

Eastminster Presbyterian Church  
SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY  
Epiphany of the Lord  
January 3, 2021

### GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

#### OPENING PRAYER

God of promise and mysterious light, be with us this day as we journey in our faith to meet your gift—the Christ Child. We ask that you give us courage and hope along our way, as your light will continue to glow brightly in our path, leading us to service and discipleship in Jesus' name. Amen.

#### VOLUNTARY

Carl Simone

*March of the Kings*

*Melody Davis*

OPENING HYMN 152 *What Star Is This With Beams So Bright*

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

As forgiven and forgiving people, may we go to God asking for mercy and trusting in his pardon.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Lord of living light, we hear the story of the Magi and tie it together with our warm Christmas celebration. It feels comfortable to us. Break those bonds of comfort and help us to realize the risk of witness and discipleship for those who follow your light. Shine brightly in us and through us. Give us vision of what you would have us be and do in the light of your love. Amen.**

#### ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON

The light of Christ has come and it has erased the darkness. In that light, we can walk and work and believe that we are loved by God and called to God's service. This is our shining news of hope. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE 137 *He Came Down*

### PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Prepare our hearts, O God, to accept your Word. Silence in us any voices but your own, so that we may hear your Word and also do it; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### EPISTLE READING (*Pew Bible*, 193)

Ephesians 3: 1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—<sup>2</sup>for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was

given me for you, <sup>3</sup>and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, <sup>4</sup>a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup>In 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: <sup>6</sup>that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. <sup>7</sup>Of 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. <sup>8</sup>Although 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, <sup>9</sup>and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; <sup>10</sup>so 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. <sup>11</sup>This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup>in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

ANTHEM  
Craig Curry

Journey of the Kings

*Trevor Turner, Trumpet, Sanctuary Choir*

NEW TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible, page 2*)  
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.

The grass withers; the flowers fade; but this, the Word of our Lord lasts forever!  
**Thanks be to God!**

\*HYMN 127 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing: Jesus the Light of the World

SERMON  
Sherry Holloman

*The Star of This Story: Jesus*

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION

OF

FAITH

*Nicene Creed*

**We believe in one God the Father, the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, and 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 truly human. 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 worshipped 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**

### OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Instead of gold and frankincense and myrrh, we bring to God the treasures he has first given us—hearts, minds and bodies. May these and the offerings of our resources be used to tell of God's living light of hope in Jesus Christ.

### PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

*Star of Glory*

Jay Althouse

*Sanctuary Choir*

RESPONSE 147 *Noel, Noel* (refrain only)

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Shine your soft light on the darkness inside us. Incense our minds and hearts with your grace. Be the treasure in our hearts. Be the gift that we give. Amen

## THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

### THE INVITATION

Jesus' love knows no bounds. We are invited, as guests, to come just as we are to these feast...forgiven sinners, ready to be strengthened by this bread and this cup.

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks, O God, for making your love evident since the very beginning of time when you spoke the word which replaced the darkness of chaos with life-giving light. A light which has nurtured generations of people, and plants and creatures, great and small. A light which also revealed the fear and powerlessness caused by corrupt and evil actions. And so you spoke the Word which would once and for all dispel the darkness of chaotic lives. Through your love for the world the Word became flesh and lived among us full of grace and truth. The angels carolled glory to you in the highest heavens and peace to all people on earth, and we join with them and with all people to praise your holy name:

RESPONSE 556 *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Holy God, as the travelers with their treasures were overwhelmed with joy on finding Jesus, so we also are overwhelmed on finding out the depth of his love for us. For Jesus showed just how beloved we are to him, by loving us and giving himself for us. We bless you for Jesus, who through his life, death and resurrection fully lived the promise of redemptive wholeness offered for all who would be obedient to your creating will. It is with awe and wonder that we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and cup, O God, that we may experience the presence of the Word-made-flesh - Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him - living out his ministry in the world today and every day.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord of bright and abiding Light, you have shone us, in the person of Jesus your Son, a new way to live. You have poured your light into the world and have asked us to live in the light rather than run and hide in the darkness of doubt and despair. You promise to be our light all of our days and ask us to place our trust in you. The journey in this light is risky. It means that we will have to be very serious about our service to you, giving you our best and offering hope and light to others. In this new year, we bring to you the names and situations of others for whom light seems to be a stranger. They struggle with ill health, economic hardship, broken and damaged relationships, loss of loved ones, and anxiety. We place them in your care. Let your light shine on them, bringing healing and hope. Help us to be bearers of that light in all that we do; for we ask this in Jesus' name saying: **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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: Take eat. This is my body given for you. Do this remembering me. In the same way, he took the cup saying: This is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this remembering me. Come. Eat. Drink. Be filled with the goodness of our Lord.

RESPONSE 556 *Lamb of God*

#### RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT

*This sacrament is not the possession of this congregation nor of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Lord welcomes you. We welcome you. All persons are invited to receive the sacrament.*

COMUNION RESPONSE (LUYH 20) *Alleluia!*

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Lord God, we give you thanks for the fellowship we have experienced at your table. We give you our gratitude for the refreshment and nourishment we have received. May we go now into the world in the strength of your Spirit to freely give ourselves to and for others; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior. Amen.**

### **GOING INTO THE WORLD WITH GOD'S WORD**

#### DISMISSAL AND BENEDICTION

We go now as a light to the nations. Honor the Lord; preach what we know of the risen Christ. And may God strengthen us and bless us with peace; May Christ Jesus bring forth justice for us and among us; And may the Holy Spirit alight on us and affirm us as God's beloved ones. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

CLOSING HYMN 152 *As With Gladness Men of Old*