

# EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD ~ JANUARY 4, 2026



**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
P.O. Box 250 \* 205 West Jefferson Street  
Cole Camp, MO 65325**

**"Being Transformed By God's Grace To Love And Serve."**

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*If it is uncomfortable for you to stand where indicated, please feel free to remain seated. The congregation responds where it is bold print.*



## THE POWER OF YES ~ THE WISE MEN SAID YES

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

### Opening Dialog

Wise Ones from the east learned about a star that would lead them to a newborn king. They decided to take a journey to find this king so they could worship him and bring him gifts. But King Herod had other plans and wanted to know, from the Wise Ones, where this new king was. The Wise Ones were told in a dream to go home a different way to that Herod wouldn't find out. They could've said no.

**The Wise Ones said YES**

Maybe they should've said no.

**The Wise Ones said YES**

There were reasons they might've said no.

**The Wise Ones said YES**

The Wise Ones took a risk. They took a chance on God.

**The Wise Ones said YES**

*please stand in body or spirit*

Opening Hymn

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

#302

Greeting

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Hymn of Praise

“Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”

#301 vs. 1-2

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.....**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.**

*please be seated*

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1 - 6

<sup>1</sup>Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. <sup>2</sup>For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. <sup>3</sup>Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. <sup>4</sup>Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. <sup>5</sup>Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. <sup>6</sup>A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

<sup>1</sup>Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

<sup>2</sup>**that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

<sup>3</sup>that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup>**Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup>May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup>**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

<sup>7</sup>In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>10</sup>**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

<sup>11</sup>May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

<sup>12</sup>**For the King delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

<sup>13</sup>He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

<sup>14</sup>**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives, and precious is their blood in his sight.**



## Second Reading

Ephesians 3:1 - 12

<sup>1</sup>This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—<sup>2</sup>for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, <sup>3</sup>and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, <sup>4</sup>a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup>In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup>that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. <sup>7</sup>Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup>Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; <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. <sup>11</sup>This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup>in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

Children's Sermon

Pastor Stephen Zeller

*please stand in body or spirit*

Gospel Acclamation      “Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”      #301 vs. 3-4

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 2nd chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

<sup>1</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” <sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” <sup>9</sup>When they 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. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.**

*please be seated*

Sermon

Pastor Stephen Zeller

*please stand in body or spirit*

Hymn of the Day

“The First Noel”

#300

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

## Sharing The Peace

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*please be seated*

Offering

*please stand in body or spirit*

Offertory                    "Bright and Glorious Is the Sky"                    #301 vs. 5-6

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.....God of every good gift, we offer what we have back to you, knowing that your son is the greatest gift we will ever receive. Grant us glad and generous hearts, ever and always. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

Hear, O Lord, the prayer you taught us to pray.....**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Our first table for Holy Communion this morning will be for those who do not wish to climb the stairs. Please watch for direction from the ushers.

*please be seated*

## HOLY COMMUNION

At the Altar

All who believe that Jesus is present in the Bread and the Wine and has the power to forgive are welcome to commune.

Red wine or white grape juice is available.

### “We Three Kings of Orient Are”

1 We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and  
mountain, following yonder star.

3 Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, gladly raising,  
worshiping God Most High. *Refrain*

*Refrain*

Oh, star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.  
*Refrain*

2 Born a king on Bethlehem's  
plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again;  
king forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign. *Refrain*

5 Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
heav'n sings alleluia:  
alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain*

xt: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt

### Communion Hymns

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”  
“What Child Is This”

#275  
#296

*please stand in body or spirit*

### Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray.....Christ Jesus, you have fed us with love incarnate, and we are truly changed. Send us forth from this meal to be forces for change in this world, as we find the YES within each of us. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

### Blessing

May God bless you with courage, as you seek the YES within you;  
May Christ be born again in every risk you take for the sake of the world;  
And may the Holy Spirit remind you, again and again, that you are never alone, and that you are loved beyond measure. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

