



Lutheran Women in Mission

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Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Magazine

Do You See What I See? By Rev. Vernon Schindler

Opening

Begin by listening to a recording of the Christmas song, "Do You Hear What I Hear?"

You may also sing, "As With Gladness Men of Old" (*TLH* 127, *LW* 75) or the first two verses of "The Star Proclaims the King Is Here" (*TLH* 131) "When Christ's Appearing Was Made Known" (*LW* 81).

Then pray together the collect for the Epiphany of Our Lord:

God, by the leading of a star you once made known to all nations your only-begotten Son; now lead us, who know you by faith, to know in heaven the fullness of your divine goodness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*Lutheran Worship*, page 20).

Overview

Once again this past Christmas, we celebrated the miracle of all time: God's Son, through whom the universe was created, gave up power and glory to be born as a human being. We do not know what led the men from the East to associate Jesus' birth with the star; perhaps they knew the words of Balaam's prophecy. (Have someone read **Numbers 24:17** aloud.) In any case, it was God who awakened in them the desire to go and see the Savior with their own eyes. We can only imagine their anticipation as they undertook the long journey of perhaps 500 or 600



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Selected articles or parts

of articles of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* are available for reading online, but not the entire magazine.

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[LWQ Writer Guidelines](#)

miles, hoping that in the capital of Judea they would learn the particulars concerning the birth of the royal child; and see Him for themselves. They came, convinced that this Child was the Messiah.

Searching the Scriptures

You know the account of the visit of the Magi well. From memory - as a group or privately - mark the "yes" or "no" column on the basis of whether the fact is based on Matthew's account.

(PDF, 156KB)

[LWQ Bible Study Guidelines](#) (PDF, 65KB)

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Matthew's account says:

	Yes	No
1. There were three wise men.		
2. The wise men were rich.		
3. They came with camels.		
4. They traveled by day.		
5. They traveled by night.		
6. Herod wanted to worship the Messiah.		
7. The wise men wanted to see the king of the Jews, who was just born.		
8. The wise men came immediately after the shepherds left.		
9. The wise men found Jesus in the stable.		
10. Joseph was with the Child and His mother Mary.		
11. The star was a planet.		
12. The star was a comet.		

Discuss your answers as a group. Now check your answers, read **Matthew 2:1-12**.

What do we see in Matthew's account? The census was over. The crowds had left. The wise men found the object of their search, Jesus "with his mother." Note what they did when they found Jesus. They bowed down and "worshipped him." (Jesus alone is to be worshipped). Then they offered Jesus most precious gifts - gold, incense (frankincense) and myrrh.

When we examine this account, we may see three ways people reacted to the news of the birth of Jesus. The first

reaction could be hostility.

- Why was King Herod "disturbed" when he heard about "one who has been born king of the Jews" (v. 2)?
- Why was "all Jerusalem" [disturbed along with Herod]?
- In what way, do some display a similar hostility to Christ today?

The second reaction *may have been* indifference displayed by the people of Jerusalem (and the people of Bethlehem), as well as the religious leaders. The chief priests and teachers of the law could answer "in Bethlehem in Judea"; but perhaps they did not believe the Messiah had come. Matthew does not report their traveling to Bethlehem to see for themselves.

Nor is it reported that the inhabitants of Bethlehem recognized the baby as the long expected Messiah. In fact, read **Luke 2:18** for their reaction to the report of the shepherds.

- In what ways do Christians sometimes seem to take this "good news" for granted?
- What about those who claim to be Christian, but they neglect the use of the means of grace (the hearing of God's Word and receiving the Sacrament of the Altar)?
- Do you agree or disagree that they are indifferent to Christ?

The Magi from the east bowed down in humble submission to the Lord and worshipped Him. Then they presented their gifts. The Wise Men gave expression of their faith - they worshipped Jesus and presented their gifts. Likewise, God has given us the eyes of faith to see Jesus, our Savior, and ears to hear what God offers us because of the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Recall a time when God's love was proclaimed to you.

- How has your faith grown as you've heard this wonderful proclamation again this year?
- How can you share the "good news of great joy today in the town of David a Savior, has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord" (**Luke 2:10-11**).
- Who are those around you who may need to hear?

Closing

God placed the star in the heavens to lead the Magi to Jesus. We have been led to Jesus through God's Word, which proclaims to us through the Christmas readings that Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem, is the Messiah, our Lord and Savior.

Pray together: Lord God, heavenly Father, because You sent us Your only-begotten Son for our salvation and gave Him the Name of Jesus, grant that we may begin the New Year trusting in His saving Name and live all our days in His service and praise to the glory of His holy Name; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Dr. Vernon Schindler lives in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He and his wife, Belva, are members of Risen Savior Lutheran Church. Their son, Jonathan, and his wife, Alma, live in Tucson, Arizona. Pastor Schindler will be the preacher at the Sunday morning worship service at the LWML Convention in Sioux Falls in June 2007.