

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH2

*“We have seen His star in the east,
and have come to worship Him.”
(Matthew 2:2)*

Dear friends in Christ,

As we come upon the season of Epiphany, the Church once again focuses on the Light, which is Christ that shows forth to a world in darkness – a Light which draws us to Himself and His salvation.

The Magi, seeking to worship Jesus are often placed as a part of the Christmas account, but actually happens some time later. And yet, their journey, their finding of the Christ child does not happen without God’s grace – His miraculous doing.

Take a closer look at Matthew 2:2. First of all, these wise men from the East would not have made such a long and arduous journey without the gift of faith. Somehow, God’s messengers have brought them the Word of God – and by His grace they believe – they must go and find this promised One of God. And then God makes sure that they will find Him by a mi-

raculous star.

But also notice the reason for their visit. They do not come simply to have a look-see. Curiosity does not drive them. *“We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”*

They have come to worship Him!

It was the same for the shepherds on the night of His birth. They have come to be in the presence of Jesus the Christ, the Savior of the world – for it is only through Him that they have salvation.

And finally, not only have they come to be in the presence of the forgiving and life giving Savior, they have come to give Him of His gifts in their offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They have become God’s instruments to provide the Christ-child’s earthly parents the means to escape to Egypt to avoid wicked Herod’s plan to murder Jesus the child King.

As we have arrived at the year of our Lord, 2012, God’s miracles continue. We are able to come and worship the King – to be in His presence and receive His

gifts of Word and Sacrament for forgiveness, life, and salvation. In a time when so many are making New Year’s resolutions which are rarely kept, I would pray that all of you would make every effort to come and worship the Lord each Lord’s Day during the coming year.

Pray that God would give you a hunger for His life giving Word and Sacrament and help keep you from the temptation of anything that would prevent you from doing so. Being in the presence of our Lord and receiving His gifts will continue to keep you in the one true faith – and by the grace of God you will hunger for His presence all the more. That is quite miraculous in itself.

Once again, Roxanne and I would like to thank all of you for your prayers, your gifts, and support during the past year. We have truly been blessed by our family here at Immanuel and I look forward to the coming year as we live and serve our neighbors together in the Name of Jesus. God give all of you a most joyous and blessed New Year.

With love in Christ,
Pastor Praeuner