

**The star...  
came to  
rest over  
the place  
where the  
child was.**



Matthew 2:9, ESV



*January 7, 2024*

*Saint Thomas Lutheran*

*23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370*

*[www.stl-eastpointe.org](http://www.stl-eastpointe.org)*

*Guest Preacher: Rev. Mike Vieregge*

*Specific Ministry Pastor - Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Deacon - Don Cooley*

*Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another  
Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People*

**We are here to serve our community.** As you worship with us online, the Lord Jesus is at work, uniting us as friends and family. If you are curious to learn more out ministry in the community, go to [www.stl-eastpointe.org](http://www.stl-eastpointe.org), or like us on Face Book. To get your questions answered in a more personal way, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor/staff member to give you a call.

*Divine Service  
Epiphany Sunday*

**Call To Worship**

*“O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”*

[LSB 395 1, 4-6]

O Morning Star, how fair and bright! You shine with God’s own truth and light,  
Aglow with grace and mercy! Of Jacob’s race, King David’s son,  
Our Lord and master, You have won Our hearts to serve You only!  
Lowly, holy! Great and glorious, All victorious,  
Rich in blessing! Rule and might o’er all possessing!

Almighty Father, in Your Son You loved us when not yet begun  
Was this old earth’s foundation! Your Son has ransomed us in love  
To live in Him here and above: This is Your great salvation.  
Alleluia! Christ the living, To us giving  
Life forever, Keeps us Yours and fails us never!

O let the harps break forth in sound! Our joy be all with music crowned,  
Our voices gladly blending! For Christ goes with us all the way—  
Today, tomorrow, ev’ry day! His love is never ending!  
Sing out! Ring out! Jubilation! Exultation!  
Tell the story! Great is He, the King of Glory!

What joy to know, when life is past, The Lord we love is first and last,  
The end and the beginning! He will one day, oh, glorious grace,  
Transport us to that happy place Beyond all tears and sinning!  
Amen! Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! Crown of gladness!  
We are yearning For the day of Your returning!

Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship.

**Opening Liturgy**

[Psalm 72]

**L:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C:** Amen.

**L:** Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son!

**C:** **May he judge the people with righteousness and the poor with justice.**

**L:** God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone.

**C:** **Give us the power of your Holy Spirit, that with your Word active in us, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow in boldness and confidence through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*(silence for reflection and self-examination)*

L: Gracious God,

**C: Have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Word and Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, blessing all with the love of Jesus; in his name we pray. Amen.**

L: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in your witness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep you in eternal life.

**C: Amen.**

L: Let us pray: Lord God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now my 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.

**C: Amen.**

### ***Hymn of Praise***

*“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”*

[LSB 411, vv. 1-2]

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus. **Refrain**

**Refrain: In Him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.**

I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus.  
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path, And show me the way to the Father. **Refrain**

Text: © 1970, 1975 Celebration.

### ***Prayer of the Day and the Sharing of Peace***

L: O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

*(share the peace with one another)*

### ***Anthem***

*“Were You There on that Christmas Night”*

N. Sleeth

## ***+ The Service of the Word +***

### ***Old Testament Reading***

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned 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 bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

*(after the reading)*

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### ***New Testament Reading***

**Ephesians 3:1-12**

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

*(after the reading)*

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### ***Gospel Reading***

**Matthew 2:1-12**

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 2.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

*(after the reading)*

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### ***Nicene Creed***

LSB inside back cover

### ***Announcements***

## Children's Sermon

### Hymn of the Day

### "What Child Is This"

[LSB 370]

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

### Sermon

## + Our Responds to the Good News +

### This week's "KINGDOM THOUGHT"

"Going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother,  
and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures,  
they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." **(Matthew 2:11)**

*Worship, rather than just a weekly activity, is a way of life  
for the child of God in Christ Jesus.*

### The Prayer of the Church

L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

*(after each petition)*

L: Let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

L: Lord God, heavenly Father, we here remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**



**EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION** There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church. If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2233
- Visit: <https://www.stl-eastpointe.org/2015/07/13/mission-support/>
- Go to <https://www.elixiogiving.com/app/giving/stthoms>
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

**Offertory**

*"Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray"*

[LSB 663 vv. 1 & 5]

Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; From your sleep awaken!  
 Be not by the evil day Unawares o'ertaken;  
 For the foe, Well we know,  
 Is a harvest reaping While the saints are sleeping.

But while watching, also pray To the Lord unceasing.  
 God protects you day by day, Strength and faith increasing,  
 So that still Mind and will  
 Shall unite to serve Him And forever love Him.

**+ Service of Holy Communion+**

*"As we receive the True Body and Blood of our Lord, our faith is fed, our spirits are encouraged, and we are moved to share God's grace with the world."*

*[Because of the closeness of this sharing (and the concerns expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29) we ask that those who have not been taught the faith at STL speak with a pastor or elder before communing.]*

**Preparation for the Sacrament**

[Isaiah 60]

- L: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
- C: **The Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.**
- L: Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.
- C: **Lift up your eyes all around and see; they gather together, they come to you from afar.**

- L: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- C: **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.**

**The Words of Institution**

## ***The Distribution of the Sacrament***

### ***Pre-Communion Canticle***

*“O Jesus, Blessed Lord to Thee”*

(tune LSB 358)

O Jesus, blessed Lord, to Thee my heartfelt thanks forever be,  
Who has so lovingly bestowed on me Your body and Your blood.

