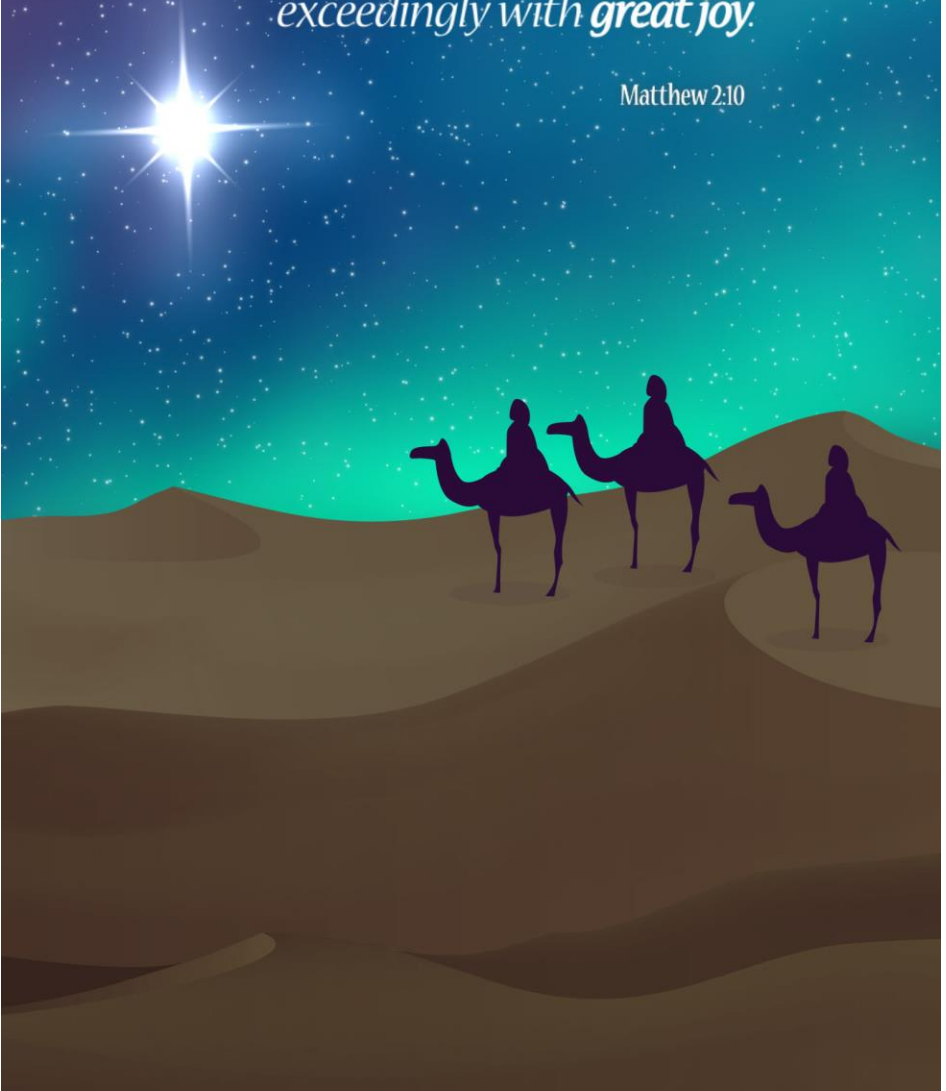


When they saw

THE STAR, *they rejoiced*
*exceedingly with **great joy.***

Matthew 2:10



January 07, 2024

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
38801 Blacow Road
Fremont, CA 94536
Church: (510) 793-6285

January 07, 2024
10 AM Service – Epiphany Sunday
Ministers: The People of HTLC & HRLC
Web Site: holytrinityfremont.org

If you're looking for a community that seeks to follow God's star, there is a place for you here. Trust that the mystery of God has brought you this far on your journey and will guide your future steps. All of who you are is welcome here.

Our worship services are livestreamed on our YouTube channel and website. If you do not wish to be filmed, please do not sit in the first four pews or the last pew. Children's Time and communion distribution are not filmed.

All invitations to stand or kneel are for those who are able.

WELCOME TO THE STORY

The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

A Story that Invites Us

SINGING BOWL

During the ringing of the bowl, you are encouraged to center your thoughts on God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Please Stand

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We gather wondering, ‘Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?’

All: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of elders.

L: We gather asking, ‘Where will we find the Child of Christmas?’

All: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.

L: We gather wanting to know, ‘Where will we find the Christ who has come for us?’

All: We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: Living God, your star in the East guided the Magi to Jesus - your Chosen Child, but it was a disturbing and difficult journey.

