

THE KEYS



Church of St. Peter the Apostle
Anglican Catholic Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States
www.dmas-acc.org

The Rev. Canon Peter Geromel, OHI, DMin - Rector
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www.anglican catholic.org

<https://stpetersacc.org>

Fr. Seeley's Corner

The Epiphany or the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles

The Epiphany is the culmination of the Christmastide and adds the final element to the story. Epiphany is from two Greek words: epi = outward and Phania meaning to appear, or appearing; think phantastic. Thus Epiphany means: outward showing, or outward appearing.

We also hear it nowadays in such phrases as “having an epiphany”, a lightbulb moment when you realize something, or figure something out.

You might say the Wise Men had the first epiphany moment when they saw the star and realized where it led, and decided to follow the star to Our Lord.

Jesus, the Son of God, is born into this world; God visits his people. God does not visit everyone the same way, in fact each person's encounter with Jesus will be highly personal. To those who have fewer means to seek Him, he is likely to come toward them; to those who seek Him he may make himself harder to find. This is because God wants each person to cherish their encounter with Him, if he is too easily found and discovered the person in question might become disenchanted with God and lose interest, thus He might make them look harder for Him.

When Jesus was born angels announced his birth to the shepherds in a vision. To those who had no knowledge of philosophy or science, and who could not dedicate time and energy to seeking God, God made himself known directly and comforted them by having His Son available to them, in a stable where they could come and worship him. He made himself available to those who desired Him, but did not have the means or knowledge to seek him.

Now we see something different. Wisemen come from the East seeking “He who is born the King of the Jews”. How did they know that a King of the Jews was to be born? Especially as they were most likely not Jews themselves? The Jewish scriptures had traveled the world through the exiles and diaspora of the Jews and each time the jews settled in a new area, they translated their Scriptures; so there were many pagans and heathens who had heard of, or even read the Jewish Scriptures.

These men had taken time to seek God, but God wanted them to treasure their encounter with Him, so he requires that they seek Him over many days/weeks. And their journey proves fruitful.

And here, three men make a journey with treasures to seek out and worship the King of the Jews, a little baby who cannot even acknowledge their visit or reward them for their efforts.

This goes to a very important idea; the thirst for God. The desire for God. There is an innate desire for God in mankind which leads mankind to do either heroic and wonderful things, or horrible and amazing things. The thirst for God is an innate part of the human soul; you can see it everywhere. You can see it in the proliferation of religion in the world.

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in the priesthood

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in religious life

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in missionary work.

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in charitable work

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in teaching

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in helping those less fortunate, the poor, and the handicapped.

You can see it in people who seek God after hitting a low point in their lives; like with drinking and drugs. They know that Christians forgive, and when people realize that they need forgiveness, they will often come to church.

You can see it in people who hear a call and seek God in going to church especially in today's times in which church is no longer fashionable and many churches are corrupt and worldly, no longer teaching the gospel.

You see people flock to the Latin Mass, because they think there they will find a closer connection to God in the mystery of the sacred language and ancient ceremony.

You see it in people drawn to Anglicanism, the liturgy, the ancient faith, and the sacraments; plus a spirituality based in monastic meditation.

You also see it in ways that might not seem obvious sometimes:

You see today people seeking God in other strange philosophies, like the New Age and Spiritualism.

You see evangelical meetings, sometimes going on for days or even weeks.

You see people seeking God by converting to those religions which have very strong cultural ties; like Judaism, Islam, and Mormonism

You can also see it today in people who go to self help programs, special diets, and feel good philosophy. They know that God is within, and that their body is a temple, and they seek to sanctify it.

You also see this thirst for God in subcultures today: people seeking belonging.

You see it in Viking and other historical revival subcultures, people seeking a sense of belonging and intensity by living the culture of their ancestors.

You see it in the gothic or emo subculture and other musical genres, people seeking an outward expression of their inner aesthetic.

You see it even in the LGBT world which has become a form of refuge that offers a sense of belonging and inner validation outside of societal structures and the roles of family life.

These things used to be provided by the Church, and her abandonment of cultural and charitable institutions has meant people seeking those needs elsewhere.

When the Wisemen get to Nazareth they enter the house where Mary and Joseph dwell (they do not come to the stable, as that was only for the one night wherein he was born). They enter and offer their gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

These gifts have several meanings.

- Gold has traditionally been seen as the wisemen recognizing that Jesus was a king.
- Frankincense has traditionally been seen as the wisemen recognizing that Jesus is God.
- Myrrh has traditionally been seen as the wisemen recognizing that Jesus is human and will die for one day.

These gifts also represent our offerings to the Lord.

When we come to Jesus, do we bring our gold? That which we hold dear, that which we have worked for and means the most to us?

