

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School

711 & 805 W 5th St., Neillsville, WI 54456

Member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD,
OBEY HIS VOICE,
AND HOLD FAST TO HIM,
FOR THE LORD
IS YOUR LIFE.
(DEUTERONOMY 30:20)

Epiphany 3
January 29, 2023

To those who are visiting us for the first time, we extend our sincere welcome; to our friends who know us we renew our welcome; to those who seek a church home we invite you to be part of our family and enjoy fellowship with our Savior.

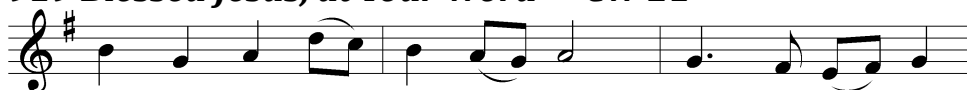
Epiphany is a word that means “appearing” or “manifestation.” It’s an attempt to capture the fact that God stepped into our world and in subtle yet unmistakable ways revealed his glory. Jesus spoke with authority as God himself and performed miracles. The Sundays in Epiphany are green to focus on growth and new life in the Church.

Today is Epiphany 3. Our focus today: Jesus reveals himself as God by commanding us to live holy lives.

The church year begins here 2022

2

919 Blessed Jesus, at Your Word CW 21



1 Bless - ed Je - sus, at your Word we are gath - ered
 2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est
 3 Gra - cious Sav - ior, good and kind, Light from Light, from
 4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and



all to hear you. Let our hearts and souls be stirred
 dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks our night
 God pro - ceed - ing, o - pen now our heart and mind;
 ad - o - ra - tion! Grant that we your Word may trust,



now to seek and love and fear you, by your teach - ings,
 with the beams of truth un - cloud - ed. You a - lone to
 help us by your Spir - it's plead - ing. Hear the cry your
 con - fi - dent of our sal - va - tion, while we here be -



sweet and ho - ly, drawn from earth to love you sole - ly.
 God can win us; you must work all good with - in us.
 Church now rais - es; hear and bless our prayers and prais - es.
 low must wan - der, till we sing your prais - es yon - der.

Text (sts. 1-3): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.; (sts. 1-3): Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619-1684; (st. 4): tr. unknown, alt.; (st. 4):
 Geistreiches Gesang-Büchlein, Berlin, 1707
 Tune: Johann R. Ahle, 1625-1673, alt.
 Text and tune: Public domain

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are
 they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is e -
 ter - nal; it stands firm in the heav -
 ens. Your faith - ful - ness con - tin - ues for -
 ev - er. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
 Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Lord God, in mercy receive the prayers of your people. Grant them the wisdom to know the things that please you and the grace and power always to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: A - men.

THE WORD

First Lesson: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵See now, today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. ¹⁶This is what I am commanding you today: Love the LORD your God, walk in his ways, and keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances. Then you will live and increase in number, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are going to possess.

¹⁷But if your heart turns away, and you do not listen, and you are lured away, and you bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸then I declare to you today that you will most certainly perish. You will not live a long life on the land that you are about to enter and possess by crossing over the Jordan.

¹⁹I call the heavens and the earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live ²⁰by loving the LORD your God, by listening to his voice, and by clinging to him, because that means life for you, and you will live a long life on your land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Psalm 119a

Refrain



Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Psalm tone



Blessed are they whose ways are blameless*,
who walk according to the law of the LORD.

Blessed are they who keep his statutes*
and seek him with all their heart.

You have laid down precepts*
that are to be fully obeyed. **Refrain**

Oh, that my ways were steadfast*
in obeying your decrees!

Then I would not be put to shame*
when I consider all your commands.

I will praise you with an upright heart*
as I learn your righteous laws.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning*,
is now, and will be forever. Amen. Refrain

Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Therefore, beyond this, brothers, just as you received instruction from us about how you are to walk so as to please God (as indeed you are doing), we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that you do so even more. ²To be sure, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³Indeed, this is God's will: that you be sanctified, namely, that you keep yourselves away from sexual immorality. ⁴He wants each of you to learn to obtain a wife for yourself in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in lustful passion like the heathen, who do not know God. ⁶No one is to overstep and take advantage of his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we said previously and solemnly testified to it. ⁷For God did not call us for uncleanness, but in sanctification. ⁸Consequently, whoever rejects this is not rejecting a man, but the God who gives you his Holy Spirit. ⁹Concerning brotherly love, there is no need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God, with the result that you love one another. ¹⁰In fact, you are doing so toward all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we encourage you, brothers, to do this even more, ¹¹and to make it your ambition to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, just as we instructed you. ¹²Do this so that you are conducting yourselves decently toward outsiders and are not lacking anything.

