

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

All kings shall bow down before him. (v11)

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, & bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Matthew 2:1-12

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, & have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, & all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests & 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 & learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go & search diligently for the child; & when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go & pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; & 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; & they knelt down & paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, & myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. What connections do you find between the First Reading & the Gospel Reading? *Hint: look for topics, parallel ideas, inversions, reversals, similarities, extensions, metaphors, actions, vocabulary, grammar, etc. Remember to include themes, imagery/illustrations & "mirror images."*
2. Read the rest of Matthew 2. In addition to the symbolism of the gifts, how do they show God's provision for the up coming journey to Egypt and back? Is Jesus a "trust fund baby" LOL?

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Changing gears for a moment- How does *Psalm 72* square with *Psalm 146:3-4* (also *Psalms 20:7, 33:16-17, 118:8-9, 147:10-11*)? How does treating *Psalm 72* as a prayer help? How does *Psalm 72* help you pray for governmental leaders- regardless of party affiliation? *See 2 Timothy 2:1-2*
4. Of all the congregations near you, why do you come & worship & give offerings at a particular one? Name at least 5 reasons (10 is better) beyond personal taste/opinion/likes & family history. In fact, the more you humbly & meekly do these things (come, worship, give) the better that congregation gets (almost miraculously). Conversely the less you do these things the worse the congregation gets (almost demonically). Who do you think is the beneficiary (or victim) of those behaviors?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. What leads new people to find Jesus, the light of the world, in your congregation? What's your role in this? How can you help folks find Jesus? By the way, do we take credit for the success? *See Small Catechism: Creed 3; Psalm 119:105; John 3:19, 8:12, 12:46; 1 Corinthians 3:5-8; Galatians 5:13-14* SC available bookofconcord.org
6. What is God's light doing to the darkness? What leads new people to find Jesus, the light of the world, in your congregation? *See John 3:19, 8:12, 12:46; Galatians 5:13-14; Psalm 119:105; SC: Creed, 3rd art.*

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Festival of Our Lord's Epiphany

Series: Faith through Action

5 men to guide us in the new year

01.05.25

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Wise Men

Meeting a need

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: On entering the house, they saw the child
with Mary his mother; & they knelt down & paid him homage.
Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of
gold, frankincense, & myrrh. (*v11*)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

We have observed his star at its rising,
& have come to worship him. (*Matthew 2:2*)

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