

The AGAPE NEWS (#14)

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD, 2021



A WEEKLY "BLOG-LIKE" NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH - CALGARY AB – January 5, 2021

Hello dear SMLC Family and friends!

A very blessed new year! I hope you had a meaningful Christmas celebration. I hope you are in good health and good spirits!

I haven't seen you since last year! My family and I are doing well, thank God. We had a quiet Christmas and new year – "quiet" is the word these days... and we also had a restful break, enjoying the "not-so-cold winter" (so far) in the outdoors. Lucas and Melissa are now back to online learning, at home.

We are in the holy season of Epiphany now, as of this evening when I write this. It officially begins with evening prayer on January 5 and ends the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday.

Epiphany is one of the oldest seasons in the Christian Church Year, second only to the Easter season. This season of lights emphasizes Jesus' manifestation (or, epiphany, from the Greek *epiphaneia*) as God and man. The earliest Christians called the feast of the Epiphany the Theophany ("revelation of God"). When the Gentile Magi come to worship Jesus, they show that everyone now has access to God. Now all people, Jew and Gentile, can come to God's temple to worship, because Jesus is the new temple: God in the flesh.

The Epiphany of Our Lord (January 6) marks the celebration of the visit of the Magi. Epiphany may include as many as nine Sundays, depending on the date of Easter. The season is marked at its beginning and at its end by two important feasts of Christ.

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As we all know, the tiny little Coronavirus doesn't know any difference between one year and another new year. The pandemic is still a harsh reality and it's filling hospitals, isolating and separating families and harvesting human lives all around us. We may thank God that we can still gather in person for worship.

We at SMLC continue to be cautious and follow all protocols to protect each other and mostly the most vulnerable among us. I ask you once more to trust God's promises that HE IS WITH US in every situation and a stronghold in every trouble. Please continue to pray for our church, our families and for the world.

And now...

Go on, keep on reading!

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A SMALL DOSE OF GOD'S WORD FOR YOU TODAY:

(From the Old Testament reading for Epiphany Day) **ISAIAH 60: 1**

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.”

IN GERMAN:

„Mache dich auf, werde licht! denn dein Licht kommt, und die Herrlichkeit des HERRN geht auf über dir.“

NEWS FROM SMLC.

1 – ATTENDANCE ON THE LAST SERVICES

We had quite a good attendance over Christmas, despite the winter storm (i.e. “snow dump”) that made some signed-up attendees stay home! It was a busy and blessed season: Ten services in a week (Dec 20 to 27)!

Here is the attendance:

Dec 23 (candlelight services): German 18; English: 27

Dec 24 (candlelight services): German 28; English: 22

Dec 25 (Christmas Day services): German 13; English: 24

Dec 27 (Sun): German 13; English: 15

Jan 3 (reading services): German 16, English 21

2 – BIG THANK YOU # 1: I want to thank those who have done a very good job by leading the readings services on January 3 when I was away. Thank you, Walter (liturgy), Bernd (sermon reading), Frieda and Koreen (readers) Dana (leading the whole English service), ushers, Warren and Bernie (technical support), Johnson & Elizabeth (for the beautiful music).

3 - BIG THANK YOU # 2: Today I want to thank all of you, who have given me, your pastor, so much support with prayers, empathy and encouragement during this past year. I want to also thank you all for all Christmas wishes, Christmas cards and Christmas gifts, some anonymous, others not. It is impossible to thank everybody individually. And even to my “secret Santa” who left an anonymous gift to my family at the office, thank you so much. Andrea will never tell me who it was!

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy". Philippians 1: 3 & 4

4 – BIBLE STUDIES: We continue to offer online bible study on Zoom every Wednesday (except when there’s a fifth Wednesday), at 7 p.m.

Elizabeth Schieman is leading the study on the gospels every first and third Wednesday. I am leading the study “who are we, Lutherans?”. Call our office if you need the login info.

5 – BIBLY STUDY FOR YOUTH: Elizabeth is also offering online bible study for our youth, every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. Please call the office if you are interested in those.

6 – ONLINE SUNDAY SCHOOL: Mrs. Koreen is gathering our kids for a virtual Sunday School, but it's actually during the week, not Sundays! If you wish your child or grandchild to participate in a fun and educational activity while in a Christian environment, please contact us to get the login info.

7 – OFFERINGS VIA E-TRANSFERS: If you are so inclined to send your offering via e-transfer please use: smlccsecretary@shaw.ca to send your donation. E-transfers are automatically deposited into the bank account, thus no need to send a password to the office. We appreciate your continuous support of our church. Thank you for your generosity.

