



Spruce Grove Newsletter

Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church, Wolf Lake, MN Vol. 26 No. 1 January-February 2021

The Epiphany of our Lord

What is Epiphany of our Lord? Epiphany is a term that simply means a manifestation, appearance, or revelation of a deity. The epiphany of our Lord is the appearance or revelation of Jesus the Christ. It is during this season in the church year that we examine scripture texts that do exactly that. They reveal unto us Jesus Christ who is the Incarnate Deity (God in flesh). Starting from the Epiphany of our Lord (January 6) through the transfiguration of our Lord (February 19) the readings are ordered in such a way as to manifest or reveal Jesus through His teachings and or miracles He performed. He is shown in His humanity and also in His divinity, True Man and True God.

Epiphany begins with the wise men or the magi following the star to Bethlehem and worshipping the child Jesus. The baptism of our Lord is the first Sunday after Epiphany and the season ends on Transfiguration Sunday, the last Sunday in Epiphany where Jesus is literally revealed to Peter, James, and John in all of His majesty and splendor.

There are many wonderful scripture passages to examine for this time of year, but for the sake of this article we will look at the Matthew passage for the beginning of the Epiphany season. Matthew 2:1-12 *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child;*

and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

The revelation of Jesus as King of the Jews to these wise men is astounding especially as we consider who these men were. They were men from east of Jerusalem, who were members of the religious hierarchy of ancient Persia and Media (modern day Iran). They were scholars and practitioners of astrology, they studied the stars (astronomy), were government officials, and were interpreters of dreams. It was because of this they were called wise men.

We may wonder how they came to know of the Jewish Messiah. It is believed that they came into contact with the Jewish religion and the Hebrew Scriptures due to the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. The Persians and Medes then captured Babylon and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem, but some continued to live in the Persian Empire. Daniel was also a well known man in Babylon and among the Medes. He prophesied of the coming Messiah in his book Daniel 7:13-14 *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Although this may explain to some degree why the wise men had knowledge of the Messiah, king of the Jews, it still does not explain how they knew to

continued on next page

connect the star to the birth of Jesus Christ, king of the Jews. This is what makes this an epiphany. The wise men saw the new and strange star and recognized it as a sign of the birth of a king and it was revealed to them that this was indeed the King of kings, the King of the Jews. Since God revealed to the wise men in a dream to not report the whereabouts of the child to Herod, it is possible that he revealed to them in a dream to follow the star. We may never know how they knew to follow the star, but this much we do know that God placed the star in the night sky and led them to the child and when they saw Him they were extremely happy and they fell down worshipping Him. This then is the epiphany; this child is the Messiah, the King, not just of the Jews, but also of the Gentile Magi. He is the King of the world and His kingdom is forever and will not be destroyed. May the revelation of our Lord bring you great joy this new year and let us fall down and worship Him because of His Epiphany.

God's Peace, Pastor Dennis Hannu

Baptism



Elowyn Mae Impola, daughter of Loren & Karla Impola of rural Sebeka, was baptized on Friday, December 18, 2020 at the home of her parents by Pastor Dennis Hannu. Her sponsors are Lynn Impola of rural Sebeka and Luke & Jody Marsh of WA. Her grandparents are Paul & Esther Impola of rural Sebeka and Tim & Carol Karlsen of WA. Her great grandparents are Elma Impola of Sebeka and Frances Karlsen of WA.

Birth Announcements

Jeremy & Katie Howard announce the birth of their 10th child. Mickie Marlene was born on December 1, 2020 at Essentia Hospital in Detroit Lakes. Mickie weighed 7 pounds, 1.9 ounces and was 19.5 inches tall.



Mickie was welcomed home by her parents and sisters: Grace, Stella, Nina, Royal & Sabine and brothers: Damon, Jonah, Knaylor & Roman. Her grandparents are Curtis & Sarah Howard of Menahga, MN and Julius & Terrie Aho of Sebeka, MN.

Nate & Carrie Aho announce the birth of their 4th child. George David was born on December 5, 2020 at Essentia Hospital in Detroit Lakes.

George weighed 9 pounds, 11 ounces & was 22 inches tall.

George was welcomed home by his parents, brothers, Samuel & Stephen and sister Reyna. George's grandparents are Joshua & Deborah Aho of rural Wolf Lake, MN and Craig & Lisa Sunnarborg of Battle Ground, WA.



