

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

January 4, 2025 | First Presbyterian Church, Petaluma CA



PRELUDE

Jenny Smith

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor John

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to the Lord.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dorothy Teply

Kings and nations
Weak and powerful
All are coming to meet with God.

Sons and daughters
Rich and needy
All are coming to meet with God.

Strong and mighty
Weak and gentle
All are coming to meet with God.

Wise God
Shining in the darkness
Seen by those who love you
Found by those who seek you
We are here to worship you.

PRAYER AND SILENT LISTENING TO GOD

Let us pray. God of every nation, by the light of a wondrous star you led wandering magi to the humble infant Jesus, revealing to them your salvation for the world. In the miraculous and the mundane, in union with all who have glimpsed the light of your grace, lead us to Christ, that we may offer our worship and serve him with sincerity of heart. In silence now, prepare our hearts for worship, speak to us as we wait and watch for you.

CAROL

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign. (*chorus*)

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising gladly raising, worshiping God Most High. (*chorus*)

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in a stone-cold tomb. (*chorus*)

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies. (*chorus*)

DISCOVERY TIME

Grete Hansen

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Dorothy Teply

Let us acknowledge the darkness in our lives,
repent of our sin, and receive the light of God's mercy.

**God of justice,
we confess that our actions fall short,
whenever we remain passive
while others are oppressed;
whenever we guard our own prosperity
at the expense of those who are poor;
or when we ignore the cries of those in need of help.
Forgive us, we pray,
for hiding in the darkness of this world
more than loving the light of your righteousness
made known to us in Jesus Christ.
Judge us with the mercy, we pray,
and extend your grace to us.
Strengthen our faithfulness
to you and to all who are precious in your sight.**

Silence, a time for personal confession.

Amen. Beloved of God, thrill and rejoice in God's goodness.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

THE OFFERING

Pastor John

SPECIAL MUSIC

Coventry Carol

DOXOLOGY *(or in your preferred version)*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

OLD TESTAMENT

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Dorothy Teply

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. May he judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice. May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness. May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

May he live while the sun endures and as long as the moon, throughout all generations. May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts. May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy. From oppression and violence he redeems their life, and precious is their blood in his sight.

GOSPEL

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, 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." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: '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.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact

time when the star had appeared. 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."

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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTING ON THE WORD

Pastor John

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed (325 and 381 C.E.)

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.

CAROL

The First Nowell

The first Nowell the angels did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winder's night that was so deep.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor John

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**May we be as living loaves,
Kneaded and shaped by the hands of God.
May we be as wine of the Spirit,
poured out that others might know joy.
Love be the leaven within.
Love be the flavor of thought and word and deed.
Peace be among us. Amen.**

OUR PRAYERS TO GOD

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(or in your preferred version)*

**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.**

CHARGE

CLOSING RESPONSE

From where we are
to where you need us,
Jesus, now lead on.

From the security of what we know
to the adventure of what you will reveal,
Jesus, now lead on.

To refashion the fabric of this world
until it resembles the shape of your reign,
Jesus, now lead on.

Because good things have been prepared
for those who love God,
Jesus, now lead on.

Surround us with your presence,
inspire us with your purpose,
confirm us in your love.
Amen.

BLESSING

CLOSING SONG *Christ Be Our Light* (chorus)

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Worship Leaders: Pastor John Chase, Dorothy Teply, Music Director Jane Shelly,
Organist/Pianist Jenny Smith, Bob Heyman

Credits

Call to Worship adapted from Ruth Burgess, *Hay & Stardust*, Wild Goose Publications, 205.

Opening Prayer adapted from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion, Year B, vol. 1*, p. 41.

Confession and Pardon adapted from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion, Year A, vol. 1*, p. 39.

The Nicene Creed: The Nicene Creed is the most ecumenical of creeds, and first doctrinal creed in the PC(USA) *Book of Confessions*. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) joins with Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and most Protestant churches in affirming it. This foundational statement of Christian faith was developed at the Councils of Nicaea (325

C.E.) and Constantinople (381 C.E.) to define core doctrines, especially the Trinity (one God in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) as well as Jesus' full divinity and full humanity.

Closing Response adapted from *A Wee Worship Book, Fourth Incarnation*, 2002, Wild Goose Worship Group, GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago, 1999, p. 24, 79.

Music: *We Three Kings*, TEXT and MUSIC: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1857, alt.

Music: *The First Noël*, TEXT: English carol; *Some Ancient Christmas Carols*, 2nd ed., 1823, alt., MUSIC: English carol; *Sandy's Christmas Carols*, 1833.

Music: *Christ Be Our Light (chorus)*, TEXT and MUSIC: Bernadette Farrell, 1993, Text and Music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell (Publishing by OCP).