

# The Voice of Our Savior's



## Your Epiphany Bough: Where was its Stem? By Tom Kuster

The word "epiphany" refers to a revelation, a presentation of the divine to a new audience. The Church celebrates the Epiphany season in the weeks after Christmas, starting by remembering the star that revealed to the Wise Men that the Savior had been born. Their visit to the Christ Child established a strong Epiphany theme -- that this Child is the Savior not only of the Jews but also of Gentiles.

Another Bible text often heard at Epiphany is Jesus' parable of the mustard seed, where he compared his kingdom to this tiny seed, which becomes a huge tree. The growth and spread of that kingdom-tree throughout the ages is the story of a series of epiphanies. As God's Word and sacraments were presented to one new audience after another, the Holy Spirit worked an epiphany in one heart after another, and finally came to you and me. My father and mother brought God's Word to me -- who brought it to them?

The Bible describes the earliest of these spreading boughs of epiphanies. Of others we read in history. The most recent branches we have to trace by ourselves.

In Acts we read of an early offshoot, when the apostle Paul was called to leave Asia Minor and preach in Troas. That was an important moment: it was the first stretch of the gospel from Asia to Europe. The mustard tree was growing.

In AD 718 a young man named Boniface decided his calling was to leave his native England and preach the gospel in Germany. Through his work the Word spread into central Europe, where the Reformation

would begin. The limbs of the mustard tree were spreading.

We in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod find another epiphany twig in Harold Bluetooth, the first Christian king in Denmark. His conversion opened the door to the gospel in Scandinavia. Through him a branch of the mustard tree spread to the north.

In Chicago I learned a new appreciation for my Grandmother Kuster. She knew the difference between the teaching of the non-denominational church conveniently located a block from home and the Lutheran church over a mile away. Both pastors were recruiting my Dad. She knew the difference and guided him, despite the inconvenience, to the Lutheran church.

In church again this year, we celebrate publicly together the Epiphany to the Wise Men. Other epiphany events, the more personal ones, we thank God for privately. Each generation provides an epiphany to the next, passing the news of how our Savior rescued us from sin and death, restored us to God, and assured us of a blessed life now and in eternity. It's a worthy act of praise to explore your own personal epiphany branch, and that of your family. Look back! Talk to those who remember. Who brought God's Word to you? And who brought it to them? And then look ahead. Who in the future will look back, and find you to be, by God's grace, the offshoot that grew into their epiphany bough?

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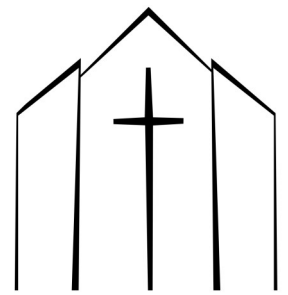
*Article reprinted from Forward/Northwestern Lutheran January 1999.*

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## Our Mission

is to  
**Glorify**  
 God as we  
**Gather**  
 around the  
 Gospel to  
**Grow**  
 in the  
 Word and  
 Sacraments  
 and then  
**Go**  
 to others  
 with the Gospel



OUR SAVIOR'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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 Phone: 605-756-4259  
 605-880-0436

Facebook:  
[fb.com/WELS.South.Shore/](https://www.facebook.com/WELS.South.Shore/)

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## Congregational News



### Worship In January

### Notes on Worship

In January we conclude our celebration of Christmas and move into the Epiphany season of the Church Year. "Epiphany" comes from a Greek word that means "reveal." It is the season when you see Jesus begin his public ministry, revealing the reason the Son of God came to earth. During Epiphany, you will come to understand that when the true identity of Jesus is revealed, you realize your own true identity as well.

Worship is Sunday at 9:00 a.m. All services are streamed on Facebook at [fb.com/WELS.South.Shore/](https://www.facebook.com/WELS.South.Shore/). The theme of each service is below. Hymnals are available at church if you would like one to use at home! Below is this month's service information.

Thursday, Jan. 1		New Year's Day
Readings: Numbers 6:22-27, Psalm 100, Luke 2:1-21		Communion
Sermon: Matthew 3:1-12	Hymns 75, 72, 313, 316	
Sunday, Jan. 4	<b>The Dawn of Redeeming Grace</b>	Christmas 2
Readings: Psalm 148, Ephesians 1:3-18, John 1:14-18		Communion
Sermon: Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Hymns 42, 50, 34, 254 (LAPPY)	
Sunday, Jan. 11	<b>Jesus is the Savior of the World</b>	Epiphany
Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72, Ephesians 3:2-12		
Sermon: Matthew 2:1-12	Hymns 80, 67, 352 (new hymnal), 399	
Sunday, Jan. 18	<b>Jesus is the Lamb of God</b>	Epiphany 2
Readings: Isaiah 49:1-6, Psalm 40, John 1:29-41		
Sermon: Colossians 2:6-15	Hymns 84, 89, 311, 27	
Sunday, Jan. 25	<b>Jesus is the Light the Shines in Darkness</b>	Epiphany 3
Readings: Isaiah 8:19-9:4, Psalm 27, 1 John 2:3-11		Communion
Sermon: Matthew 4:12-23	Hymns 280, 85, 90, 375 (new hymnal)	

Consider reading the scripture lessons and hymns as a part of your personal devotions during the week leading up to Sunday Worship!