Alvin & Alisha Aho announce the birth of their 5th child.

Ember Lynn was born on December 23, 2020 at Essentia Hospital in Detroit Lakes. Ember weighed 7 pounds 15 ounces and was 21.5 inches tall. Ember was welcomed home by her parents and brothers: Koen, Benson & Dylan & sister Krisslyn. Her grandparents are Raymond & Janet Aho of rural Wolf Lake and Roger & Priscilla Matson of SC.

Sunday School Christmas Program



The Spruce Grove Sunday School Christmas Program was held on December 20th, 2020. Pictured below are the children in Pre-school through 9th grade singing the closing songs. There are over 125 children in Sunday School this year.

Lent Services

Lent Services begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17 at 7:30 PM. The services will continue on Wednesdays throughout the months of March & April.

The Maundy Thursday Service is April 1st, Good Friday Service is April 2nd and Easter is April 4th.

Please join us as we gather in worship and fellowship in the weeks leading up to the celebration of Christ's resurrection from the grave.

Special Services

Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church will be holding Special Services from Friday, March 5 through Sunday, March 7th.

Paul Matson and Bob Tumberg will be the guest speakers for the services.

Services will be held Friday evening at 7:30 PM, Saturday evening at 7:30 PM

and Sunday at 11:00 AM and 1:45 PM. Coffee will be served after the evening and afternoon services and dinner will be served after the Sunday morning service.

* There will also be a Seminar on Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM. The topic is "12 Disciples" and will be led by Bob Tumberg.

Everyone is invited to attend.

Grandchild Announcements

Paul & Esther Impola announce the birth of a granddaughter and grandson.

Mayme Joan Impola was born on September 25, 2020 to their daughter Clara and husband Jimmy of Ironwood, MI. Other grandparents are Rick & Betty Estola of MI.

Seth William Mattila was born on November 14, 2020 to the daughter Lois & her husband Jerome Mattila of WA. Other grandparents are James & Leah Mattila of WA.

Reuben & Ellen Tumberg announce the birth of a grandson.

Jeremiah David Matson was born on January 2, 2021 to their daughter Linda and her husband Seth of Pasco, WA. Other grandparents are Mark & Sandy Matson of WA.

Milestones

Deborah Aho	~ 65th Birthday - 1/19/2021
Hazel Yliniemi	~ 80th Birthday - 1/30/2021
Carter Aho	~ 10th Birthday - 2/5/202
Eleanor Yliniemi	~ 80th Birthday - 2/9/2021
Miriam Yliniemi	~83rd Birthday - 2/19/2021

Thank You from the Elmer Yliniemi Family

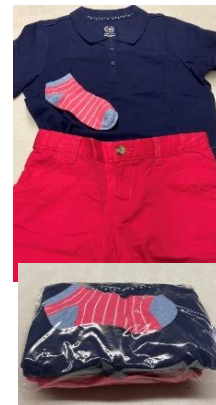
We thank the Spruce Grove Congregation and others for your prayers, comforting words, and overwhelming support that has helped us during our loss of Elmer, as well as during Isak's and my illness. So many of you showing up on the way to the cemetery was very special. May the Lord bless each of you for your kindness, concern, and generosity during our difficult time. The funeral service and other content about Elmer's life, is available at the following site: <https://sites.google.com/view/elmer-yliniemi>

We miss Elmer dearly, and the home is no longer the same without him, but we rejoice that he has attained Victory in Jesus and we can look forward to a great reunion in heaven someday!

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph.5:20
Love and God's Peace! Miriam Yliniemi and family

Christmas Child Shoe Box Project

For many years, the Youth group has participated in the annual Christmas Child Shoe box project sponsored by Samaritans Purse. A Shoe box is filled with gifts for a child in need around the world. This year 103 boxes were made. Alvin Aho, Youth Group leader, had 20+ youth group members assemble the boxes which came unassembled. All gift items were purchased during the year. The boxes were labeled for a boy or girl in 3 or 4 size categories. The \$250 Thrivent Action Team seed money was used to buy the boxes, zipper bags, labels, and a few missing essentials for the boxes. Due to Covid, only 5 people got together to pack the boxes. Alvin delivered them to Detroit Lakes from where they will continue to the next destination for processing.



