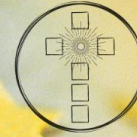


# EPIPHANY 2024

## Follow Your Star: Seeking Light



*Serve & Enrich*  
Zion United Church  
of Christ

*The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Epiphany*

### Prelude

*Hope*

**Gathering**—Speak to us, Lord, for your servants are listening...Lead us, O God, and we will follow...Bless us, Spirit of wisdom and truth, and guide us home...Speak to us, Lord, for your servants are listening.~

### A Reading from the Psalms

*Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 (NRSV)*

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.

<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O LORD, you know it completely.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written  
all the days that were formed for me,  
when none of them as yet existed.

<sup>17</sup> How weighty to me are your thoughts,  
O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup> I try to count them—they are more  
than the sand;

I come to the end—I am still with you.

### Gathering Song

*Arise, Your Light Is Come, 231*

**A Time of Prayer**—Before you formed us in our mother's womb, you knew us completely. Before a word is on our lips, you perceive it. You hem us in, before and behind. You call us as your own and lay your hand upon us. Such knowledge is too

wonderful for us; it is so high we cannot attain it. Even when we fail, Holy One, call us anew, that we might hear your voice and respond with expectation and joy: “Here I am.”~

**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.

**Bell Choir**

*Fanfare of Praise*

**Exploring God's Word for All Ages**

*Star Word: Begin*

**We Hear God's Word—1 Samuel 3:1-20**

*Colling Bennington, Mindy Murphy, Debi Hamblet*

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup>the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ and he said, ‘Here I am!’ <sup>5</sup>and ran to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call; lie down again.’ So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup>The LORD called again, ‘Samuel!’ Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call, my son; lie down again.’ <sup>7</sup>Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup>The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.”’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak, for your servant is listening.’ <sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to Samuel, ‘See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup>On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>For I have told him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup>Therefore I swear to the

house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever.'

15 Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup>But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' <sup>17</sup>Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' <sup>18</sup>So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.'

19 As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup>And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.

## **Meditation**

*Follow Your Star: Begin*

## **Hymn**

*Here I Am, Lord, 559*

## **We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving**

*Offering envelopes are available. Request them through the office or pick them up on the bookshelf in the back of the sanctuary.*

**Invitation**—The generous life rests on gratitude and trust in God's abundance. As we give, we acknowledge that we have communally received more than enough to meet our collective needs. Our offerings serve to realize the reign of God's kingdom on the earth.+

**January Benevolence**—Emergency Assistance Fund

## **Doxology**

**We Give Thanks**—Generous God, cultivate and nurture gratitude and trust in us. May our gifts be used for the benefit of the kingdom and all creation in your name. Amen.+

## **Hymn**

*Open My Eyes That I May See, 480*

**Benediction**—Go in the peace of being fully known by God. Go in the hope that God has in you to transform the world. Go in the love of neighbor and friend. Go in the assurance that God still goes with you. Amen.+

## **Postlude**

*Andante Tranquillo*