Verse of the Day: Ephesians 5:2

Alleluia! Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Alleluia!

C: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

These words are writ - ten that we may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 5:21-37

²¹You have heard that it was said to people long ago, "You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment." ²²But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be subject to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, "Raca," will have to answer to the Sanhedrin. But whoever says, "You fool!" will be in danger of hell fire.

²³So if you are about to offer your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother. Then come and offer your gift.

²⁵If someone accuses you, reach an agreement with him quickly, while you are with him on the way. Otherwise your accuser may bring you to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶Amen I tell you: You will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

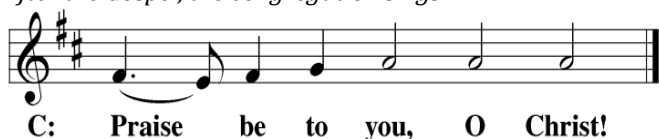
(continued on page 10)

²⁷You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery," ²⁸but I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to fall into sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰If your right hand causes you to fall into sin, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

³¹It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce." ³²But I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, causes her to be regarded as an adulteress. And whoever marries the divorced woman is regarded as an adulterer.

³³Again you have heard that it was said to people long ago, "Do not break your oaths, but fulfill your vows to the Lord." ³⁴But I tell you, do not swear at all: not by heaven, because it is God's throne; ³⁵and not by earth, because it is his footstool; and not by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your own head, since you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Instead, let your statement be, "Yes, yes," or "No, no." Whatever goes beyond these is from the Evil One.

After the Gospel, the congregation sings:



695 *Take My Life and Let It Be* CW 21



- 1 Take my life and let it be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;
- 2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love;
- 3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly for my King;
- 4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, not a mite would I with-hold;



take my mo-ments and my days, let them flow in cease-less praise.
 take my feet and let them be swift and beau-ti - ful for thee.
 take my lips and let them be filled with mes-sag - es from thee.
 take my in - tel - lect and use ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

- 5 Take my will and make it thine,
 it shall be no longer mine;
 take my heart, it is thine own,
 it shall be thy royal throne.

- 6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
 at thy feet its treasure store;
 take myself, and I will be
 ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879
 Tune: William H. Havergal, 1793–1870
 Text and tune: Public domain

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 5:21-37

JESUS' WORDS SHOW THE RADICAL LOVE OF GOD

- I. Jesus lovingly preaches us into hell.**
- II. Jesus lovingly preaches Himself into hell.**

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father
almighty.**

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

OFFERING



The members of St. John's have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. Guests need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry, but please use this QR code to fill out a short form giving us a digital record of your attendance.

Visitors can also sign our guest register in the entryway by the drinking fountain.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done
 on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
 as we forgive those
 who sin against us.

**Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.



C: A - men. A - men. A - men.

705 *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways* CW 21



- 1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep his stat - utes still!
2 Or - der my foot - steps by your Word, and make my heart sin - cere;
3 As - sist my soul, too apt to stray, a strict - er watch to keep,
4 Make me to walk in your com-mands—'tis a de - light - ful road—



Oh, that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will!
let sin have no do - min - ion, Lord, but keep my con-science clear.
and should I e'er for - get your way, re - store your wan - d'ring sheep.
nor let my head or heart or hands of - fend a - gainst my God.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, abr., alt.

Tune: William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

Text and tune: Public domain

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This Week at St. John's: Jan 29, 2023

SERVING US TODAY

Greeters: Joan Zickert & Jean Goetz

Ushers: Team 2- Verlyn Shaw's team

Altar Guild: Linda Biebert & Megan Allard

Donating Bulletins Today: Schmid Family

Donating Website in February: Ray & Sharon Wetzel in thankfulness for our Savior

SERVING US NEXT SUNDAY

Greeters: Ed & Jenn Schmid

Ushers: Team 3- Dick Urban's team

Altar Guild: Charlene Siebert

~OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW & SERVE~

TODAY	9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Sunday School & Bible Class
MONDAY	7:30 PM Dartball @ Greenwood
WEDNESDAY	8:20 AM Chapel 4:00 PM Bible Study
THURSDAY	5:30 PM Adult Instruction Class 6:00 PM Handbells 7:00 PM Choir
SATURDAY	5:00-8:00 PM Family Bruce Mound Outing
NEXT SUNDAY	9:00 AM Communion Service 10:15 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:30 AM Gr. 4-8 sing at Christie 11:30 AM Sunday School Teachers Meeting

CHURCH NEWS

Bible Class: Bible Class resumes today after the worship service. We will continue our study of "10 Lies About God," focusing on the lie "There Are Many Ways Into God's Presence." Please join us in the church basement after worship.

