

ABOUT THE EPHIPHANY OF OUR LORD
- *highlighting the Scriptures for the week* -
THEME: Arise, shine for your light has come!

January 6 marks the Festival of the Epiphany, or the manifestation, of our Lord. Not even the richness of Christmas prepares us for the opulence of Epiphany. The visit of the mysterious magi prepares the way, with their royal gifts. The call now goes forth to all who sit in the darkening shadows of this world: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you" (Isaiah). Epiphany exalts in the glory of the transcendent God who enters the world and showers His own light upon us. He has sent us His only-begotten Son and in Him, found in fashion as a man, has manifested the fullness of His glory (Preface). Epiphany celebrates the end of the ancient division between Israel and the Gentile nations. It is Israel's glory that the nations will come to her Light (Isaiah). Paul declares this to be a mystery revealed to him by God. Through the preaching of the Gospel, the Gentiles will become heirs together with Israel, members together of one body and sharers together in the promise (Ephesians). Like the gentile Magi, we gentiles follow the light of the star and gather today to worship Christ. We offer our greatest treasures in our worship, but none of them are so rich as the gifts God provides in His sacred Word and holy Sacrament: forgiveness, life, and salvation full and free! He judges us in righteousness, defends us in our affliction and causes righteousness to flourish among us. "May His name endure forever" (Psalm 72).

WEEKLY BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Use the schedule below in your personal devotion. The first three readings are the lessons read today; the last three will be read next Sunday. The Wednesday reading is the psalmody for the week. Each day you may want to pray that Psalm or the prayer printed in our service folder today, followed by the suggested reading and your personal requests and Thanksgivings to our Heavenly Father.

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| Sunday | Isaiah 60:1-6 What "kings" came to the brightness of the LORD's dawning light? What evidence of "thick darkness" over the peoples of the earth do we see today? How does the Light of Christ's gospel dispel the darkness? Where is that Light to be found? What result does it bring? |
| Monday | Ephesians 3:1-12 What is the "mystery of Christ"? Where and how is it revealed? What is the central purpose of the church? How is this done? |
| Tuesday | Matthew 2:1-12 Where did the star lead? What did the magi do when they saw the Child? Where do we find Him today? What is the central activity of the church? What does this mean? |
| Wednesday | Psalm 72 Who is the "royal son" whose praises are sung in this psalm? What is His job description? How extensive is His kingdom? How does His kingdom come among us? What does this mean? |
| Thursday | Isaiah 43:1-7 How does Messiah, the LORD's anointed, bring justice to the nations? What tenderness does He exhibit toward the bruised reed and smoldering wick? What is the source of the hope of the far-flung islands of the earth? What is the LORD's promise to His anointed? What covenant will He establish? Whose Light will He be? From what blindness and prison does He set free? What does this mean? |
| Friday | Romans 6:1-11 Why does God not show favoritism toward His people Israel? To whom did He first send His message of salvation – the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all? When did Jesus' public |

mission begin? What did He go around doing in His ministry? How is this done among us today?

Saturday

Luke 3:15-22 What did the people wonder about John? How did John clarify the work and mission of the Messiah (Christ)? What happened when Jesus was baptized? Describe the power and presence of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity at the Baptism of Jesus? When were you baptized? What were you given when you were baptized? What does this mean for you right now?