

the STAR



“We have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship Him.”
Matthew 2:2

FEBRUARY — MARCH 2020

VISION

Be a community that puts Jesus first, our neighbors second, and ourselves third, by gathering to be served by Him so we can grow to love as He loves.

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Epiphany Lutheran Church

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Sunday Worship: 9:30 am
Fellowship: 10:30 am
Growth in the Word: 11:00 am
Sunday School: 11:00 am



WINTER WAITING

The season of Epiphany is all around us. These are to be days filled with celebrating the continuing reality of Christmas as the light of Christ spreads out into the world around us and Jesus is made known as the Lord and Savior. But, regardless the season of the church and the bright green color of the paraments, the season of nature and the date on the calendar impose a different reality. The reality is January.

It's the dead of winter, trees are bare, lawns are brown and brittle, dismal days seem to far outnumber bright days, and spring is still two full months away. This year we don't even have the diversion of Lent to add a bit of interest to the emptiness of winter—Ash Wednesday does not make its arrival until the final week of February. December, of course, is the official season of waiting; which is for most of us, I suspect, not entirely accurate. For most of us the busy-ness and anticipation of the Christmas season make it a pleasant sort of waiting. But that's not the case in January. The season of real waiting is now. In January, the things that bring joy lie still ahead, off in the distance. In January, we can only wait for warm breezes, flowering trees, lush grass, spring training, and bright days.

All of those things will come, though. Methodically and purposefully, each day runs its course, and each day comes with a bit more daylight than the one before and the things we anticipate move a little closer. It may seem like it, but winter is not forever. The unofficial, but altogether real, season of waiting that is January affords a palpable, and so potent opportunity for each of us to practice and improve our skills of waiting. The place to begin that training is with the certain knowledge that what we anticipate will come. That's how hope works. And hope is the vital key to handling waiting the right way. Hope is not an idle wish or wistful fantasy. Hope is dead certain and guaranteed. It will happen. Spring training will come, so will flowers and green grass. Lent will arrive and so will Easter after it. It will happen. The passing of each day makes it certain. All that we long for and wish for will at last greet us. All of it...it's just a matter of time. Hope, and God's promise, make it certain. Just as surely as opening day at Busch Stadium will come, so the Last Day, the day of resurrection and renewal will come. On that day, every longing will be satisfied, every empty space will be filled, and all waiting will be swallowed up forever in perfect fulfillment. We live today, then, with that certainty and with that hope; and with those realities guaranteed, we can learn to celebrate the joy of today, every day—even if “today” is still January.

Pastor Joel Biermann

REDEEMING VALENTINE'S DAY

Holidays are called holidays for a good reason: most of them have roots in holy days celebrated by the church. For some holidays, like Christmas and Easter, the roots are obvious. For others, like Halloween or Groundhog Day, the connections may be less apparent but are still certainly there if one does a bit of digging into the history. And then there's St. Valentine's Day. Any holiday starting with "saint" seems destined for a solid grounding in some ancient church celebration. But the official holiday that dominates the month of February is surprisingly lacking in any sort of ecclesiastical foundation. Searching for the roots of Valentine's Day doesn't yield much. The best that can be conjectured is that sometime in the third century after Christ's resurrection, it seems that two different men both named Valentinus died as martyrs and were buried just north of Rome along the same road. And that's just about everything that we know about Saint (or is it Saints?) Valentine. The origins of the saint are so obscure and the stories so sketchy that the Roman Catholic church now leaves the observance of this feast day only to local custom, with no official endorsement. But, with or without any foundation in fact, the date has managed to grow into its present stature as the great annual festival of love and romance all around the globe.



While the more cynical among us might attribute the continued "success" of Valentine's Day to great marketing by confectioners, florists, and greeting card manufacturers; perhaps the more likely reality is that people actually enjoy expressing their love to those they love, and it's nice (or for most men, pragmatically helpful!) to have a scheduled date to prompt such expressions of love and affection. I'm on board with this view. With or without any solid liturgical, historical, or ecclesiastical reasons, Valentine's Day is a good idea. I can even offer a theological rationale to bolster the obvious pragmatic benefits. Christ commanded us to love one another, and to show that love in concrete expressions. And in Ephesians 5, Paul offers a remarkable vision of that love when it is in action between husband and wife. There is plenty of good reason, then, for you to express the love you have for those who are bound to you in special relationships within God's plan. In other words, yes, do put forth the effort: send the card, give the gift, write a poem, speak your love, do something special for those that you love. When you show your love in concrete ways to your spouse, children, parents, and others bound to you in this life, you are honoring God who has given those special people to you. So, happy Valentine's Day... whoever he was!