Sunday School: Sunday School will be held today for children 3 years old through 8th grade.

Wednesday Bible Study: We will continue our Wednesday Bible Study ***this week***. Join us from 4:00 to 5:00 in the ELC conference room as we continue our study of the book of Romans.

Bulletins: Would you like to donate bulletins on a particular Sunday in 2023? The sign-up sheet for 2023 is available on the table in the entryway. Cost to donate bulletins is \$10.00 per Sunday.

If interested, please sign up on the sheet for the date you would like. Payment can be made any time throughout the year. Simply place the money in a marked envelope and put it in the offering basket.

Lent 2023: We will have three pastors in the Lenten rotation this year: Pastor Biebert, Pastor Wilke of Globe-Christie, and Pastor Naumann of Trinity, Marshfield.

Supper will be served by various groups and organizations at 6:00 p.m., except for Ash Wednesday.

Our Lenten services will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays starting February 22nd.

Care Packages: Our LIGHTS group will be packing 13 care packages to be sent to college students and military personnel. Donations of items to include in the packages are needed and welcomed.

Some ideas for donations could include: Kleenex, pens, post-it notes, hand lotion, microwave popcorn, fruit snacks, candy bars, raisins, chips, pudding, dried fruit, cookies, tea, dried soup mix, gum, soap, coffee, etc. Anything that can be individually wrapped works well; the list is almost endless. Cash donations for postage are also needed. Donations can be placed in the entryway. (The boxes will be packed up on February 6th.)

This is a nice way to show our young people that they are in our thoughts and prayers. Thanks for your assistance!

Pancake Breakfast: The Friends of St. John's Pancake Breakfast will be held on Sunday, February 12th, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the school gym. All of you are invited to attend. There is no charge; free-will offerings will go for tuition assistance to students who are attending WELS high schools or colleges.

If you are able to help out by providing any food items, cash donations, or kitchen/serving help, please fill out and return the donation slip by Monday, February 6th. Thank you!

BB Games: Tuesday, 1/31: We will travel to St. Mark in Eau Claire for games at 4:00 and 5:00.

Thursday, 2/2: The A Team will be playing in a Triangular at St. Mark's in Eau Claire at 4:30 and 5:30.

Family Bruce Mound Outing: Our neighboring churches of St. John's, Christie, and Immanuel, Globe, are planning a tubing outing at Bruce Mound for Saturday, February 4th, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. All are welcome to come. A pot-luck supper will be available; bring your own beverages.

If you are able to bring food for the pot-luck, please sign up on the sheet on the table in the entryway.

Winter Carnival: Our church's HIS Group (Hands in Service) is sponsoring a children's carnival on Saturday, February 25th as part of Neillsville's Winter Carnival. The children's carnival will be held here in our gym from 11:00-1:00. There will be bounce houses, a cake-walk, face painting, balloon animals, a giant slide, concessions, crafts...activities for all ages! Parents are expected to stay while their children are here. Cost will be \$5.00 per child (ages 1-12). Infants and ages 13+ are Free! Cost for the cake walk is \$1. We hope many parents and children can attend!!

Volunteers are needed to help with the carnival. We also need bakers who would be willing to bake cakes or cupcakes for the cake walk. A sign-up sheet for cakes/cupcakes is on the table in the entryway. To help in other ways, please contact Megan Allard, Darlene Zschernitz, Linda Biebert, or the school office.

Cash donations to help the HIS group cover the cost of the bounce houses, giant slide and game would be gratefully accepted. Total cost is \$535.00.

Proceeds from the Kids Carnival will go toward new signage for the ELC/School and the church.

Serving Abroad: Please keep Noelle Lavene (Fitzmaurice) in your prayers. She is serving in the Air Force Reserves, and was recently sent to Qatar, where she will be for six months. If you'd like to contact her, her address is listed below:

Noelle Lavene
8 EAMS/TROS
Unit 61233
APO, AE 09309

New Member: We welcome **Rene Defourneaux** as a communicant member. Rene completed adult instruction class and was baptized this past Monday in the ELC. Let's make him feel welcome!

