



"WHERE IS HE WHO HAS BEEN BORN KING OF THE JEWS? FOR WE SAW HIS STAR WHEN IT ROSE AND HAVE COME TO WORSHIP HIM."

*Matthew 2:2,  
ESV*

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD (Observed)  
JANUARY 4, 2026

IN THE NAME OF JESUS, WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S!

8:00 & 10:30 a.m.



*THE ENTRANCE RITE*

*PRELUDE*

*O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*

Setting: Paul Manz

*WELCOME*

*ENTRANCE HYMN*

*O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*

LSB 395

1 **O Morning Star, how fair and bright!**  
You shine with God's own truth and light,  
    Aglow with grace and mercy!  
Of Jacob's race, King David's son,  
Our Lord and master, You have won  
    Our hearts to serve You only!  
    Lowly, holy!  
    Great and glorious,  
    All victorious,  
    Rich in blessing!  
Rule and might o'er all possessing!

2 **Come, heav'nly Bridegroom, Light divine,**  
And deep within our hearts now shine;  
    There light a flame undying!  
In Your one body let us be  
As living branches of a tree,  
Your life our lives supplying.  
    Now, though daily  
    Earth's deep sadness  
    May perplex us  
    And distress us,  
Yet with heav'nly joy You bless us.

3 **Lord, when You look on us in love,**  
At once there falls from God above  
    A ray of purest pleasure.  
Your Word and Spirit, flesh and blood  
Refresh our souls with heav'nly food.  
    You are our dearest treasure!  
    Let Your mercy  
    Warm and cheer us!  
    O draw near us!  
    For You teach us  
God's own love through You has reached us.

4 **Almighty Father, in Your Son**  
You loved us when not yet begun  
    Was this old earth's foundation!  
Your Son has ransomed us in love  
To live in Him here and above:  
    This is Your great salvation.  
    Alleluia!  
    Christ the living,  
    To us giving  
    Life forever,  
Keeps us Yours and fails us never!

5 O let the harps break forth in sound!  
Our joy be all with music crowned,  
Our voices gladly blending!  
For Christ goes with us all the way—  
Today, tomorrow, ev'ry day!  
His love is never ending!  
Sing out! Ring out!  
Jubilation!  
Exultation!  
Tell the story!  
Great is He, the King of Glory!

6 What joy to know, when life is past,  
The Lord we love is first and last,  
The end and the beginning!  
He will one day, oh, glorious grace,  
Transport us to that happy place  
Beyond all tears and sinning!  
Amen! Amen!  
Come, Lord Jesus!  
Crown of gladness!  
We are yearning  
For the day of Your returning!

*CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTiON*

LSB 151

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

**Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

*HYMN OF PRAISE - "Gloria in Excelsis"*

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:**

**We worship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:**

**You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

**You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.**

**For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord,**

**You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,**

**in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray. O God,

**by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles.**

**Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine**

**presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You**

**and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**



### *THE LITURGY OF THE WORD*

#### *FIRST LESSON (Be seated)*

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will be seen upon you.  
And nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your rising.  
Lift up your eyes all around, and see;  
they all gather together, they come to you;  
your sons shall come from afar,  
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.  
Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and exult,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned 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 bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### *PSALM 72:1-11 (Sung responsively)*

Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the royal son!  
May he judge your people with righteousness,  
and your poor with justice!  
Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,  
and the hills, in righteousness!

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,  
give deliverance to the children of the needy,  
and crush the oppressor!

May they fear you while the sun endures,  
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,  
like showers that water the earth!

In his days may the righteous flourish,  
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

May he have dominion from sea to sea,  
and from the River to the ends of the earth!

May desert tribes bow down before him  
and his enemies lick the dust!

May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands  
render him tribute;

may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!

May all kings fall down before him,  
all nations serve him!

