

# Holy Crossings

Our Mission... to seek, share, and serve our Savior

January 2020

## The Nativity Tree-Part Two

The Sunday school children shared the Christmas story for us on Sunday Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> between the two services. Once again, the scene takes place in the family's living room. This year instead of Mom trying to get everyone in the Christmas spirit the children are trying to get their parents excited about Christmas. The kids suggest baking cookies, putting up Christmas lights and even taking out a Christmas present from last year to use, a Christmas sequin project, but nothing is working to motivate Mom and Dad. The children then suggest setting up Aunt Agatha's last year's gift the Nativity Tree that depicts the Christmas story as it wraps around the tree like garland. Still no luck. Dad suddenly remembers the neighbor's church is having a living nativity, so the family decides to go and watch. While there, they hear the story of Christmas. As they are heading home, they see a pizza delivery man at their house. They didn't order the pizza, but it was a favorite, Italian sausage, black olives and extra cheese pizza. Also, included in another pizza box were 4 tickets to Italy to spend the Christmas holiday with Aunt Agatha. We soon find out why Mom and Dad did not want to bake cookies, decorate the house, or even set up the Nativity Tree, they knew they would be flying to Italy spend the holiday with Aunt Agatha. It was a well-done performance by everyone involved.

We thank Bonnie Nowak for writing the play and Sheri Brunner for directing the play. Also thanks to Sunday school superintendent Vivian Jobst and all the adults and students that took part in the play. It was a job well done by everyone!



# Epiphany Sermon

January 5, 2020

## EPIPHANY

**Theme:** "The Wisdom of Jesus at 12"

**Text:** Luke 2:40-52

**Synopsis:** Jesus goes to Passover in Jerusalem and remains behind to converse with the teachers in the temple.



January 12, 2020

## FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

**Theme:** "Baptism – Always in All Ways, Connected to Christ!"

Baptism of Jesus

**Text:** Matthew 3:13–17

**Synopsis:** Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan River

January 19, 2020

## SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE & SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

**Theme:** "Truth! Made in God's Image - Redeemed and Filled Bringing Light and Life with Love!"

**Text:** John 6:63-69

**Synopsis:** "Jesus reminds all who want to follow him that His Words are Spirit that create faith so we can know Jesus is the Holy One of God"

January 26, 2020

## THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

**Theme:** "Following the Light of the Word"

**Text:** Matthew 4:12–25

**Synopsis:** Jesus calls four of His disciples in Galilee.

### What is Epiphany...

A couple straightforward questions for you: "when is Epiphany?" and "what is Epiphany?" Surprisingly, a handful of good Christian folks can answer these questions confidently. Can you?

First, when is Epiphany?

Epiphany's date is January 6.

Unfortunately, the day of Epiphany is seldom celebrated, especially in America. As good Americans, we rush to the end of the story, making the magi miraculously arrive the night that Christ Child was born, even though Scripture states differently. The following summary gives a glimpse concerning what is Epiphany and the readings for the day.

*The Lord God Is Manifested  
in the Incarnate Son  
The Feast of the Epiphany  
centers in the visit of the Magi  
from the East.*

In that respect, it is a "Thirteenth Day" of Christmas; and yet, it also marks the beginning of a new liturgical season. While Christmas has focused on the Incarnation of our Lord—that is, on God becoming flesh—the season of Epiphany emphasizes the manifestation or self-revelation of God in that same flesh of Christ. For the Lord Himself has entered our darkness and rises upon us with the brightness of His true light (Isaiah 60:1–2). He does so chiefly by His Word of the Gospel, which He causes to be preached within His Church on earth—not only to the Jews but also to Gentiles (Ephesians 3:8–10). As the Magi were guided by the promises of Holy Scripture to find and worship the Christ Child with His mother in the house (Matthew 2:5–11), so does He call disciples from all nations by the preaching of His Word, to find and worship Him within His Church (Isaiah 60:3–6).

With gold they confess His royalty; with incense, His deity; and with myrrh, His priestly sacrifice (Matthew 2:11).



## Sunday Schedule

8:15 AM

**Traditional Worship Service**

9:45 AM

**Adult Bible Study  
and Sunday School**

11:00 AM

**Contemporary Worship Service**



## Prayer for a New Year

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. Amen.

## Trusting in the Lord in 2020!

by Pastor Jim Jobst

Happy New Year for the 2020 end of the decade year! The Lord Jesus will continue to be our guide as we look to His Word, ***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make straight your paths."*** Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Coming up next month, several members will be attending the Best Practices of Ministry Conference in Phoenix, AZ. We give thanks to the MN. South District for a grant to make this possible for those who are attending.

The goal of the MN. South District and by providing grant money is two-fold. First to provide leadership resources for congregations in our District from the workshops and seminars at the 3 day conference. Then an opportunity to work with Dr. Phil Johnson and church leaders to take what has gleaned and possibly then put into a strategic plan for ministry needs of the congregation.

