



January 4, 2026

Prelude

Welcome

Silent meditation

Isaiah 60:1-3

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.

O God, our Father, creator of the universe,
whose Son, Jesus Christ, came to our world,
pour your Holy Spirit upon your church,

that all the people of our world,
being led through the knowledge of your truth to worship you,
may offer the gold of intellect,
the frankincense of devotion,
and the myrrh of discipline
to him who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns for ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP

Call to Worship

Psalm 72:18-19

Elder Dan Churchwell

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory!
Amen and Amen!

* *Sometimes a Light Surprises*

Trinity Hymnal 621

The song leader will sing Verse 1, then the congregation rises and sings the entire song.

* Invocation

Reading for Epiphany Sunday

Matthew 2:1-23

Six readers from the congregation are needed for the following passage and have not been assigned. Anyone is welcome to read. Please go to a microphone or ask someone to bring you one.

- Reader 1 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.
- Reader 2 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.”

- Reader 3 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.
- Reader 4 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, 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." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."
- Reader 5 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:
- "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."
- Reader 6 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

GOD CALLS US TO RENEWAL

Call to confession

John 8:12

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Prayer of confession *followed by a time of silent confession*

**Almighty and merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned
against you and one another
in both our actions and our inactions.
We recognize that in Jesus Christ our light has come,
yet often we choose to walk in shadows and ignore the light.
Gracious God, forgive our sins and remove from us
the veil of darkness that shrouds our lives.
Illumined by your Word and sacrament,
may we rise to the radiance of Christ's glory. Amen.**

Declaration of Forgiveness

Romans 15:11b-13

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him.”

And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope.”

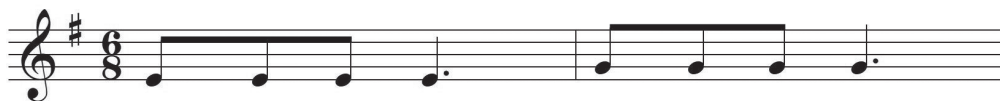
May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

8:30 service On the final verse of the song below, 4- to 5- year-olds are invited to the foyer to join Christ Kids Worship and will return following the sermon.

11:15 service Church bags are available in the foyer for 4- to 5-year-olds who need some quiet activities during the sermon.

* Come, Holy Ghost

Bruce Benedict & Ray Mills



1. Come, Ho - ly Ghost, Cre - a - tor blest,
 2. O Com - for - ter, to thee we cry,
 3. O Ho - ly Ghost, through thee a - lone,
 4. Praise we the Lord, Fa - ther and Son,



and in our hearts take up thy rest; come with thy grace
 thou heav'n - ly gift of God most high; thou fount of life,
 know we the Fa - ther and the Son; be this our firm
 and Ho - ly Spir - it with them one; and may the Son



and heav'n - ly aid to fill our hearts which thou hast made,
 and fire of love, and sweet a - noin - ting from a - bove,
 un - chang - ing creed, that thou dost from them both pro - ceed,
 on us be - stow all gifts that from the Spir - it flow,



to fill our hearts which thou has made. to Vs 2
 and sweet a - noint - ing from a - bove. to Chorus
 that thou dost from them both pro - ceed. to Vs 4
 all gifts that from the Spir - it flow. to Chorus



Harmony (optional) > Ah where you go there I am



Melody > Be not a - fraid, where you go there I am



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GOD'S WORD GIVEN TO US

* Scripture reading

Acts 1:1-8

¹ In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with [b] the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Elder: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

* Prayer

Sermon A Continuing Story

Pastor Andrew VanderMaas

A story just getting started ...

Carried on through ...

By means of ...

With the result that ...

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD

* *As with Gladness Men of Old*

Trinity Hymnal 226

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The bread served is gluten free, and the grape juice served is pasteurized.
Rows will be dismissed to walk forward.

Prayer of Thanksgiving spoken together

Heavenly Father, in sending Christ, the light of the world,
you revealed your glory to the nations.
You sent a star to guide seekers of wisdom to Bethlehem,
that they might worship Christ.
Your signs and witnesses in every age
lead people from every place to worship him.
We praise you that in Jesus we become your children,
baptized into your service. Amen.

Living out our faith announcements about the life of the church

Prayers of the People

*During the offertory please pass the red friendship pads found at the end of the rows.
Give online at christchurchgr.org or by texting (888) 793-1604*

Offertory

*** Sending Song**

The King Shall Come

text, Greek, tr. John Brownlie
music, Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music



The King shall come when morn - ing__dawns and
light and beau - ty brings. Hail, Christ the__ Lord! Your
peo - ple__ pray: Come quick - ly, King of kings.

CCLI 332344

*** Benediction**

Kids and All: You are invited to come forward and ring the bells as we sing our closing Amen song.

*** Amen Alleluia**



A - men. A - men. Al - le - lu - ia, a - men.

Prayer Partners are available to pray with you right now. Come to the area by the organ with anything on your heart: praise, fears, questions, thanksgiving. We'll sit down and pray together.

*** Postlude**

Cover art
Miriam Nienhuis

Worship musicians
Jina Jang, song leader
Susan Guerra, piano and organ