



January 11, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Epiphany

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

5304 N 44th Ave

Wausau, Wisconsin 54401

Web Address: stjohnwausau.org

E-mail: pastor.maggie.westaby@gmail.com

Email: stjohnwausau@gmail.com

Office: (715) 675-6950

CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING DIALOGUE

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

Today we celebrate Epiphany. Today we look for the many ways we come together in worship, traveling different distances, arriving with different thoughts, and yet still gathering as one. Today I ask how did you get here?

I walked, eyes looking up, following the star.

I ran, lunging for a love that is bigger than me.

I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender step.

I ambled like a river, caught up in God's flow.

I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

Tell me again. How did you get here?

I am here by God's grace and love's pull.

Welcome home. This is God's house. Let us worship our gracious God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

One of the gifts of confession is it allows us to begin again. For in this moment of prayer, we name our shortcomings and mistakes. We receive God's grace, and we start again. Let us begin again. Let us pray:

God of new beginnings, we admit that we often follow the well-worn path, simply because others have been there before. Sometimes this is holy and humble, but there are days when a new path needs to be tread. On those new-beginning days give us the courage to follow your star. Give us the courage to go home by another way. Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new direction for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor. With hope in our hearts we pray. Amen.

Dear travelers, no matter the roads you've taken, the steps you've made, or the paths you've traveled, there is nowhere you could go that would land you outside of God's love. Hear and believe the good news: Regardless of the paths we travel, we do not walk alone. We are loved. We are forgiven.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

GATHERING HYMN

Bright and Glorious Is the Sky



1 Bright and glo - rious is the sky, ra - diant are the
2 On that ho - ly Christ - mas night through the dark - ness
3 Sa - ges from the east a - far, when they saw this
4 Him they found in Beth - le - hem, yet he wore no



heav - ens high where the gold - en stars are shin - ing.
beamed a light; all the stars a - bove were pal - ing,
won - drous star, went to find the king of na - tions
di - a - dem; there they saw a maid - en low - ly



All their rays to earth in - clin - ing beck - on us to
all their lus - ter slow - ly fail - ing as the won - drous
and to of - fer their ob - la - tions to the child, the
with an in - fant pure and ho - ly rest - ing in her



heav'n a - bove, beck - on us to heav'n a - bove.
star drew nigh, as the won - drous star drew nigh.
new - born king, to the child, the new - born king.
lov - ing arms, rest - ing in her lov - ing arms.

5 Guided by the star, they found
him whose praise the ages sound.
We too have a star to guide us,
which forever will provide us
with the light to find our Lord,
with the light to find our Lord.

6 And this star, as bright as day,
that will never lead astray
with its message so appealing,
is the word of God, revealing
Christ, the way, the truth, the life,
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877–1970, alt.
Music: DRÆTIG ER DEN HIMMEL BLÅ, Danish, 19th cent.
Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

May 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.

Let us pray...

God of starlight,

We long to follow you. Like the Magi, we want to pick up the hems of our robes and run in your direction. Like the Magi, we want to kick up dust with our feet and make a joyful ruckus following your guiding star.

Unfortunately, the stars can be hard to see from here. Your still, small voice can be hard to hear from here. So just as you guided the Magi, guide us.

Draw our attention to your Word. Reveal what it is you want us to hear, so that we can follow you. With hope in our hearts, we pray. **Amen.**

READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift 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. ⁵Then 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. ⁶A 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. Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;
that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;
that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in
righteousness.

**Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and
crush the oppressor.**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to
another.

**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that
water the earth.**

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

**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute, and the kings of
Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed,
and those who have no helper.**

He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the
needy.

**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives, and precious is
their blood in his sight.**

READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

¹ This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given me for you, ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ 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: ⁶ that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ 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. ⁸ 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, ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him. Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with-in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “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.” ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶‘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.’” ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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.” ⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And 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.**

NOISY OFFERING & CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

As with Gladness Men of Old



- 1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be - hold;
- 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
- 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
- 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
- 5 In the heav'n-ly coun-try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
and when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
all our cost-liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n-ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Responding to “Hear us, O God” with “Your mercy is great.”

PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The Magi brought gifts to Christ and offered their lives in worship. With thankful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZEVQ/home>

GIVE THANKS

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son. Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son. And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am rich,” because of what the Lord has done for us. And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am rich,” because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God,

As the Magi entered the house, they knelt in joy and paid homage to Jesus. Opening their treasure chests and giving gifts. So, we have come to you today, offering gifts from our own treasure chests. Bless these gifts and inspire in us ways that we can continue to cultivate Christ’s light through our ministry.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

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.**

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star, he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan, you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & LORD'S PRAYER

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 & ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All are welcome at this table—the early, those on time, and the late. The certain and the searching. Those who followed the light with confidence and those who are still on the road. For this is the God who meets us at every crossroads we endure: in questions that pull us forward, in starlight that refuses to let us stay where we are. This is Epiphany—not that God appears only once or in one place, but that Christ is revealed again and again. Here, at this table, hope takes on flesh in bread and wine. Come, taste and see the light of the world, given and shed for you.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

For the Bread Which You Have Broken



- 1 For the bread which you have bro - ken, for the wine which you have poured,
- 2 By this prom - ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re - stored,
- 3 With the saints who now a - dore you, seat-ed at the heav'n - ly board,
- 4 In your ser - vice, Lord, de - fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;



for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.
by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord.
may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord.
in the world to which you send us let your king - dom come, O Lord.

Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855–1930, alt.

Music: OMNI DIE, *Gross Catolisch Gesangbuch*, Nürnberg, 1631

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Give Me Jesus



1 In the morn-ing when I rise, in the morn-ing when I rise,
2 Dark . . . mid-night was my cry, dark . . . mid-night was my cry,
3 Just a - bout the break of day, just a - bout the break of day,
4 Oh, . . . when I come to die, oh, . . . when I come to die,
5 And . . . when I want to sing, and . . . when I want to sing,



in the morn - ing when I rise, give me Je - sus.
dark . . . mid - night was my cry, give me Je - sus.
just a - bout the break of day, give me Je - sus.
oh, . . . when I come to die, give me Je - sus.
and . . . when I want to sing, give me Je - sus.

Refrain



Give me Je - sus, give me Je - sus.



You may have all the rest, give me Je - sus.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: GIVE ME JESUS, African American spiritual

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of light and journey,

We thank you for meeting us here—for feeding us with hope made flesh and sending us out renewed. Guide us by your light, that we may bear Christ into the world, revealed in love, courage, and grace. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the Spirit guide you on the star's path, leading you by light when the way is unclear.

May the light of Christ fill you and shine forth—from your eyes, your words, and your deeds.

May the Creator bless your journey with wonder strong enough to keep you searching, hope bright enough to keep you moving, and joy deep enough to be shared.

And may the Holy Three in One ✠ bless your coming and your going, your following and your returning, now and forevermore. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *Arise, Your Light Has Come!* (ELW 314)

Arise, Your Light Has Come!



1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
3 A - rise, your light has come! All you in sor - row born,
4 A - rise, your light has come! The moun - tains burst in song!



show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.
bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
Rise up like ea - gles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

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DISMISSAL Go in joy. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

Welcome to all! Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones.

To those who are visiting: Welcome to St. John and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex.

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to Christ's Table.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John (715) 675-6950. If you or a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from Pastor Maggie, please contact St. John.

Food Basket. Each week you are invited to bring **non-perishable grocery** items to be given to a local food pantry. Place your gift in the *Shopping Cart* next to the main entrance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noisy offering! The 2nd Sunday of the month! Next Noisy offering:

Sunday, January 11th bring your coins (bills also accepted 😊).

Money will be raised and donated quarterly. This noisy offering will go to: *Community Dinners for those in need.* Did you know St. John hosts three Community Dinners a year and each one costs approximately \$1,300. Your donations help serve a very real need in our community! **If you are a Thrivent member, you may be eligible to apply for a \$250 Thrivent Action Team card** which can go directly towards our community dinners. Please see Connie Nowak if you can help!

LENTEN DINNERS We need volunteers to prepare and serve our Lenten Dinners. We also need volunteers to bring salads, desserts and milk, and to help with cleanup. The dinners will be served from 5-6 pm. Worship starts at 6:30. The sign-up chart is in the narthex. Please join us for Lent this year.

Sunday School Teachers Needed: As parent-teachers age out of Sunday School with their kids, we need 2-3 new teachers to step in and help teach the good word! With enough help, the commitment averages to teaching one lesson each month. Please contact Kim Landwehr at kamootz@gmail.com if you are interested!

Chair Yoga: Saturday January 24th / January 31st / February 21st / February 28th all starting at 10:00 a.m. at St. John! A free event, donations are accepted for St. John's Youth.

Mission Trip to Duluth, MN Sunday, July 12th – Friday July 17th Grades 7th – 12th Please let us know if your student is interested by 02/18/2026

Memorial Committee Position Open – Please see Jan Mueller for details

Monday, January 12th at 6:30 p.m. Adult Study will discuss Chapters 9:17 – 14 of the Gospel of Luke.

Monday, January 26th at 6:30 Pastor Maggie's Book Club will discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus.

Sunday, February 1st at 10:15 a.m. Annual Congregational Meeting.

Wednesday, February 18th Ash Wednesday. Lenten Dinner starts at 5:00 p.m. Worship 6:30 p.m.

Church Mailboxes have moved – The mailboxes are now in order numerically by envelope number, though your name is also listed alongside your number. There are master lists in red binders, listed alphabetically by last name. Our mailbox section only accommodates 240 slots. We have set up a temporary location by the side door of the narthex. If you do not see your name or see errors, please let us know.

****We have also changed our envelope system**** If you are looking for offering envelopes, please fill out the pink offering envelope form and place it in the office door mailbox.

Kwik Trip Gift Cards Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or on our website! Help support St. John with Kwik Trip gift cards!

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Lutheran Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize

congregants. Parents, please note our children's sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

Coming This Week @ St. John January 11th – January 18th

Today - Sunday, January 11th

9:00 a.m. Worship / No Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Church Town Hall – Discuss Name Change

Tuesday, January 12th

6:30 p.m. Adult Bible Study – Luke Chapters 9:17-14

Wednesday, January 14th

8:30 a.m. Quilters Meet

6:30 p.m. Confirmation Class

Sunday, January 18th

9:00 a.m. Worship / No Sunday School

3:30 p.m. Community Dinner @First United Methodist Church