The members attending are Pastor Jim, Jimmy Anderson (Vice President of Holy Cross); Janean Johnston (shut-in visitation ministry) and Vivian Jobst (Sunday School Superintendent). Each of us will have opportunities to attend several workshops that are in our areas of ministry as well as learn about new opportunities in ministries that are given by the main guest speakers.

Dr. Phil Johnson will meet with the members attending the conference beforehand and then again after they return. He will provide guidance in how to prepare and use the resources in helping the congregation look into possible ministry targets and objectives for the future at Holy Cross. This is based on where God has placed us, in the Prior Lake, Savage, Shakopee and Scott County local communities. We will also look at how God has gifted the congregation with talents and skills, as well as what ministry is currently working according to our strategic plan and what ministry may be struggling. Then, seeing if ministries that struggle. fit in with our community, talents, and strategic goal and objectives.

But first, objectives (along with several ministry targets) is one of the areas yet to be developed from our mission statement and goal as a congregation.

Now with the Best Practices Conference coming up, we have the opportunity after the group returns to meet in the Spring to discuss in a congregational planning time to look at our ministries and determine where we continue to put our emphasis of prayer, resources, time and energy. All this is so that we may be accomplishing the great commission of our Lord, ***"All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me, therefore, go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them all I have commanded, and truly, I will be with you always to the end of the age."*** Matthew 28:16-20.

Thank you for your prayers for those attending the Best Practices in Ministry Conference that will be held February 20-22. I am looking forward to all aspects of working with the District, attending with members, and discussing the possibilities and resources for continuing the blessing of sharing together in partnership the ministry of our Lord Jesus! God bless our Church in 2020!

In Christ, Pastor Jim

### BIBLE BOOKENDERS

We are reading "Angel Unaware" by Dale Evans Rogers. We will be meeting on Monday, January 27, 2020, at 7:00 pm. All are welcomed! Come, share in the discussion and Christian fellowship!

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know.  
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." – Dr. Seuss*

## January Stewardship Article

Our God is a God who works through means. He can and has worked immediately without agency, as the Bible testifies, but primarily, on the whole and for the most part, our God works through means. He does this not only for all of our earthly needs but also for all of our spiritual needs. And He does this for our benefit.

He provides for all our needs of this body and life through means. He gives us fathers and mothers to care for us when we are young. Through them, God provides house and home, food and clothing, education and training in the arts and work of this world.

He gives us good government to protect us from harm and danger; He gives us faithful neighbors and good friends to help in times of need and lack. He gives us employers who trade our work for income so that we may acquire the needs of the body. He gives us brains and brawn so that we will have something to trade with those employers for that needed income. This work, which we are able to do only because of what God has provided to us, redounds to the benefit of others. And so, the cycle of God giving through means continues. He provides for all our needs of our souls. He sent His Son into the flesh to be our Savior. In that body, our Lord Jesus Christ lived the life that God demands of us all – a life we have failed to live because of our sins – and, in that body, He made payment for those sins on the cross, once and for all.

God delivers this forgiveness through the means of His Word and Sacraments. He calls pastors to proclaim, in His stead and by His command, that our sins are

forgiven for Jesus' sake. Through these same pastors, God Himself claims us as His own in Holy Baptism, placing His own name on us in water and Word, igniting faith by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And He gives us His life-giving body and blood to nourish us in this same faith until the end. Our God is a God who works through means.

This is true also of stewardship. This is what St. Paul wrote in Philippians:

"I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:18–19).

The gift St. Paul received from the Philippian church is a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. They gave to God. God provided for St. Paul through the Philippians. And the God who loves both Paul and the Philippians will supply their every need according to the riches in Christ Jesus. Our God is a God who works through means.

"For all the promises of God find their Yes in [Jesus Christ]," St. Paul tells us in 2 Cor. 1:20. This is true also of you. Trust in the God who provides for all that we need in body and soul through means. And not only will you find His "yes" to you, but others will find it, too, through you. "But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you – see that you excel in this act of grace also" (2 Cor. 8:7).

## The Lutheran Hour



Under-the-weather? Out of town? Why not listen to **The Lutheran Hour**. It can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org).

January 5

### "Mercy In This Dojo"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
New Series  
(Genesis 37)

January 12

### "People are Treasure"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
New Series  
(Genesis 39)

January 19

### "Unforgettable"

Guest Speaker: Dr. Dean Nadasdy  
New Series  
(Genesis 40:1-23)

January 26

### "Call it a Comeback"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
New Series  
(Genesis 41)

### Voters' Meeting

The quarterly Voters' meeting will be held Sunday January 26<sup>th</sup> between the services. Please plan to attend.

