

**EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD
BLESSING OF THE CHURCH
BLESSING OF LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF BABY KITS**

January 3, 2021

10:00 a.m.

The Rev. Kurt Christenson, pastor

Bill Engel, organ

Paul Engel, Billie Thompson, & Bil Wright, singers

Omari Abdul-Alim, violin

Brian Jensen, sound, video, & computer

PRELUDE

WELCOME

☐ SOLA GRATIA ☐

EPIPHANY BLESSING OF OUR CHURCH

•We gather on the Community Crossing of our patio to begin today's liturgy with an annual blessing of our church.

In the name of the + Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

May peace be to this house and to all who enter here. By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.

As we prepare to ask God's blessing on this house of the church, let us listen to the words of scripture.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

INSCRIPTION

•this inscription is made with chalk about the main entrance:

*The magi of old, known as

C Caspar,

M Melchior, and

B Balthasar

followed the star of God's Son who came to dwell among us

20 two thousand

21 and twenty-one years ago.

+ Christ, bless this house,

+ and remain with us throughout the new year.

O God, you revealed your Son to all people by the shining light of a star. We pray that you bless this home and all who live here with your gracious presence. May your love be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Christ, bless this patio...

this place of hospitality for so many who seek an urban oasis, and even their daily bread.

•please follow the procession into the church, pausing where appropriate:

Christ, bless this lounge...

this place of welcome for all your children, every day of the week.

Christ, bless this sanctuary...

this place of worship and praise.

Christ, bless this font...

this place of washing by your word.

•please find your seats, but remain standing there

Christ, bless this ambo...

this place of sounding forth your word.

Christ, bless this table...

this place of feasting on your life.

Christ, continue to bless this congregation...

that we may continue to be your heart in the heart of the city.

Let us pray together:

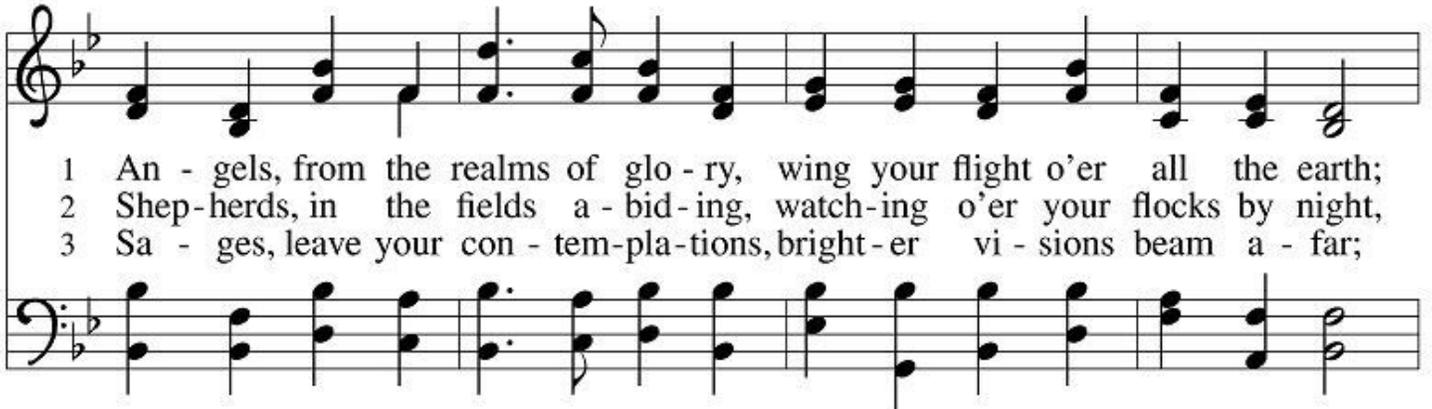
O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of

your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**in some traditions, these three letters also stand for the ancient Latin blessing Christe mansionem benedicat, which means "Christ, bless this house"*