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Pastor Joel Biermann

REST

Rest. In recent years, our culture has almost completely forgotten the value of this underrated word. God has designed us as creatures who need rest. Yet, high levels of productivity are required from us, and the American all-go mentality has shaped the value we place on rest. We even have a hard time admitting in public whenever we actually have had a chance to rest.

We know that rest is a good thing for us as humans. Still, we seem to pass it by for the sake of the next errand to be done, task to accomplish, or commodity to purchase. Why is this? Maybe it's because the value that comes from resting properly is far more difficult to identify, measure, or even remember. It's easier to wonder, "If I'm just resting, what value am I providing to anyone?"



Whether it be an hour, a full day, or even a vacation, taking adequate time to rest helps us experience its value. And although it may not be measurable or quantifiable, it does many things for us. It can restore us and give us energy. It can provide a refreshed perspective. It can strengthen the God-given relationships that are important to us. It can give us a renewed appreciation for life. It can give us opportunities for the strengthening of our faith. God knows that it's easy for us to forget about our need for rest, and perhaps that's why He made room for it in the ten commandments, when He said "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy."

When we affirm it's value in our lives, we might begin to view rest almost as a commodity, and a very precious and unique kind of commodity. Perhaps there are some commodities in our lives worth abandoning for the blessings that come from this one.

The Bible has plenty to say about true and lasting rest, which cannot be found outside of Christ. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30); "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1); "...Ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls." (Jeremiah 6:16); "Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken." (Psalm 62:5-6)

"Lord, we thank you for the work that You have given us to do. Thank You for the opportunities for rest that You have provided for us. Help us to see them, partake in them, and appreciate them as You have designed us. Help us also to remember that true and lasting rest is found only in Your Son, Jesus. Amen"

Rev. Alex Schrader

LOOKING FORWARD INTO THE “2020’S”

As we are now in the mist of 2020, we are not just in a new year, but a new decade (although some might say the new decade does not start until 2021). Regardless, there are many conversations about the election cycle, the upcoming census, and just an overall conversation on what the future holds.

It is important to think about how Epiphany fits into the future as both a singular, independent entity and also how we fit in to the larger church body of the future. I typically enjoy reading and listening to people’s predictions for what is to come. I have heard some people talk about the future of what the church will look like, so I thought I could come up with five things that I think will be important when thinking about the future of Epiphany.

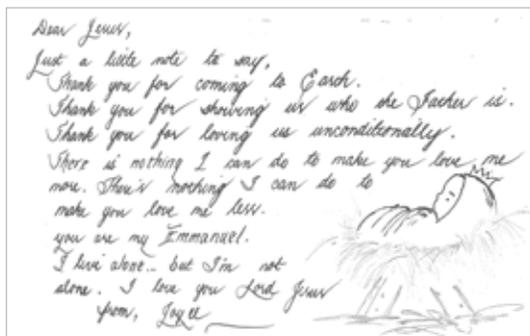


- 1) Children will become a focal point for vibrancy in the congregation, but family ministry will be very different going forward.
- 2) Digital media (websites, social media, podcasts) will have less of an importance in the life of the church than some people think.
- 3) Local churches like Epiphany will act as a significant liaison between the local government and the people in the community.
- 4) Various forms of art will act as a primary tool for evangelism and meaningful spiritual conversations.
- 5) Inter-church collaboration will become the norm for many churches.

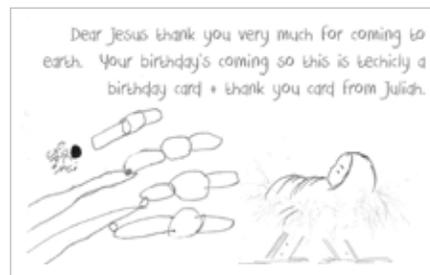
When we make something like our “March Madness Bracket” predictions, we usually do not have much influence in the actual outcome. We are not the coaches or the players, and we simply must act as spectators with victory or having our “brackets busted”. However, we do not need to have the same approach with our church life. We are the players on the court, representing Christ to the world! We can look to the future with anticipation and eagerness and not fear what is to come.

