

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield
Pastor Deb Staniszewski
January 4, 2026
9:30am
Epiphany of our Lord



"Thriving Together in Faith and Love"

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Silent Meditation

Prelude

Welcome

Please stand if able

EPIPHANY DIALOGUE

S&S Day of Epiphany

We give thanks on this holy day, adorned with epiphanies:
for the star that led the magi to the manger,
that the nations may see the light of Christ;
for the water turned to wine at Cana's wedding,
that the people taste the goodness of the Lord;
for the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Jordan,
that the Christ would save us all.
This is the day that the Lord has made,
we will rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

S&S Christmas

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,

**we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.**

(cont.)

**We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.
Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.
Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
✝ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.



GATHERING SONG

Brightest and Best of the Stars

(ELW 303)



1 Bright-est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,
2 Cold on his cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing;
3 What shall we give him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion?
4 Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,
5 Bright-est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,



dawn on our dark - ness and lend us your aid.
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Shall we bring in - cense and of - f'rings di - vine,
vain - ly with gifts would his fa - vor se - cure;
dawn on our dark - ness and lend us your aid.



Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,
an - gels a - dore him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion,
Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,



guide where our in - fant re - deem - er is laid.
mak - er and mon - arch and sav - ior of all.
myrrh from the for - est or gold from the mine?
dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.
guide where our in - fant re - deem - er is laid.

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783–1826, alt.

Music: MORNING STAR, James P. Harding, 1850–1911, adapt.

GREETING

S&S Day of Epiphany

God who sent the Light into our world,
God who shone in the Bethlehem manger,
God who spreads the Spirit's rays, be with you all.

And also with you.

P - Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

All



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.
 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.
 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

S&S Day of Epiphany

Let us pray.

Everlasting God, the radiance of all faithful people, you brought the nations to the brightness of your rising. Fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all the world through him who is the true light and the bright morning star, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

please be seated

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from Isaiah.

- ¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
- 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.
- ³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- ⁴ Lift 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.
- 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,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
- 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Responsively

- Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;
- ² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**
- ³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
- ⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor. R**
- ⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.
- ⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**
- ⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
- ¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. R**
- ¹¹ May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.
- ¹² **For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**
- ¹³ He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.
- ¹⁴ **From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight. R**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

A reading from Ephesians.

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.

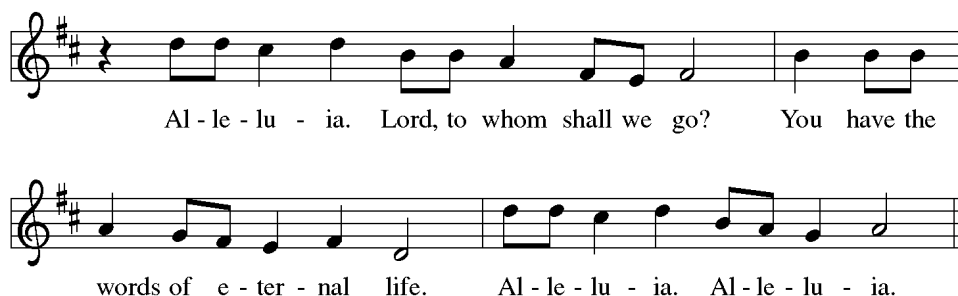
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

please stand if able to welcome the gospel

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(ELW p. 142)



GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

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.'"

(cont.)

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.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated



MUSICAL OFFERING

St. Paul's Choir

(Words to follow along.)

Lully, Lulla, Lullay

By Philip WJ Stopford

Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla.
By, by, lully, lullay. Lully, lulla, Thou little tiny Child,
By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too how may we do for to preserve this day?
This poor youngling for whom we sing.
By, by lully, lullay.
Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, By, by lully, lullay.
Lully, lulla, Thou little tiny Child, By by lully, lullay.

Herod the king, in his raging, charged he hath this day.
His men of might in his own sight all young children today.
Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, By, by, lully lullay.
Lully, lulla, Thou little tiny Child, By, by lully, lullay.

That woe is me, poor Child for Thee, and ever morn and day.
For Thy parting neither say nor sing, By, by, lully, lullay.

Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, By, by, lully, lullay.
Lully, lulla, Lully, lullay, By, by, lully, lullay.
By, by, lully, lullay.

SERMON BY: Pastor Deb Staniszewski

please stand if able to proclaim the word of God in song.

As with Gladness Men of Old



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

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.*
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by the star, together with the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O Splendor of God's glory, shine your radiance within our world. Remove the barriers that divide us, and teach us to love with all our might. Lead us, O God:

lead us by your light.

True Dawn from on high, set us free from the power of guilt and grave. Shine your light in our lives and grant us your grace. Lead us, O God:

lead us by your light.

O living Spring of light from light, renew the strength of all who suffer: the poor, the sick, and those who mourn (especially). Lead us, O God:

lead us by your light.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of light, into your hands we place all for whom we pray, trusting in your radiant mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share the peace as you are comfortable.



