

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church, and we pray that our Lord would guard and keep you in His grace, mercy, and peace throughout the Days of Christmas and the New Year of Our Lord.
- ◆ We rejoice this morning in the Holy Baptism of Giovanni Colglazier, the infant son of Elizabeth Seyboldt; and we also give thanks as Alexis Tevlin is confirmed in the Lutheran confession of the Christian.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments, our Family Bible Class continues a study of Genesis, making special use of Dr. Luther's commentary on that book.

Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Older children, especially between the ages of eight and twelve, will meet with Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh. And Dave Smith is teaching a catechesis class for teenagers and others who are interested.
- ◆ Catechumens (and parents), please note that our weekday catechesis classes are resuming this week (*on Wednesday only for this week*), at 4:30 p.m.
- ◆ Dcs. Rhein will be traveling to Ethiopia this week, leaving on Wednesday the 11th, to work on the Lutheran hymnal project there. She will return to South Bend on January the 25th. Please remember her in your prayers.
- ◆ Pastor Stuckwisch will be in Chicago with his daughter Oly' Anna for her Youth America Grand Prix dance competition the latter part of the week and through this coming weekend.
- ◆ New and returning officers of the Congregation will be inducted into office at the Divine Service on the Third Sunday after the Epiphany (22 January). (*Meetings this month are going to be postponed and rescheduled for later.*)
- ◆ Pastor and LaRena Stuckwisch and family express their sincere thanks to the members of Emmaus for the thoughtful cards and gifts received this season, and for all the loving support throughout the year. The family is grateful for the kindness and care of their brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Michael & Ines Jindra to the glory of God, in celebration of their 20th wedding anniversary.

- ◆ Please note that a new flower chart for the Year of Our Lord 2017 is now available on the bulletin board at the back of the church. You are welcome to sign up to provide flowers for the Lord's Altar to the glory of God, in memory of loved ones, or in honor of special people and events.
- ◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 1 JANUARY 2017: \$ 2,198.17**
In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2360 is needed each week.
Offering envelopes for the coming Year of Our Lord 2017 are available in the glass room at the back of the church.
- ◆ **IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:**
(ELDER) Robert Rhein; (USHERS) Martin & Matthew Horner;
(ACOLYTE) Stefan Horner; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein;
(CRUCIFER) Aaron Seyboldt; (GREETER) Pat Nering.
- ◆ **We are in need of additional greeters to welcome members and guests to the Lord's House on the Lord's Day. Please consider volunteering to serve and assist in this way approximately one Sunday each month.**
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Church Year

“Epiphany now seems to be somewhat of an orphan as far as the Western church year is concerned, though at one time it was second only to Easter. To us it lies in the shadow of Christmas, though it is nonetheless the second great festival of the Christmas cycle, or in one of its older names, ‘Old Christmas.’

“Epiphany was of course at one time the Feast of the Nativity. According to the Egyptian calendar, which was 12 days behind the Julian one used at Rome, the winter solstice fell on January 6th, and the birth of Christ was tied in with the pagan festivals honoring the sun, exactly as was going to happen a century later with Christmas in the West. In Asia Minor and Egypt it originally recalled not merely the appearance of Christ in human flesh — His Nativity — but several other distinct events: His baptism in the Jordan and the wedding at Cana. . . .

“The story of the Wise Men must have been one of the most popular in the whole Bible, if we are to judge from second- and third- century mosaics, graffiti, and manuscripts. In art and legend these kings from the East made a colorful contrast to the drab shepherds and the humble manger. When the Muslims later

overran the Holy Land, destroying churches as they went, they are reported to have saved one in Bethlehem solely because they looked up and saw painted on the walls men who were dressed as Easterners, like them — the Wise Men.

“Already in the sixth century the Magi had come to be called ‘kings,’ though the expected term was Magi or Wise Men. Of the most ancient paintings, carvings, and statues, few show them with scepters, crowns, or royal robes until after the time of the crusades.

*“Augustine, Chrysostom, and other early writers mention the number of the Wise Men as 12. The Persian word **magi**, translated ‘wise men,’ really means ‘keepers of sacred things,’ ‘priests,’ ‘priest-scholars,’ or “astronomers.’ Later tradition sets their number at three. Melchior, the king of Arabia, a Semite, was supposedly 60 years old; Balthasar, king of Ethiopia, a negro, 40; Caspar, king of Tarsus, and Indo-European, 20. Their starting point was Babylon, according to the legends, and they made their way by camel up the fertile valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, the standard route of the traders.*

“Only Matthew records the story of the Wise Men, and even he does not tell us half of what we should like to know. Oddly enough the pious legends that have grown up about them are now accepted as if on the same level with Scripture. Matthew’s account is more detailed concerning their visit to Herod than in any other part of the story. After following the star they arrived at the capital city of Jerusalem and naturally sought out Herod for the answer to their question: ‘Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship Him.’

“Just when the Wise Men arrived at Bethlehem is not known. If the star appeared in the sky before Christ was born, they might have arrived on the night of his birth. If it first appeared on Christmas Eve, they could scarcely have arrived in less than two or three months. Herod, we know, decreed that the boys of Bethlehem up to the age of two were to be killed, and this may provide a clue to the time of their visit. Matthew says he did this ‘according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the Wise Men.’ Either he was playing the game unusually safe in killing so large an age group, or the Wise Men did not reach Bethlehem until a year or more after Christ’s birth.

“As the tale of the Wise Men grew, both in legend and song, their gifts took on symbolic meanings. Melchior is said to have brought the gold in a small casket or jewel box. Balthasar’s frankincense was thought to be in a censer or thurible, and Caspar’s myrrh in a gold-encrusted horn. The gold was to represent Christ the King; the frankincense, Christ the Priest; and the myrrh, Christ the Prophet.”

(From THE YEAR OF THE LORD, by Theodore J. Kleinhaus, CPH 1967)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY **THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD**

Divine Service of Communion **9:00 a.m.**
with Holy Baptism and the Rite of Confirmation

Coffee & Refreshments 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY **Vespers** **6:00 p.m.**

TUESDAY *South Bend – LaPorte Circuit Pastors Meeting*

Deaconess Rhein to Ethiopia until January the 25th

WEDNESDAY *Pr. Stuckwisch leading RLA Chapel* 8:30 a.m.

Catechesis Class 4:30 p.m.

Evening Prayer **6:00 p.m.**

THURSDAY—SUNDAY *Pr. Stuckwisch in Chicago with Oly'Anna*

NEXT SUNDAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**

Coffee & Refreshments 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the Second after the Epiphany:
Isaiah 49:1–7; 1 Corinthians 1:1–9; and Saint John 1:29–42*