OPENING HYMN

Angels from the Realms of Glory

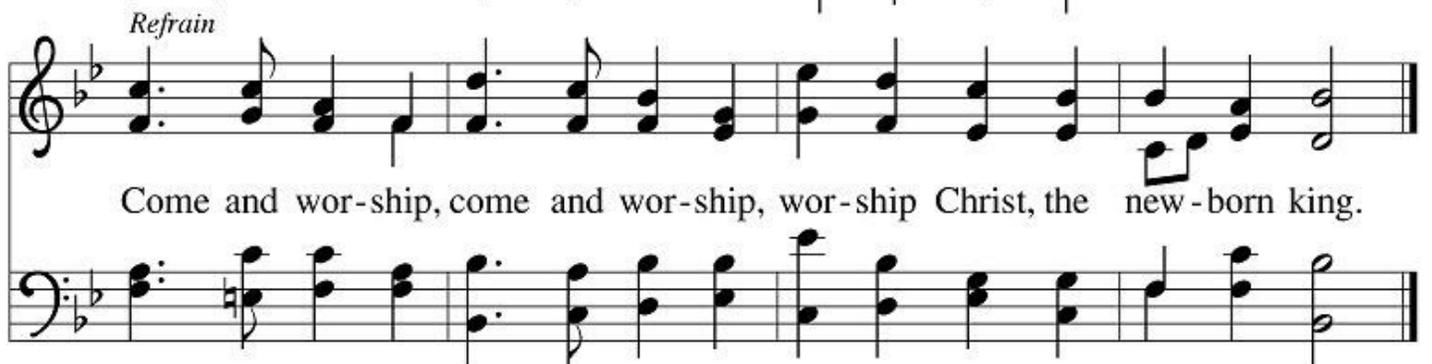


1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.

Refrain



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4
Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

□ SOLA SCRIPTURA □

EPISTLE LESSON: Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. 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. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

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. 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. 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.

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 3:1-12

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

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

HYMN OF THE DAY

The First Noel

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 . . .

The first system of musical notation for 'The First Noel'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in the key of D major (two sharps). The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

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

The second system of musical notation. It continues the melody and bass line from the first system. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

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

The third system of musical notation, concluding the piece. It continues the melody and bass line. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

Refrain

night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -

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

Text: English traditional
Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

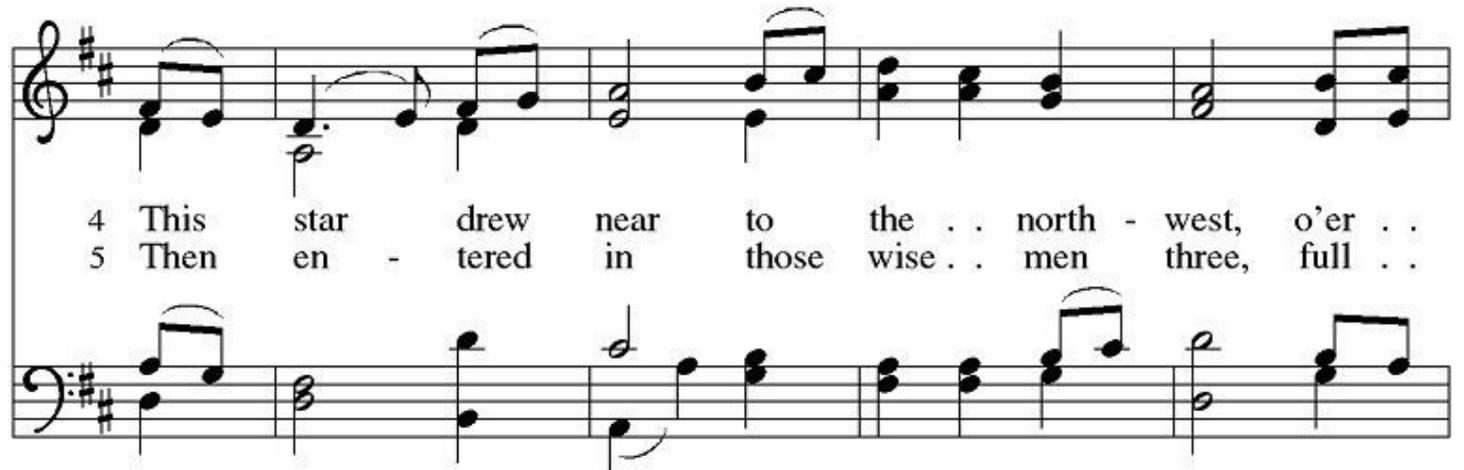
In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and 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.’ ”

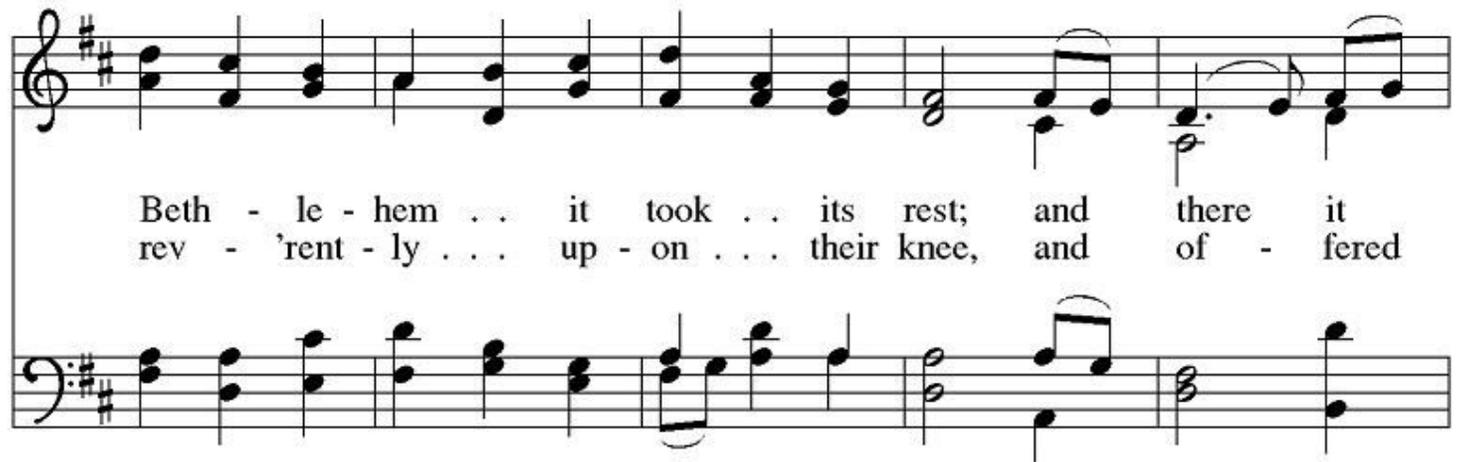
Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, 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.

