.50
Memorial	\$ 0.00
Other	\$ 120.00
Total	\$ 2,829.00

Serving January 7, 2024

Opener/Closer	Rose Johnson
Worship Assistant	Lisa Pettit
Communion Assistant	Donna Doughty
Lector	Joyce Moore
Ushers	Sandy & Randy Craven
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson Catherine Sayers

Serving January 14, 2024

Opener/Closer	Allena Sperry
Worship Assistant	Donna Doughty
Communion Assistant	Katherine Kelly
Lector	Sean Jeffrey
Ushers	Amanda & Sean Jeffery
Altar Guild	Geri Regnier Lisa Pettit

Pray Without Ceasing



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The Armed Forces,
their families,
and victims of war
Persecuted Christians
The ministries of
St. Matthew
Presiding Bishop
Elizabeth Eaton
Bishop Kevin
Strickland
Southeastern Synod
Staff
Pastor Taylor Burton
Edwards
Laura Alexander
Zocia Barr family
Keandra Bashful
Carol Bingemann
Dave Bonaker
Pat Bonaker
Eva Brown
Betty Davidson
Ken Hoag
Myrna Hoag
Bennie Jackson
Mairetha Jackson
Marga Miller
Traudel Mosely

Debby Owen
Dorothy Redden
Connie Sieg
Joan Smith
Jim Sperry
Carla Stickles
Albert VanHousen II
Margarete Walsh
Monika Wright
Gary Anderson
Judy Bultman
Kyle Carter
Jim Chappel
Jean Clemmons
Xavier Danguilan
Brandy Garnett
Becky Goldsmith
Estrella Gonzales
Doris Grier
Petra Henderson
Beverly Huckaby
Norma Kilby
Ken Korn
Boyd Lester
Laura Lester
Robert Lowe
Michelle Matthias
Tim Moore

Gary Nearhoof
Kimberly O'Malley
Michael Owen
Angela Paul
Vincent Pawlowski
Dwight Redmond
Tiffany Richardson
Dayna Ryan
Yuliia Savitska
Shirley Scott
Ricky Skinner
Betty Townsend
Charlie VanHousen
Dawn VanHousen
Martha Zimmerman

Libya
Maui
Morocco
Israel
Ukraine
Gaza

Mr. Pizza
Gold Teeth World
Quality Inn
Apparel King & More
Smoke Buddy's

Deadline for bulletins is **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Sunday.
Deadline for February newsletter is January 20.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to St. Matthew: Jesus Christ offers himself to all. May you be blessed as we celebrate God's love for us. All the baptized are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table. The wearing of a mask is optional during worship and social distancing is recommended. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday.

We invite you to join our congregation if you have not yet found a church home. We are people of God that share a living, daring, confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person, questions, complexities and all. Join us, as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Nursery: St. Matthew provides nursery service for children ages 4 and younger. All children are welcome to attend worship with their families. If a child needs a break during the service, they may sit with a parent/guardian in the Narthex.

Mission Outreach Opportunities:

- **Mission Focus:** Tackle Hunger - collecting canned goods for Brown Bag of Columbus which provides supplemental groceries to low income elderly age 62 or over.
- Lion's Club: Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones
- Ronald McDonald house: Pop tabs
- Flags to Retire: Bring used American flags that you no longer want or need.
- St. Anne's: Personal hygiene products (travel size), toilet paper, and non-perishable food items

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex between bathrooms.

Remembrance Gathering: Please come to the Remembrance Gathering Tuesday, January 9th at 3:00 PM in the Church House. The gathering is an open invitation to members of our congregation to come together and share personal stories or recollections of someone else's life. We began with stories of World War II and our goal for 2024 is to expand our sharing to include all wars and conflicts.

Spending Plan: Our Spending Plan for 2024 isn't fully funded yet. If you haven't made a commitment yet, please pick up a green pledge card in the Narthex and return to the basket. Your generous commitment to support the ministries of St. Matthew in 2024, is appreciated no matter how large or small.

Time and Talent Sheet: It's a New Year and you may be wondering how you can be involved in church activities? Pick up a Time and Talent sheet in the Narthex, fill it out, and return it to the church in the offering plate. There is no age requirement or limit for being involved!

Save the Date

- January 9th 3:00 PM -Remembrance Gathering Church House
- January 18th 5:00 PM - Council Meeting - Church House
- January 19th 9:00 AM - Growing in Grace
- January 26th 9:00 AM - Growing in Grace

MISSION FOCUS JANUARY 7, 2024 THRU FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Brown Bag of Columbus

Groceries For The Elderly

STARTED IN JULY 1987, THE BROWN BAG OF COLUMBUS IS A NONPROFIT AGENCY, WHICH PROVIDES GROCERIES TO LOW-INCOME ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS IN COLUMBUS, GA. IT WAS BEGUN AFTER A SURVEY DONE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING, SHOWED MANY INDIVIDUALS WERE FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS AND UNABLE TO GET NEEDED ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL OR LOCAL PROGRAMS.

DUE TO THE VARIOUS COMMUNITY GROUPS THAT HELP THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND WOMEN WITH CHILDREN, WE DECIDED TO TARGET THE GROUP THAT CAN LEAST HELP THEIR SITUATION DUE TO THEIR AGE AND CIRCUMSTANCES – THE ELDERLY.

WE DESPERATELY NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE! SINCE NOVEMBER OF 2021, FOOD PRICES HAVE INCREASE ALMOST 14%, FORCING MANY SENIOR CITIZENS TO MAKE CHOICES ABOUT WHERE TO REDUCE THEIR BUDGETS. THE NORMAL CHOICES ARE THAT SENIORS WILL CUT THEIR FOOD BUDGETS BEFORE THEY WILL CUT MEDICATION, AND THAT MEANS THAT THEY WILL REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF FOOD THAT THEY EAT EACH DAY.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THEM!!

Dear Heavenly Father, you will not leave us without a blessing. Wrestle with your church and renew it for the sake of the world. Preserve our life in you, so that we faithfully name you before the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement



Reach in to grow in Christ
Reach up to worship God
Reach out to welcome and witness

ST. MATTHEW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4026 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31907

(706) 561-3406 - Office Hours - Tues & Thurs 2:00-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: twbe@liturgyfolks.com

Office email: office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor
Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator
Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music
Penny Davis, Nursery Director