

Epiphany of Our Lord: January 3, 2021

Gathering

Prelude: "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

Opening Hymn: "Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning" (v. 1-4)

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| 1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid. | 3 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 or gold from the mine? |
| 2 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. | 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his favor secure;
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor. |

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High, † one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: Gracious God,

C: in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our failure to welcome this light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.

P: I bring you good news of great joy for all people: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. Your sins are forgiven in † Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Everlasting God, the radiance of all faithful people, you brought the nations to the brightness of your rising. Fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all the world through him who is the true light and the bright morning star, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Word

Blessing of the Lector

P: Let us pray. Gracious God, your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Send your Holy Spirit upon John as he proclaims the word, so that all who receive it will no longer dwell in the shadows, but will have the light of life.

C: Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

² 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.

³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

C: Thanks be to God.

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

¹ **Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;**
² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**
³ **that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.**
⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**
⁵ **May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.**
⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**
⁷ **In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.**
¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**
¹¹ **May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.**
¹² **For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**
¹³ **He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.**
¹⁴ **From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12

¹This 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 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 to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “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.” 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.’”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ 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." ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ 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. ¹² And 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.

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

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Silence for reflection and meditation

Hymn of the Day: "Bright and Glorious Is the Sky" (v. 1-3, 6)

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| 1 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. | 3 Sages from the East afar,
when they saw this wondrous star,
went to find the king of nations
and to offer their oblations
unto him as Lord and King,
unto him as Lord and King. |
| 2 On that holy Christmas night
through the darkness beamed a light;
all the stars above were paling,
all their luster slowly failing
as the Christmas star drew nigh,
as the Christmas star drew nigh. | 6 As a star, God's holy word
leads us to our King and Lord;
brightly from its sacred pages
shall this light throughout the ages
shine upon our path of life,
shine upon our path of life. |

The Nicene Creed

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;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

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.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He 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.

Dedication of the New Year to God's Glory

P: Today when we gather for the first time in the new year, we are reminded that by God's abundant mercy, each day is new. Let us give thanks for God's faithfulness last year and ask for God's blessing in the year ahead. Let us pray.

O God, as we dedicate this new year to your glory and praise, we give thanks for your presence and mercy in 2020. For feeding us each week through your Word and sacrament,

C: We thank you, Lord.

P: For your faithful provision in the last year—ourselves, our time, our possessions, and life—signs of your gracious love, and for your promise to provide all we need in the year ahead,

C: We thank you, Lord.

P: For giving us each other and those who have died in you, to know and to love during our pilgrimage on this earth,

C: We thank you, Lord.

P: Where we have failed,

C: Forgive us.

P: Where we still hurt,

C: Heal us.

P: In this new year, grant us faith to know your gracious purpose in all things. So draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, and lead us to the building up of your kingdom so that each day might be lived for the glory of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering Prayer

Please stand as you are able.

A: God with us: You came as a baby to a manger. You slept on straw and greeted shepherds and magi. You come again in bread and wine. Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things. And then, through these gifts, help us to bless the lives of others in the strength of your holy name.

C: Amen.

The Meal

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

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.

The Lord's Prayer

**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: The True Light has come into the World. Come to his table and be filled with light and life.

The Body of Christ, broken for you.

The Blood of Christ, shed for you.

All eat bread and drink wine or juice at their seat.

Communion Hymn: "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

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|--|---|
| 1 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. | 2 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. |
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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.

- 3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
we shall know the joy of Jesus.

Refrain

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

A: O God, on this day, you revealed that your Son is the savior of all nations. As you led the magi, so lead us to follow your Son until all nations bow before him in whose name we pray, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

Blessing

P: Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day, ✚ through the Word made flesh.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: "As with Gladness Men of Old" (v. 1-4)

- 1 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.
- 2 As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.
- 3 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.
- 4 Holy Jesus, ev'ry day
keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: "The First Noel"

Worship Leaders

The Rev. Emily Beckering, Pastor

Kris Keith, Music Director

Kate Wollenburg, Organist

Terry McDowell, Assisting Minister

John Cathcart, Reader

Upcoming Events

Sunday, January 3: Epiphany of Our Lord

10:30 am Worship

Tuesday, January 5

4 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Sunday, January 10: Baptism of Our Lord

10:30 am Worship

4 pm Zoom Fellowship Time

Monday, January 11

Annual Reports due to office

Tuesday, January 12

4 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Wednesday, January 13

6:30 pm Bell Choir

Thursday, January 14

7 pm Worship & Music Committee (Zoom)

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Thank you for worshiping with us today.

To give your offering through our website, please visit stpaulreading.org/online-giving/

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call the after-hours line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, call Penny Huber, 513-931-6420. To remove people from the list, contact the office.

We pray for **Mary and her granddaughter Kyra** (friend of Paul Pieper); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel**; **Louise Barry**; **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Bobby** (Christian Lohmeier's friend); **Nancy Bose** (Kathy Hirt's friend); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Nicole Bucknam** (friend of Millers); **Jodie Calhoun**; **Christian**; **Frances Clemons** (Portmanns' friend); **Kathy Curless**; **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Dick** (Linda Miller's brother); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jerry Doan** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Lee Erbeck**; **Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Micki Ford** (Fords' niece); **Jeanne Fuller**; **Scarlett Gally** (Beth Wernery's great-niece); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **George and Sherry** (Shirley Harbaugh's cousins); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Steve Gollehon** (Elinor Schieman's cousin); **Hannah**; **Matthew Harrison** (Seals' neighbor); **Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp**; **Richard Hoffman** (Cindy Mayhugh's brother); **Andrew Horton**; **Mary Ann Hudecki** (Linda Miller's sister), **Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Jo and her daughter** (Jeanne Fuller's friends); **Joan** (Penny Huber's friend); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Dennis King**; **Jay King** (son of Jamie King); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Lewis Laine** (Chet Laine's brother); **Richard Lane** (Elinor Schieman's nephew); **Nelson Langefeld**; **Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Revea and Jim Mayhew** (Millers' sister & brother-in-law); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Ann Miller** (Millers' niece); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Doris Minton**; **Barbara Moorhouse**; **Jean Nolte**; **Ervin Oerther** (Portmanns' brother-in-law); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Eric Papin**; **Christian & Suzie Pereira** (Carolyn Koehl's granddaughter & grandson-in-law); **Richard Peterson** (Shirley Harbaugh's brothers); **Don Pflieger** (Kings' brother-in-law); **Ginny Pape**; **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Paul Pieper**; **Faith Pirrmann**; **Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Brenda Schumacher** (Marilyn Portmann's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Shear family** (Kings' daughter & son-in-law); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **Jason Simpson** (Freda Faulkner's grand-nephew); **Patricia Smith**

(Teresa Bell's mother); **Scott Songer; Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Teresa** (friend of Marty Lohmeier); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Tereasa Vogel** (Freda Faulkner's friend); **Jack Wagner; Jeanne Wagner; Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Jean Winkle; Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle's daughter-in-law); **Mike and Lou Zecchini** (Minton/Betsch in-laws).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Louise Barry, Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte, Heather Segar.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Jim and Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Doris Minton's son); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Mack Thompson** (Freda Faulkner's grandson); **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadin and Barry Wisecup).