

**2nd Sunday after Christmas**

**January 3, 2016**

**Scriptural Meditation for the Day**

*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. Ephesians 3:7-8*

**Gathering the Family of God~**

**The Peal of Our Church Bell**

**Welcome and Greeting One Another with the Peace of Christ**

**Prelude** *The Three Kings* arr. by W. Held

**Call to Worship**

One: On the Eve of His birth, shepherds were led to a stable,  
to see the Child in a manger,  
the child who would be the hope  
for all those who were oppressed and hopeless.

**All: The night sky, dark and foreboding, was filled with angelic light,  
and the voices of the heavenly host brought the good news  
to those who least expected it.**

One: Others were drawn to the manger scene, from distant lands,  
seeking to find a king who would change the world, who would bring good news.

**All: They came bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh,  
costly and precious for the most precious Gift of God.**

One: Let us come this day, bearing our burdens and our joys.  
Let us come before the manger of the King.

**All: We come, bringing what we have,  
to pay homage to the one who will change the world.**

**Prayer of Invocation**

\* **Gathering Song** *We Three Kings* # 151  
All on v. 1, 2, & 5 and all Refrains, Men on v. 3, Women on v. 4

**\* Prayer of Reconciliation**

*Let us remain standing and express ourselves to God.*

One: Ever-patient God, we are a people who live in thick darkness. We stumble  
around bombarded by news of war and poverty, famine and genocide, injustice  
and oppression.

**All: Help us to be people of the light, shining your light of righteousness,  
peace, and joy into all the dark places of our lives and world.**

One: Unlock the mystery and glory of the babe born in Bethlehem.  
Turn our aimless wandering into a journey of purpose guided by your star.

**All: Let your light break into our lives and our world, and transform us into  
people of the light. Amen.**

**\*A Time for Contemplation** (a private time for you and God)

**\*Words of Forgiveness**

One: As surely as the Light follows the Darkness, the light of God's love, given to the  
world so long ago, is given for you, for healing and hope. You are beloved of  
God. In God's name, receive the Light.

**All: Amen.**

One: Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

**All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

**\*Gloria** (Adapted from # 113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*)

**All: Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o!  
Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o!**

Text: French Carol, trans. By James Chadwick, Music: French Carol, arr. by Edward Shippen Barnes  
Copyright © 1937, renewed 1965, Fleming H. Revell Company. H. Augustine Smith, Jr., from the *New Church Hymnal*.

**God's Word for Little Ears**

**~Hearing God's Word~**

**Prayer for Understanding God's Word**

**All: Dear God, prepare our hearts as we listen to your Holy Word. Teach us to  
trust your light. Help us take risks, that we might step out in faith into the  
unknown. Like the Wise Men, guide us now to the place where you abide. Guide  
us to the stable of your love, that we may offer you the gifts of our lives. Amen.**

**Old Testament Lesson** Isaiah 60:1-6 page 690

One: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm** (adapted from Psalm 72:1-14)

Left Side (Mississippi River side): O God, give your justice to the king,  
**Right Side** (Lorimier St.): **and your righteousness to the son of the king.**

LS: May he judge your people with honesty,  
**RS: and your poor with godliness.**

LS: May the mountains bring forth prosperity for the people,  
**RS: and the heights your acts of justice.**

LS: May he vindicate the poor of the people,  
**RS: rescue the needy, and defeat oppression.**

LS: May he live all the days of the sun,  
**RS: and until the moon is no more, for all generations.**

LS: May he be like the rain on new-mown hay,  
**RS: like gentle rain on parched earth.**

LS: May justice flourish in his days  
**RS: and well-being abound until the moon passes away.**

LS: May he rule from sea to sea,  
**RS: from the River to the ends of the earth.**

LS: May the kings of Tarshish and the islands bring tribute,  
**RS: the kings of Sheba and Seba offer a gift,**

LS: and may all the kings bow down before him,  
**RS: and all the peoples serve him.**  
LS: For he will rescue the needy crying for help  
**RS: and the wretched who have no helper;**  
LS: he will pity the poor and needy  
**RS: and the lives of the needy he will deliver.**  
LS: He will redeem their lives from oppression and violence  
**RS: and their blood will be precious in his sight.**

For use in worship, with acknowledgement. © Jeff Shrowder 2000.

**Congregational Anthem/Hymn**      *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*      # 146

**New Testament Epistle**      Ephesians 3:1-12      page 193

One: The Word of the Lord.      **All: Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Lesson**      Matthew 2:1-12      page 2

One: The Word of the Lord.      **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Message**      *Unexpected Visitors*      Pastor Kim Nelson

~Responding to God's Word~

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

*Let us stand and affirm our faith.*

**All: We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.  
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
Preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives.  
Teaching by word and deed, and blessing the children,  
Healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted,  
Eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners,  
And calling all to repent and believe the gospel.**

(From a Brief Confession of Faith, PCUSA, Lines 7-18)

**Invitation to Become a Joyful Giver**

*The magi paid homage to the child, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. May we too bring the gifts of our lives and offer them in joy to Jesus Christ.*

**Giving of our Tithes and Offerings & Friendship Pad**

*Please take a moment to sign your name and contact information in the pew pad.*

**Offertory**      *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*      arr. by D. Wood

**\*Doxology**      *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*      (# 675, verse 4)

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

Tune: Tallis' Canon, Whole Psalter 1561, Public Domain.