Break forth, my soul, for joy and say: What wealth is come to me this day!  
My Savior dwells within my heart: How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

### ***Distribution Hymns***

*“As with Gladness Men of Old”*

LSB 397, vv. 1, 3, 5

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.

*“Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning”*

LSB 400, vv. 1, 2, 3

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the East, the horizon adorning, Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining; Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining, Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.

Shall we not yield Him, in costly devotion, Fragrance of Edom and off’rings divine,  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean, Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?

### ***Post-Communion Canticle***

*“Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray”*

LSB 623 vv. 4, 5  
(tune LSB 358)

One bread, one cup, one body, we, Rejoicing in our unity,  
Proclaim Your love until You come To bring Your scattered loved ones home.

Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly pray: O keep us steadfast till that day  
When each will be Your welcomed guest In heaven’s high and holy feast.

### ***Dismissal***

### ***Sending Prayer***

## **Benediction**

### ***Sending Hymn***

*“Arise, Your Light Has Come!”*

[WOV 652]

Arise, your light has come! The Spirit’s call obey;  
show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.

Arise, your light has come! Fling wide the prison door;  
proclaim the captive’s liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light has come! All you in sorrow born,  
bind up the broken-hearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light has come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing, God’s pow’r will make us strong.

Text by Ruth Duck. Music by William H. Walter  
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Watch services on Facebook or at [www.stl-eastpointe.org](http://www.stl-eastpointe.org) – videotaping in progress during service

## **NEXT SUNDAY**

### ***The Baptism of Our Lord***

January 14, 2024

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-5 / Romans 6:1-11 / Mark 1:4-11

**2024 Envelopes are available in the west hallway!** Please stop by the table, print your name on the list next to the envelope # you are taking home. Information for electronic giving is printed in the worship folders. If you have any questions, contact Linda in the church office. **Please, do not use these envelopes until 2024!**

January 13, 2024 – Undecorate the Church at 9:00 am

Help is needed!

**Thank You!** A warm, heartfelt thank you to the families who have kept our Giving Tree growing in the past few years. Your generosity has provided so much joy to many children in need at Christmas. I have been privileged to be the coordinator of this Ministry for many years here at St. Thomas, and I will miss it more than I can say. I pray that my successor finds it to be as much of a blessing as I have. Wishing you all a New Year filled with love and our Father's unending and perfect grace. Victoria Corbett

**There is no Attendance Form to fill out -**

You will no longer have to fill out a form for your attendance at each service. We will only be tracking our # attended and the # of communion participants. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

**Help Wanted**

St. Thomas needs to have a snow shoveler/salter for the entrances and the sidewalks on stand-by for when it snows. The shoveling will need to be done before school starts at 8:00 am (by 7:30 am) and then throughout the day when we have a snowstorm. Entrances/sidewalks will also need to be shoveled before school lets out, at 3:00 pm and on Sunday mornings before service. Please contact Linda in the church office if you're interested. This is a paid position and will be discussed with the interested person.

**There will be no Monday Night Vespers on January 8th or 15<sup>th</sup>.**

***Our Confession of Faith***

As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), we subscribe to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian) and the Christian faith as confessed in the Book of Concord. This includes believing that:

- Jesus Christ is both true God and true man who died for our sins and rose again to save us.
- His body/blood are truly present in communion under the form of bread/wine (page 326).
- Communion is, among other things, an expression of doctrinal unity.
- Infant baptism is a Means of Grace through which God delivers one from sin and gives eternal salvation to all who believe (page 325 in Lutheran Service Book).

*Weekly Worship with Communion - Sunday at 9:30 a.m.*

*Monday at 7:30 p.m. (pending)*

*"The Flock" for children and Crossftraining JC Style for youth*

*Faith Hope Love Gatherings - Sunday and throughout the week*

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

January 7, 2024

### In your prayers this week please remember:

- Our schools – public, private and those in homes – and all connected to the education of our children and youth in this new year.
- Those who feel isolated or alone, along with those who suffer with depression.
- Our individual and joint efforts of sharing God’s peace and hope with all.
- STL as we minister to all God’s children in these changing times.

**And we remember those who protect and nurture life on this earth**, this week remembering those receiving the vaccine, along with all military families, emergency responders, and hospital, nursing home and hospice care workers.



To connect to the **STL PRAYER CHAIN**, contact Karen Dolan ([mdolan421@gmail.com](mailto:mdolan421@gmail.com)), text “Prayer” to 1-586-800-2223, or scan this QR code, with your phone’s camera, to be taken to the prayer request form.

### † In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

†**God’s Healing Hand on:** Brenda Finger, Ben Stubenrauch, Harrison Ahee, John Belvedere (son-in-law of Caroline Henze), Scott Baker (grandson of Diane Ustick).

†**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Mary Buike, Gianino, Joanne Awe, Robert Laroche (family of Jan Adams), Jan Adams, Tiffany Crow (granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Payton Gifford (great-granddaughter of Jane Gurnack), Kennedy Pank (great-granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Adriana Sullivan (friend of Sue Wensink).