



ST PAUL PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

JANUARY 7, 2024

Whenever you see an asterisk (*), you are invited to stand as you are able.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.

PRELUDE: "Noel for Flutes"

(Louis Claude D'Aquin)

GATHERING

*BLESSING THE CHURCH

(see the insert)

*GATHERING HYMN: "The First Noel"

(ELW 300)



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .
4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and



night that was so deep.
 tin-ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional
 Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

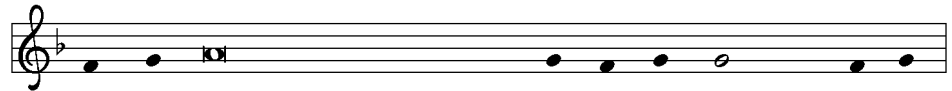
*GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also with you.**

*KYRIE



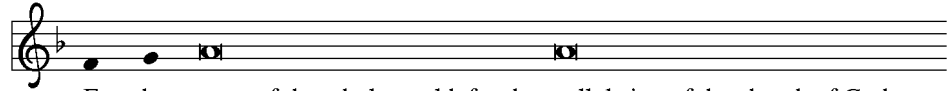
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



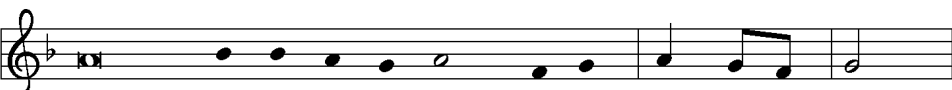
For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



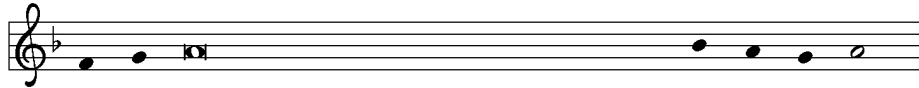
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



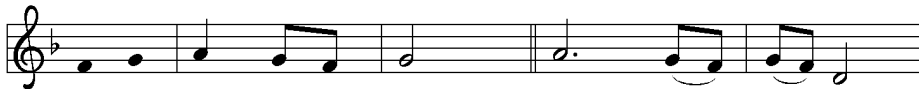
and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

*HYMN OF PRAISE



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of



God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us; you are



seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



3 For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir-it, in the glo-ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray, O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen**

WORD

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 60:1-6

As Jeremiah and Ezekiel had promised, God brought the Israelites back home to Jerusalem from their exile in Jerusalem. This rescue, unlikely and unexpected, was itself an Epiphany: an awe-inspiring appearance of God within human affairs to rescue and redeem.

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

²For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

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

⁴Lift 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.

⁵Then 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.

⁶A 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.

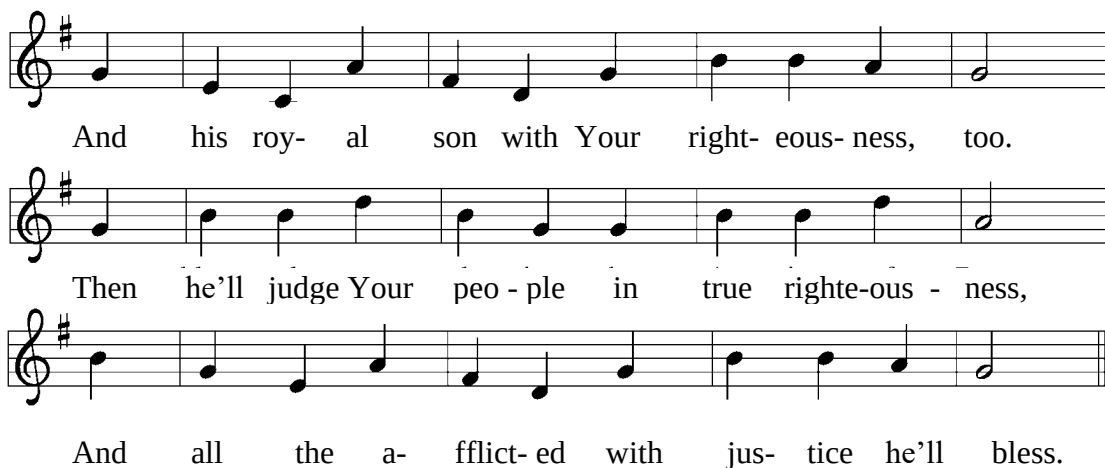
R: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 72: 1-7, 10-15

(Sung to the tune St. Denio ELW 834)

Like Isaiah the psalmist presents God's blessing (here of the king at his coronation) as a matter of international significance.