8 – WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK?

Jan 5 (Tues): Online Youth Bible Study @ 7:30 p.m.

Jan 6 (Wed): Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

Jan 7 (Thurs): Online Board of Elders meeting, 7 p.m.

Name of the upcoming Sunday, Jan 10: First Sunday after the Epiphany – The Baptism of Our Lord

BIRTHDAYS (RECENT OR COMING UP)

Dec 31 – Elfriede Seip

Jan 1 – Meta Koepke

Jan 1 – Emilie Woessner

Jan 2 – Lori Salter

Jan 4 – Sean Smallwood

Jan 5 – Claudia Tiefisher

Jan 6 – Anton Morela

Jan 8 – Adelia Altwasser

Jan 8 – Gabriel Thome

Jan 9 – Lauryn Brazil

Jan 10 – Olga Fink

NEW BIRTH (BAPTISM) ANNIVERSARIES:

Dec 29 – Jacqueline Kueppers

Dec 31 – Heidi Weiss

Jan 1 – Margaret Becker

Jan 1 – Fred Butler

Jan 9 – Meta Koepke

If any name is missing, please let me know. God bless you all!

FEASTS, FESTIVALS and COMMEMORATIONS IN THE CHURCH YEAR THIS WEEK:

January 1 – Circumcision and Name of Jesus

January 2 – Wilhelm Loehe, Pastor

January 6 – The Epiphany of Our Lord

January 10 – Basil the Great of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa, Pastors and Confessors

You may look them up either in the bible or on the internet to find out more about those faithful women and men!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Send us your prayer requests. We have a “prayer chain” where a group of people (the “prayer warriors”) pray for your needs. Your requests will be shared with Lorraine Duncan, from our board of evangelism, who will include them in the prayer chain. **Remember:** A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.

NOW IN GERMAN - UNSERE DEUTSCHE ECKE!

Hier ist ein Titel aus einer Schallplatte des Lutherischen Chores aus Porto Alegre, Brasilien. Das habe ich miterlebt! Es ist aus Opus 8, *Weihnachtslieder* von **Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)**, genannt „Drei Könige wandern aus Morgenland“, ein schönes Lied für Epiphany. In der Begleitung erklingt der Choral "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern" von Philipp Nicolai (1599).

Die Aufnahme wurde in Oktober 1983 zum 500. Gedenken an Luthers Geburt gemacht. Die Sinfonieorchester aus Porto Alegre hat uns auch begleitet. Es war in der Tat eine schöne Erfahrung und eine große Feier!

Der Chorleiter war Rev. Dr. Hans G. Rottmann, unserer Musikprofessor; Der Solist war mein Bruder Manfred Zeuch. Ich habe im Bass gesungen. Wir waren beide Studenten im Concordia Seminar in Südbrasilien.

Wenn Sie diesen Newsletter in Papierform erhalten haben, können Sie auf YouTube dem Titel „Drei Könige wandern aus Morgenland“, suchen. Genießen Sie bitte!

Klicken Sie hier, um zuzuhören

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRCrf4La3VM&feature=youtu.be>

Und hier ist der Text den ich hier beigefügt habe:

Drei Könige wandern aus Morgenland;
Ein Sternlein führt sie zum Jordanstrand.
In Juda fragen und forschen die drei,
Wo der neugeborene König sei?
Sie wollen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold
Dem Kinde spenden zum Opfersold.

Und hell erglänzet des Sternes Schein:
Zum Stalle gehen die Kön'ge ein;
Das Knäblein schaun sie wonniglich,
Anbetend neigen die Könige sich;
Sie bringen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold
Zum Opfer dar dem Knäblein hold.

O Menschenkind! halte treulich Schritt!
Die Kön'ge wandern, o wandre mit!
Der Stern der Liebe, der Gnade Stern
Erhelle dein Ziel, so du suchst den Herrn,
Und fehlen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold,
Schenke dein Herz dem Knäblein hold!

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And now, the “clean joke” section is back:

Pray for My Hearing

The stranger approached the pastor after service and said, “I’d like you to pray for my hearing.”

The pastor placed his hands on the man’s ears and said a passionate, earnest prayer.

“How’s your hearing now?” the pastor asked.
Looking surprised, the man said, “Well, it’s not until tomorrow.” (Court Hearing)

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Thank you for taking your time to read my newsletter. If you enjoy reading it, let me know!
And remember: God is ALWAYS with us, also in 2021! Happy New Year!

**In His service,
Rev. M. Zeuch
On the evening of January 5, 2021 Anno Domini (the start of Epiphany)**



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