

# Epiphany of Our Lord

## January 4, 2026

### 10:30 AM



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**University Lutheran Church of Hope** is a welcoming, Christian community of faith centered on God's grace and called to demonstrate God's love for the world. University Lutheran Church of Hope is a Reconciling in Christ congregation with a commitment to racial equity.

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## Welcome. Peace be with you.

**We continue our holy experiment.** We're worshipping together in-person and virtually on YouTube. Welcome to all!

### For those worshipping in-person, please remember:

- ❖ **To support the health and wellness of all those among us**, feel welcome to use masks and hand sanitizer, stay current with your vaccinations, and stay home as needed if you are unwell.
- ❖ **We honor one another's boundaries** by asking permission to be in close proximity, and finding alternate ways to greet one another and share the peace (a deep bow, the peace sign, an air hug, etc.). Our risk levels and comfort differ.
- ❖ **In our service today, we will share Holy Communion.** Ushers will direct you.
- ❖ **If you are new to the community** and wish to speak with a Pastor or be included in our communication and activities, fill out the blue slip in the pew rack and give it to an usher. We'll follow up. It's also just fine to be anonymous. To get more involved, check out our website: <http://www.ulch.org/> To receive the weekly enews, the Thursday Epistle, contact our church administrator at [ulch@ulch.org](mailto:ulch@ulch.org).
- ❖ **Children are welcome in worship.** Kids, grab your SPARK Story Bibles. Craft tables are available for families. Note: The nursery is not staffed, but is available for your use. The nursery is on the upper level of the education wing, most easily reached from the doors nearest the baptismal font.
- ❖ **After worship, enjoy the time to linger for conversation** in the lounge, courtyard and patio.

## Land Acknowledgment

*This Land Acknowledgment, and our response, are both a work in progress. We're actively engaged in a process to move beyond a simple acknowledgment, and toward a more active commitment. Watch for more opportunities for our community.*

We gather for worship on the land of our Creator. Many of us and our church building dwell in the traditional home of the Dakota people, and a land over which the Anishinaabeg people and others also moved. They gathered and ate food, rested, died and gave birth, and prayed here, and many still do.

# GATHERING

+ Indicates the assembly stand as able. Assembly parts are marked in **bold**.

**ELW** refers to the red hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. **ACS** refers to *All Creation Sings*, an *ELW* supplement.

## Prelude

Bright and Glorious Is the Sky

Paul Manz

## Welcome

## Call to Confession

Friends, on this Epiphany Sunday we stand at the start of a new year, and there is nothing better about a new year than the chance to begin again. That is exactly what we do in the Prayer of Confession.

We speak honestly with God and God surrounds us with grace. We are able to begin again.

So may we start this new year, this new season, this new week with God's grace.

Let us pray. Let us begin again.

## Prayer of Confession

**Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again. So today we pray—**

**forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks.**

**Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call.**

**Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action.**

**Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world.**

**With hope we pray, amen.**

## Words of Forgiveness

Family of Faith, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid,

God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

**Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless.**

**We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## + Gathering Hymn

Bright and Glorious Is the Star (*vss. 1-4*)

ELW 301

## + Greeting

The grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## +Prayer of the Day

God of the Stars, like the magi, we come to this place searching for you. So today, just like every day, we ask that you remove any barricades that keep us from your Spirit. Clear out the distractions. Wipe away the doubt. Open up our hearts, and speak to us through these ancient words. And as you do, we will keep walking. As you do, we will move toward you. With hope we pray, amen.

## WORD

### Children's Message

#### Reading - Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
For darkness shall cover the earth  
and thick darkness the peoples,  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.  
Nations shall come to your light  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.  
Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together; they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.  
Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.  
A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and frankincense  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Word of God. Word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

«¡Levántate y resplandece que tu luz ha llegado!  
¡La gloria del SEÑOR brilla sobre ti!  
Mira, las tinieblas cubren la tierra  
y una densa oscuridad se cierne sobre los pueblos.  
Pero la aurora del SEÑOR brillará sobre ti;  
¡sobre ti se manifestará su gloria!  
Las naciones serán guiadas por tu luz,  
y los reyes, por tu amanecer esplendoroso.  
»Alza los ojos, mira a tu alrededor:  
todos se reúnen y acuden a ti.  
Tus hijos llegan desde lejos;  
a tus hijas las traen en brazos.  
Verás esto y te pondrás radiante de alegría;  
vibrará tu corazón y se henchirá de gozo;  
porque te traerán los tesoros del mar,  
y te llegarán las riquezas de las naciones.  
Te llenarás con caravanas de camellos,  
con dromedarios de Madián y de Efá.  
Vendrán todos los de Sabá,  
cargando oro e incienso  
y proclamando las alabanzas del SEÑOR.