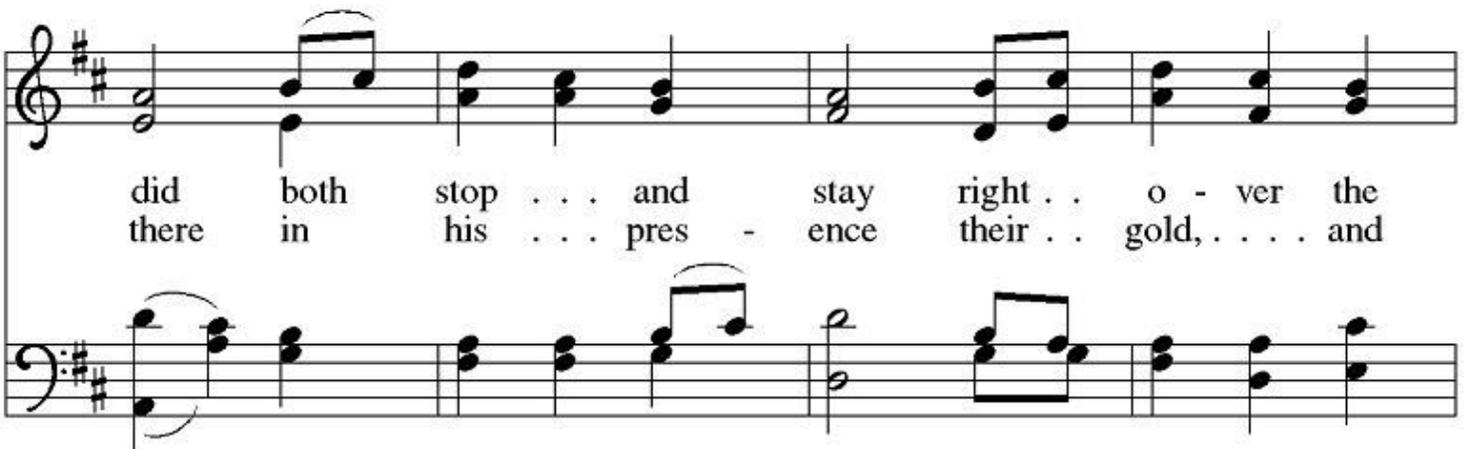
**all sing:*



4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .
5 Then entered in those wise . . men three, full . .



Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

Refrain

place where Je - sus lay. No - el, No - el, No -
 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; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

SERMON

Pastor Kurt

□ **SOLA FIDE** □

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

response: Kathleen Thomerson

•please repeat after the cantor, and again after each indicated petition:

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.

•all sing at the end of the prayers:

In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the
 day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934
Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson
Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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.

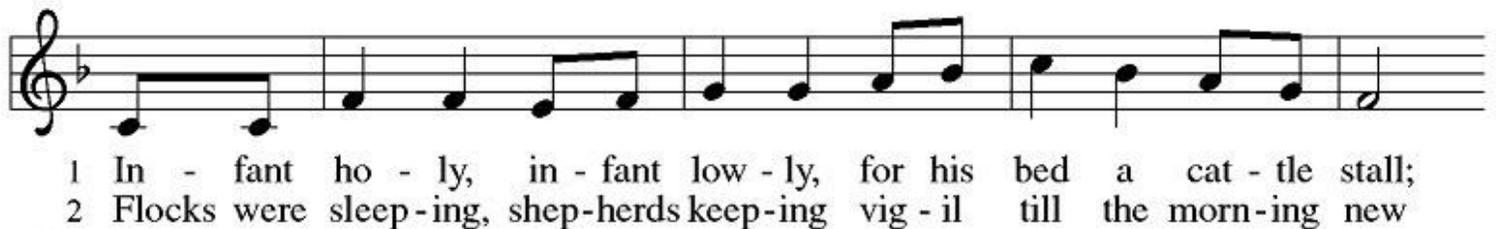
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

OFFERING

[Give Here](#)

OFFERTORY

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly





ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

BLESSING OF BABY KITS FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

pastor: The eyes of all look to you, O God,

all: and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand,

satisfying the desire of every living thing.

