



First Lutheran Church

February 2019

Pastor's Page

The Epiphany season is a time to ponder and find delight again in the wonder of our Savior Jesus who is true God and true man. A special article was shared with me by Jan Stroethoff who has kindly given me permission to share it with you as well. —Pastor Dave

The Church Year Calendar for Series A, B and C have the same readings for Epiphany: Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12 and Psalm 72. Why Psalm 72? It is a Psalm of Solomon. Its requests, hopes and dreams reflect the promises of God given to Abraham: *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed* (Genesis 12:3c); and the promises given to David in 2 Samuel 7: *your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you*. Psalm 72 may be a personal prayer of Solomon's as he began his reign or it may have been used to commemorate the anniversary of his accession. The desire of the King and the people who sing it demonstrate their desire to live under the King who rules in accordance with God's righteous decrees:

Give the king Your judgments O God,
And your righteousness to the king's son.
He will judge Your people with righteousness,
And Your poor with justice. (Psalm 72:1-2)

The Psalm also serves as a reminder that God particularly blesses his people in order that they may be a blessing to the nations. Solomon's reign was the high point of Israel: David's son continued the Davidic line and built the temple David desired to build; the secured borders lead hope that they would live in peace with and gain respect from their neighbors:

Worship Service Schedule

Sunday Morning:

8:30 a.m.

Traditional Worship Service

9:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Bible Classes

11:00 a.m.

Blended Contemporary Worship Service

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first and third Sundays of the month.

Continued on Page 2

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,
 And from the River to the ends of the earth.
 Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him,
 And His enemies will lick the dust
 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
 Will bring presents;
 The kings of Sheba and Seba
 Will offer gifts.
 Yes, all the kings shall fall down before Him;
 All nations shall serve Him. (Psalm 72:8-11)

We would expect the Psalms following Psalm 72 to be ones of praise and delight in the fulfilled Abrahamic and Davidic promises.

Instead of bringing blessings to the people, Solomon's reign initiated the decline into materialism and idolatry that eventually led to exile. Rather the Psalter reflects the tragic history of Israel. Psalm 73 and 74 are Laments: *When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me* (73:16); *O God why have You cast us off forever?* (74:1). Book 3 contains the darkest Psalm (88) and ends with Psalm 89 asking: *Lord, where are Your former loving kindnesses, which You swore to David in Your truth?* (89:49).

Jesus came to fulfill all the promises of Psalm 72 and tell the people that God had not forgotten His promises. In Luke, Zechariah spoke prophetically: *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the LORD God will give Him the throne of His father David.* Simeon recognized the King who would bless all the nations: *a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles And the glory of Your people Israel* (Luke 2:32). The magi saw His Star and came to worship Him with valuable gifts. The people expected the Messiah to establish His righteous rule in Israel and defeat the Roman Empire. But Jesus entered the desert to be tempted by Satan.

In much the same way we leave the Season of Epiphany for Ash Wednesday, Lent, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. We know that Jesus has defeated the enemy and yet we are confused and often in despair: Why do we suffer? Why is there still oppression? Where is Your righteous rule? Our waiting is different from the faithful people of the past, because we see Jesus but we don't see His righteous rule and so we pray: Thy Kingdom Come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Events Coming Up

"Better Knots" Marriage Enrichment

Please join us on Sunday, February 10th, from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. for a time of marriage enrichment. Couples from all stages of marriage... months to many years... are encouraged to join us for this special event.

Super Bowl Party

Everyone is invited to join us for a Super Bowl Party on Sunday, February 3rd, beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our youth are sponsoring this event and will provide snacks. A free-will offering will be collected to support their trip to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis this summer.

Installation of Pastor Fitch

Messiah in Missoula and Trinity in Superior invite us to join them for the installation of Rev. Russell Fitch who will be their new pastor. The service will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Messiah here in Missoula on Sunday, February 10th. They also invite us to hors d'oeuvres starting at 4:30 p.m. and coffee and dessert following the service.

Boards & Parish Planning Meetings

Just a reminder that our Boards and Parish Planning Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 19th. The Board meetings begin at 6:00 p.m., and the Parish Planning Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Hope to see all of our board and PPC members then!

Ambassadors for Reconciliation

The Ambassadors for Reconciliation will give a presentation on Sunday, February 17th, during the Bible Class Hour. They have a new opportunity to bring a healing message to church leaders in Rwanda along with the Office of International Missions of our Synod. Please come hear about this mission opportunity!

LifeLight Bible Study to Begin

The Tuesday morning LifeLight study will begin on Tuesday, February 12th, at 9:30 a.m. in the Library. To prepare for Lent and Easter they will be studying the second part of the Gospel of Luke. Everyone is welcome to join them!