Palabra de Dios, palabra de vida.

**Demos gracias a Dios.**

+ **Gospel Acclamation**    Angels, from the Realms of Glory (*vss. 1 & 3*)

ELW 275

## **+ Gospel Reading - Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18**

The gospel according to Matthew the second chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: '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.' " Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Después de que Jesús nació en Belén de Judea en tiempos del rey Herodes, llegaron a Jerusalén unos sabios procedentes del Oriente. —¿Dónde está el que ha nacido rey de los judíos? —preguntaron—. Vimos levantarse su estrella y hemos venido a adorarlo. Cuando lo oyó, el rey Herodes se turbó y toda Jerusalén con él. Así que convocó a todos los jefes de los sacerdotes y maestros de la Ley de su pueblo para preguntarles dónde había de nacer el Cristo. —En Belén de Judea —le respondieron—, porque esto es lo que ha escrito el profeta: "P ero tú, Belén, en la tierra de Judá, de ninguna manera eres la menor entre las principales ciudades de Judá; porque de ti saldrá un príncipe que será el pastor de mi pueblo Israel". Luego Herodes llamó en secreto a los sabios y se enteró por ellos del tiempo exacto en que había aparecido la estrella. Los envió a Belén y les dijo:—Vayan e infór- mense bien de ese niño y tan pronto como lo encuentren, avísenme para que yo también vaya y lo adore. Después de oír al rey, siguieron su camino. Sucedió que la estrella que habían visto levantarse iba delante de ellos hasta que se detuvo sobre el lugar donde estaba el niño. Al ver la estrella, sintieron muchísima alegría. Cuando llegaron a la casa, vieron al niño con María, su madre, y postrándose lo adoraron. Abrieron sus cofres y presentaron como regalos: oro, incienso y mirra. Entonces, advertidos en sueños de que no volvieran a Herodes, regresaron a su tierra por otro camino.

Cuando Herodes se dio cuenta de que los sabios se habían burlado de él, se enfureció y mandó a matar a todos los niños menores de dos años en Belén y en sus alrededores, de acuerdo con el tiempo que había averiguado de los sabios. Entonces se cumplió lo dicho por el profeta Jeremías:

«Se oye un grito en Ramá,  
llanto y gran lamentación.  
Es Raquel que llora por sus hijos  
y no quiere ser consolada. ¡Sus hijos ya no existen!».

El Evangelio del Señor.

**Alabanza a ti, oh Cristo!**

**Sermon - Pastor Amanda Simons**

# Hymn of the Day

## We've Seen God's Face

Text: Anna Strickland (2025)

Music: Polish Carol



Like the ma - gi from the east we tra - vel in - to  
If we find our path has led us to King Her - od's  
We will trust that star to guide us to the place where  
When new threats de - rail our jour - ney from the path we



the un - known Step by step we make the jour - ney, called by  
den of fear Still we'll keep our fo - cus fixed on chas - ing  
we were called Find - ing God em - bod - ied in the humb - lest  
planned to take We won't let fear par - a - lyze us, no we



God to seek the throne O - ver moun - tains, through the des - erts  
down that star so clear Though the ty - rants rage and threat - en  
dwell - ing place of all As King Her - od sends his sol - diers  
won't stay locked in place Stay - ing nim - ble, we'll move for - ward



Seek - ing Christ we fol - low e - ver 'Til at last  
Noth - ing weak - ens our pro - fess - ion It is God's  
Time stands still while we be - hold him Here's where we  
Keep - ing safe by cross - ing bor - ders Move a - round



we reach the place Where we hope to see God's face  
voice we have heard Fear will not have the last word  
were called to be God's in - car - nate love to see  
the fear with grace For we know we've seen God's face

## Affirmation of Faith

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and *still* we believe.

We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people.

So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.

We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst.

We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: *Unto us, love is born.*

We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So *still*, we believe. Amen.

## Prayers of the People

*Following each petition:*

God, Emmanuel,  
Hear our prayer.

Dios, Emmanuel,  
Escucha nuestra oración.

## + Sharing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

La paz de Cristo sea siempre con ustedes.