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## SECOND LESSON

Ephesians 3:1-12

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to

bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*(10:30) CHILDREN'S SERMON*

**ALLELUIA VERSE (Stand)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL**

Matthew 2:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter  
**Glory to You, O Lord.**

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell

down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

*SERMON (Be seated)*

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

The wise men made their visit to Bethlehem sometime *“after Jesus was born.”* We don’t know how long afterwards it was. Some have suggested that it could have been two years or more after the birth, since King Herod, as we heard last Sunday, targeted the elimination of all boys who were that age or younger.

The church has us observe the wise men’s arrival twelve days after his birth. And this is probably a more likely scenario, since Luke tells us that the family was only visiting Bethlehem because of the census.

Regardless of the actual timing of the visit, what’s more important to note is the fact that important messages are given through the story. The visit of the Wise Men conveys crucial thoughts for us to hear and understand.

Today’s sermon will lift up three of these messages. And as we will see, each is reinforced by today’s other readings, and each is connected to a particular image.

The dominant image in today’s assigned readings is that of light shining in a dark world. Think of those stirring words from Isaiah, where he says: *“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising”* (vv 1–3).

These are perfect words to capture the essence of the Epiphany visit. They also perfectly complement that related prophecy we read during Advent and Christmas, also from Isaiah. That prophecy, from chapter nine, and fulfilled when Jesus was born, says: *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. . . . For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;*

*and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Is 9:2, 6).*

In the Epiphany story, the guide for the Magi was a very special light that shined in the heavens. The Wise Men describe it by saying: *"We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him (2:2).* Later we're told that *"when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (2:10).*

This star can remind us that when God revealed himself to the world, granting us an epiphany, he did so as a light shining in a dark place. St. Paul refers to this in today's second reading when he explains that God's self-revelation in Christ was done *"to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things" (v.9).*

The scriptures, from their beginning, make clear that the world itself is a very dark place. This is why the first numbered act of creation is the bringing of light. God's declaration of *"Let there be light" (Gen 1:3)* on the first day marks the beginning of his work to bring order and good.

Light is pure. As such, it's a natural symbol for holiness. Light floods over darkness and destroys it, much the way God's holiness floods over sin and wipes it out.

Light, we could say, is the backbone of life. For without light, the living organisms of the earth would all wither and die.

One of the reasons Christmas is celebrated on December 25 is to show in a figurative way that the light of the world has come. The 25<sup>th</sup> comes right after the winter solstice, when the days of the year start to become longer again and the nights shorter.

What's more, the white church paraments for Christmas and Epiphany also reflect the theme of light. And this is especially the case when gold fabric is woven into it too.

On this day we remember that Jesus once said: *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (Jn 8:12).* Christmas marks the time this light first appeared; and Epiphany marks the days of this light's earliest impact.

Yes, light is the first great theme suggested by today's readings. But there is a second theme found in them as well. This is the message that the whole world is included in God's plan of salvation. The image that highlights it, is Gentiles coming to the light.

God has always loved his whole creation. When he created man, there was no division between Jew and Gentile.

But then great evil spread over the earth and God decided to send the Flood. After this, God made a special effort to work with Abraham and his descendants until the time was right to bring forth the world's Messiah.

In today's Old Testament reading, Isaiah prophesied about this time. He said: "*Nations shall come to your light. . . . Lift up your eyes all around and see; they all gather together, they come to you*" (vs 3-4). These words all witness to the universal focus of God's efforts.

This theme is clearly reflected in today's Gospel story. The appearing of the Magi to baby Jesus is significant in that these are non-Jews coming from foreign countries to worship him as their King and Savior. These Gentiles, as prophesied, were coming to Christ's light.

This theme is seen in our epistle reading as well. In telling of what God has done for the world in Christ, Paul makes sure to mention – using the same highlighting word of "mystery" – that Christ's salvation extends to the Gentiles and not just to the Jews. He says: "*This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel*" (Eph 3:6).

Epiphany is therefore the season of the church year that hangs a huge welcome sign at the door to the kingdom of God. This welcome is to be extended to everyone.