### Thank You

Thank you to the members and friends of Our Savior's for the cards, gifts, prayers and well wishes that you gave to Pastor Nelson and his family during the Christmas season. What a blessing it is to serve with you as we grow in our faith and bring the saving message of Jesus to our friends, our community and our world. Pastor, Penny, Isabelle and Stan

Thank you for your prayers, cards, and gifts you gave to our family this past year. Your concern and generosity are wonderful expressions of Christian love. Thank you all very much! Pastor Ott

### New Year's Worship

Join us New Year's Day at 9:00 a.m. for a special worship service with Holy Communion.

### Thank You

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Christmas program, party, and decorating this past Christmas! Your service to the Lord and his people is appreciated!

## Grow in Grace and Knowledge!

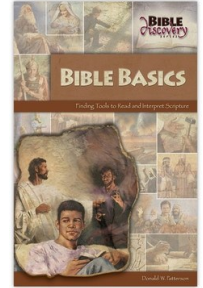
**Sunday Morning Study** Join us as we continue our study of the book of Job. We meet after worship in the fellowship hall.

**Sunday Night Book Study** In January we will finish discussing , *Bible Basics* by Donald Patterson. We will take a break the rest of January. Watch the bulletin for information about our next book and when class will resume. Thank you to all who have attended and made it such a blessing!

Jan. 4 Styles of Literature in the Bible ch. 6 and Ways to Approach the Bible ch. 7

Jan. 11-25 No class

We meet Sundays at 6:30 p.m. at church. Join us even if you haven't read the book.



## Door Offering January 18

There will be a freewill door offering at church on Sunday, January 18. All funds raised will go to the Devin and Claire Weseloh family. The Weseloh's had identical twin girls, Daphne and Quinn on August 25, 2025. Quinn is doing very well. Daphne remains hospitalized since birth at Children's Hospital in Minneapolis. She has had two heart surgeries along with other procedures. Claire is in the cities with the girls. Devin is in Fargo with the two older boys. All funds raised will be used to help them in their everyday living expenses. If you wish to give an offering through the church for them, it would be fine. Daphne and Quinn are the granddaughters of Randy and Paula Ott.

## Annual Meeting

The annual voters' meeting and the annual Ladies' Aide meeting will be on Sunday, January 18 after worship.

A meal will follow.

## Great Plains News

**Spring Auction** Did you say auction? Yes, we are having a Spring Silent Auction! Just like in years past, this silent auction will be done online. The online bidding will start on Wednesday, March 11 at 7:00am and will close on Sunday, March 15 at 2:45pm. You may view the auction items prior to the Spring Concert and can pick up the items after the concert. More information regarding registration will be posted in the updates and in emails. However, we need your help to make this a fun and successful event. We are asking for themed baskets and donations of some auction items or you can donate gift cards. All these items need to be dropped off to Mrs. Roloff no later than Monday, March 2.

**Save the Date** Circle Saturday, July 18 on your calendar. We are planning a 30th Anniversary Celebration of GPLHS! More information regarding this special event will be sent to you via updates, emails and invitations. Let's thank the Lord for this amazing and needed ministry!

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«Address»

«City» «State» «Zip»

## See ya at Church

Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
South Shore SD

Service at 9:00 am on Sunday  
Livestreamed on Facebook -  
[fb.com/WELS.South.Shore/](https://fb.com/WELS.South.Shore/)

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## News from the WELS

“Calling” is one of the four priorities outlined in the synod’s “Christ through us” long-range strategic plan (along with “Culture,” “Congregations,” and “Commission”).

For our synod to carry out its mission faithfully, we need an adequate number of well-trained pastors, teachers, and staff ministers to teach and proclaim God’s Word. That need has become more acute in recent years as we are experiencing a significant shortfall in the number of called workers.

So it comes as no surprise that “Calling” has been identified as one of the priorities of our synod as we plan for the future. The “Calling” priority has five main components. With God’s help, we will:

1. Expand pathways to ministry. Our training schools will examine how we can provide new ways for people to enter ministry. Some of those things are already being done. At Martin Luther College, we are already attempting to recruit WELS members who are serving in public schools. Such people already have a teaching degree; MLC provides the instruction needed to become ministry certified in WELS. Other WELS people may have degrees in other fields. We will develop ways to provide them with the educational skills needed to teach, along with the instruction needed to become ministry certified.
2. Innovative recruitment efforts. We will look at ways to improve and expand our efforts to recruit traditional students for entry into Martin Luther College. Those efforts will likely expand the current practice of school recruiters meeting with high school students by specifically working with current called workers and congregations to expand recruitment efforts.
3. Ensure ministerial education stability. We will look for ways to ensure that our synodical schools remain on a firm financial foundation and to enlist our members in working toward that goal.
4. Establish a sustainable strategy for called worker development. We will look at how best to deploy the workers that we have now, exercising the best stewardship in how and where we use them.
5. Support called worker well-being. Having spiritually and physically healthy called workers ensures that they will be able to cope with the challenges and pressures of ministry, thus reducing the number of called worker resignations.