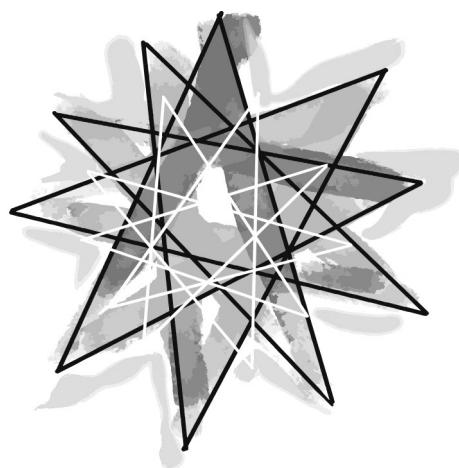
“This Little Light of Mine”

#677

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Keep saying “yes”!

**Thanks be to God**



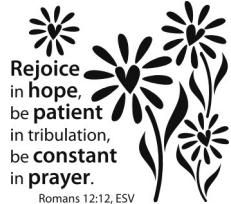
# “THE POWER OF YES”



**Welcome:** Rejoice, brothers and sisters, as we serve God in the New Year. And a blessed Epiphany Sunday and season! We have come to worship the King, just as the wise men did so long ago.

*We invite everyone to enjoy coffee and fellowship before worship in the Gathering Space. Please join us!*

**In Our Prayers:** “Unspoken prayer concerns”, Ruth Ann Kreisel, Earl Bauer, Dennis & Claudia Moellman, Gene Beckman, Robert Tatum, Jerome Goosen, Nathan Vanderlinden, Ron Eickhoff, Gordon Ives, Norene Ives, Jon Beckman, Scott Cash, Judie VonHolten, Greg Ives, and Kyle Luetjen.



Mike Wingerter (brother of Susan Goosen), Kathy Harms, Deanna Browning, Debra Eichler, Kylie Simon, Hazel Karstons, Marvin Logan (brother of Gale Logan), Larry Haase (brother-in-law of Gene Beckman), David Mobely (brother-in-law of Randy Healan), Joyce Jones (sister of Connie Gerken), Kris Barnes (friend of Julie Cronin), Joe Campbell, Cliff Eckhoff, Carmilla Swaim and husband (friends of Debbie Eckhoff), Joseph Fuelling (nephew of Paul Fuelling), Karen Haase (sister-in-law of Gene Beckman), Jackie Ross (sister of Randy Healan), and Adam Gumbel (son of Jim & Kim Gumbel).



**Nursing Home:** Vern Dean Bohling, Shirley Cash and Larry & Judy Schlesselman: *Anew*. Eugene Beckman & Florence VonHolten: *GSCC*.

**Military:** Please keep all those who have served our country past and present in your prayers, especially: Rank E3 Jensen Hamilton (grandson of Dennis Hamilton), Private Bradyn Hood (grandson of Connie Gerken), MSgt. Jason Ostberg (son-in law of Suzanne Lutjen) Lt. Col. Ron Poe, SSG Nick Smith and Major Joseph Strathman.





**Prayers:** If you would like your name added or removed from the prayer list, please contact the church office at 668-3537.

**WELCA:** Women of the ELCA will be holding their quarterly meeting on Wednesday, **January 7th** at 7:00 pm in the chapel. The program will be followed by a business meeting. All women are invited to attend!



**Health Care:** The Benton County Health Department will be here on Thursday, **January 8th** from 8:00am until 10:00am to assist you with your health care needs.

**Planning:** Worship & Music committee will meet on Wednesday, **January 21** at 3:30pm.



**Worship:** There will be no Casual Worship Service on Saturday, **January 17th**.



**Annual Meeting:** It is time to regroup and find out where we have been in 2025 and where we want to be 2026. Come and spend time with us on Sunday, **January 18th**. We will begin with Sunday School Class at 9:00am. Then worship will begin at 10:00am. After worship we will enjoy a soup and chili lunch together, stretch our legs and then gather at 12:15pm in the sanctuary for the annual meeting.

