



**Midweek Service  
Grace Lutheran Church  
Lincoln, Nebraska**

## **Opening Dialog**

The light shines in the darkness,

**and the darkness has not overcome it.**

The Word became flesh and lived among us,

**and we have beheld Christ's glory.**

To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

## **Introduction to Sunday**

This Sunday celebrates Epiphany. The word Epiphany means "showing forth," or "manifestation," and it names the day that the church tells Matthew's story of the magi from foreign lands who follow the light of the star and thus "see" Jesus as Christ. Their gifts are symbols: gold, because they honor Jesus as the king; frankincense, because they worship Jesus as divine; and myrrh, because they are already preparing for his death.

## **Prayer of the Day**

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.**

## **Readings**

Isaiah 60

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

What "light" is God giving you today?

Ephesians 3

<sup>10</sup>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.

Why is it important for God's wisdom to be rich in variety?

Matthew 2

9 When the magi 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. 10 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

How would you describe the "joy" known by the magi?

## **Reflection**

### **This Radiance Marks Our True Home**

Humans have an almost universal longing for home. We long for what was, knowing we can never return once life has changed us. For some this means we live forever as wanderers and refugees. In the gospel text, Jesus and his family are refugees far from their home in Galilee. Shortly after the events in this text they will leave for Egypt, fleeing from Herod's persecutions and becoming political refugees.

Still, no matter where we are or how far we travel, as Christians we are always home. For the children of God, home is less place than it is *experience* of the presence of God. Home is that holy place in the presence of God where everyone has a place at the table and all are treated equally.

So, Jesus offers a home everyone can recognize and everyone can experience. This is a home for those whose families are broken, a home for those who are homeless, a home for all people. This is the place Jesus creates for us. So, what else can we do but offer Jesus the best we have: our very lives!

### **Lord's Prayer (together)**

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.

### **Apostle's Creed (together)**

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

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

### **Responsive Prayer**

Show us your mercy, O God,  
**and grant us your salvation.**  
Give us the joy of your saving help again,

**and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.**

Give peace in all the world;

**for only in you can we live in safety.**

Keep the nations under your care,

**and guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Let your way be known upon earth;

**your saving health among all nations.**

Let not the needy be forgotten,

**nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Create in us a clean heart, O God,

**and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

Lord, hear my prayer,

**and let my cry come before you.**

### **Closing Prayer**

O God, in you we live and move and have our being. Guide and govern us every day by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but remember that always we are walking in your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Blessing**

Almighty God (+) bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

**Amen.**