**Invitation to Communion**

By the light of the star, God led travelers to the Christ child. When they saw the child they were overwhelmed with joy.  
By the light of divine love, God leads us to this holy meal. Gathered together, we encounter the living Christ and taste the deepest joy.

**Communion Music**      *We Gather Here in Jesus' Name/Come, Share the Lord*      # 510

Refrain: **Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine, come, share the Lord.**

**Prayers of the People followed by The Lord's Prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**All: 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.**

~Going Forth to Serve God~

**Life in Our Church Community**

**\*Song of Going Forth**      *As With Gladness*      # 150

**\*Benediction**

One: Arise, and go forth to shine for all the world to see.

**All: We go to spread the good news of light and love, righteousness and justice.**

One: Go now and follow the star that will guide you on your journey this week, this year, and forever.

**All: As the Magi of old, we go forth in trust and excitement, transformed in the presence of the child of light.**

One: May the blessing of the God of light rest upon you and fill you with light.  
May God's light inspire you;  
May God's angels guide you;  
May God's love protect you.  
May Christ, our Emmanuel,  
Dwell with you this day and forevermore.

**All: Amen.**

**\*Postlude**      *What Star is This*      arr. by H. Hopson

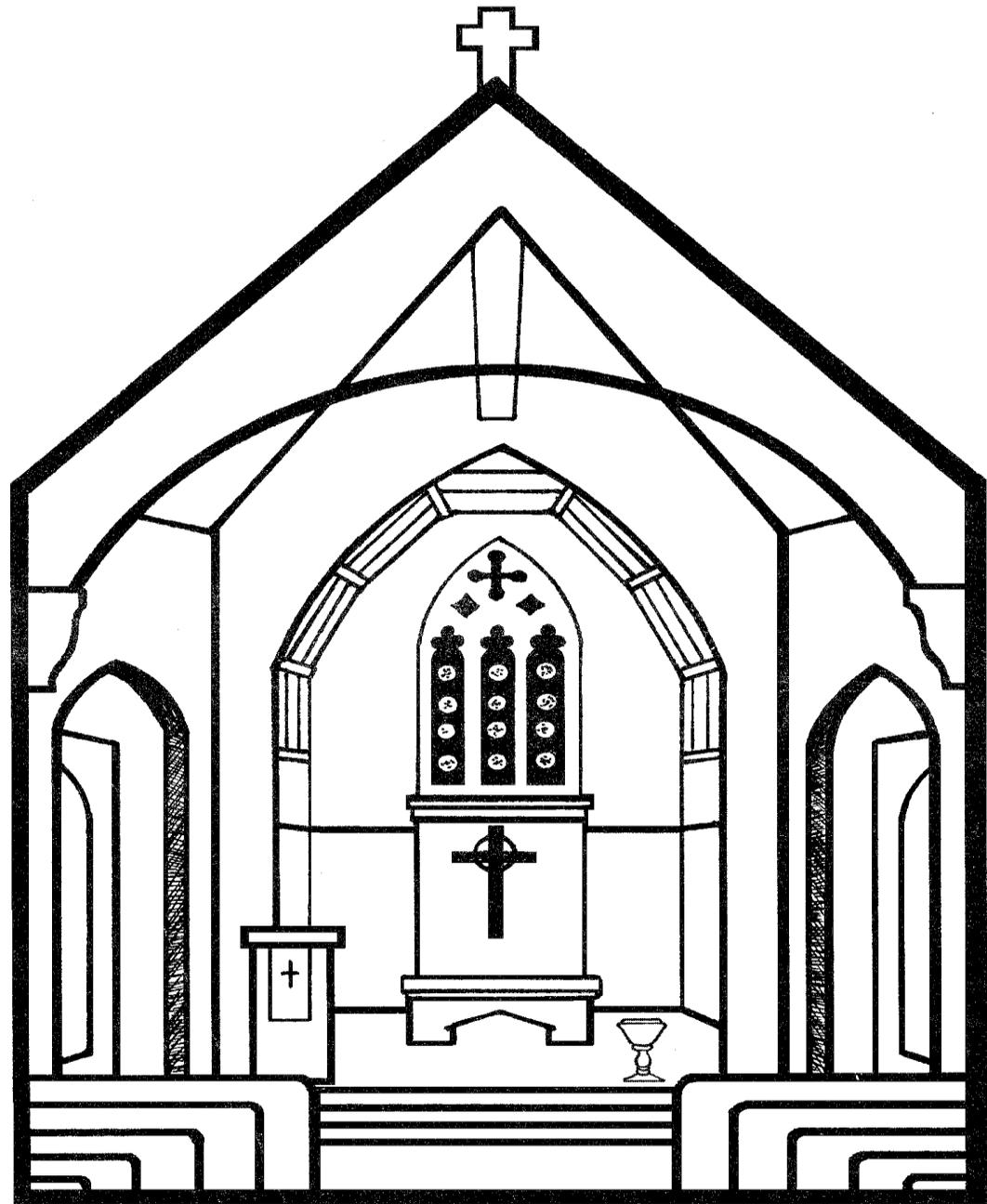
Community worship is ended—Discipleship and service now begin.

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**\*Please stand, if you are able.**

Electronic aid for the hearing impaired is available from the usher.

Music printed and recorded for congregational use only under CCLI # 11373529



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