

The Theme of Today's Liturgy

As the Church Year comes to an end, we confess that Our Lord is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending. The Church particularly focuses our attention not on the end, but on the ongoing feast (*Gospel*). That is where Our Lord's promise of a new heaven and earth meet, where we heed Our Lord's joyful call and sup with Him in the nuptial hall of the Lamb of God (*Chief Hymn*). So the Spirit and the Church rightly call out, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

Introit

Psalm 85:1, 7, 9, 11; antiphon: Jeremiah 29:11a,12



P I know the plans I have for you, de- | clares the Lord, *
plans for wholeness and not for | evil.

Then you will call upon Me and come and | pray to Me, *
and I will | hear you.

P Lord, You were favorable | to Your land; *

You restored the fortunes of | Jacob.

Show us Your steadfast love, | O Lord, *
and grant us Your sal- | vation.

C Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear Him, *
that glory may dwell | in our land.

Faithfulness springs up | from the ground, *
and righteousness looks down | from the sky.

C Glory be to the Father and | to the Son *
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning, *
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

P I know the plans I have for you, de- | clares the Lord, *
plans for wholeness and not for | evil.

Then you will call upon Me and come and | pray to Me, *
and I will | hear you.

P Lord, You were favorable | to Your land; *

Collect of the Day

Absolve, we beseech You, O Lord, Your people from their offenses, that from the bonds of our sins which by reason of our frailty we have brought upon ourselves we may be delivered by Your bountiful goodness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 65:17-25

Thus says the LORD God: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," says the LORD Almighty.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 45:14-15

C In many-colored robes [the King's daughter] is led | to the King, *
with her virgin companions following be- | hind her.
With joy and gladness they are | led along *
as they enter the palace | of the King.

Epistle Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Brethren: Concerning the times and the seasons, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together

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↑ - Please stand • ↓ - Please sit

Welcome to Epiphany Lutheran Church!

Here is where Jesus answers His promise to be with us always, by coming to us in His living and active Word and the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

Parents of Small Children:

We are very happy that you are here today, honoring Our Lord's Words: "Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Lk. 18:16). If you feel you must step out with a fussy child, please hurry back! Like Jesus, we want your children in the Divine Service, not out.

Visitors:

So we can get to know you better, please fill out one of the attendance cards in the hymnal rack in your pew and introduce yourself to Pastor Beffrey and the congregation! We hope you'll come back to Founders Hall after the service to share a cup of coffee and snack with us.

Who may Commune at Epiphany?

The Sacrament of the Altar is offered at Epiphany in every Service. The normal communicant is a confirmed member of a congregation of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS). Under no circumstances should an un-baptized person commune. If you are not a member of an LCMS congregation, or have not communed at Epiphany before, please speak with the Pastor or an Elder before the service begins.

with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse

Revelation 21:1



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

P I saw the holy city, new Jer- | usalem, *
coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride
adorned for her | husband.



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel Reading

St. Matthew 25:1-13

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

C (♪) Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

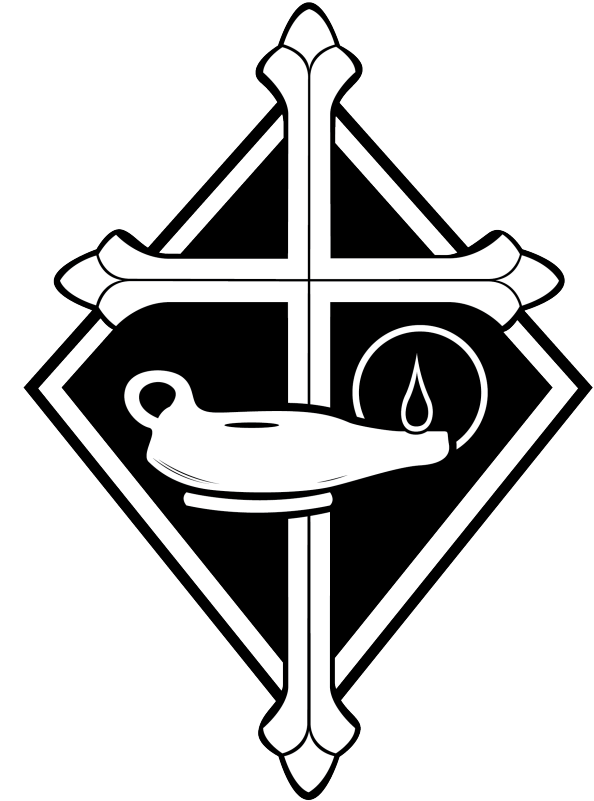
At that time Jesus spoke this parable to His disciples: "The kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C (♪) Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The Last Sunday of the Church Year

✠ Sunday 26 November Anno ✠ Domini 2023 ✠



Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning,
and be like men who are waiting for their master to
come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open
the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.

—Luke 12:35-36

Epiphany Lutheran Church

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