Jarred Irby

FOUND IN THE MANGER SCENE ON THE FRONT LAWN



On Sunday, January 5, 2020, a few members were taking down the outdoor manger scene on the front lawn to store away until next December. In doing so, they noticed that not only was a baby bunny sleeping under the baby Jesus, but the baby Jesus had been wrapped in a flannel swaddling blanket and three notes wrapped in two Ziploc baggies (we are guessing for protection from the weather) were tucked inside the blanket. The three notes (pictured here) were written by two children and possibly their mother. These precious letters were written to Jesus. Epiphany plans to keep the notes and the blanket and put them out again next year with the baby Jesus.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
February						1
2 Choir 8:45 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. EpiphanyKids 10:45 a.m. SuperBowl Party 5:00 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	3	4 Elders Meeting 6:30 p.m.	5 ESL Class 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m.	6 Woerner Ballet Class 12:30-3:15 p.m.	7 Epiphany Stars 9:30 a.m. AI-Anon 10:00 a.m. Church Office Closed	8
9 Choir 8:45 a.m. Worship-Communion 9:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. EpiphanyKids 10:45 a.m. Bible Study 6-12 10:45 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	10 Church Council 7 p.m.	11	12 ESL Class 10:00 a.m.	13 Woerner Ballet Class 12:30-3:15 p.m.	14 Epiphany Stars 9:30 a.m. AI-Anon 10:00 a.m. Valentine's Day	15
16 Choir 8:45 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. EpiphanyKids 10:45 a.m. Bible Study 6-12 10:45 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	17 President's Day Church Office Closed	18	19 ESL Class 10:00 a.m.	20 Woerner Ballet Class 12:30-3:15 p.m.	21 Epiphany Stars 9:30 a.m. AI-Anon 10:00 a.m.	22 Holy Yoga 9:00-11:00 a.m.
23 Choir 8:45 a.m. Worship-Communion 9:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Potluck 10:45 a.m. EpiphanyKids 10:45 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	24	25	26 ESL Class 10:00 a.m. Lenten Dinner 5:30 p.m. Worship 6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday	27 Woerner Ballet Class 12:30-3:15 p.m.	28 Epiphany Stars 9:30 a.m. AI-Anon 10:00 a.m.	29
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ANNOUNCEMENTS



The Epiphany Neighborhood at Christmas – One snowy, Wednesday morning in December, I went outside to shovel the sidewalk with a plastic shovel that I found in the building and just as I was trying to shovel (I say trying because it was mostly ice and I wasn't getting anywhere), a man that was driving by approached me and told me he could help. He said he knew Amy and Pastor Mike. His name was Ryan. He had just dropped his kids off at school and was heading back home. I said I could just throw some salt on the ice and see if that helped but he insisted on helping me. He went home and got a better shovel and then came back and shoveled both sidewalks leading to the office door and I believe he did the main church stairs and sidewalk there too. I offered to pay him for what he did but he again insisted on not being paid. It's so nice to know that the people of this neighborhood are willing to help out each other and the church. He wasn't a member, just a man who knew the people of and things that Epiphany does for the community and he wanted to help. He is a blessing to our community and was a blessing to me that morning. – Carrie Beary

Note Received from an Epiphany Neighbor – Epiphany Family, I have enjoyed "Carol of the Bells", "Come Little Children", "Do You Hear What I Hear", "Oh Holy Night" coming from your bell tower the past two evenings. The music has provided a relaxing way to end the work days on the week before we celebrate Christmas. – Kate

February is Food Pantry Month – Please share the love of Christ, with those in need, by donating non-perishable food items and hygiene products to the St. Trinity Food Pantry. If you would like to make a monetary donation, you can include it in the offering collection. Please mark your check or envelope with "St. Trinity Food Pantry". I encourage all members to take a turn delivering our donation to the food pantry. It is an experience that will help you to understand why we do this. If you would like to deliver the donation to the food pantry, please see Britney Hawk.

Potluck Sundays

Sunday, February 23 & Sunday, March 22
Please bring a dish to share.

Starlet Available Online!

Issues of the weekly Starlet are now available via a link on the home page of our website: www.elcstl.org.

Altar Flowers – The flower chart for 2020 is now posted in the Narthex. Signing up to place the altar flowers is a great way to celebrate a special day, person, or a memory of a loved one. Two vases of flowers are \$25, and you are welcome to take the flowers home after the worship service of the day you sign up for. Please return the vases the following week to the church or church office. You can pay for your flowers online through our website, with your weekly offering, noting that \$25 is for flowers, or put your payment in a special flower envelope that is placed on the podium under the flower chart.

Upcoming Dates

Ash Wednesday – February 26, 2020

Lenten Dinners & Worship Services – Wednesdays, February 26, March 4, 11, 18, 25, & April 1

Palm Sunday – Sunday, April 5

Good Friday – Friday, April 10

Easter Sunday – Sunday, April 12

Volunteer Opportunity – Last year, we helped Oak Hill Elementary School (on Morganford), in their efforts to create a garden for their students. They are currently planning a garden clean-up day for Friday, April 17 and they are asking for volunteers from Epiphany. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Britney Hawk at britneyhawk@yahoo.com or 314-352-8103.