All: When we lack the courage to venture into unfamiliar territory, O God, forgive us.

P: Your star led the Magi to grapple with Herod, an evil person.

All: When we fail to name a source of evil, or fail to affirm the good, O God, forgive us.

P: Your star came to rest over the birthplace of Jesus Christ, where gifts were given him.

All: When we fail to bring our best gifts, or our most appropriate gifts, to serve you, O God, forgive us.

P: Your star was left behind as the Holy Family fled the anger of Herod to Egypt.

All: When we are not able to see the refugee, or to help the stranger in our neighborhood, O God, forgive us.

Time of silent reflection

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

P: You care about the gifts that are ours, O God, and you want us to recognize them, and to use them well.

All: You will bless us when we confront our lack of courage, and decide to take the rough but right way.

P: God will go with you when you do!

All: And we will rejoice in God's supportive presence.

P: Pardon and peace are ours!

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: "Bright and Glorious Is the Sky" vs. 1,2,3



1 Bright and glo - rious is the sky, ra - diant are the
2 On that ho - ly Christ - mas night through the dark - ness
3 Sa - ges from the east a - far, when they saw this



heav - ens high where the gold - en stars are shin - ing.
beamed a light; all the stars a - bove were pal - ing.
won - drous star, went to find the king of na - tions



All their rays to earth in - clin - ing beck - on us to
all their lus - ter slow - ly fail - ing as the won - drous
and to of - fer their ob - la - tions to the child, the



heav'n a - bove, beck - on us to heav'n a - bove.
star drew nigh, as the won - drous star drew nigh.
new - born king, to the child, the new - born king.

GREETING

P: God of Advent, of waiting and hoping,

All: keep our hearts expectant, ready for your coming among us.

P: God of Christmas, of celebration and rejoicing,

All: make our hearts glad with the joy nothing can take from us.

P: God of Epiphany, of hiding and making known,

All: fill our hearts with wonder at the revelation of your glory that we have seen in Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LITANY FOR EPIPHANY

L: Christmas is over, the presents unwrapped. The darkness of our nights threatens to take over our lives.

All: Light of the world, shine in our hearts.

L: Into the quiet of a tiny country, ruled by a faraway emperor, Magi came from another place to encounter God.

All: Light of the world, shine in our hearts.

L: You have greater gifts yet to share with us; reveal more of your great love for us this day.

All: Light of the world, shine in our hearts.

L: Remind us that, like the Magi, we have seen you and we have gifts from you to open for the world.

All: Light of the world, shine in our hearts, that the world may know your glory and love.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: O Star-flinging God, whose light dances across eternity, dazzle us into your presence this new year.

All: Open our hearts to the mystery of your love.

L: Awaken us to your presence, knit to the ordinary.

All: Reveal to us what is possible, but not yet present.

L: Heal us, that we might be healers.

All: Reconcile us to you and to ourselves, that our living might be reconciling.

L: Stop us often, we pray, with news that is good, with hope that holds, with truth that transforms, with a Word tailored to this trail we're on.

All: May the word of your grace guide our steps like the sun by day and the north star by night, as we travel into the gift of a new year. Amen.

Be Seated

The Story that Shapes and Forms Us

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

R: Open our hearts and minds to the light of your word, read and preached.

All: We rejoice in the mystery made plain through the good news of the babe of Bethlehem. May this good news transform us and guide us, as we seek to follow the star of love and light.

R: A reading from Isaiah, chapter sixty, beginning with the first verse.

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 60:1-6*

“Arise, shine, for your light has come!
the glory of Yahweh is rising upon you!

Though darkness still covers the earth
and dense clouds enshroud the peoples,
upon you Yahweh now dawns,
and God’s glory will be seen among you!

The nations will come to your light
and the leaders to your bright dawn!
Lift up your eyes, and look around:
they’re all gathering and coming to you—
your daughters and your sons
journey from afar, escorted in safety;

you'll see them and beam with joy,
your heart will swell with pride.
The riches of the sea will flow to you,
and the wealth of the nations will come to you—

camel caravans will cover your roads,
the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing the praise of Yahweh.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

R: Give us justice, O God,

All: that we may be justice-bringers to your world.

R: Give us righteousness, O God,

All: that we may live righteousness in love and compassion.

R: Give us light, O God,

**All: that we bring light to the shadows and hope to the
hopeless.**

R: Give us peace, O God,

**All: that we may be peacemakers in all that we do and in
all that we say. Amen.**

Please Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: tune – *“Angels We Have
Heard on High”*

**All: Lord, to whom else shall we go
Words of deathless life to know?
Not by bread alone we live,
But by ev'ry word You give.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**



P: The holy Gospel according to Matthew the second chapter.

