

The Celebration of
The Epiphany of our Lord



St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran
Church, School & Preschool
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Opening Hymn:

How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (#79)

cf. last two verses for hymn information

1 *How lovely shines the Morning Star!*

The nations see and hail afar The light in Judah shining.

Thou David's Son of Jacob's race,

My Bridegroom and my King of Grace,

For Thee my heart is pining.

Lowly, Holy, Great and glorious,

Thou victorious Prince of graces,

Filling all the heavenly places.

2 *O highest joy by mortals won,*

True Son of God and Mary's Son, Thou high-born King of ages!

Thou art my heart's most beautiful Flower,

And Thy blest Gospel's saving power

My soul with joy engages.

Thou mine, I Thine; Sing hosanna!

Heavenly manna Tasting, eating,

Whilst Thy love in songs repeating.

The music continues softly in the background as we speak responsively.

Minister: Grace and peace to you from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

Congregation: To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father-- to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Rev 1:4-6)

M: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

C: on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. (Is. 9:2)

M: Darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,
C: but the Lord rises upon you and His glory appears over you.

(Is 60:2)

M: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood it.

C: We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

(Jn 1:5,14)

*3 Now richly to my waiting heart,
O Thou, my God, deign to impart The grace of love undying.
In Thy blest body let me be,
E'en as the branch is in the tree, Thy life my life supplying.
Sighing, Crying. For the savor
of Thy favour; Resting never,
Till I rest in Thee forever.*

M: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

(Is 9:6)

C: In Him was life, and the life was the light of man.

(Jn 1:4)

M: God of Glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light to the world, to reveal your love for all people. But wherever there is light, there will also be darkness.

C: We confess that we are sinful often choosing to dwell in darkness instead of live in Your light. We beg for forgiveness for starving ourselves of Your Son's life-giving light. We repent of our entrenched evil that hates the light and tries to dispose of it. We admit our apathy towards sanctification and renewal that cause us to continue to live in the night. Trusting Your grace, we earnestly pray: "Create in us a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us." Through Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.

(Ps 51:10)

4 A pledge of peace from God I see

When Thy pure eyes are turned to me To show me Thy good pleasure.

Jesus, Thy Spirit and Thy Word, Thy body and Thy blood, afford

My soul its dearest treasure. Keep me kindly In Thy favour,

O my Saviour! Thou wilt cheer me; Thy Word calls me to draw near Thee.

M: Arise, shine, for Your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon You. (Is 60:1) The Light comes not to sear and blind us but to save us. Christ Jesus came into this world as an infant in a Bethlehem manger so that He might die as our Savior on a Roman cross in Jerusalem. For His sake, God forgives us all our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive You all Your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,

C: and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (1 Jn 1:7)

M: You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Pet 2:9)

*5 Thou, mighty Father, in Thy Son
Didst love me ere Thou hadst begun
This ancient world's foundation.
Thy Son hath made a friend of me,
And when in spirit Him I see,
I joy in tribulation.
What bliss is this! He that liveth
To me giveth Life forever;
Nothing me from Him can sever.*

We'll sing the final two stanzas at the end of the service.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Lord God, by the leading of a star You once made known to the nations Your one and only Son. Guide us also, who know Him now by faith, to come at last to the perfect joy of Your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament:

Isaiah 60:1-7

¹ “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. ² See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. ³ Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴ “Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm. ⁵ Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. ⁶ Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD. ⁷ All Kedar’s flocks will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I will adorn my glorious temple.

Psalm 72

The King Shall Come (#25)

Text: John Brownlie, 1857-1925, abr., alt.

- 1 The King shall come when morning dawns
And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills
And life to joy awakes-*
- 2 Not as of old a little child To bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
That lights the morning sky.*
- 3 Oh, brighter than the rising morn
When Christ, victorious, rose
And left the lonesome place of death
Despite the rage of foes.*
- 4 Oh, brighter than that glorious morn
Shall dawn upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes
And we shall see his face.*
- 5 The King shall come when morning dawns
And light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
Come quickly, King of kings!*

Gospel:

Matthew 2:1-12

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ ““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.”” ⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.” ⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

C: We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hymn

As with Gladness Men of Old (#83)

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98, alt.

