

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

In our Hearts and Prayers: Sheila Edwards, Sheila Kaderli, Betty Schmidt, our homebound and shut-ins, our Fredericksburg community, our nation, and the military.

The Three Habits of Highly Contagious Christians Bible Study will be offered on Sundays, January 11, 18 & Feb 1 at 10:15am in the Adult SS Room and on Monday nights, Jan 12, 19 & 24 at 6:30pm in the Conference Room (or by Zoom). **Sign up in the Atrium by TODAY.**

Sign up by January 11 to join us on a Mission Trip, March 17-21, 2026...5-day trip to San Vicente, Mexico, near Big Bend National Park.

A Budget Forum will be held on Sunday, January 18 immediately following the worship service in the Sanctuary. (*Adult Bible Study will begin after forum.*)

Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25 immediately following the worship service in the Sanctuary.

Thank you for your Christmas Eve contributions of \$4,137. **Attendance:** 144

Thank you for your contributions of \$5,586 given last week. **Attendance:** 34

ASSISTANT & LECTOR – Rhonda Behrends

USHERS – Perry & Cris Strackbein, Dan & Judy McGookey, Donna Oehler, Sandy Schmitzinsky, Karen Snowden (Acolyte – usher)

MINISTRIES FOR THE WEEK

TODAY – Jan 4 10:15am Adult Sunday School – Adult SS Rm

MON – Jan 5 5:15pm Sign Mtg – Conf Rm
6-9:00pm Astronomers Mtg – Fell Hall

WED – Jan 7 8:00am Men's Breakfast – Adult SS Rm
9:30am WELCA Bible Study – Conf Rm
6:30pm Property Committee Mtg – Adult SS Rm

THURS – Jan 8 5:30pm Finance Mtg – Conf Rm
6:00pm Investment Mtg – Conf Rm

SUN – Jan 11 9:00am Worship with Communion
10:15am Adult Bible Study – Adult SS Rm
10:15am Youth Sunday School – Fell Hall

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ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Fredericksburg, Texas

Epiphany of Our Lord

January 4, 2026

Video on Zion's YouTube Channel at 6:00PM

(go to www.zion-lutheran.com/youtube)

Broadcast on KNAF (910AM) at 6:00PM

Pastor & Organist – Rev. Jonathan Mollenkopf
Assistant – Robert Menking; Lector – Jim O'Neal
Choir Director & Pianist – Rhonda Behrends

426 W. Main – PO Box 1571 – Fredericksburg, TX 78624
(830) 997-2195 – www.zion-lutheran.com – email: zionfbg@gmail.com

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Zion Lutheran Church
Epiphany of Our Lord
January 4, 2026

P=Presider **R=Responses** *Please stand, as you are able

Our Mission Statement – *We Share the Joy. We Worship, Love and Serve.*

GATHERING

BELLS

WELCOME (*Please register your attendance in the books at the end of the row where you are seated, tear it out, and place it in the offering plate.*)

PRELUDE Flute/Piano Duet ~ Debbie Sultemeier & Sheri Robinson
“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” ~ Music: *Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, 1599; Lyrics: 15th Century German
“In the Bleak Midwinter” by Gustav Holst & Christina Georgina Rossetti

EPIPHANY DIALOGUE

A We give thanks on this holy day, adorned with epiphanies:
for the star that led the magi to the manger,
R that the nations may see the light of Christ;
A for the water turned to wine at Cana's wedding,
R that the people taste the goodness of the Lord;
A for the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Jordan,
R that the Christ would save us all.
A This is the day that the Lord has made,
R we will rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia.

***GATHERING HYMN** *“The First Noel”* **HYMN NO. 300**

**The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.



***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

R Amen

SENDING

***BLESSING FOR THE NEW YEAR**

A O God, you have been our help in ages past, our hope for years to come. As we welcome this new year, bless us with peace.

R **Fill our days with the light of Christ and lead us on the path of life until we see you in our heavenly home. You live and reign forever and ever. Amen.**

***BENEDICTION**

P Beloved children of God, what came into being in Christ was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. The light of Christ shine on you with grace and mercy and fill you with joy and peace. (*John 1:1, 3-5*)

R Amen

***SENDING HYMN** “As with Gladness Men of Old” (vs.1,3,5) **HYMN NO. 302**

**As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.**

**In the heav'nly country bright need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing alleluias to our king.**

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898, alt.

***DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace, guided by the light of Christ.

R **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Our Day of Joy is Here Again” by Andrew L. Skoog

**They looked up and saw a star shining
in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.**

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

**And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. Refrain**

**This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. Refrain**

**Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee, and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. Refrain**

Text: English traditional

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P God who revealed yourself to wise men following a star,
Guide all who search and journey towards your light today,

R **God, whose light shines like a bright guiding star, have mercy on us.**

P God who unveiled yourself in the gift of a Son,
Show yourself to all who seek after justice and righteousness today,

R **God, whose light shines like a bright guiding star, have mercy on us.**

P God who was baptized with those who declared their repentance in the Jordan river, Manifest yourself to all who come with repentant hearts today,

R **God, whose light shines like a bright guiding star, have mercy on us.**

P God, who is rich in mercy, came to offer salvation to all who call upon Jesus as Lord. We have bold and confident access to God through faith in Christ Jesus. By his grace, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit.

R **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

***HYMN OF PRAISE** *"Bright and Glorious Is the Sky"* (vs.1-3,6) **HYMN NO. 301**

**Bright and glorious is the sky, radiant are the heavens high
where the golden stars are shining.**

**All their rays to earth inclining
beckon us to heav'n above, beckon us to heav'n above.**

**On that holy Christmas night through the darkness beamed a light;
all the stars above were paling. all their luster slowly failing
as the wondrous star drew nigh, as the wondrous star drew nigh.**

**Sages from the East afar, when they saw this wondrous star,
went to find the king of nations and to offer their oblations
to the child, the newborn king, to the child, the newborn king.**

**And this star, as bright as day, that will never lead astray
with its message so appealing, is the word of God, revealing
Christ, the way, the truth, the life,
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.**

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877-1970, alt.
Text © 1958 *Service Book and Hymnal*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

***GREETING**

P God who sent the Light into our world, God who shone in the Bethlehem manger, God who spreads the Spirit's rays, be with you all.

R **And also with you.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

R **Amen**

SPECIAL MUSIC

"How Many Kings" by Downhere

Judy McGookey

WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
²For darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples, but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

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***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

R Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

***DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

COMMUNION HYMN *"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"* **HYMN NO. 282**

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!**

**For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.**

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

"Oh, Come, Little Children" by Johann A.P. Schulz
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SERMON

***CHRISTMAS CREED** *“In God the Father We Believe”*

tune: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

In God the Father we believe The Lord of hosts his name.

All things from him their form receive;

By his strong Word they came.

By him was all created In earth and heav’n above.

He made them all, things great and small,

By his great pow’r and love.

In God’s Son Jesus we believe; Who came at God’s own hour,

Whom Virgin Mary did conceive By Holy Spirit’s pow’r.

He suffered and was buried Was raised at God’s own call

To reign on high, and to draw nigh At last as Judge of all.

In Holy Spirit we believe And in Christ’s church on earth.

The saints, united, faith receive, A gift of precious worth.

He sanctifies and keeps us By his empow’ring love.

Forgiven, we the grave shall free To live with God above.

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Lead us, O God:

lead us by your light.

*PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

R And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEAL

OFFERING

“He Is Born” -Traditional French Carol

***OFFERING SONG** *“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”* (vs.4) **HYMN NO. 275**

**All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.**

**Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.**

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4

³Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift 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. ⁵Then 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. ⁶A 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.

L The Word of the Lord.

R Thanks be to God.

PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14 (Read responsively)

A Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king’s son.

**R May he judge your people with righteousness
and your poor with justice.**

A May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

**R May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.**

A May he live while the sun endures
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

**R May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.**

A In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

**R May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute;
may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.**

A May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

**R For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.**

A He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy.

**R From oppression and violence he redeems their life,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, ²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given me for you ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.

⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in^[a] God, who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

L The word of the Lord. **R** **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (vs.2) **HYMN NO. 283**

**The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2nd Chapter.

R **Glory to you, O Lord.**

***GOSPEL** **Matthew 2:1-12**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² 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." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'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.' " ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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." ⁹When 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.

¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P The gospel of the Lord. **R** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

"We Three Kings of Orient Are"

WOV 646



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,
owns a de - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
God and Sac - ri - fice; heav'n sings al - le -



moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
lu - ia: al - le - lu - ia the earth re - plies.

Refrain



Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt.; Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891