**And also with you.**

**Y también contigo.**

*All are invited to share the peace of Christ using these or similar words "Peace be with you" or "La paz del Señor."*

# MEAL

## Offertory

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Wilbur Held

*Thank you for your continued generosity! Donations may be sent electronically or by mail, or placed in the offering plate in the center of our space as you come forward for Holy Communion. A QR code is available on the last page of the bulletin.*

## +Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. Creator God,

**in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all. Amen.**

## +The Great Thanksgiving

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to our God.**

Let us give thanks to our gracious God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

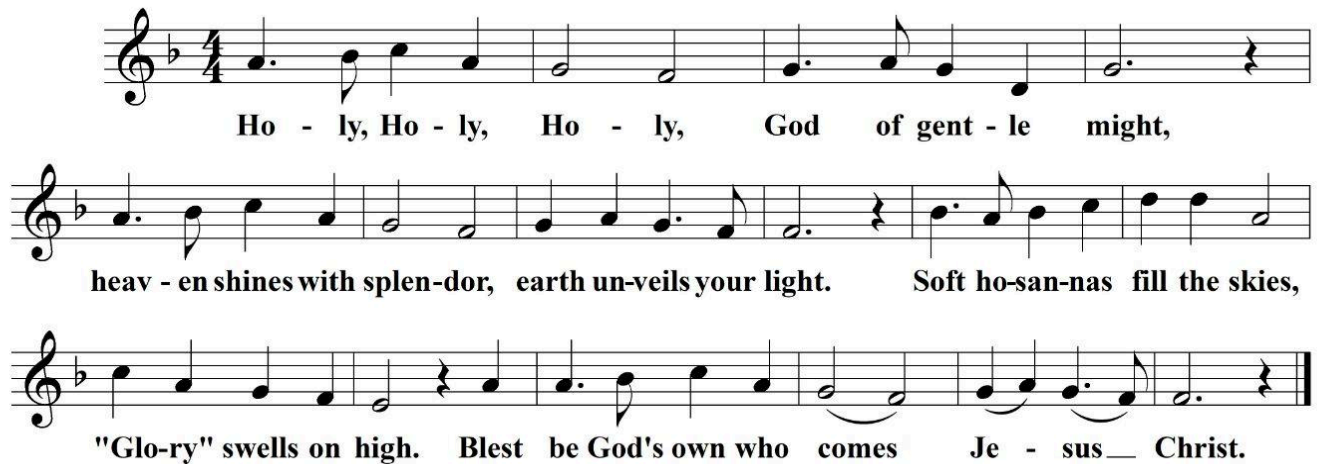
It is indeed...join their unending hymn:

## + Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy

Text adapted by Paul Stever

Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, God of gent - le might,  
heav - en shines with splen-dor, earth un-veils your light. Soft ho-san-nas fill the skies,  
"Glo-ry" swells on high. Blest be God's own who comes Je - sus — Christ.

## +Eucharistic Prayer and Words of Institution

### +The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, Our Mother, 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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Creador nuestro, Madre nuestra, Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo, santificado sea tu nombre. Venga tu reino. Hágase tu voluntad en la tierra como en el cielo. Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día. Perdona nuestras ofensas como también nosotros perdonamos a los que nos ofenden. No nos dejes caer en tentación y líbranos del mal. Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es el poder y tuya es la gloria, ahora y siempre. Amén.

## Holy Communion

*We believe that Jesus Christ is present in Holy Communion with gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation. All who hunger for the presence of Christ in their life are invited to partake. By our participation in this meal and blessing, we are strengthened in faith and in life. All are welcome to commune.*

### ***If you are at home and sitting with others...***

*When sharing the bread with someone, say to them: "This is the body of Christ, given for you." When sharing the wine or grape juice, say, "This is the blood of Christ, shed for you."*

### ***If you are at home on your own...***

*Hear the voice of the pastor naming these promises of grace and life for you. If you'd prefer a blessing, hear these promises: "You are a beloved child of God. May God strengthen you with grace through Christ for all we face today."*

### ***If you are worshiping in-person today...***

*We invite you to come forward to receive the elements and hear the words of promise, or to receive a blessing. Following the direction of the ushers, come forward: pick up a cup, gather around the table, receive the bread (gluten free is available), the servers will pour into your cup either the red wine or white grape juice, place used cups in the basket. If you'd prefer, coming forward to the front for a blessing is always an option. Children of all ages are welcome to partake in the bread and juice at Holy Communion.*

### ***If you seek healing prayers today...***

*A healing minister is available during Holy Communion this morning. If you'd like prayers for healing for yourself, for those you love, or for other situations, you are invited to come to one of the healing ministers. You can ask for specific prayers, or simply ask them to pray with you...and they will. During this time, you may also dip into the baptismal waters and remember the promises, and light candles for situations around the world and close to home.*

**Music During Communion**    Of the Father's Love Begotten  
The First Noel

ELW 295  
ELW 300

## **+Table Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.  
**Amen.**

## **+Prayer after Communion**

Loving God, In a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, **Amen.**

## **Announcements**

## SENDING

## **+Sending Hymn**

Songs of Thankfulness and Praise (vss. 1 & 4)

ELW 310



## **+Blessing**

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit. May you reach for each other's hands.  
May you choose courage whenever you can. And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear. In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends, and the one who journeys with us.  
**Amen.**

## **+Dismissal**

Go in peace and be not afraid.  
**Thanks be to God!**

Vaya en paz y no tengáis miedo.  
**Gracias a Dios!**

## **Postlude**

From Heaven Above

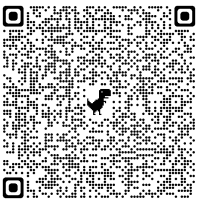

### **What do you fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent and Christmas**

*(from Sanctified Art, What do you fear, 2025)*

"Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers; however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear." When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

This Advent series takes seriously the angels' message and trusts that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. The resources look closely at the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and invite us to consider the fears we hold now. Fear can divide and paralyze us and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?