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

please be seated for the Offering

please stand if able

OFFERTORY SONG Let the Vineyard be Fruitful

ELW 182 Hillert

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

S&S Christmas

God of glory,
great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow.
Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth
may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

(ELW 144)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

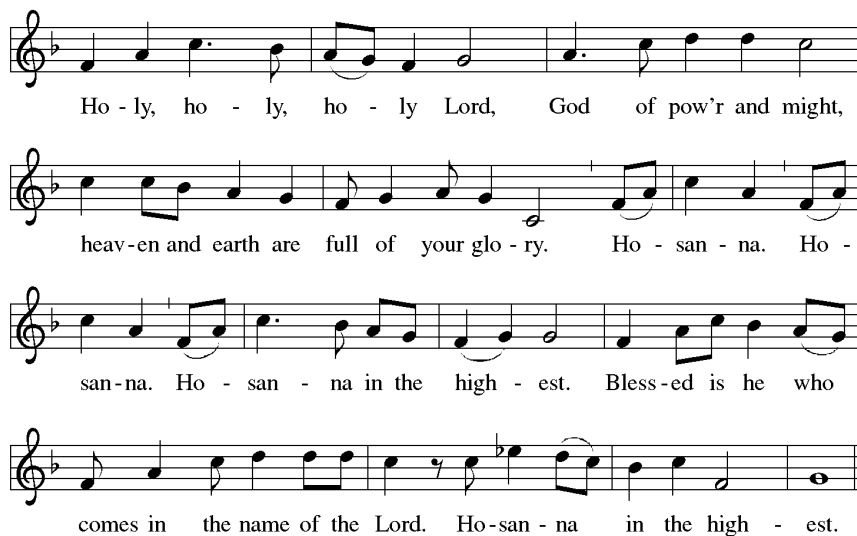
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
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:

**HOLY,
HOLY,
HOLY**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE:

(ELW 145)

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

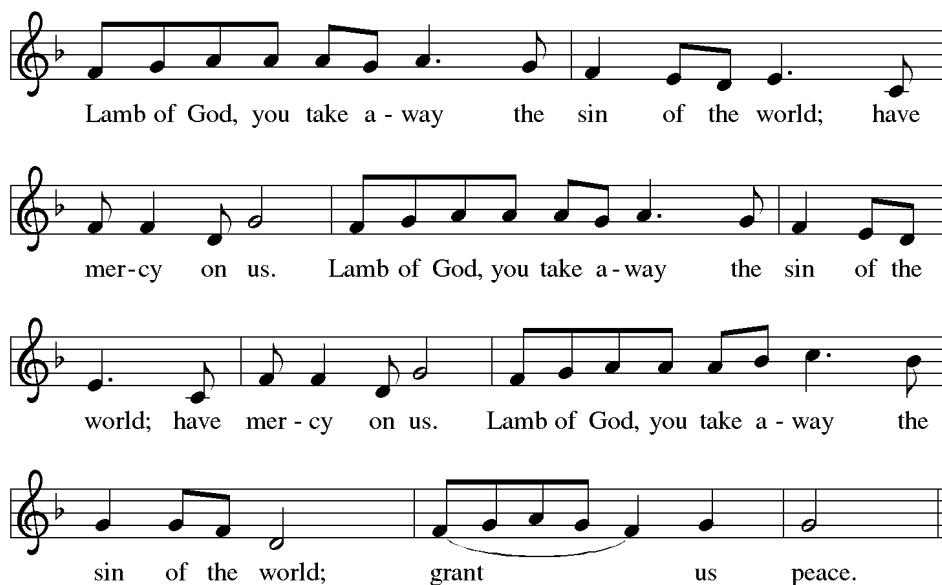
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen



COMMUNION SONG

"LAMB OF GOD"

(ELW 146)



please be seated



CELEBRATION OF 1ST HOLY COMMUNION

Today this community of faith rejoices with Jonah Sonny Vaughan who joins us in sharing the meal of holy communion.

In the sacrament of holy baptism, we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God. In the sacrament of holy communion, God unites us in Jesus Christ and nourishes us for that mission. Living among God's faithful people, we are strengthened by God's word and this holy supper to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

Let us pray. Gracious God, we thank you for this sibling in Christ who stands before us now. As he grows in years, deepen his faith in Christ and his trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We thank you Holy One, for Jonah's parents and family members who support and love him, and ask that you move them to continue nurturing his faith. Help this faith community to support Jonah in his life in Christ, and give every one of us eyes to see ourselves, others, and the world as you do.

AMEN

Let us welcome this sibling in Christ to holy communion.

**Welcome to the Lord's table. We thank God for you.
We pray that you will find joy and strength in this meal,
until we feast forever at God's heavenly banquet.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

S&S Day of Epiphany

The light of Christ came into our world and shines in the darkness.
Come now to feast at Christ's table.

** We practice continuous Communion.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.



Amen.

please stand if able

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

S&S Day of Epiphany

O Lord, you look upon us in love and refresh our souls through the gifts of bread and wine. Send us out, reflecting the light of your grace, to tell the story of Jesus Christ, our bright morning star.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

S&S Day of Epiphany

Beloved children of God, what came into being in Christ was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The light of Christ shine on you with grace and mercy and fill you with joy and peace.

(John 1:1, 3-5)

Amen.

Arise, Your Light Has Come!



1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
 2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
 3 A - rise, your light has come! All you in sor - row born,
 4 A - rise, your light has come! The moun - tains burst in song!



show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
 pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.
 bind up the bro - ken - heart-ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
 Rise up like ea - gles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

S&S Day of Epiphany

Go in peace, guided by the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.