At one time or another, we've all experienced the pain of being unwelcome or of being denied a place in a group. And this is a particularly debilitating kind of pain, and one that can often be devastating.

At the same time, we also know that exclusion from certain places is simply a fact of life. When a person doesn't meet the academic requirements or the experience conditions or the financial obligation or the dress code, they aren't allowed in. That's not an injustice. It's just the way the world works.

In the same way, without Christ, we are excluded from the kingdom of God and from his grace and forgiveness. That's because the sign at the doorway of heaven says: "No sinners allowed." Yes, only those who are holy can come into God's presence.

Thankfully, the season of Epiphany introduces God's workaround for this. To deal with our human sin, God sent his Son to be our Savior. And that Son's ministry among us, and

his eventual sacrifice on the cross, paid the price of our sin and made our salvation possible.

Just as light seeps through every barrier crack, spreading outside its confining places and not stopping until it's gone through the entire universe, so also God's forgiveness and grace spread throughout the whole world too, drawing people to God from all nations. This light is shining in our world's darkness, and it is spreading Christ's love and peace, bringing many to salvation.

Christ's kingdom is not inclusive of sin. And it is not inclusive of all of mankind's thoughts and ideas. But because of Christ and his salvation, it is now inclusive of sinners.

A Gentile is an outsider. And we were all once outsiders in relation to God because of our sin.

But not anymore. Because of Christ, we are a part of God's family and considered holy in his sight.

The images of light and inclusion convey the two main messages of today's readings. But there is a third image we should note as well. This is the image of joy and celebration.

We see this joy and celebration in the giving of the wise men's gifts to baby Jesus. Gifts represent love and happiness. Who doesn't like to give and receive gifts?

We see it, too, in Paul's words to the Ephesians when he tells of the "*manifold wisdom of God*" being shared even with "*the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places*" (3:10). The Good News of Christ's appearance is a cause of celebration even beyond this world.

As for the Isaiah reading, this one can allow us to have a little fun. And that's because Isaiah speaks here of camels who rejoice – ones whom we could call the "singing camels of Sheba."

Isaiah says: "*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 bring good news, the praises of the Lord*" (v 6). Does this not say that the camels were singing God's praises?

I suppose the camels might simply be the transportation here. But then again, maybe that's a short-sighted assumption. If you read the text straight up, they seem to be involved in the praising too.

By the way, “*bringing good news and proclaiming the praises of the Lord*” is the last way one might describe the noises that come from a camel. Camels are irritable. And they can make some strange sounds. Sometimes they even spit their foul saliva at bewildered tourists. Yet here they are described as if they sing the praises of God!

Although not specifically mentioned in the Gospel reading, camels are likely the ones that made it possible for the Magi to come and worship their King as they traveled across the desert regions to Bethlehem. And if that’s the case, then camels were certainly involved in the praise of God – bearing precious gifts of gold, frankincense, myrrh... and precious Magi. They, too, offered themselves to their King through worship.

The “singing camels of Sheba” is a marvelous image for Epiphany – certainly because the image is so striking. But perhaps another reason for this is because camels often represent the unbeautiful of the world. Their appearance is strange. Some would even say ugly. And they come from foreign lands.

Camels are not part of the “in” crowd, for sure. Yet they are welcome in God’s kingdom, because God accepts their praise.

St. Paul would sometimes think of himself in this same camel-like way. In today’s second reading, we hear him call himself: “*the very least of all the saints*” (Eph 3:8).

But Paul also knew that he was given the grace of “*shining out*” (Eph 3:9) with God’s light of welcome and forgiveness. That light was given him by Christ. And through it, he was leading others to the praise of God.

Even camels can shine with a glorious light when they reflect the light of God. And this reminds us that God wants his people to “arise and shine,” according to the prophecy.

