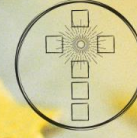


EPIPHANY 2024

Follow Your Star: Seeking Light



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

Epiphany Sunday

Prelude

We Three Kings

Gathering—Christ’s light is shining, calling us to respond with joy. Christ’s light is shining, calling us to worship and praise.~

A Reading from the Prophets

Isaiah 60:1-6 (NRSV)

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

and your daughters shall be carried on
their nurses’ arms.

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.

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,

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

the wealth of the nations shall come to
you.

⁴ Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to
you;
your sons shall come from far away,

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.

Gathering Song

We Three Kings, 233

A Time of Prayer—God of glory and grace, shine upon our worship with your presence. Shine in our hearts with your love. Shine in our lives with your grace, that we may arise with confidence and go forth to bring your justice and love to all.~

The Lord's Prayer (unison)—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.

Council Installation

President – Nathan Law

Vice President – Michelle Van Dyke

Secretary – Debi Hamblet

Treasurer – Terri Bennett

Financial Secretary – Cindy Yenna

Buildings and Grounds – Greg Law

Exploring God’s Word for All Ages

Star Word

We Hear God’s Word—Matthew 2:1-12

Greg Miller

²In 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. 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.

Meditation

Follow Your Star

Hymn

Songs of Thankfulness and Praise, 243

We Gather at the Table

Set Your Place at the Table—Whatever you have on hand to celebrate

communion will work just fine, because this ancient ritual is not about what we use for this meal or where we partake of it. Instead, it is about the act of remembrance. So, gather around the table, prepare your place, and remember that Christ is in our midst.

Our Invitation—Follow the star to the table of grace. Here we find gifts beyond price. Follow the star to the table of blessing. Here we find strength for the journey. Follow the star to the table of peace. Here we find rest and refreshment. Follow the star to the table of Christ. Here we find light and love.~

A Prayer for Transformation—Merciful God, grant us the grace to behold your glory and offer us the assurance that your loving light will not burn us. Grant us the confidence that we too can shine your light in our world. Remove the lampshades of fear and shame that hide our light. Dust off the cobwebs of doubt and despair that shadow our light. Shine in and through us, that your light may brighten our world. Amen.~

Assurance of Grace—Here is the mystery: Grace is ours, no matter what. God’s love is ours, no matter what. Grace and love save us and shine in us. They allow us to shine as the light of the world with the Light of the World. Amen.~

The Words of Institution— On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” And so, we remember...we offer ourselves...we proclaim God’s love...

Blessing Our Meal—Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, that we may be your light in the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine, that we may be filled with your glory and grace. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with one another, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at your heavenly banquet. Through

your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forevermore. Amen.~

We Share the Bread and the Cup—The light of Christ, shining through you. The glory of God, blazing within you.~

We Give Thanks—Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ’s body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.~

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—As we gaze on the lights of the Christmas season, may we remember the Light that draws near. Like those wise travelers from the East, let us bring gifts and treasures to honor Christ, the Light of the World.~

January Benevolence—Emergency Assistance Fund

Doxology

We Give Thanks—Glorious God, bring glory to these gifts and to the offering we share with you and your church. Bring the light of your justice and righteousness to the dark corners of our world. Bring the glory of your love and compassion to heal our broken communities. Bring the hope of generosity and gratitude to places in need of transformation. Amen.~

Hymn

As with Gladness, 236

Benediction—Go forth to shine with light of Christ’s love. Go forth to shine with the glory of Christ’s grace. Go forth to shine with the justice and peace of Christ’s life.~

Postlude

March of the Kings