



Worship Program  
January 6th & 7th, 2024

## Introduction

The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

## Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

**A: Amen.**

P: Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

*(Silence is kept for reflection)*

P: God of life,

**A: You promise good news of great joy for all people and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

P: Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God’s promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In ✠ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

**A: Amen.**

## Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also, with you.**

## Gathering Hymn

### "The First Noel" (ELW 300)

1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . . be - yond them far; and to seek the  
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

*Refrain*  
night that was so deep.  
tin-ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay.  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el. No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## 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.

**A: Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

*(Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.)*

Arise, shine. For your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. But the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift 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 on their nurses' arms. Then 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. 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 proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The Word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**

Psalmody: Psalm 72:1-7,10-14

L: Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son.

**A: That he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice.**

L: that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills in righteousness.

**A: Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

L: May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

**A: Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

L: In his time may the righteous flourish. And let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

**A: May the kings of Tarshish and of the Isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

L: May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

**A: For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

L: He has compassion on the lowly and poor and preserves the lives of the needy.

**A: From oppression and violence, he redeems their lives, and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12

*(What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.)*

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles. For surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In 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. That is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of 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. Although 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, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery, hidden for ages in God who created all things. So 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. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation “Alleluia” (Setting 1, ELW pg. 102)

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

**Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

*(God’s promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel)*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.”

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him.

And calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea. For so it has been written by the prophet. 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.”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then 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.” When they had heard the king, they set out. And there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

## Sermon

### Hymn of the Day

#### **“The Bells of Christmas” ELW(298)v.1-4**



*Det ki - mer nu til ju - le - fest, det ki - mer*  
1 The bells of Christ - mas chime once more; the heav'n - ly  
2 This world, though wide and far out - spread, could scarce - ly  
3 Now let us go with qui - et mind, the swad - dled  
4 Oh, join with me, in glad - ness sing, to keep our



*for den høj - e gæst, som steg til la - ve*  
guest is at the door. He comes to earth - ly  
find for you a bed. Your cra - dle was a  
babe with shep - herds find, to gaze on him who  
Christ - mas with our king, un - til our song, from



*hyt - ter ned med nyt - års - ga - ver: fryd og fred.*  
dwell - ings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.  
man - ger stall, no pearl nor silk nor king - ly hall.  
glad - dens them, the love - liest flow'r of Jes - se's stem.  
lov - ing souls, like rush - ing might - y wa - ter rolls!



## Nicene Creed

**A: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

**L: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.**

**L: Humble the hearts of your faithful people, that we seek to be servants of your gospel and witnesses to your mysteries. Give us boldness in faith, that we make the good news of Christ's birth known to all people. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.****

**L: Establish justice on earth for all its inhabitants. Lead us to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Empower the work of all who research, engineer, and make accessible alternative and renewable sources of energy. Make us careful stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.****



L: Nations shall come to your light and kings to your dawning. Remove corruption and fear from the hearts of leaders and authorities. Lead governments to expand policies and resources that care for refugees and all migrants. Strengthen the work of resettlement agencies. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Defend the cause of all who are in need, all facing poverty, and all who are oppressed. Come quickly to those who feel that their lives and livelihoods are fragile. (especially) Give them strength and lead them forth with hope. Hear us, O God.  
**A: Your mercy is great.**

L: As the magi offered gifts to the Christ child, empower us to give generously. Prosper the work of ministry partnerships in our community. Together, help us share what we have to ensure that our neighbors have enough food, resources, and opportunities. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: You have redeemed the lives of your faithful departed. Through the love of Christ, gather us into one body with them, and reveal to us the mystery hidden for ages in the One who created all things. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. **A: Amen.**

### Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also, with you.**

### Offertory Song “What Child is This” (ELW 296) v.1

1      **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!**

## Offering Prayer

P: God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. **A: Amen.**

## The Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also, with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **A: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**“Holy, Holy, Holy” (Setting 2, ELW pg. 108)**

## Thanksgiving at the Table

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. **A: Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**A: 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.**

## Invitation to Communion

P: Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace. **A: Amen**

**"O Lamb of God"**  
**(Setting 1, ELW pg. 112)**

## Special Music

"In The Room" Performed by Maverick City

## Prayer after Communion

P: God our redeemer, You have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **A: Amen.**

## Blessing

P: God bless you and keep you, ✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Sending Hymn “Go Tell it on the Mountain” (ELW 290)

*Refrain*



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;

*Refrain*



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Dismissal

P: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

**A: Thanks be to God.**