It doesn’t matter whether we ourselves are beautiful, wise, strong, or outstanding. All that matters is that we glow with the light that God has shined upon us by sending his Son into the world. By his cross, and in our baptism, Jesus has scrubbed away our sins, clothed us in his shining righteousness, and made us his light-bearers to everyone around us.

If wise men can follow a star and bring gifts, and if a camel can sing beautiful praises to God, then you, too, can be “*the light of the world*” (Mt 5:14) and help spread the epiphany of God to those around you. You can spread out the welcome mat of this message as you bask in the light of his grace.

Let all these things be so. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

- 1 The people that in darkness sat  
A glorious light have seen;  
The light has shined on them who long  
In shades of death have been,  
In shades of death have been.
- 2 To hail Thee, Sun of Righteousness,  
The gath'ring nations come;  
They joy as when the reapers bear  
Their harvest treasures home,  
Their harvest treasures home.
- 3 To us a Child of hope is born,  
To us a Son is giv'n,  
And on His shoulder ever rests  
All pow'r in earth and heav'n,  
All pow'r in earth and heav'n.
- 4 His name shall be the Prince of Peace,  
The Everlasting Lord,  
The Wonderful, the Counselor,  
The God by all adored,  
The God by all adored.
- 5 His righteous government and pow'r  
Shall over all extend;  
On judgment and on justice based,  
His reign shall have no end,  
His reign shall have no end.
- △ 6 Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,  
And make us Thine alone,  
Who with the Father ever art  
And Holy Spirit, one,  
And Holy Spirit, one.

I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.

And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of the Father.

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life  of the world to come. Amen.

## OFFERING

*Offerings support the church's mission work – both here and through our many partners. Offerings may be placed in the box at the sanctuary entrance or sent to the church through our website or the mail. Fellowship Cards help us welcome new people and track participation. Please fill one out and place it in the offering box following the service.*

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O God, You have made Yourself known to all nations in the person of Your Son. Grant us a right knowledge of Him, that we would abandon the darkness of this world and embrace the joy of His heavenly light. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Lord, as Your Son was once found in the arms of the Virgin Mary, so now is He found in Your Holy Christian Church. Cause Your Word to abide richly among us, that many would be led to Christ through our witness. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, You have called workers in your kingdom to teach and proclaim the mystery of Your grace. Grant them boldness to speak what You have revealed in Your Word, so that all people would worthily partake of Your gifts. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son as the Savior of the world so that all its families might worship before You. Bless the families of this congregation with Your grace and protection, and lead them to remember You in times of both joy and trouble. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Enlighten, O Lord, the rulers of this world by the proclamation of Your wisdom, for it casts down the proud and raises up the lowly. Further your work of peace and justice in our land, and give free course to Your blessed Gospel. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, You have made us fellow heirs of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Remember all those who are afflicted and in need of deliverance, including all those on our prayer list and those we name before you now in our hearts... Hear their prayers, provide help and deliverance according to Your will, and preserve them in the faith until that day when their eternal healing is fully revealed. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord God, You brought the Magi of old to worship Your Son, Jesus, and You have brought us to worship Him also. Receive our gifts and give us Jesus in His body and blood, so that we may return home according to Your holy way. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these needs, gracious Father, and whatever else You know that we need, grant for the sake of Him who shattered this world's darkness with everlasting light, and who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*OFFERTORY VERSE*      *Let All Together Praise Our God Sts. 1,3*      LSB 389

**1 Let all together praise our God  
Before His glorious throne;  
Today He opens heav'n again  
To give us His own Son,  
To give us His own Son.**

**3 Within an earthborn form He hides  
His all-creating light;  
To serve us all He humbly cloaks  
The splendor of His might,  
The splendor of His might.**



*SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT*

*PREFACE*      *(Stand)*      LSB 160

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good right and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

*SANCTUS*      LSB 161

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:  
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.  
Hosanna. Hosanna.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

<i>PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING</i>	LSB 161
<i>THE WORDS OF OUR LORD</i>	LSB 162
<i>PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST</i>	LSB 162
<i>LORD'S PRAYER</i>	

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 trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.