The people will flourish like mountains around,
 And righteousness like fruit from hills will abound.
 For he will defend all the needy and save
 ' their children; put those who oppress in the grave.

And he will endure for as long as the sun;
 As long as the moon—through all ages that run.
 He'll be like the rain falling on a mown field;
 Like showers that water the earth, fruit to yield.

In his days the righteous will flourish, stand sure,
 Abundance abound till the moon is no more.
 The great kings of Tarshish and of distant shores
 will bring to him tribute of great precious ores.

The kings of both Sheba and Seba are there,
 Presenting him gifts of their kingdoms most fair.
 All kings of the earth will bow down to his fame;
 All nations will serve him and honor his name.

For he will deliver the needy who cry;
 He'll help the afflicted when no one is nigh.
 He will take great pity on both poor and weak;
 The needy near death, he will save and will seek.

He'll rescue them from great oppression and might,
 For their blood is precious and dear in his sight.
 O long may he live! Sheba's gold pave his way;
 Let people pray for him and bless him all day.

SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 3:1-12

It was easy in the early church to consider Gentile Christians to be less legitimate than their Jewish siblings. Many of the New Testament writers preached against this, including the author of Ephesians in this passage. Indeed, today's Gospel reading, of Gentiles adoring Christ, may be told exactly for the same purpose.

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—
²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you,
³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words,
⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.
⁵In 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:
⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of 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.
⁸Although 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,
⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things;
¹⁰so 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.
¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,
¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

R: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *Repeat alleluia*

We have observed his star | at its rising,*
and have come to | worship him.

***GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 2:1-12**

Since the Easter season ended last spring, we have been reading through the stories in Matthew's Gospel of Jesus's earthly ministry, from his call of the disciples to the beginning of the Passion. This parable is his final one. It provides still another perspective on Matthew's great theme – that Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us" – which began with his nativity story and will continue until Jesus' promise at the end of the book: "I am with you to the close of the age."

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the second chapter.

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In 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.'"

⁷Then 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.

P: The gospel of the Lord. **A: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY:** "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!"

(ELW 308)



1 O Morn - ing Star, how fair and bright! You shine with
2 Come, pre - cious dia - mond, light di - vine, and deep with -
3 Lord, when you look on us in love, at once there
4 Al - might - y Fa - ther, in your Son you loved us,



God's own truth and light, a - glow with grace and mer - cy!
in our hearts now shine; there light a flame un - dy - ing!
falls from God a - bove a ray of pur - est plea - sure.
when not yet be - gun was this old earth's foun - da - tion!



Of Ja - cob's line, King Da - vid's son, our Lord and Sav - ior,
In your one bod - y let us be as liv - ing branch - es
Your word and Spir - it, flesh and blood re - fresh our souls with
Your Son has ran - somed us in love to live in him here



you have won our hearts to serve you on - ly! Low - ly,
of a tree, your life our lives sup - ply - ing. Now, though
heav'n - ly food. You are our dear - est trea - sure! Let your
and a - bove: this is your great sal - va - tion. Al - le -



ho - ly! Great and glo - rious, all vic - to - rious, rich
dai - ly earth's deep sad - ness may per - plex us and
mer - cy warm and cheer us! Oh, draw near us! For life
lu - ia! Christ the liv - ing, to us giv - ing



in bless - ing! Rule and might o'er all pos - sess - ing!
dis - tress us, yet with heav'n - ly joy you bless us.
you teach us God's own love through you has reached us.
for - ev - er, keeps us yours and fails us nev - er!

5 Oh, let the harps break forth in sound!
Our joy be all with music crowned,
our voices gaily blending!
For Christ goes with us all the way—
today, tomorrow, ev'ry day!
His love is never ending!
Sing out! Ring out!
Jubilation!
Exultation!
Tell the story!
Praise to Christ, who reigns in glory!