All boxes had age-appropriate shirts, shorts, and socks. Soap was wrapped in inside a washcloth in plastic bags. Other items included school supplies, comb, toothbrush, and fun things like puzzles, balls, toy cars, dolls, jump ropes, flashlights, tape measure,



JAN-FEB-MAR 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1/17 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Organist: Sarah Sound: Chet	1/18	1/19	1/20 Family Bible Study 8:00 PM	1/21 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	1/22 Worship Service 7:30 PM Organist: Betsy Sound: Tyrone Coffee Group # 8	1/23
1/24 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Organist: Patricia Sound: Neil	1/25	1/26	1/27 Family Bible Study 8:00 PM	1/28 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	1/29 Song Service 7:30 PM Organist: Betsy Coffee Group # 9	1/30
1/31 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Guest Speaker: Jacob Aho Dinner Following the Service Grp # 1 Organist: Sarah Sound: Nate	2/1	2/2	2/3 Family Bible Study 8:00 PM	2/4 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	2/5	2/6 Youth Group 8:00 P.M.
2/7 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service & Holy Communion 11:00 AM Organists: Ramona & Betsy Sound: Andreas	2/8 7:30 Board Meeting	2/9	2/10 Family Bible Study 8:00 PM	2/11 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	2/12 Worship Service 7:30 PM Organist: Deborah Sound: Alvin Coffee Group # 1	2/13
2/14 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Organist: Sarah Sound: Chet	2/15	2/16	2/17 Ash Wednesday 7:30 P.M Organist: Betsy Sound: Neil Coffee Group # 2	2/18 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	2/19	2/20 Youth Group 8:00 P.M.
2/21 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Organist: Deborah Sound: Nate	2/22	2/23	2/24 Lent Service 7:30 P.M Organist: Patricia Sound: Tyrone Coffee Group # 3	2/25 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	2/26	2/27
2/28 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Guest Speaker Dinner Following the Service Grp # 2 Organist: Sarah Sound: Alvin	3/1	3/2	3/3	3/4 Guest Speakers: Paul Matson & Bob Tumberg	Special Services Mar 5-7	
3/7 Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service & Communion 11:00 A.M. Organists: Patricia & Ramona Sound: Chet Dinner Following the Service Grp # 3	3/8 ← Worship Service 1:45 P.M. Organist: Deborah Sound: Alvin Coffe Group # 10	3/9 7:30 Board Meeting	3/10 Lent Service 7:30 P.M Organist: Betsy Sound: Tyrone Coffee Group # 6	3/11 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	3/12	3/13 Seminar at 1:00 PM Worship Service 7:30 PM Organist: Betsy Sound: Nate Coffee Group # 5
3/14 Sunday School 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Organist: Sarah Sound: Andreas	3/15	3/16	3/17 Lent Service 7:30 P.M Organist: Patricia Sound: Neil Coffee Group # 7	3/18 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM	3/19	3/20 Youth Group 8:00 P.M.

January 2021

CLEANING GROUPS

Justin & Miranda Impola
Victor Jr. & Stacy Aho
Nick & Megan Aho
Luke & Renata Nevala
Tim & Sarah Aho
Thomas Aho

February 2021

Jared & Kimberly Nevala
Job & Katie Aho
Chet & Dayna Anderson
Levi & Andrea Yliniemi
Dennis & Miriam Hannu
Dawne Loper

Funeral



Clifford Donald "Cliff" Koskela, age 82, a longtime Menahga/Wolf Lake, MN area resident, peacefully entered Heaven on Monday, January 11, 2021, surrounded by his loved ones at the Green Pine Acres Nursing Home in Menahga, MN.

Cliff was born on April 30, 1938, in Wolf Lake Township of Becker County, MN to William and Ethel (Wiirre) Koskela. He grew up learning the value of good hard work on his parent's farm near Wolf Lake. He attended the District #1712 country school near his home through the eighth grade and then went on to attend high school in Menahga. As a young man, Cliff gained employment working for Swift and Co. Turkey Processing Plant in Detroit Lakes. Later, he ventured to Minneapolis and worked at Neal's Wood Shop where he learned the skill of cabinet making. On March 3, 1962, he was united in marriage to his high school sweetheart, Irene Maninga at the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church of Wolf Lake by Pastor George Wilson. Their marriage was blessed with four children: Davin, Tim, Stacy, and Jodi. Cliff engaged in a 53-year long career as a commercial truck driver. He drove for United Van Bus of Minneapolis, which later became Wintz Trucking. Cliff and Irene made their home in Crystal, MN where they raised their four children and lived until his retirement in the mid-1990s when they remodeled the country schoolhouse, where Irene was once a student in her childhood, into their residence where they have made their home since. In his retirement, he liked to keep himself busy and drove a truck part-time for Steve Becker and for Kirk Bettis. Cliff loved all sports and especially enjoyed following his favorite sports teams: The Vikings, Twins, and Timberwolves. He also loved