PAX DOMINI LSB 163

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

AGNUS DEI LSB 163

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**  
**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**  
**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

*DISTRIBUTION (Be seated)*

*Those wishing to commune at the foot of the steps should come forward first. Those wishing to commune at the altar rail should come forward after these, front rows first, from both sides of the aisle. After receiving, all should return to their seats. A common dismissal will be given at the end.*

- 1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
- 2 Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;  
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.
- 3 Shall we not yield Him, in costly devotion,  
Fragrance of Edom and off'rings divine,  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
- 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure.  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration;  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
- 5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

- 1 O Savior of our fallen race,  
O Brightness of the Father's face,  
O Son who shared the Father's might  
Before the world knew day or night,  
Alleluia!
- 2 O Jesus, very Light of Light,  
Our constant star in sin's deep night:  
Now hear the prayers Your people pray  
Throughout the world this holy day.  
Alleluia!
- 3 Remember, Lord of life and grace,  
How once, to save our fallen race,  
You put our human vesture on  
And came to us as Mary's son.  
Alleluia!
- 4 Today, as year by year its light  
Bathes all the world in radiance bright,  
One precious truth outshines the sun:  
Salvation comes from You alone.  
Alleluia!

5 For from the Father's throne You came,  
His banished children to reclaim;  
And earth and sea and sky revere  
The love of Him who sent You here.  
Alleluia!

6 And we are jubilant today,  
For You have washed our guilt away.  
O hear the glad new song we sing  
On this, the birthday of our King!  
Alleluia!

△ 7 O Christ, Redeemer virgin-born,  
Let songs of praise Your name adorn,  
Whom with the Father we adore  
And Holy Spirit evermore.  
Alleluia!

*BLESSING*

*NUNC DIMITTIS (Stand)*

LSB 165

Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of  
ev'ry people:  
A light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

*PRAYER*

*BENEDICTION*

1 O rejoice, ye Christians, loudly,  
For our joy has now begun;  
Wondrous things our God has done.  
Tell abroad His goodness proudly,  
Who our race has honored thus,  
That He deigns to dwell with us.

*Refrain*

Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness,  
Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining,  
For the Sun of Grace is shining!

2 See, my soul, thy Savior chooses  
Weakness here and poverty;  
In such love He comes to thee.  
Neither crib nor cross refuses;  
All He suffers for thy good  
To redeem thee by His blood. *Refrain*

*DISMISSAL*

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*POSTLUDE*

*As with Gladness Men of Old*  
Setting: Michael Burhardt

FELLOWSHIP: Board of Evangelism

## Those serving:

8:00 a.m.

Greeter: Jim Easterly  
Comm. assist: Judy Koucky  
Reader: Rich Kauzlarich

10:30 a.m.

Greeter: Lynn Jacquez  
Comm. assist: Dan Buuck  
Reader: Michael Chamberlain  
Acolyte: Julia Dennis  
AV Assistants: Hannes Buuck, Andreas Buuck

## Acknowledgments

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403 O Savior of Our Fallen Race Text: Latin, c. 5th–10th cent.; tr. Gilbert E. Doan, 1930–2024 Tune: Stephen R. Johnson, 1966 Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005326 Tune: © 2002 Stephen R. Johnson. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005326

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**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
7426 IDYLWOOD ROAD  
FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA 22043**

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

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Caring Ministry, Safety Ministry, Leisure Group  
Other seasonal and occasional working groups

**CHURCH STAFF**

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**The Rev. Xinhong “Chris” Yang, Associate and Chinese Pastor**  
**The. Rev. Wayne Lehrer, Pastor Emeritus**

Kantor Aaron Jansen, Director of Parish Music

Jill Cha, Preschool Director

Tawni Harrell, Director of Youth

Norm Williams, Business Manager

Linda Fekete, Parish Secretary

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