6 What joy to know, when life is past,
the Lord we love is first and last,
the end and the beginning!
He will one day, oh, glorious grace,
transport us to that happy place
beyond all tears and sinning!
Amen! Amen!
Come, Lord Jesus!
Crown of gladness!
We are yearning
for the day of your returning.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET, Philipp Nicolai
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INVITATION TO BAPTISM

*NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became 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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,**

**who 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.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

L: Humble the hearts of your faithful people, that we seek to be servants of your gospel and witnesses to your mysteries. Give us boldness in faith, that we make the good news of Christ's birth known to all people. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Establish justice on earth for all its inhabitants. Lead us to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Empower the work of all who research, engineer, and make accessible alternative and renewable sources of energy. Make us careful stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Nations shall come to your light and kings to your dawning. Remove corruption and fear from the hearts of leaders and authorities. Lead governments to expand policies and resources that care for refugees and all migrants. Strengthen the work of resettlement agencies (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Defend the cause of all who are in need, all facing poverty, and all who are oppressed. Come quickly to those who feel that their lives and livelihoods are fragile. Give them strength and lead them forth with hope. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: As the magi offered gifts to the Christ child, empower us to give generously. Prosper the work of ministry partnerships in our community (*especially*). Together, help us share what we have to ensure that our neighbors have enough food, resources, and opportunities. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: You have redeemed the lives of your faithful departed. Through the love of Christ, gather us into one body with them, especially the saints of our congregation who have gone before us like Becky Nordberg, Bill Keller, Jean Knepper, Mike Shoemaker, and Royal Kline Jr. Reveal to us the mystery hidden for ages in the One who created all things. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

L: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. **A: Amen.**

*PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also, with you.**

MEAL

OFFERING

Offerings can be made online at stpaulpgm.org/give, mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.

MUSICAL OFFERING: *"Now Sing we, Now Rejoice"*

(J. S. Bach)

***OFFERTORY:** *"What Child is This" (verse 3)*

(ELW 686)



3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



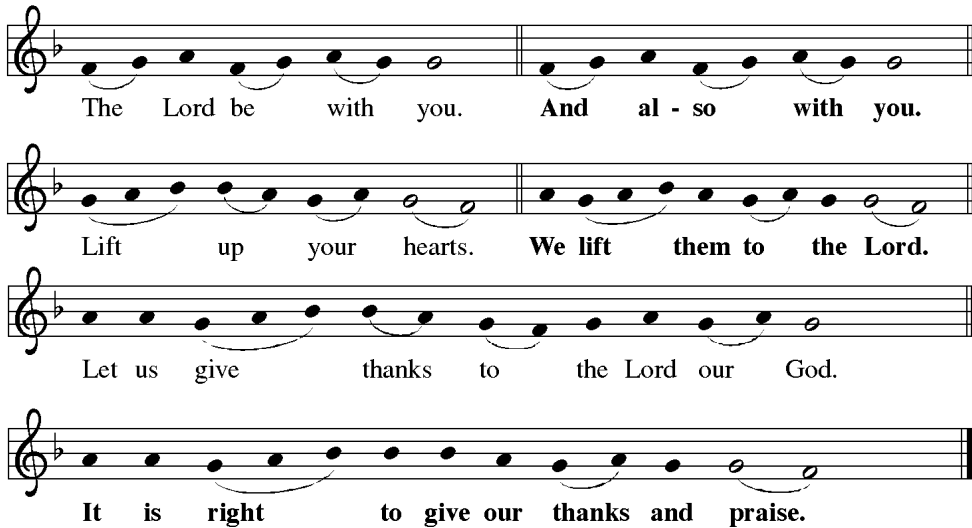
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

*OFFERING PRAYER

L: God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

* DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

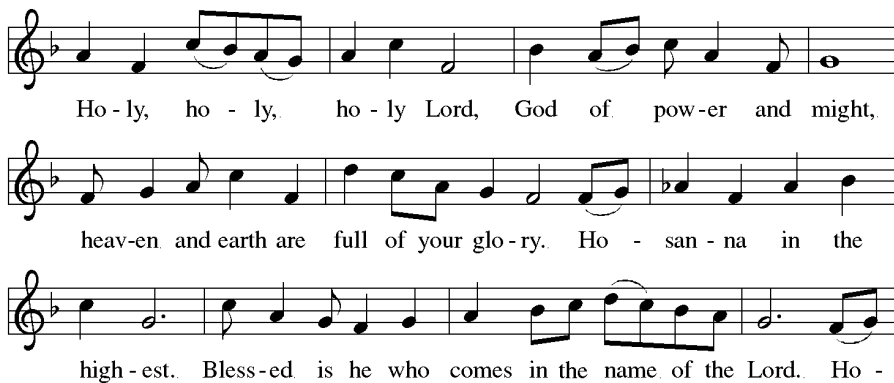
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,

heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the

high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was handed over,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Together as the body of Christ, we proclaim the mystery of our faith