Patrick Flynn.....February 1
 Michele EdstromFebruary 2
 Judy Marvin.....February 3
 Amy Allen.....February 4
 Andrea YoungFebruary 4
 Cole Aycock.....February 6
 Chris PfeufferFebruary 7
 Tori ThorneFebruary 7
 Nicholas Hagen.....February 9
 Dorothy Zickler..... February 13
 Susan Driscoll February 13
 Henry Kleffner..... February 16
 Mark Hagen February 18
 Michael Mara February 18
 Trevon Allen..... February 21
 Matilda Perry February 23
 Ron Armstrong February 25
 Andrea Reynolds..... February 26
 Lacie Irby February 26
 Don Fassold..... February 28
 Ruth Schury February 29

Daniel Matta March 7
 Stephanie Mitre March 8
 Mike Reilly March 10
 Jayme Gallo..... March 10
 Katie Bernal..... March 14
 Angela Langdon March 17
 Kimberly Wheeler..... March 21
 Farah Matta..... March 23
 Wilmar Degenhardt..... March 24
 Michael Lamb March 26
 Emanuela Cuka March 27
 Noah Boeyink March 27



There are no wedding anniversaries on record for Epiphany members in February or March.

PRAYER REQUESTS

To be a part of the Prayer Chain
 contact Karen Slama at (314) 353.2396.

Homebound

Johanna Armstrong
 Ron Armstrong
 Bonnie Crites
 Ron Diederichs
 Carolyn Gluesenkamp
 Bob Johnson
 Donna Reek
 Emilee Sutherlin
 Dorothy Zickler
 Kurt & Kathy Zickler

For God's Grace, Health & Healing

The Family of Rusty Barnett
 (Upon his death - Brother of Billy Barnett)
 Vince Birkman
 Billie Black
 (Friend of Vince Birkman)
 Ken Braniecki
 (Lisa Birkman's father)
 Essie Campbell & Family
 (Friend of Ruth Schury)
 Pam Clark
 Bob Hampton
 (Cancer - Friend of Bill Dorsam)
 Susan Harris & family
 John Heinicke
 Jim & Bonny Lang
 Charles Marvin
 Vickie Matta
 Millie Phillips
 Eric Trickey
 (Cancer - Brother-in-Law of the Zeigler's)
 Riley Voss
 Judi Winker



**I OFFER THIS PRAYER
 IN THE NAME OF
 JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD
 AMEN**

Serving as Police Officers

Jonathan Baublitz
 (Desiree Stout's brother)
 Andrew Kleffner
 Mark McMurry
 Don Reynolds

Serving in Military

Patrick Coil
 (Mary Kay Sansone's son)
 Paul Frederick
 (Shirley Frederick's grandson)
 Adam Welch
 (Fred & Pat Wachter's grandson)
 David Wheeler
 (Judy Langdon's son-in-law)

Missionaries

Hady & Vickie Matta, St. Louis
 Duane & Elizabeth Meissner, Belize
 Gary & Stephanie Schulte, Togo

Other Requests:

Woerner School Families and Staff



4045 Holly Hills Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63116

FROM THE SCHULTE'S **(TOGETHER IN MISSION MISSIONARIES THAT EPIPHANY HELPS SUPPORT.)**

Dear Saints and Friends of Epiphany,

Warm Advent Greetings in Christ! Steph and I want to thank you so much for your ongoing support in so many ways throughout the year, especially as regular donors in support of our ministry in West and Central Africa through the Together in Mission program! You are such a tremendous blessing to us – in fact, the very backbone of our partnership! During this season of Advent, as we celebrate the humble first coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus, clearly you are doing much to prepare the way for our Lord's second triumphant coming which makes you also a blessing to many! We want to celebrate that and acknowledge you for it!

Meanwhile, Steph and I are very excited because our greetings will come from St. Louis for only a few more days! On Thursday at long last, we board the plane to begin the long trip to our new home in Brazzaville, Congo! It will be so nice to have a sense of home again! We left Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, way back in February! Our household goods arrive in the port of Pointe Noire, Congo, just two days ago and we anticipate two to three weeks to get them out of customs and finally delivered to our Brazzaville apartment. We certainly covert your prayers as we undertake this huge transition from a West African Base to a Central African one!

Thank you again for your consistently wonderful encouragement and support! May our Advent King continue to bless all of you! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our house to yours!

Your co-workers in Christ,

Pastor Gary and Steph
Missionaries to West and Central Africa