



# The Epiphany

January 5, 2025

7:00 pm

Tonight we walk alongside the three kings on their journey to find the Christ Child. We begin in the Parish Hall and then process into the Nave. The gifts for those in need in western NC will be presented to the Christ Child as our offering. They will go to people who, like Jesus after his own birth, had to leave their homes. We will ask for God's blessing as an extension of the abundant blessings we have received from God and send our offering into the world to bring in light and hope.

## **THE INVITATORY AND PSALTER**

### **Opening Acclamation:**

Officiant Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People Thanks be to God.**

Officiant 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. *Psalm 72: 1-2*

### **The Collect of the Day**

Officiant The Lord be with you

**People And also with you**

Officiant Let us pray.

Officiant

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

## Matthew 2: 1-11

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.

*Please join the procession into the Nave where we will continue our service. As you enter the Nave, please place your gifts before the crèche as your offering to God and to those in need in western NC.*

## Hymn in Procession

## Hymnal 1982 – 128

We three kings of Orient are,  
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
Following yonder star.

*Refrain:* 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 for ever, ceasing never  
Over us all to reign. *Refrain*

Frankincense to offer have I:  
Incense owns a Deity nigh;  
Prayer and praising, gladly raising,  
Worship him, God Most High. *Refrain*

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
Sealed in the stone cold tomb. *Refrain*

Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
Heaven sings alleluia:  
Alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain*

## **The Lighting of the Candles**

**Arise, Shine**      *Phos hilaron*

**Arise, shine, for your light has come.  
And the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.**

*The congregation lights their candles at this time.*

Officiant and **People**

**God our Father, source of all light, you revealed to the aged Simeon your light which enlightens the nations. Fill our hearts with the light of faith, that we who bear these candles may walk in the path of goodness, and come to the Light that shines for ever, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**Second Reading**

**Matthew 2:11-15, 19-22**

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.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.'

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee.

**Homily**

**The Reverend Nancy L.J. Cox**

**The Song of Simeon**     *Nunc Dimittis*

**Luke 2:29-32**

Officiant and **People**

**Lord, you now have set your servant free \***  
**to go in peace as you have promised;**  
**For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, \***  
**whom you have prepared for all the world to see:**  
**A Light to enlighten the nations, \***  
**and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \***  
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. We pray as pilgrims, "Lead us to your presence; *let us see your glory!*"

Almighty God, grant to your Church wisdom. Work through us that we might lead many to the knowledge and love of you. *Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

Defend those in need, Lord Christ. Rescue those who are materially poor and thwart all the ways of oppression. *Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

The heavens reveal your wonders, O God. Give us eyes to see, hearts to follow, and lives that pay you homage. *The congregation is invited to add their thanksgivings.*

*Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

Bless all students as they return to school and university. May they find wisdom as well as knowledge; give them a hunger for your truth. *Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

Loving God, you are the help of those who are helpless and deliverer of those in distress: bless and heal all those in need. *The congregation is invited to add their petitions. Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

Great redeemer, you have guided us to your presence; you have shown us your glory. Grant us, that we might, at last, see you face to face. *Silence.*

Lead us to your presence;

**Let us see your glory!**

Officiant: God of stars and journeys, you lead us day by day to the joyful vision of your light. Move us by the power of your Word that we, too, might open our gifts for others and so receive in our hearts anew the holy child of Bethlehem, Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **A Collect for Protection**

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. **Amen.**

## **Blessing of Our Gifts**

Gracious God, accept your people's gifts and may they be a blessing to those who will receive them. As the kings offered gold, frankincense or myrrh, the best they had, may we also offer our best to you. May our hearts and voices be joined in praise of Jesus Christ, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

## **Blessing**

May God the Father,  
who led the wise men by the shining of a star  
to find the Christ, the Light from light,  
lead you in your pilgrimage to find the Lord. **Amen.**

May God, who has delivered us from sin and death,  
give us a place with the saints in light  
in the kingdom of his beloved Son. **Amen.**

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ  
shine in your hearts and fill our lives  
with his joy and peace. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## **Dismissal**

**BCP p. 126**

Officiant	Let us bless the Lord.
People	<b>Thanks be to God.</b>

This Little Light of Mine

- 1 This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
  
- 2 Ev'ry where I go, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
  
- 3 Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

**Voluntary**

**De-greening of the church**

Epiphany is the celebration of the proclamation of the light of Jesus having come into our world at Christmas. Tonight, as we mark our change of seasons, we will use the Christmas greens of the church to bring light to our night with a Burning of the Greens