As you journey through this season, may your hope become gritty and resilient. May you remember: hope that trembles is still hope. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear."

<p><b>Staff at University Lutheran Church of Hope</b></p> <p><b>Lead Pastor</b> Rev. Amanda Simons (she/her) amandas@ulch.org</p> <p><b>Pastor</b> Rev. Maria Anderson-Lippert (she/her) mariaa@ulch.org</p> <p><b>Minister of Worship and Music</b> Paul Stever (he/him) pauls@ulch.org</p> <p><b>Church Administrator</b> Nathan Obrestad (he/him) nathano@ulch.org</p> <p><b>Financial Administrator</b> Catherine Menick (she/her) FinAdmin@ulch.org</p> <p><b>Sunday Opener/Closer, Worship Tech</b> <i>Please share our open position</i></p> <p><b>Custodian</b> Geremew Beshah (he/him)</p> <p><b>Lutheran Campus Pastor</b> Kate Reuer Welton (she/her) kate@umnlutheran.org</p>	<p><b>Giving electronically</b> Use this QR code to reach the University Lutheran Church of Hope donation page:</p> <p>Or go to <a href="http://www.ulch.org">www.ulch.org</a> and click on the “Give” tab. Thank you for your generous support of God’s ministry through ULCH.</p>  <p><b>Copyright Acknowledgments</b> Spoken Advent liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed   A Sanctified Art LLC   <a href="http://sanctifiedart.org">sanctifiedart.org</a> (2025) Scripture excerpts in English from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, unless otherwise noted. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture excerpts in Spanish from Santa Biblia, NUEVA VERSIÓN INTERNACIONAL® NVI®, © 1999, 2015 por Biblica, Inc.® Usado con permiso de Biblica, Inc.® Reservados todos los derechos en todo el mundo. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.</p>  <p><b>University Lutheran Church of Hope</b> 601 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Minneapolis, MN 55414-1437 612.331.5988 <a href="http://www.ulch.org">www.ulch.org</a> Office hours: 9am to 2pm weekdays</p>
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### Today’s Worship Leaders

Pastor Amanda Simons, Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert (presiding ministers); Marty Lewis-Hunstiger (assisting minister); Maureen Armstrong (musician); John Beane, Kelleen Brooks, Randall Brooks, Lisa Morse (communion servers); Sonja Peterson (lector); Kyle Rosenberg (worship tech facilitator); Don & Meri Hauge (greeters); Sampson Evans, Scott Hvizdos, Williams Santana (ushers); Juna Evans, Liv Evans (acolytes); Shelly Parry (worship prep); Pauline Hendrickson, Kathy Kufus (communion clean-up); Sara Tufvesson Doure, Diane Greve (healing prayer)

**Poetry for the season written by Sarah Speed** (2025, *Sanctified Art*)

A Step Toward Home

I will not tell you to buck up,  
to tough it out, to ignore the fear  
rattling around in your chest.  
I will not tell you that all shall be well  
or that morning will come quickly.  
I will not ask you to march into danger  
without first repeating your name in my prayers.  
But if fear stops you in your tracks,  
if fear makes it hard to breathe,  
hard to move,  
hard to think,  
then I will remind you  
that even one step with shaking knees  
is a step toward home.

### **Hope Choir and handbells upcoming**

Hope Choir rehearsals resume on Wednesday, January 14 at 7-8:30pm. If you'd like to join us in 2026 maybe for a special project like Night Songs or other period of time, please reach out to Paul at [pauls@ulch.org](mailto:pauls@ulch.org). Handbells will also continue in late January, dates TBD, open to new ringers at any time. We have a group learning beginning techniques, as well as a more experienced group.

### **Night Songs: Sunday, February 15 at 7pm**

Save the date for another Night Songs performance with our own Hope Choir and other local choirs! Many things will be similar to past years, but last time this event was so popular that we weren't able to seat everyone who showed up. So this time around we are requiring people to get tickets online in advance, to help ensure there is a seat for each person who comes. Watch for a ticketing link through Eventbrite coming soon, and get your tickets early!