

Sunday Worship on January 4, 2026

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Kevin Johnston)

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song BOP 811 Standing at the portal (Vs. 1-3)
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song 172 As with gladness men of old (Vs. 1-3)
- Prayer for children

We listen

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Isaiah 60:1-6
- Second reading: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Matthew 2:1-12
- Sermon: **Following the light**
- Praise song BOP 176 Songs of thankfulness and praise (Vs. 1, 2, & 5)
- Communion
- Prayer for people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (tune BOP 79 Praise God with songs that never cease) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 177 Christ, whose glory fills the skies (Vs. 1, 2, & 3)

We Serve

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

Responsive Call to Worship

Praise God from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

Praise the Creator of the sun and moon and shining stars!

Give praise, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

Give praise, hills and mountains.

All people together, let us praise the name of the Lord and declare God's glory in heaven and on earth.

Let us worship God!

Praise song – BOP 811 Standing at the portal (Vs. 1-3)

Prayer of Adoration

God of majesty and mystery, we come to you in wonder and praise, for

your purposes are beyond our comprehension, your majesty incomparable, your love beyond imagination, and your presence always with us. We praise you for your creation, for your transforming grace and your abiding steadfast love.

Prayer of confession (Unison)

God of light and life, you have come to us in Christ Jesus to open a path to new life, but we fall back on what is familiar. We confess that we are in love with our old ways and our resolutions for change fall short. Forgive us who we have been, amend who we are and direct who we shall be.

Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us: (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

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. Be assured of God's forgiveness. Make a new start this year, be at peace with God, secure in the knowledge of God's love.

May the Peace of Christ be with you. *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

Praise song BOP 172 As with gladness men of old (Vs. 1, 2, & 3)

Prayer for the children

Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)

- First reading: Isaiah 60:1-6
- Second reading: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Matthew 2:1-12

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

Sermon: Following the light

Happy new year everyone.

Thank you for being so faithful serving our church community with your time and energy and effort. I am truly grateful for what you've done. You did wonderful job. Thank you.

And, I hope and pray that this new year will be filled with happy, meaningful, valuable, thankful, and blessed moments. May our every day be guided by our Shepherd, so that we can confess that we have no need when our God is with us.

Today, it's Epiphany Sunday. Epiphany means revealing or making known.

In the church, Epiphany celebrates the moment when God revealed Jesus to the world, not only to Israel, but to all nations.

When the Magi followed the star to Bethlehem, they discovered that the child born in a manger is the true King, the Light for every people and every place. Epiphany reminds us that Christ is still revealing himself, and we are invited to follow his light.

Epiphany is about light, but not just any light. It is the light that finds us when we are not even looking for it. It is the light that draws strangers, seekers, and outsiders into the presence of Jesus Christ. This is the light that God reveals to us.

The Magi were not Israelites. They did not grow up with the Scriptures. They did not belong to the covenant people. And yet, they saw the light, they saw the star. God placed light in their sky, and it was enough to begin the journey.

Faith often begins this way. Not with full understanding. Not with perfect belief. But with a small light that refuses to let us stay where we are.

The Magi followed the star, and it led them first to Jerusalem.
To power. To the palace. To Herod.

And here we see the contrast of Epiphany. The same light that guided the Magi disturbed Herod. The same Christ who brings joy to seekers brings fear to those who cling to control.

Herod was troubled. So were the religious leaders. They knew the Scriptures. They knew where the Messiah should be born. But their knowledge alone did not move their feet, did not move their hearts.

The Magi moved. They left their comfort zone behind. They risked misunderstanding. They traveled far because light was meant to be followed, not admired from a distance.

And the star led them not to a throne, but to a child.
Not to power, but to vulnerability. Not to certainty, but to worship.

V11, “On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.”

This is the heart of Epiphany. God’s glory revealed not in dominance, but in humility. Not in force, but in presence.

The Magi offered gifts – gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Not because the child needed them, but because worship always gives something away. True worship costs us something.

True worship also re-orientes us.

Here comes a powerful line.

V12, “And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.”

Meeting Christ changes the road home.

Not always dramatically, but deeply.

Once you encounter Jesus, you cannot return unchanged.

Epiphany reminds us that God’s light still shines.

God’s light shines not only for insiders, not only for the certain, but also for all who are willing to follow.

This morning, at the Lord’s Table, that same Christ meets us.

Still humble, still given, still light for our path.

May we have the courage of the Magi to follow the light we are given, may we have the courage to the Magi to kneel before baby Jesus, our Saviour Christ, and may we have the courage of the Magi to walk another road for the sake of the world.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you have revealed your Son as light for the nations. Give us eyes to see where you are leading, hearts willing to follow, and lives shaped by worship and trust. Lead us always to Christ, the true light of the world. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Praise song BOP 176 Songs of thankfulness and praise (Vs. 1,2, & 5)

Communion:

Sisters and brothers in Christ, this is the table of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, Christ welcomes all who seek his light and long for his grace. As the star once led the Magi to the child, so the Holy Spirit now leads us to this table where Christ meets us, nourishes us, and sends us out changed. Come, for all is ready. Let us confess our faith with the words of 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: Holy and gracious God, from the beginning you have spoken light into darkness. You set stars in the sky to guide your people, and in the fullness of time, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

In him, your glory was revealed not in power, but in love. He shared our flesh and our suffering, walked our roads, and gave himself for the life of the world.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, with the Magi and the saints of every time and place, we praise your name and sing:

(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: Gracious God, we remember Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life for us all. As we come and witness the presence of our Saviour in our midst, open our hearts and fill our hearts with faith that Jesus saved us all through his sacrifice on the cross. We give our hearts and praise to you that you showed your glory through suffering.

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

L: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until that day when every nation walks in your light.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE

(The minister breaks bread in the presence of the people, saying:)

The Lord Jesus, on the night before he died, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it and said,

“This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

(The minister may pour wine into the cup, lifting it while saying:)

In the same way, he took the cup after supper, saying,

“This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

(Distribution of the elements)

Every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. (Take some time for personal prayer)

Prayer for the people:

Faithful God, we thank you for meeting us at this table. You have fed us with the light of Christ and strengthened us for the journey ahead.

Carry those among us who are weary, grieving, or uncertain. Guide those who stand at crossroads. Comfort the suffering, heal the ill, and give wisdom and courage to those who lead and serve.

Send us out as bearers of your light in our homes, our community, and our world. May we follow Christ faithfully, trusting that your light goes before us. In Jesus Christ’s beautiful and wonderful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

Sisters and brothers in Christ, the Magi brought gifts in response to the grace they encountered. So we offer our gifts today – not to earn God’s love, but as a joyful response to it. Let us give generously, trusting that God uses what we offer to bring light and hope to the world.

As we give our offerings, let us glorify God.

(BOP #79, Praise God with songs)(words are on the screen)

Offering prayer:

Generous God, receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and trust. Use them to extend your light; to serve those in need, and to reveal Christ’s love in this world. bless both the gifts and the givers, that all we do may glorify you. In Jesus’ precious name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 177 Christ, whose glory fills the skies (Vs. 1-3)

Now, it is our time to be sent to the world where God called us to be.

As we prepare to go, remember this. God’s light still shines, and Christ still calls us to follow.

Like the Magi, we do not walk by certainty alone, but by trust. Having met Christ in Word and Sacrament, we are sent out changed to walk a new road, carrying his light, in our hearts, into the world.

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