to be out in the woods hunting or out on the lake fishing. Cliff and Irene also enjoyed snowmobiling on the north wood trails. He enjoyed pulling his kids behind the family boat waterskiing or tubing. Cliff always took pride in caring for his yard and lawn. He and Irene also cared for the Midway Snurdbirds Baseball Diamond which they kept sharp for many years. Cliff was a member of the Tall Pine Tom's chapter of the National Turkey Federation and the Minnesota Finnish American Historical Society- Wolf Lake Chapter. Most of all, Cliff was a follower of Christ. His family takes great comfort in knowing what he saw through faith he is now seeing by his own eyesight in the glory of Heaven. He was a long-time member of the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church near Wolf Lake where he loved to worship and fellowship with his church family.

He will be lovingly remembered by his precious wife for these past 59 years, Irene; his four children: Davin (Patty) Koskela and Tim (Diane) Koskela all of Maple Grove, MN, Stacy (Mike) Tadych of St. Hilaire, MN, and Jodi (Jeff) Zabler of Punta Gorda, FL; ten dearly loved grandchildren: Kristin, Joshua and Nick Koskela, Cody and Haley Belanger, Grace and Olivia Koskela and Garret, Jenna and Colleen Tadych; seven precious great-grandchildren; three brothers: LeRoy (Joan) Koskela of Wolf Lake, MN, Eugene (Geri) Koskela of Maple Grove, MN and Gerald (Deb) Koskela of Wolf Lake; and his sister, Hazel Aho of Arizona; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Cliff was preceded in death by his parents and a brother in infancy.

Private family services were held on Friday, January 15, 2021, at the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church near Wolf Lake, MN. Rev. Dennis Hannu was the officiate. Deb Aho was the organist. All of Cliff's grandchildren will serve as his urn bearers.

Remember in Prayer

- Family of Clifford Koskela
- Family of Byron Saari
- Mickie Howard
- Family of Rev. Elmer Yliniemi
- Family of Josie Aho
- Linda Aho
- All of those affected by COVID-19
- Eva Salo
- Hazel Aho
- Ava Woodard
- Marlene Walters
- Shirley Kangas
- Jennie Hanson
- Pat Aho
- Elma Impola
- Jamie Aho
- Joan Koskela
- Martha Aho
- Sirkka Seppala
- Our Church, our Pastor and Church leaders.
- National Leaders
- Our Widows
- Our Missionaries
- Our Children & Youth
- Our Military
- Our Elderly

This is the last article Pastor Elmer Yliniemi wrote, which was printed in the July 2020 newsletter for a senior citizen group he attended.

Dear Friends,

I am sure we are all looking forward to resuming our regular gatherings soon. Today we live in a very uncertain and turbulent world. God is not an author of confusion or evil, but he often allows these things to call us back to Him. In ancient Israel, God persistently called His children back to Himself when they strayed by raising prophets who directed the people back to the Word of God. God has allowed circumstances throughout history, such as the political and moral climate of a nation, economic crisis, illness, war, and natural disasters to awaken people to recognize His sovereignty. Perhaps this is a time for each of us to consider our priorities in life and spend time with the Word of God. We have been living in affluent times where entertainment, sports, possessions, and money have become idols. Where is our first Love? God's Word tells us, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:21)

It can be easy to focus on the negative things, but the Scripture tells us to fix our eyes on "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2). We live in a fallen world where sin abounds. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12). However, we have an awesome God who is still in ultimate control. He is directing the course of history even when things seem out of control. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa.55:9). We often forget how great God is and question His goodness.

