



A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



At Acacia Park Lutheran Church, we welcome you!

Connect

Wonder

Celebrate

Share

January 2019

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Epiphany is a time of the church year that tends to get glossed over. During the season of Advent, we are waiting for the Christmas season - we pause during the Advent season and slow down a little bit to wait for the coming of our savior. Then comes Christmas. We gather together on Christmas Eve and celebrate the 12 days of Christmas with gifts, food, and family. Then, it seems it is all over. We go into a waiting period until Lent. This is true, to a point, but there is one important celebration that we often overlook because it is a one day celebration, January 6th, and it typically doesn't fall on a Sunday. That celebration is the Epiphany. This special day ends the Christmas season, and we acknowledge the journey that the magi took to find Jesus, to give their gifts and their blessing to the savior of the world. An epiphany is a moment of sudden insight. We've all had those moments - where dots are connected or we view a situation in a different way. This moment of clarity is what we celebrate on January 6th, the revelation of the Messiah to the gentiles through the arrival of the magi. This year, Epiphany falls on a Sunday, and we will take time to celebrate this special day of the church year. It is part of our slow down this season, taking time to really center and focus on the details of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

There are two poems I read and pray through during the 12 days of Christmas and the day of Epiphany. I am sharing them with you. May they offer a different way to engage with God this holiday season:

Howard Thurman - "The Work of Christmas"

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

T.S. Eliot - "The Journey of the Magi"

'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For the journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.

Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
 And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
 And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
 And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
 And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
 A hard time we had of it.
 At the end we preferred to travel all night,
 Sleeping in snatches,
 With the voices singing in our ears, saying
 That this was all folly.
 Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
 Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
 With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
 And three trees on the low sky,
 And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
 Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
 Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
 And feet kicking the empty wine-skins,
 But there was no information, and so we continued
 And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
 Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory
 All this was a long time ago, I remember,
 And I would do it again, but set down
 This set down
 This: were we led all that way for
 Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
 We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
 But had thought they were different; this Birth was
 Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death,
 We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
 But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
 With an alien people clutching their gods.
 I should be glad of another death.

In Christ,

Pr. Meagan Sherman-Sporrong

Thurman, Howard. "The Work of Christmas." *The Mood of Christmas & Other Celebrations*. Friends United Press, 1985.

Eliot, T.S. *The Journey of the Magi*. Faber and Gwyer, 1927.

Treasurer's Report (as of November 30, 2018)

	YTD	YTD Budget Trended	Diff Act/ Budget
Offering Income	\$43,289.57	\$45,214.58	(\$1,925.01)
Other Income	\$10,883.04	\$6,966.67	\$3,916.37
Expense	\$93,351.70	\$97,768.09	\$4,416.39
Net	(\$39,179.09)	(\$45,586.84)	\$6,407.75

Worship and Christian Education

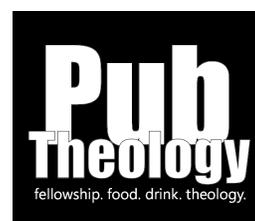
YOU AND THE WORD BIBLE STUDY

On **Sunday, January 6th** (weather permitting) our Bible study group will meet in the downstairs lounge immediately following worship. Please mark your calendars, and plan on joining us in fellowship, study and discussion.

**Please note: there will be no Bible study on Sunday, January 27th due to our Annual Congregational Meeting.*

PUB THEOLOGY

We will meet on **Tuesday, January 22nd** (weather permitting) at 7:00 pm at Marcia Walther's home, 4116 N Octavia Ave, Norridge for fellowship and friendly discussion of topics including faith, spirituality, current events, and just about everything in between. If you would like to bring an appetizer or treat to share, that would be great! All are welcome. Call or email the church office at 708-453-3662 or acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com for more information.



Parish Events and Notes

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The church council meets on **Thursday, January 10th** at 7:00 pm.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



Acacia Park's annual Congregational Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 27th** immediately following worship. We will hear about the year 2018; have reports from the pastor, president, and treasurer; and adopt a new budget for 2019. Please join us for this important day in the life of ministry at Acacia Park!

Serving the Congregation and Larger Community

ST. CYPRIAN'S FOOD PANTRY

Canned and non-perishable goods for the St. Cyprian's Food Pantry continue to be collected. Food donations may be left in the bin in the Narthex. **No open packages or expired food, please.**

THE NIGHT MINISTRY



We will once again be "taking it to the streets" to serve a meal to the homeless on **Sunday, January 20th** with The Night Ministry. We need volunteers to help prepare the sandwiches and pack the dinner bags as well as volunteers to drive and help distribute food. If you or anyone you know is interested in going to the location to hand out food and visit with the recipients, please contact Karen Lanners at 773-439-9893. We will also be making 75+ care bags to be distributed locally to people in need.

DONATE YOUR COATS!

As the weather turns colder, it's a great time to take stock of your coats and cold weather gear. During the **month of January**, we will continue to collect new and gently-worn coats and cold weather items including hats, scarves and gloves for donation to those in need. Please place your donations in the Night Ministry bin in the Narthex.



From the ELCA

EPIPHANY: UNFOLDING THE DISCOVERY



Just like friends, epiphanies come in many shapes and sizes. Like friends, you never know when or where you might experience an epiphany, perhaps one that will even change your life! Like friendships, some epiphanies unfurl over time while others immediately appear. Being open to both possibilities invites illumination into our lives and enrichment of our experiences with each other.

The Women of the ELCA's study guide, *Epiphany: Unfolding the Discovery*, can be used individually for reflection or journaling, or in a group to arrive at a deeper understanding and appreciation of the concept of epiphany. You can download this free resource at www.womenoftheelca.org/filebin/pdf/resources/Epiphany.pdf.

