

Epiphany Celebration 2018...Your Star Is Rising!

***RING OUT THE GOOD NEWS:
IN JESUS CHRIST WE ARE RENEWED,
MADE ABLE TO RESIST OUR USUAL WAYS OF THINKING,
RESILIENT TO FACE ALL OUR DAYS WITH PEACE AND HOPE!***



Welcome and Community News

Readying Ourselves for Worship: "Surely God Is In This Place"

Gathering As God's People

✧And the Children Will Lead The Way: Kids' Time!

✧**Call to Worship:** (Based on Isaiah 60: 1-6; MaryBeth will play chord, then Congregation sings closing line from "Angels, From The Realms Of Glory, Hymnal, #143)

All Sing: Come and worship, come and worship; worship Christ, the Newborn King!

Pastor: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of God is shining on you!

One: Shadow shall cover the earth, but the brightness of God's presence is upon us.

All Sing: Come and worship, come and worship; worship Christ, the Newborn King!

Pastor: Nations will be drawn to the light, and rulers to the dawning of a new day.

One: Look around and see what is happening: people are gathering to come home!

All Sing: Come and worship, come and worship; worship Christ, the Newborn King!

Pastor: You will see this and be filled with joy; you will tremble with excitement.

One: Great caravans will come, bringing gold and incense. Everyone will tell the good news of what God has done!

✧***Gathering Hymn:** Hymnal, #143, "Angels, From the Realms of Glory"

✧**Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

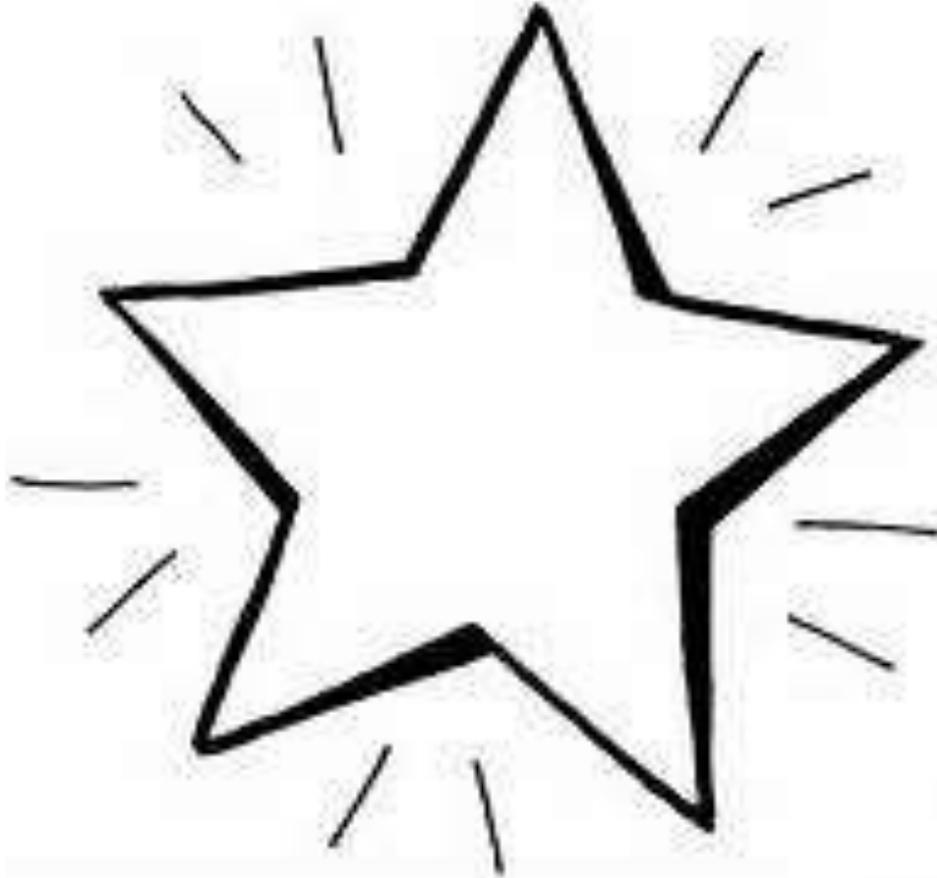
As this new year begins, we are renewed, made able to resist our usual ways of thinking, becoming resilient to face each new day! This good news clearly rings out to all who have ears to hear, and eyes to see.

It is a time of Epiphany....our own epiphanies! As this new year begins, let us spend some time reflecting on the past and opening to God with us now, into the future. Please use the space in the bulletin held for our confession to do your personal reflection. Listen....

