

Worship on January 8th, 2023 (CCLI: License Number #3156883)
(Welcoming Elder: Edwin Webster)

Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 350 To God be the glory
- Words of Assurance
- Time for our children and youth
- Praise song – BOP 342 All who the name of Jesus bear

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- First reading: Isaiah 60:1-6
- Second reading: Psalm 72 (refrain 3)
- Third reading: Scripture: Mathew 2:1-12
- Sermon: Arise and shine for your light has come!
- Hymn BOP 400 Spirit of the living God
- Communion at the Lord's Table (The Apostles' Creed)

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 376 Lord, the light of your love is shining

We Serve

- Benediction

As we come into the presence of our God, let us open our hearts and minds,
and focus on our Lord and King.

Responsive Call to Worship

We are called to serve in the name of Jesus, God's beloved Son,

God calls us by name because we are beloved.

God calls us to be a light to the nations.

We wait for God's teaching and to learn justice.

We are witnesses to God's goodness and grace who claims and loves us.

God's name be praised!

Praise song – BOP 350 To God be the glory

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Creator God, you formed the heavens and stretched them over us; you spread out the earth and made it fruitful. From your glory, you came to us in Jesus, your Son, to touch the earth with healing and hope. We praise you for all the gifts you have given us in Christ and in creation. In the strength of the Spirit, we come to renew our commitment to you, to serve in the name of Christ Jesus, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and always.

Merciful God, in baptism you promise us forgiveness and new life. We confess that we often prefer our old ways. We resist the new opportunities you set before us. We cling to harmful habits and nurse grudges, failing to forgive one another. Have mercy upon us, O God, and guide us to live with more grace and generosity through Christ our Lord.

This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)
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.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ, hear the good news of the gospel. Before the world was made, we were chosen in Christ to be part of God's family. God calls us to new life in Christ, so trust in God's forgiveness and grace. Turn and follow Jesus in repentance and joy.

May the peace of the Lord be with you. Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Prayer for children and youth

Loving God, thank you for calling us your child. Thank you for giving us our children and youth. As we are precious to you, they are so precious to us. As you love us, help us love them. Give us patience and overflowing love for them. From tomorrow, most of schools begin. As our children go to school and engage relationships with friends and teachers, be with them. Let them know that you are with them helping them, supporting them, and empowering them. So, don't let them live by their own selves, but let them live with you. Let them live by your power. Be present in their hearts and guide each step of their lives. Be praised and worshipped by them. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Praise Song: BOP 342 All who the name of Jesus bear

Prayer for Illumination:

Your Word, O God, comes to us in the translation of ancient scripture. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds with understanding and our hearts with wisdom in the name of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

First reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Second reading: Psalm 72 (refrain 3)

Third reading: Scripture: Mathew 2:1-12

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: Arise and shine for your light has come!

Today's sermon title is **"Arise and shine for your light has come!"**

The title came from Isaiah 60:1. And it's imperative. You! Arise! You! Shine! WHY? Because your light has come. What is the light? The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Think about the image of this.

God is telling us to stand up. God is telling us to shine our light.

So, we ask God.. What light? God answers, My glory, I poured out upon you. You have my light.

I thought of the prism. You know, the transparent triangle shaped three-dimensional solid object. A light goes into one side of prism, then rainbow comes out from the other side. The prism reflects light and displays its reflection.

When God shines his light upon us, what kind of light goes out from us?

January 6th, is Epiphany. It is the day we celebrate the manifestation of Jesus Christ at his birth. Especially, we remember the wise men arrived in Bethlehem bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. I talked to my sister who lives in Mexico. She said, on the Epiphany, in the shopping mall, there are three wise men who take pictures with children. Like Santa in the mall. For them, it's more important than Christmas.

Today, in 2023, when we think about Epiphany, the coming of Jesus Christ in us, celebrated by wise men, we need to think about **what is given to us and how we are to respond.**

According to gospels and Isaiah, something was given to us. **John 1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.**

This is very similar to what Isaiah is saying in today's passage. Isaiah gives the reason for us to arise and shine. That is because the glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

I am giving you the image of light shining down to you. God revealed himself in his light to us. God revealed himself in Jesus Christ his one and only Son.

God gave us light, God gave us life, God gave his Son. If we were to be prism, how are we going to reflect it? What kind of light are we going to display?

V2. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples.

This means we are without light. We are covered with darkness. To us, when we are in darkness, God shone through this light in Jesus Christ. This implies that the time of despair is over as God is about to act when the light of God came down. By beginning our passage with imperative, "Arise and Shine!," this calls for the people of God to respond in faith.

The command to shine is a clever one. It's delicate and sophisticated. The people will reflect the light which God will give them. Because we cannot shine on our own light. We do not have light in us. This command to shine is a call to open up ourselves to become God's instruments. From the beginning of the restoration of his own people, God is making clear that "you don't have any light. It's my light. It's not from you. It is from me."