Anywhere your children suffer from heat and cold,

their eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

Where life is war-torn and brims with strife and stress,

their eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

In lands parched with drought and abounding in hunger,

their eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

Where the earth is broken with quakes or wrecked with wind and wave,

their eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

Where poverty is a prison and survival fills the daily hours,

their eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

Here too, where lives are filled with bounty,

our eyes, dear God, are lifted to you.

You open your hand,

satisfying the desire of every living thing.

You open your hand to gather clothing and blankets for wrapping little ones in warmth and love.

God, take our hands in yours.

As this is the season of their need, Lord God,

by grace it is the season due for our serving.

So bless these new baby kits, gracious God, as you have blessed our eyes, our hands, and our hearts in their making,

And bless those who receive them with life—secure, sustainable and beloved. Amen.

*G. Edward Whetstone+
for Lutheran World Relief*

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your Kingdom as you have taught us to pray:

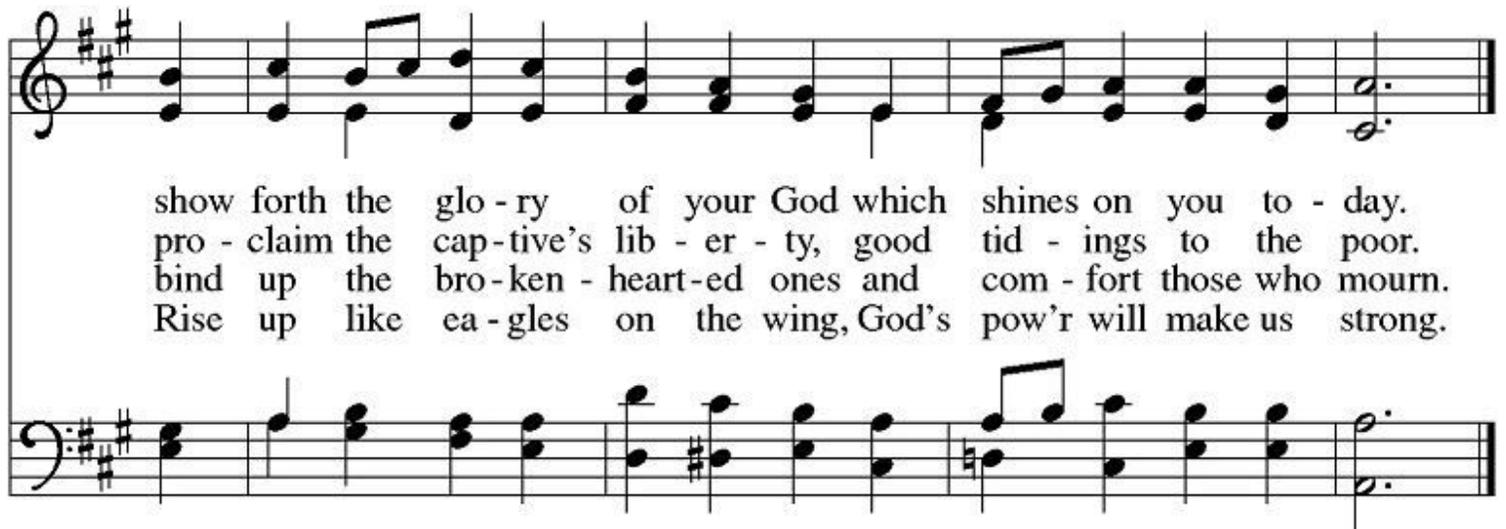
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

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!

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Arise, Your Light Has Come!'. It features a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written on a single staff, and the lyrics are provided below the notes. The lyrics are: '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!'. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.



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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BLESSING & BENEDICTION

Go now, seek out the Christ wherever he may be found,
and share the good news with all who bear him no ill will.

Bring light to those in thick darkness,
a voice to those no one speaks for,
and hope to those no one cares for.

And may God make you a sharer in the promised light.
May Christ Jesus fill you with his sense of what is right.
And may the Holy Spirit be to you like rain
that gives life to the fertile earth.

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Epiphany Blessing of a Church

*adapted from Blessing for a Home at Epiphany
from Sundays and Seasons 2021, Year B*

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offering prayer, and dismissal

from Sundays and Seasons 2020, Year B

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closing blessing

by Nathan Nettleton

a gift to the wider Church from the South Yarra Community Baptist Church

Melbourne, Australia

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