When we come to Jesus, do we bring our Frankincense? Do we pray? Do we spend time with God? Do we think about and talk to God? This does not necessarily mean saying vocal prayers, it could mean saying Morning or Evening prayer, and then thinking over what we've read throughout the day. (I'm sending you an email weekly now to make MP and EP easier to say)

When we come to Jesus, do we bring our Myrrh? Do we live as if we might meet Jesus today? We could die at any time, we could be killed or die on the way home from church (not to get overly morbid, but this is a truth we need to keep in mind). We need to live our lives ready to meet Jesus, to live our lives as a sweet smelling savor of myrrh unto Our Lord?

There is a cheesy motivational saying: wise men still seek him. But the truth is that whenever someone realizes that if you desire love, if you desire friendship. If you desire justice, if you desire order and peace, these things can only be found when God is involved.

People seek God who desire what is best, and realize that that cannot be found in earthly things, it can only be found in contact with the divine.

This is the message of Epiphany. It is a physical manifestation of the phrase: seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. The Wiseman sought and found: it's our turn now.

News and Information

The Feast of the Circumcision, Wed. Jan. 1, 6 pm.

The Feast of the Epiphany, Mon. Jan. 6, 6 pm.

Wednesday, Jan. 22nd, Vestry Meeting at 7:30, preceded by Mass at 7 pm.

(Epiphany House Blessings now available by appointment.)

Jan. 24-26, All Angels' Retreat in South Carolina

The Presentation of Christ, Sunday, Feb. 2, all masses.

St. Matthias the Apostle, celebrated Wednesday, February, 26th, 6 pm.

Going forward, we plan to have Solemn Evensong and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on First Sundays at 6 pm - with Reception of Holy Communion for those who did not receive earlier. And we plan to have Celtic Evensong - with Reception of Holy Communion as well - on Third Sundays. This will be from the Irish Prayer Book of 1926 with Celtic Hymns and Preaching on a Celtic Saint.

JANUARY, 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
LEGEND: HC - Holy Communion; FHE – Festal Holy Eucharist; HE - Holy Eucharist; SS – Sunday School; PG - Prayer Group; EP – Evening Prayer; MP – Morning Prayer; P&HU – Prayers and Holy Unction			[1] 6:00 p.m. HC CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST	[2] 12 noon HC	[3]	[4]
[5] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong & Benediction CHRISTMAS II	[6] 6:00 p.m. HC EPIPHANY	[7]	[8]	[8] 12 noon HC	[10]	[11]
[12] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. EP EPIPHANY I	[13]	[14]	[15]	[16] 12 noon HC	[17]	[18]
[19] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong EPIPHANY II	[20]	[21]	[22] 7:00 pm HC 7:30 pm Vestry	[23] 12 noon HC	[24]	[25]
[26] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong & Benediction EPIPHANY III	[27]	[28]	[29]	[30] 12 noon HC	[31]	

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

If you cannot fulfill your assigned duty because of an urgent reason, PLEASE SECURE A REPLACEMENT.

	January 5	January 12	January 19	January 26
Coffee Hour	--	E. Paisley	V. Williams	C. deRosset
Epistoler 8 a.m.	D. Drysdale	C. Von Claparede	G. Mauney	D. Drysdale
Epistoler 10 a.m.	P. Williams	T. Paisley	G. Terrell	P. Williams

Altar servers and ushers will be assigned as available before each service.

FEBRUARY, 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
LEGEND: HC - Holy Communion; FHE – Festal Holy Eucharist; HE - Holy Eucharist; SS – Sunday School; PG - Prayer Group; EP – Evening Prayer; MP – Morning Prayer; P&HU – Prayers and Holy Unction						[1]
[2] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong & Benediction PRESENTATION OF CHRIST	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6] 12 noon HC	[7]	[8]
[9] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. EP EPIPHANY V	[10]	[11]	[12]	[13] 12 noon HC	[14]	[15]
[16] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong SEPTUAGESIMA	[17]	[18]	[19]	[20] 12 noon HC	[21]	[22]
[23] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS 6:00 p.m. Evensong & Benediction SEXAGESIMA	[24]	[25]	[26] 6:00 p.m. HC ST. MATTHIAS	[27] 12 noon HC	[28]	

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

If you cannot fulfill your assigned duty because of an urgent reason, PLEASE SECURE A REPLACEMENT.

	February 2	February 9	February 16	February 23
Coffee Hour	L. Olver	B. Von Claparede	M. Slayton	C. Kurstedt
Epistoler 8 a.m.	D. Drysdale	G. Mauney	C. Von Claparede	D. Drysdale
Epistoler 10 a.m.	T. Paisley	P. Williams	G. Terrell	T. Paisley

Altar servers and ushers will be assigned as available before each service.

2025 Vestry (term end): Clemens Von Claparede (?27), Dan Drysdale (?27), George Mauney (?25), Mike Slayton (?25), George Terrell (?26), Vicki Williams (?26)