FIC: It is time to renew our subscription. If you would like to continue receiving the "Forward In Christ" magazine here at church or would like to try it for the first time, cost is **\$12.00/year**.

You will find a "Forward In Christ" sign-up sheet on the table in the entryway. Please sign up on the sheet; money should be turned in as soon as possible. Please place your payment in a plain envelope marked "FIC." You can put that in the offering basket or drop it off in the school office.

More FIC: The February edition of "Forward In Christ" is available in the entryway.

Calendar: The February calendar is available on the table in the entryway.

Church Windows: As you have undoubtedly noticed, the new windows have been installed. At the printing of this bulletin, there was still some trim work needing to be done.

Update from Pastor Baerbock: We thought our members would be interested in reading an update from Pastor Baerbock on how his wife Karen is doing. Please keep the Baerbocks in your prayers!

"Last Wednesday (1/18) we were at Mayo in La Crosse for a consultation with the surgeon and dietician. Wednesday (1/25) we will return early to Mayo for surgery. They will be placing a G tube (feeding tube) in Karen's stomach. She still is eating by mouth quite well (I feed her), but the ALS doctor wanted the tube to be in place sooner rather than later when it could turn into an emergency situation.

Each day here is a challenge, but with Lord's help we make it through. I am still doing the lifting. Her joints in her arms and wrists are very sore, as is her neck. In reading, I'm wondering if that isn't a result of dehydration, since it is water that gives her swallowing problems. The G tube would solve that.

Karen's speech has been deteriorating to the point where she has to repeat some words slowly to be understood. She also

finds it harder and harder to control her emotions, which is another symptom of ALS. Many cousins and relatives have visited in the past month along with our children and their families, which is greatly appreciating and uplifting for her."

Annual Voters' Meeting Highlights

We went through an overview of the last six months of 2022 and touched on things coming up in 2023. Items of special note are listed below.

Pastor's Report: *Voters approved having Pastor Guenther come once a month for the upcoming year. This allows Pastor Biebert to have more time to visit our shut-in members.*

Adult Discipleship: *Voters ratified membership changes that took place over the last six months.*

Treasurer's Report: *The budget for 2023 was set and approved. Our mission pledge for 2023 was set at \$35,000.*

Repair Projects: *Work will be moving forward soon on the parsonage repair project.*

We will be looking into replacing the exhaust fans in the two bathrooms in the church entryway.

WELS Weekly Prayer: *Multi-Language Productions – Almighty God, Lord of the nations, just as Paul strived to reach all people by all means possible, so we pray that you would open many hearts to trust in Jesus through the biblical media created and distributed by WELS Multi-Language Productions. Help them to communicate the wonderful truths of Scripture clearly and concisely in 56 different languages as well as through artwork and music. Continue to inspire your servants as they carry out your work. Reassure them of your presence in their work and your blessing on their efforts. Amen.*

Worship the Lord with Gladness:

Last Sunday: 124

Worship with Our Care of God's Wealth:

Thankoffering Given last week:

\$6,151.00 (Home); \$416.00 (Missions)

To assist you in worship:

- ✚ Personal listening devices are available for anyone to use. Please talk to the ushers for assistance.
- ✚ Large-print bulletins available upon request.
- ✚ Personal Prayers: Red Hymnal (pp. 10-11); Blue Hymnal (inside front cover)
- ✚ Preparation for Lord's Supper: Red Hymnal (p. 156); Blue Hymnal (pp. 295-296)
- ✚ Luther's Small Catechism: Blue Hymnal (pp. 286-293)

We love seeing young children in church as we want families to worship together. We also love to hear children making a "joyful noise to the Lord." If you need some privacy for feeding an infant or changing a diaper, please make use of our parents' room off the north side of the entryway where you can still listen to the service.

Visitors, if you would like to know more about our church or school, please introduce yourself to our pastor. He would be delighted to speak with you and serve you in whatever way he can.

St. John's Lutheran Church & School 711 & 805 W 5th St., Neillsville, WI 54456

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Website: www.stjohnsneillsville.com

Facebook (church): www.facebook.com/stjohnsneillsville/

Facebook (school): www.facebook.com/stjohnshornets/

Worship Schedule

Sunday-9:00 a.m. (Year-Round)

Tuesday-6:00 p.m. (After Easter through November)