**Constitution Update:** One item of business for the Annual Meeting on **January 18th** will be a vote on updates to our Church Constitution. The last update to our current constitution was in 1995. Copies of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws are available for download from the church's website (under "Events" - "Annual Meeting") or there are printed copies at the Usher's Stands. Please review these documents before our meeting so we can discuss and vote on January 18th.



**Meeting:** The Council will meet on Wednesday **January 7th** at 6:00pm



**Envelopes:** The 2026 offering envelopes are available in the link. If there isn't a box for you and you would like 2026 offering envelopes, please contact Russell Oelrichs, or the church office to request a box.



**Chili Cookoff:** It's time for another St. Paul's Chili Cook-off, sponsored by the Luther League. Think you have an awesome chili recipe? We would love for you to bring a Crock-Pot full for a little friendly competition! The Luther League invites you to join the fun on Sunday, **January 11th**, in the Fellowship Hall following worship. In addition to chili, there will be hotdogs, dessert, and drinks available for everyone. See you there!

**Little Blessings Angel Tree:** There is an additional Angel Tree in the Gathering Space which is designated for the Little Blessings Day Care. The angels on the tree contain gift ideas for the day care, including non-perishable food items, needs for infant and toddler care, or a monetary donations. These gifts can be bagged and placed under the tree through Christmas Day. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering plates, designated for the Little Blessings Day Care. **Thank you** for your generosity for our day care kiddos!



**Souper Bowl:** The Cole Camp Food Pantry once again invites local churches and organizations to participate in the annual Souper Bowl of Caring collection. The church or organization with the most items donated by the day of the other "big game" on **February 8th** will win the coveted traveling trophy. Donations can be any non-perishable food item. Join us for this friendly competition as we fight hunger in our community one item of food at a time!

**Esther Circle:** Will meet on **January 19th, 2026** at 7:00 pm at Rhonda Schlesselman's home.



**Free Yoga Class:** Every Monday at 6:30pm at St. Paul's in the Fellowship Hall, a free yoga class will be offered. Thanks to new local doctor and certified Yoga instructor, Stephanie Schirding, for offering her time! This is a beginner's class.

**Nominations for the Annual Meeting:** Please review this slate of nominees for which you will be voting at the Annual Meeting on January 18th. As always, further nominations can be made from the floor on the day of the meeting:

Council Treasurer (vote for one):

Tara Anderson  
Erin Oelrichs

Council Member (vote for two):

Melisa Balke  
Greg Bredehoeft  
Scott Gerken  
Lynn Schear

Cemetery Trustee (vote for one):

Mark Oelrichs  
Cory Rice

Synod Assembly Delegates (vote for one male/one female):

Paul Fuelling  
Glen Webb  
Janice Gerken  
Rhonda Schlesselman

Nominating Committee (vote for four):

Angela Alcorn  
Bob Farrington  
Lenny Gerken  
Allen Oelrichs  
Joyce Schlesselman  
Lesa Warden

## ~In The Community~

**Christmas Cantada:** The Cole Camp Community Choir will present "Night of the Father's Love", a beautiful collection of music focusing on the awe and mystery of God with us. **January 11th, 2026**, beginning at 4:00pm with pre-organ music at 3:45, location at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cole Camp. Come and enjoy listening to friends in our own community share the love of Christ through music.



### THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

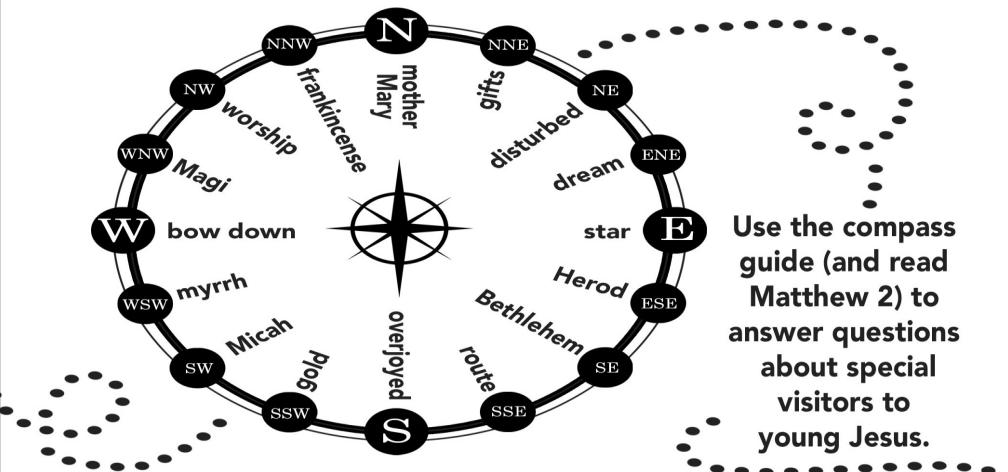
<b>Sunday, January 4:</b>	8:45am	Confirmation Class
	9:00am	SS/Adult Class
	10:00am	Worship Service
		Holy Communion at the Altar
<b>Wednesday, January 7:</b>	6:00 pm	Church Council Meeting
	7:00 pm	WELCA quarterly meeting
<b>Saturday, January 8:</b>	5:30pm	Casual Worship
<b>Sunday, January 11:</b>	8:45am	Confirmation Class
	9:00am	SS / Adult Class
	10:00am	Worship Service
		Holy Communion by stations
	AW	Chili Cookoff



### ~ \* ~ Coming Events ~ \* ~

January 7	.....Church Council Meeting
.....	.....WELCA Quarterly Meeting
January 17	.....No Casual Service
January 18	.....Annual Meeting
January 21	.....Worship and Music Meeting

# Puzz[e]!



Use the compass guide (and read Matthew 2) to answer questions about special visitors to young Jesus.

1. Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? \_\_\_\_\_ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (WNW)
3. How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? \_\_\_\_\_ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? \_\_\_\_\_ (SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? \_\_\_\_\_ (SE)
6. King Herod lied to the wise men, telling them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His \_\_\_\_\_ (N)
10. Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? \_\_\_\_\_ (W)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus.  
\_\_\_\_\_ (SSW) \_\_\_\_\_ (NNW) \_\_\_\_\_ (WSW)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_ (NNE)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A \_\_\_\_\_ (ENE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another \_\_\_\_\_ (SSE)

# Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

**Ministers**.....The Whole Congregation  
**Presiding Minister**.....Pastor Stephen Zeller  
**Organist**.....Lois Viebrock  
**Pianist**.....Jeannette VonHolten  
**AV Technicians**.....Russ Oelrichs & Todd Rusk  
**Altar Guild**.....Janice Gerken & Rhonda Schlesselman  
**Ushers**.....Melinda Strathman, Head Usher  
.....Chad Schlesselman, Randy Schlesselman & Steve Triplett



## Epiphany of our Lord ~ January 4, 2026

**Assisting Minister**.....Anne Goosen  
**Communion Assistants**.....At the Altar  
**Reader**.....Adrienn Dieckman  
**Children's Sermon**.....Pastor Stephen Zeller  
**Acolytes**.....Tristan Fox & Hudson Kullman  
**Flowers**.....Susan Goosen



## Baptism of our Lord ~ January 11, 2026

**Assisting Minister**.....Melisa Balke  
**Communion Assistants**.....Virgil & Diann Holsten  
**Reader**.....Children  
**Children's Sermon**.....Pastor Kim Knowle-Zeller  
**Acolytes**.....Miranda Gerken & Fred Goosen  
**Flowers**.....Shirley Logan