- 1 As with gladness men of old Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we Evermore your followers be.*
- 2 As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to your lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before You whom heav’n and earth adore,
So may we with willing feet Ever seek your mercy seat.*

- 3 *As they offered gifts most rare At your cradle, rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy, Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heav'nly King.*
- 4 *Holy Jesus, ev'ry day Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past, Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds your glory hide.*
- 5 *In the heav'nly country bright Need they no created light;
You its light, its joy, its crown, You its sun which goes not down.
There forever may we sing Alleluias to our King!*

Sermon

Hymn

O Jesus, King of Glory (#94)

Text: Martin Behm, 1557-1622, abr.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78,
st. 1-2, 4-5, alt.; *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal*, Columbus, OH, 1880, st. 3, alt.

- 1 *O Jesus, King of glory, Both David's Lord and son!
Your rule endures forever; In heaven is your throne.
Help that in earth's dominions, From pole to farthest pole,
Your reign may spread salvation To each benighted soul.*
- 2 *The eastern Magi, coming Their gifts of love to bring,
Bear witness to your glory And worship you, their King.
To you the star is pointing And the prophetic Word;
So joyously we hail you: Our Savior and our Lord.*
- 5 *Then let your Word within me Shine as the fairest star;
Keep sin and all false doctrine Forever from me far.
Help me confess you truly And with all Christendom
Here hail you King and Savior And in the world to come.*

Prayer of the Church

M: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary's son, in the fullness of time
you came into our world to save us from sin and death.

C: **You ushered in the day of grace so long foretold.**

M: Beloved Son of the Father, revered by the Magi, baptized by John, you came preaching and teaching, healing and comforting, forgiving and encouraging:

C: **You brought the light of life to those walking in darkness, and the joy of salvation to those doomed to death.**

M: Prince of peace, shine like a beacon for us and the people of our world. Let the good news of salvation be heard in the remotest corners of the earth. Open our own lips to speak your name to those around us who still live without faith or hope:

C: **Arouse us and our missionaries to flood the world with the light of your gospel.**

M: Lord of the Church, let your peace rule our hearts that we may use our gifts to serve you and each other in willing gratitude and joy. Watch over our loved ones near and far, that they may remember your love and rejoice in your salvation. Strengthen the faith of the sick and the disheartened. Give hope to those in despair and comfort those who mourn:

C: **Be gracious to all and lead us to reflect your love in everything we say and do.**

Special prayers and intercessions

M: Finally, bring us and all your believers to the heavenly home where we will stand in the full light of your glory and with all your saints and angels sing the everlasting song of triumph.

C: **Amen.**

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 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.

BLESSING

M: May God, who led the Magi by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, strengthen you in the light of your salvation. May God, who sent the Holy Spirit to rest upon the Only begotten at His baptism in the Jordan River, pour out His Spirit on you who have life through the waters of baptism. May God, by the power that turned water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana, sanctify you and make glad your hearts. And the blessing of our God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you always.

C: Amen.

HYMN

How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (#79)

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608, abr., adapt.;
tr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, alt

*Lift up the voice and strike the string. Let all glad sounds of music ring
In God's high praises blended. Christ will be with me all the way,
Today, tomorrow, every day, Till traveling days be ended.
Sing out, ring out Triumph glorious, o victorious, Chosen nation;
Praise the God of your salvation.*

*Oh, joy to know that Thou, my Friend, Art Lord, Beginning without end,
The First and Last, Eternal! And Thou at length, O glorious grace!
Wilt take me to that holy place, The home of joys supernal.
Amen, Amen! Come and meet me! Quickly greet me! With deep yearning
Lord, I look for Thy returning.*