It is calling us out to become God's instruments shining his light to the world where we are called. We are to display God's glory like the prism.

Magi brought presents to Baby Jesus. We only consider that they brought presents at Jesus' birth. When we carefully read the Bible, we discover the heart of God. **Matthew 2:11, "On entering the house, they (the magi) 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."**

What did they do first upon entering the house?

They gave Jesus homage. The first thing they did was worshipping Jesus

When the light has come to us, what is our first response?

Before giving the gifts, they worshipped first.

Before reflecting the light of God, we are to worship God first.

In order to arise for God, we are to give Jesus Christ our loyalty, adoration, faithfulness, and devotion.

V3. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

All the people around the world will be attracted to your light. And the kings will be fascinated by your rising.

But, whose light is this? Is this truly our light? No! The light came from God to us. And what we did was just reflecting God's light like the prism.

The light of God is what draws people to God's people and God's life.

Let us become the prism which displays the light of God.

This is the message of the Lord for us today. Let us pray.

Glorious God, thank you for your light. Thank you for the life we have. You are the one who poured out yourself upon us. We are nothing. We only have darkness in and around us. Merciful and gracious God, capture our hearts and make it yours. Shine your light through our lives. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Hymn BOP 400 Spirit of the living God

Communion At The Lord's Table This is the time for the Communion at the Lord's Table.

In your Son Jesus Christ the Word became flesh, giving us a vision of your glory, that all people might be brought out of darkness into your marvellous light.

Let us confess our faith by saying the Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles' Creed (BOP 539)

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.

(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) **(Please say BOLD print together)**

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: In wonder of your expansive embrace, we give you praise, O God. Through your radical welcome, you reveal the limitations of our own imaginations. You break down walls and boundaries we don't even realize we have erected.

Like the magi guided by the light of star through foreign territory, you call us all toward you. You lead your people across borders of hate and into lands of curious and different. You strengthen us as we journey, learning stories about one another. Gathering us in your presence, we come to recognize the gifts of your unending love for us.

Therefore, with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens, **we join the song of creation and we lift our hearts in joyful praise:**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: In Jesus, you showed how to welcome strangers in challenging ways. Ways that disrupt our traditions and unsettle our comfort zones. Jesus broke religious rules in order to include all people. He cared more about the well-being of the oppressed than his own reputation. Jesus taught us to rethink your presence among us, God, but we couldn't accept it. Resistant to transformation, your own people sent Jesus to the cross. We remember Jesus' last meal giving us his body and his blood. So, we come to the table, as **we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: May the same Spirit that lifted Christ from the grave be poured out on these bread and wine. Make this bread and this cup an extension of your welcome that knows no bounds. Fill us with the courage and faith to join you in the work of tearing down walls that exclude people from your love. Open our minds and hearts, so we accept strangers as we accepted Christ Saviour. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory is yours, O God and Father Almighty.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (BREAD)

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us take it)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (CUP)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

God of light! As we celebrate your presence within us through communion and remember this Epiphany, we pray that your light shines upon our darkness. Quiet down all our surroundings. We want to focus on you alone like the spot light on you. Help us build strong relationship with you.

May we each day open the window of our worlds, inviting the fresh light of epiphany to flood us with hope, to bring us fresh insight, and to fill us with grateful joy. May we see the world around us with new creation eyes, filled with potential and brimming with promise. May our lives be a continuous unfolding into God's grace, revealing new vistas that expand our faith horizons. May your saving love and power be overflow in the place of despair, in the hearts of fear, and in the nations with distorted desires and abused power. You are the true light and true hope.

God of love, we are coming to you as your people remembering our own congregation. There are people who are physically sick, emotionally unstable, depressed, desperate, and with relational struggles. Shine your light in our lives. Pour your glory in our lives. It is difficult going through. But, you are always above our hardships. You are always enough to overcome our difficulties. Your grace, your mercy your love, your light, your life, your guidance, your wisdom, your power are more than what we can imagine. They are more than our lives. All our ups and downs. Give us faith to trust you. Give us courage to follow you. With your light, heal us from inside out. So, we may display your amazing love and grace through our lives.

Be glorified and be worshipped. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. God has commissioned us to spread the Good News that God is at work in the world and that we are loved and blessed in Jesus' name. We offer our gifts to God in thanksgiving for all this Good News. As we offer our gifts, let us praise God.

The Doxology (Tune of BOP 830)

Praise God with songs that never cease, praise God who fills the earth with peace, praise God for love and joy within; the Holy Child is born again!

Offering prayer:

God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, we bring our gifts to you with grateful hearts. Use these gifts to spread your love in the world. And make us blessing to all those whom we encounter, that the life of Christ lives in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Song for the Journey BOP 376 Lord, the light of your love is shining

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Let us arise! and shine! The glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.