



**The Epiphany of Our Lord
January 6, 2021**

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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.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC / ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the minister begins.

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: God of goodness and lovingkindness,

People: **we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Pastor: Hear the good news of peace and salvation! God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through ☩ Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

ELW #671

Refrain

Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and
mercy
Send forth your word
Lord, and let there be light.

Verse 1

Lord, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring
us
Shine on me, Shine on me. *Refrain*

Verse 2

As we gaze at your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness,
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirrored here, may our lives tell your
story.
Shine on me, shine on me. *Refrain*

Songwriter: GRAHAM KENDRICK

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GREETING

Pastor: Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of
God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING *Isaiah 60:1-6*

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

²For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

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

⁴Lift 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.

⁵Then 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.

⁶A 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.

PSALM *Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14* Please read responsively.

¹Give the king your justice, O God,

and your righteousness to the king's son;

**²that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

**⁴Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

**⁶Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;

and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

**¹⁰May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

**¹²For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

**¹⁴From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING *Ephesians 3:1-12*

This 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.

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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

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

GOSPEL *Matthew 2:1-12*

In 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.'"

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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." ⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

SERMON

Rev. Matthew Groenke

- 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.
- 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 wondrous star drew nigh,
as the wondrous star drew nigh..
- 3 Sages from the East afar,
when they saw this wondrous star,
went to find the king of nations
and to offer their oblations
to the child, the newborn king,
to the child, the newborn king.
- 4 Him they found in Bethlehem,
yet he wore no diadem;
there they saw a maiden lowly
with an infant pure and holy
resting in her loving arms,
resting in her loving arms.
- 5 Guided by the star, they found
him whose praise the ages sound.
We too have a star to guide us,
which forever will provide us
with the light to find our Lord,
with the light to find our Lord.
- 6 And this star, as bright as day,
that will never lead astray
with its message so appealing,
is the word of God, revealing
Christ, the way, the truth, the life,
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877-1970, alt.
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NICENE CREED

People **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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Leader: Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Leader: Glorious God, fill your church with joy. Let your faithful people live as beacons of your redemption. Give wisdom and courage to your church that it may speak with boldness and confidence, even when words of mercy are met with scorn. Hear us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great.**

Leader: Show us your faithfulness in the rising and setting of the sun. Place wonder into the hearts of those who search the skies and explore the heavens. Curb waste and pollution, that all might have clean air to breathe. Hear us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great**

Leader: Bring all nations and rulers to the splendor of your dawn. Raise up advocates who champion the cause of exploited and vulnerable people. Inspire leaders to be generous with abundance, that all people might live in stability and freedom. Hear us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great**

Leader: Come quickly with your healing power to all who seek love, support, and restoration. Dispel fears and shadows. Restore broken relationships and mend broken hearts. Bring relief to those who are sick or struggling. Hear us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great**

Leader: Send traveling mercies upon all who journey home by other roads. Guard refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers. Protect families fleeing conflict in their homelands or abuse in their homes. Tend to those who have no place to lay their heads. us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Leader: According to the boundless riches of Christ, you draw all your saints, from the least to the greatest, to your heavenly places. As you created all things, make all things new again in the splendor of your glory. Hear us, O God.

People: **Your mercy is great**

Pastor: God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

People: **Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it 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.**

SENDING HYMN

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

WOV #646

1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and
mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain

Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!

2 Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again;
king forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. *Refrain*

3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, gladly raising,
worshiping God Most High. *Refrain*

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *Refrain*

5 Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
heav'n sings alleluia:
alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain*

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

BLESSING

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: What is our mission?

People: **To Shine the Light of Jesus, reflect his unconditional love, and mirror his kindness to all people. AMEN!**

DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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