



*Sunday Worship*  
*January 10, 2021*  
*Epiphany*  
*Draw near to God*  
*for God is waiting for you.*

*PRELUDE*

*CALL TO WORSHIP*

*The magi came from many places, following a star.*

**We come to worship, and the star sheds light on our lives.**

*The magi brought gifts to offer the Child.*

**We too bring gifts—ourselves, our hopes, our dreams.**

*Shepherds and magi—the meek and the mighty—all were welcome in Bethlehem.*

**We too come to Bethlehem and then return to our homes rejoicing.**

*OPENING PRAYER*

**O God, as you led the Magi to you by the light of a star, please draw us ever closer to you by the light of faith. Help us to desire you as ardently as they did. Give us the grace to overcome all the obstacles that keep us far from you. May we, like them, have something to give you when we appear before you. Amen.**

*HYMN #147 The First Nowell*

1. The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Refrain:* Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

3. And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

4. Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. *Refrain*

5. Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought. *Refrain*

*CALL TO CONFESSION*

*Can you imagine a God who would rather forgive us than punish us, who calls us 'my delight,' rather than chiding us for being so foolish and wayward? This is why Jesus came, so we might know of God's tender mercy toward us. Let us confess our lives to the One who fills us with hope, as we pray together, saying,*

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND BROKENNESS*

**God of perfect light, led us as we proceed through life. Forgive us when, like Herod, selfish ambition makes us willing to hurt others. Forgive us when, unlike the magi, we refuse to follow the light you give us. Shine in our lives through the light of your Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

*WORDS OF BLESSING AND FORGIVENESS*

*As surely as the Light follows the Darkness, the light of God's love, given to the world so long ago, is given for you, for healing and hope. You are beloved of God. Remember and say with me: **Jesus died for me. Jesus forgives me. Jesus loves me. Jesus is good to me. Amen.***

*FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON* Isaiah 60:1-6

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.

*HYMN #151* We Three Kings of Orient Are

1. 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!

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:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Earth and heav'n replies. *Refrain*

*NEW TESTAMENT LESSON* 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, <sup>2</sup> 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." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> '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.'"

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

*SERMON* Star Gifts

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR EPIPHANY*

**We believe in God who said, "Let there be light," and there was!**

**With that light, God made the world and all people in whom, and through whom, the light burns on, strong and true.**

**We believe in Jesus, the true Light, who went down to darkness to overcome death, and rose again, to unveil our own brightness, in the victory of whose love a path shines home to God's heart where all will live forever.**

We believe in the Spirit, blazing with hope, speaking the truth into every darkness, warming our lives with God's gifts and call.

We believe in the church, where God's Light is praised, and from where we are sent to love and serve the world.

We ask today that a gentle breath blow from above on the light that is in us, the light that is among us, and enflame us anew with the courage of love. Amen.

*RECOGNITION OF THE OFFERING AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION*

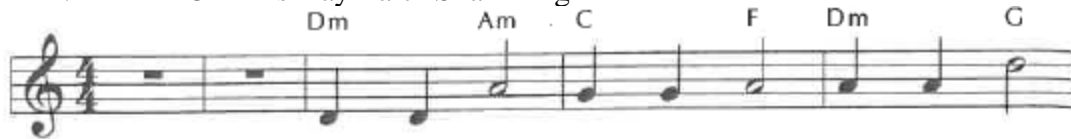
God of light and promise, we bring our gifts to further your work in a dark world. May they bring your light to those overwhelmed by darkness, pain, and loneliness. Accept these gifts of money and time, indeed, the gift of our very selves. Let them shine for all to see, and be brought into the sphere of your love and righteousness. Amen.

*JOYS AND CONCERNS*

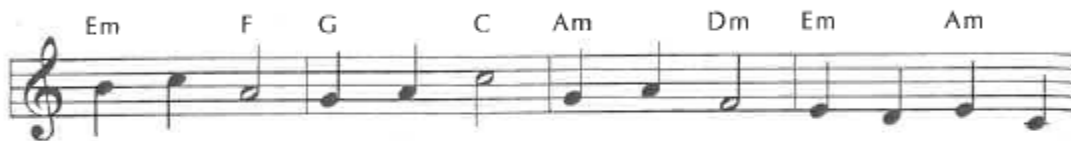
*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

*HYMN #141 On This Day Earth Shall Ring*



1 On this day earth shall ring with the song  
2 His the doom, ours the mirth; when he came  
3 God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three  
4 On this day an - gels sing; with their song



chil - dren sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to  
down to earth Beth - le - hem saw his birth; ox and ass be -  
to him led; kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts be -  
earth shall ring, prais - ing Christ, heav - en's King, born on earth to



save us; him the Fa - ther gave us.  
side him from the cold would hide him. \*Id - e - o - o - o - o,  
fore him, praise him and a - dore him.  
save us; peace and love he gave us.



id - e - o - o - o - o, id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

*BENEDICTION*