Fundraising

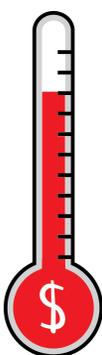
AMAZONSMILE

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Acacia Park Lutheran Church every time you shop and at no cost to you. When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience--including Amazon Prime member benefits--at Amazon.com. You'll also have the added bonus that the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Acacia Park. Log on at <https://amazonmile.com> to get started shopping.



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

\$24,000



Our Capital Campaign has taken off in leaps and bounds! As of November 30th, we have collected nearly \$19,000 and have another \$2,800 pledged to be collected through 2019. That leaves us with a balance needed of just a little over \$2,000! Thank you so much to everyone for your generosity!

We have one more fundraising event in the works for the spring to help put us over the top. On **Sunday, March 3rd**--right before Ash Wednesday--we'll be hosting a "Fat Sunday" Pancake Brunch after worship. Make sure to mark your calendars and plan on joining us for a delicious meal of pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice, coffee and tea along with raffles and prizes.

Sending Out Our Thanks

SPECIAL THANKS to Sebastian Manilla who so graciously and beautifully lent his voice in song and praise during our Advent worship services in December.

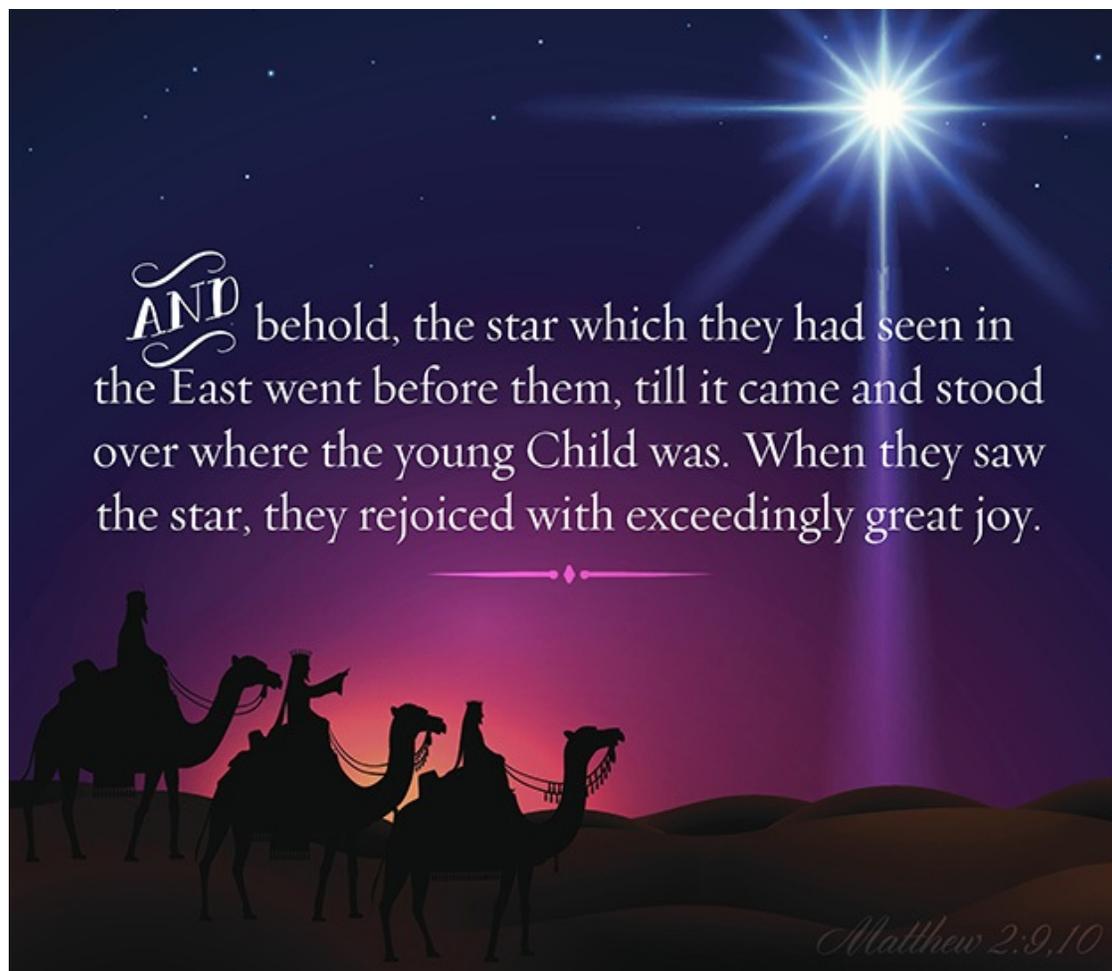
COOKIE AND CRAFT SALE

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who attended and/ or volunteered for our Cookie and Craft Sale. Hundreds of cookies were baked and then sold on December 15th, raising close to \$1,300 for our Capital Campaign. We also had a banner year for craft vendors. Ten different vendors arranged for tables and sold a variety of home-made crafts, including jewelry, gift baskets, wreaths, magnets, holiday floral arrangements, picture frames, essential oil blends and hand-decorated pots.

More photos of this event can be found on our website: acaciaparkchurch.com.



Epiphany is Sunday, January 6th.

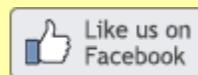
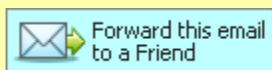


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Connect with us on the web or by email by clicking:

acaciaparkchurch.com

acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com

Share your thoughts with us by phone:

708-453-3662