The space outside the star represents the year gone by. Close around the star, write things from the past year that you treasure and shine on for you in the new year. Take a sigh too deep for words and honor them. (Pause) Further from the star, on the star's shining lines, turn these rays into arrows going away from the star and write the things from this past year which you wish to let go/let be. Take a deep breath...a sigh of relief and release, let them go/be. (Pause)

The inside of the star represents the time that lies before you...the 365 days to come, your hopes and your dreams. Honoring epiphany, breath in the new reality: God is with you to guide you in these coming days. Taking a deep breath, write within the star your prayers for this new year. Let there be some quiet.

✧Sharing Our Inner Most Selves With God



✧**Kyrie:** *(Found in Worship and Praise, #36. As you sing, you are invited to simply place your open palm over your heart, as you deeply invite God into your life this morning.)*

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.**

✧Assurance of Pardon

✧*Our Response:

**Glory be to the Father, & the Son, & the Holy Ghost;As it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be, world without end. As it was in the beginning, is now
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. A-men.
Amen. A-men. Amen. A-men. A-men!**

✧*Passing of the Peace

Held WithIn the Word

✧Prayer of Preparation

✧Bible Wisdom Teaching: Mathew 2: 1-2

Pastor: When we seek for the Christ child, we bring with us all that we know and all that we have yet to learn.

All that we're learning in about the world...

All the wisdom we've gained over the years...

All the skills we've acquired in our work...

All that we're learning as we manage school and jobs and sports and music and...

Pastor: All this we bring.

And yet we still have much to learn.

Pastor: Give us the wisdom, Gracious God, to know that we don't know everything and that there is more than one right way to do any thing. Give us hearts open to the knowledge of Your Word that we might see the rising star of Christ in our lives and follow where it leads. Amen.

✧SPECIAL MUSIC: *The Garlic Mustard Pickers play Epiphany!*

✧Bible Wisdom Teaching: Matthew 2: 3-8

Pastor: The Christ Child was not born into a world of peace but into a world that mingled politics and piety, scripture and sword. A world not unlike our own.

When fear and suspicion stalk our world, and violence and cunning seem the norm, remind us, O Prince of Peace, that this is *not* Your way.

Pastor: Give us the courage to search diligently for what is true and good and just. For it is there that we will find You and our true selves, Lord. Amen.

✧SPECIAL MUSIC: *The Garlic Mustard Pickers play Epiphany!*

✧Bible Wisdom Teaching: Matthew 2: 9-10

Pastor: When you travel by starlight, you sometimes stumble in the dark. In the dark, it takes a special kind of looking to determine if something in your path is an obstacle or a guidepost.

When you travel by starlight, the journey is easier if you have companions to help you see what your eyes cannot. When we travel by starlight...

God gives us companions.

Pastor: When we seek the Christ child,

We are never alone.

✧SPECIAL MUSIC: *The Garlic Mustard Pickers play Epiphany!*

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teaching:** Matthew 2:11

Pastor: God, frankincense and myrrh—how rich and exotic these gifts sound! Yet no richer than the gifts we carry, no more fragrant than the beauty of our lives, no more pungent than the suffering we know.

When the magi offered treasures of frankincense and myrrh, they thought them to be their greatest gifts. But perhaps their greatest treasure, the best gift of all, was the giving of their very lives....a trusting into faith.

Pastor: Brighter than the star they followed was the light the magi saw shining in the Christ Child. The real treasure that night was the light of Christ now in them...a light they carried with them from that stable to all the places and people of their lives.

And so do we! We shine everywhere we go!

✧ **SPECIAL MUSIC:** *The Garlic Mustard Pickers play Epiphany!*

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teaching:** Mathew 2: 12

Pastor: God speaks to those who dare to dream, warning them of dangers as yet unseen, beckoning them to ventures yet untried. Like magi long ago encountering the Christ Child...

We know the world to be touched by God. We dream of what is to be. We too are called to risk the journey.

Pastor: When we return home we are not the same. We travel by another way.

Thank God! We journey home another way! Our ways give way to God's ways!

✧ **A Moment of Silent Reflection...**

Opening to God's Grace

✧ ***Communion as we sing, "We Three Kings of Orient Are", Hymnal, #151**

As you come forward, please form a circle and place offering in the plate provided.

Sending Forth With Blessing

✧ ***Blessing... *What goes with you into the new year?***

✧ ***Congregational Response:**

**Holy One, now we your servants go in peace.
Your word lives on in us.**

✧ ***Postlude and Epiphany Celebration in Fellowship Hall!**

Parents Gathering as we enjoy Chili Lunch together to share teaching ideas and confirm our Children's Church schedule and upcoming Family Ministry times.