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection, we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

A: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

A: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

A: Amen

*LORD'S PRAYER

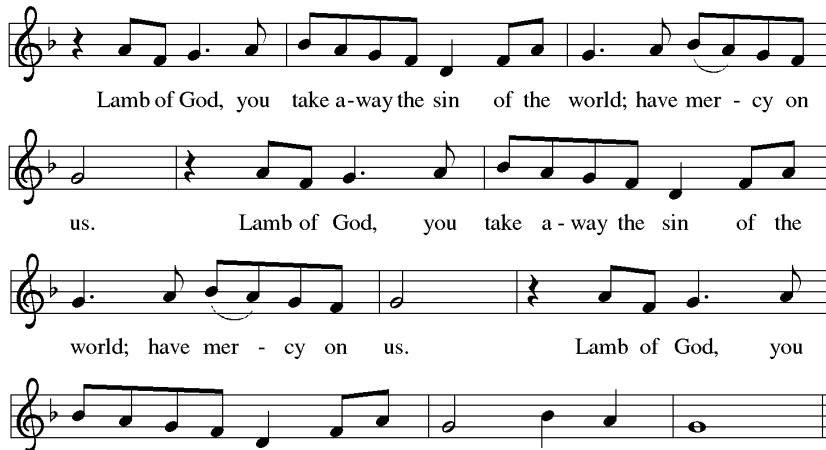
P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus has taught us.:

**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.**

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

*LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION

P: The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old"

(ELW 301)



1 Bright and glo - rious is the sky, ra - diant are the
 2 On that ho - ly Christ - mas night through the dark - ness
 3 Sa - ges from the east a - far, when they saw this
 4 Him they found in Beth - le - hem, yet he wore no



heav - ens high where the gold - en stars are shin - ing.
 beamed a light; all the stars a - bove were pal - ing,
 won - drous star, went to find the king of na - tions
 di - a - dem; there they saw a maid - en low - ly



All their rays to earth in - clin - ing beck - on us to
 all their lus - ter slow - ly fail - ing as the won - drous
 and to of - fer their ob - la - tions to the child, the
 with an in - fant pure and ho - ly rest - ing in her



heav'n a - bove, beck - on us to heav'n a - bove.
 star drew nigh, as the won - drous star drew nigh.
 new - born king, to the child, the new - born king.
 lov - ing arms, rest - ing in her lov - ing arms.

5 Guided by the star, they found
 him whose praise the ages sound.
 We too have a star to guide us,
 which forever will provide us
 with the light to find our Lord,
 with the light to find our Lord.

6 And this star, as bright as day,
 that will never lead astray
 with its message so appealing,
 is the word of God, revealing
 Christ, the way, the truth, the life,
 Christ, the way, the truth, the life.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877–1970, alt.

Music: *DELLIG ER DEN HIMMEL BLÅ*, Danish, 19th cent.

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*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strength and keep you, body, mind, and soul, now and unto eternal life. **A: Amen**

*POST COMMUNION CANTICLE – *Now Lord*



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -
pared in the sight of ev-'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the
na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

L: God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **A: Amen.**

SENDING

*SENDING OF COMMUNION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

You may be seated.

*CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE

*BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*SENDING HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old"

(ELW 434)



- 1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
- 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
- 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
- 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
- 5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
 there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
 so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
 and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
 thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
 so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
 all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
 there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.
 Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

DISMISSAL

L: Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

(Mary McDonald)



SERVING TODAY

Worship Leaders.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister..... Lauren Muthler
Organist..... Jim Rearick
Sacristan..... Karen Magnuson
Reader.....Jeff Muthler

ABOUT ST. PAUL

PURPOSE

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

MISSION

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity,
and serve community.

CORE VALUES

Faith ♡ Compassion ♡ Generosity ♡ Community

OUR BIBLE VERSES

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [Jesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.' – Acts 9:3,15

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock people, where we gather for worship this morning. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.

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