

# The Epiphany of Our Lord

January 6, 2021

6:30 p.m.

## AS WE GATHER

Christmas lights may be coming down, but the Light of the world still shines for all to see. We receive this Light during our Epiphany worship today. The promise that nations will come to the light of the Lord is fulfilled when the Wise Men come from the East. They follow the star and are led to the Light. Jesus is the light that shines the brightness of heaven into the darkness of their hearts. He does the same for you today as you receive His Word and gather at His Table. Dispelling the darkness of sin, Christ Jesus will fill you with the light of His presence and invite you, as He did the Wise Men, to bow before Him in honor and praise. Rejoice and be glad — your Light has come!

## PRELUDE

Partita on “As With Gladness Men of Old”

Mark E. Bloedow

## WELCOME

✘ PREPARATION ✘

OPENING HYMN

397 As with Gladness Men of Old (vv. 1-2, 4-5) (sung by soloist)

- 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.*
- 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.*
- 5 *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.*

Public domain

*Please stand*

## INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

*Based on Isaiah 60:1–6*

Pastor: Arise, shine, for your light has come,

People: **and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.**

*We take a moment for silent prayer and meditation upon God's Word.*

Pastor: Almighty God, thick darkness covers the whole earth, and the darkness of sin is on us, Your people.

People: **We confess that we have often walked in darkness instead of Your light. In our thoughts, words, and actions, we have turned away from Your face and have broken Your commands.**

Pastor: You alone, O Lord, invite all nations to come to Your light. You beckon those who are broken to find wholeness in the brightness of Your rising.

People: **Guide us again to the mercy of our Savior Jesus Christ, that He may dispel the darkness of our sin and renew us in the light of Your presence. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

## HYMN OF PRAISE

**533** Jesus Has Come and Brings Pleasure (sung by soloist)

*Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal,  
Alpha, Omega, Beginning and End;  
Godhead, humanity, union supernal,  
O great Redeemer, You come as our friend!  
Heaven and earth, now proclaim this great wonder:  
Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal!*

*Jesus has come as the King of all glory!  
Heaven and earth, O declare His great pow'r,  
Capturing hearts with the heavenly story;  
Welcome Him now in this fast-fleeting hour!  
Ponder His love! Take the crown He has for you!  
Jesus has come! He, the King of all glory!*

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the nations. Lead us, who follow Your Son by faith, to rejoice in the brightness of Your eternal kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** **Amen.**

✘ WORD ✘

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 60:1–6

*(Nations shall come to the light of the Lord.)*

<sup>1</sup> "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. <sup>2</sup> See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. <sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup> "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm. <sup>5</sup> Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. <sup>6</sup> Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Ephesians 3:1–12

*(Hidden for ages, the mystery of the Gospel is now revealed.)*

<sup>1</sup> For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

<sup>2</sup> Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, <sup>3</sup> that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. <sup>4</sup> In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup> This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

*(continued on next page)*

<sup>7</sup> I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. <sup>10</sup> His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, <sup>11</sup> according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

## HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1–12

*(The Wise Men follow the star and come to worship Jesus.)*

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: <sup>6</sup> "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

*Please stand*

## **NICENE CREED**

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

*Please stand*

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**Pastor:** Creator of Light, we praise You during these darkest weeks of the year that You do not leave us in spiritual darkness. When you spoke the word at creation, there was light. When Your people wandered in the valleys of deep spiritual darkness, You sent Your Son Jesus as the Light of the word.

**People:** **Let the Light of Your grace shine upon Your people, O Lord.**

**Pastor:** Beautiful Savior, Lord of the Nations, You were not afraid to enter the darkness of our world, sharing the plight of Your people and the temptation that plague us all. You willingly endured the darkness of the cross so that we might be forgiven of our sins and live in the light of Your resurrection.

**People:** **Let the Light of Your grace shine upon Your people, O Lord.**

**Pastor:** Holy Spirit, You enlighten us with Your gifts. We ask Your blessing upon our congregation. We ask You to guide our congregation to many with whom we can share the light of the Gospel. And we ask that You empower us to share Your Word and love at home, at work, and in our neighborhoods.

**People:** **Let the Light of Your grace shine upon Your people, O Lord.**

**Pastor:** Lord God Almighty, give Your healing grace to the sick, the suffering, the dying, and those who mourn.

**People:** **Let the light of Your grace shine upon Your people, O Lord.**

**Pastor:** Holy Trinity, source of all light, You give us more than we desire or deserve.

**People:** **Provide us with what we need, for You live and rule as the source of our life – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**



## 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.**

## + SACRAMENT +

*In the Lord's Supper we receive Christ's body and blood in and with the bread and wine. The two great blessings of the Lord's Supper are the forgiveness of sins and strength to live an improved Christian life. In response to the Lord's command we are to examine ourselves privately prior to partaking of the Sacrament. There are three basic questions on which we should examine ourselves, all of which we should be able to answer in the affirmative if we are to partake of the Sacrament worthily: 1) Am I truly sorry for my sins? 2) Do I believe Jesus Christ is my Savior? 3) Do I promise with God's help to live a Christian life? If you agree with the above statement, we invite you to the Sacrament.*

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

## PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: **And also with you.**

*After the Words of Institution are spoken, the bread and wine (sealed in a plastic chalice) will be distributed to communicants in the pew. Non-alcoholic elements have the letters "NA" written on the top of the chalice.*

*Please wait to open the sealed chalice until after the bread and wine has been distributed to everyone. When all have received the bread and wine, we will all take the body of blood of Christ together at the same time.*

*The ushers will collect the used communion cup when you are dismissed to leave after the closing hymn.*

## **DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

### **ANTHEM**

*"We Three Kings"*

setting by John Leavitt

*We three kings of Orient are  
Bearing gifts we traverse afar  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain  
Following yonder star*

*Refrain:*

*O Star of wonder, star of night  
Star with royal beauty bright  
Westward leading, still proceeding  
Guide us to thy Perfect Light*

*Born a King on Bethlehem's plain  
Gifts we bring to crown Him again  
King forever, ceasing never  
Over us all to rein (refrain)*

*Glorious now behold Him arise  
King and God and Sacrifice  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
Earth to heav'n replies (refrain)*

## SILENT PRAYER

*I thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, that You have permitted me, unworthy as I am, to partake of this Your most holy body and this Your most precious blood. I pray that it may be to me for the forgiveness of all my sins, for strength in resisting temptations, for service in Your kingdom and finally for the glories of life that has no end. In Your name we pray, Amen.*

*Please stand*

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

O God the Father, the source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the darkness of our world, we thank You that for His sake You have forgiven our sins and strengthened our faith through this Sacrament. Grant that we who have shared in the presence of Christ may go forth and reflect His light to all the world; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

## BENEDICTION

**Pastor:** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**People:** Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN

**411** I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

- 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. (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.
- 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. (Refrain)
- 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)

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## POSTLUDE

"Jesus Has Come"

John Behnke

## Serving at Chapel

Preacher & Liturgist: Theodore Laesch

Singer: Denise Koch

Organist & Accompanist: Carolyn Rusnak