Only God's Word and its promises are certain and true. God's Word says, we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Rom.3:23) But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). God sent His Son the first time as a Savior to rescue us by shedding His Blood to atone for your sins and mine. He did not remain dead but overcame death and ascended to the Father's right hand. The second time He will come as King of Kings to gather His own and bring judgement on the earth. Do we look forward to His second coming with Joy or fear? If our sins have been washed by the Blood of Jesus and we have a relationship with Him, we can look forward

to that day with Joy.

During these difficult times, we do not need to despair. We can trust in the hidden wisdom and power of God to lead His children even through dark times. He can bring order out of chaos. May we continue to uphold God's word and pray that by the grace of God, more people will be brought to His Kingdom through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! We have a wonderful God who has prepared the way for us to reach our eternal home! "Behold, I send and an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." (Ex.23:20)

In Christ, Pastor Elmer Yliniemi

News & Notes

- Andy & Patty Aho and family traveled to FL.
 - Ryan & Chelsea Aho and family traveled to FL.
 - Tyrone Aho traveled to WA.
 - Pastor Dennis & Miriam Hannu traveled to KY & WA.
 - Lyle & Rebecca Matson & family traveled to WA.
 - Victor Jr. & Stacy Aho & family traveled to MI.
 - Charles & Leila Aho & family traveled to MI.
 - David & Loretta Olson & family traveled to SD.
 - Nick & Megan Aho & family traveled to MI.
 - Peggy Aho, Tamra Aho, Laureena Keranen, Jolie Ingvanson, Stacie Olson & Moriah Meech traveled to FL.
 - Calvin & Kaitlyn Impola traveled to ID.
 - Kyle & Macey Aho traveled to NH.
 - Gloria Aho traveled to WA.
 - Lynn Impola traveled to WA.
 - Christa Ojala traveled to WA.
 - Jamie & Tamara Aho & family traveled to MT.
 - Joe & Jasmine Christiansen & family traveled to SC
- Some of the visitors the last few months were:
- Kent, Alyssa & Milo Aho from TX.
 - Jethro & Molly Impola & family from SD.
 - Jimmy & Clara Estola & family from MI.
 - Dan Aho from NH.
 - Ron Hakala from NH.
 - Naaman & Lila Impola & family from MI.
 - Max Aho from TX.
 - Jonathan Aho from NH.
 - Allen & Annessa Hannu from SC.
 - Jeff & Rosy Kinnunen's children & grandchildren from SC & Esko.
 - Elissa Redetzke from GA.

Thanks to those who visit here, we are truly blessed.

Sunday Meals at Church Notice

If you are on a dinner group, but not serving on a Sunday when there is a meal, please bring a dessert and a salad. If you are not on a group and would like to bring either a salad or dessert, please feel free to do so. All meals will be potluck unless announced in church.

Reminder: When there is a funeral at the church, there is usually a need for desserts and bars for after the meal.

Cookbooks For Sale

Spruce Grove Church has 2 cookbooks for sale. Tastes for All Seasons (#1) and Feed on His Word (#2) If you would like to purchase a cookbook, please contact Amanda Aho. The cost is \$12.50 per book; shipping is \$2.50 per book. Make checks payable to Spruce Grove Church Ladies and send to: Amanda Aho, 15610 490th Ave., Menahga, MN 56464. Please specify how many and which cookbook(s) you would like to purchase: cookbook #1 or cookbook #2.

Radio Broadcast

Echoes of Mercy broadcast on Sundays: KWAD Wadena 920 & 1430 AM at 8:30 A.M., Ada on KRJB 106.5 FM at 8:35 am, in Aitkin on KKIN 94.3 FM at 9:35 am, in Fosston on KKCQ 96.7 FM at 10:35, and in International Falls on KSDM 104.1 FM at 11:05 am.

Sponsored by Spruce Grove, Menahga and New York Mills Apostolic Lutheran Churches

Church Website

You are invited to check out the church website at: www.sprucegrovealc.org. Services are live online and are also recorded and may be accessed any time. Please call the church at (218) 538-6540 if you have any problems.

Telephone Services

The numbers to dial to listen to the services over the telephone are: Wolf Lake: 538-1030 / Menahga: 564-1030 / Nimrod: 472-1030/ Sebeka: 837-1030 The pin number will be 787565# for all services. When you call in, you will be asked for the participant code and that is when you will dial the pin number followed by the #. Press # again or just stay on the line and it will connect you after about 5 seconds.

Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church
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