All: Glory to you, O God.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 2:1-12*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

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

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P: The Gospel of the Word Incarnate.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY: "We Three Kings of Orient Are" vs.

1,2,5



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,
God and Sac - ri - fice; heav'n sings al - le -



moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
lu - ia: al - le - lu - ia the earth re - plies.



Refrain
Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Be Seated

MESSAGE: Pastor Tim

A Story that Feeds Us

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

L: As we gaze on the lights of the Christmas season, may we remember the Light that draws near.

All: Like those wise travelers from the East, let us bring gifts and treasures to honor Christ, the Light of the World.

THANKFUL OFFERING

Please Stand

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: “*In the Bleak Midwinter*” vs. 3

All: What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part;

Yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

OFFERING PRAYER

L: Glorious God, bring glory to these gifts and to the offerings we share with you and your church.

All: Bring the light of your justice and righteousness to the dark corners of our world.

L: Bring the glory of your love and compassion to heal our broken communities.

All: Bring the hope of generosity and gratitude to places in need of transformation. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

L: Trusting in God’s good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves. Humble the hearts of your faithful people, that we seek to be servants of your gospel and witnesses to your mysteries. Give us boldness in faith, that we make the good news of Christ’s birth known to all people. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Establish justice on earth for all its inhabitants. Lead us to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Empower the work of all who research, engineer, and make accessible alternative and renewable sources of energy. Make us careful stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Defend the cause of all who are in need, all facing poverty, and all who are oppressed. Come quickly to those who feel that their lives and livelihoods are fragile. Give them strength and lead them forth with hope. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: As the magi offered gifts to the Christ child, empower us to give generously. Prosper the work of ministry partnerships in our community. Together, help us share what we have to ensure that our neighbors have enough food, resources, and opportunities. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Here now the prayers of our heart said silently or aloud.

Here other prayers may be offered.

L: Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

All: Amen.

A CAROL SETTING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

L: God is with you.

All: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to our Redeemer.

L: Let us give thanks to our Creator.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: By the leading of a star Christ was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son, and in the miracle of water turned to

wine he revealed your glory. And so, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

THE SANCTUS: tune – “*From Heaven Above*”

**All: As light breaks forth, we sing Your praise
To you, Redeemer of our days,
For we have found in Jesus’ birth
Good news of peace and human worth.**

THE EUCHARIST

P: God of wisdom, with gratitude and love.

All: we remember your mighty acts.

P: You created a world that was good.

All: You gave us this earth to enjoy.

P: You trusted us to share with you in caring for it.

All: And when we sinned, you still did not abandon us but made covenant with our ancestors.

*P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.*

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

*In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: “Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:*

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

All: Come, Word Incarnate.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: Praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language or translation of our hearts.

All: 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.

FRACTION RITE

P: Follow the star to the table of grace.

All: Here we find gifts beyond price.

P: Follow the star to the table of blessing.

All: Here we find strength for the journey.

P: Follow the star to the table of peace.

All: Here we find rest and refreshment.

P: Follow the star to the table of Christ.

All: Here we find light and love.

Be Seated

The ushers will invite you to the Lord's Table
after the Lamb of God is sung.

LAMB OF GOD: tune – *"'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime"*

All: O Lamb of God who takes away our sins, have mercy.

O Lamb of God who takes away our sins, have mercy.

**O Lamb of God who takes away
the sins of all the earth, we pray:**

Jesus, grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

Glory be to God on high.

Holy Communion is open to all.

Grape juice is white, wine is red.

Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Let an usher know if you need communion brought to you.

For communion at the altar rail:

You may come up the center aisle to the altar rail when directed by the ushers, stand or kneel, and hold out your hand for the pastor to drop the host into. Then take a cup of grape juice (white) or wine (red) from the assistant, partake, then return to your seat via the side aisles, depositing your disposable cup in the provided bowls.

For communion at your seat with pre-packaged kit:

You may come to the altar rail as above, take a communion kit from the assistant, and return to your seat to partake. The ushers will come around to collect empty kits.



**Come to the
Feast**

COMMUNION HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old"



1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.



COMMUNION HYMN: "Brightest and Best of the Stars"



1 Bright-est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,
2 Cold on his cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing;
3 What shall we give him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion?
4 Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,
5 Bright-est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,



dawn on our dark - ness and lend us your aid.
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Shall we bring in - cense and of - f'rings di - vine,
vain - ly with gifts would his fa - vor se - cure;
dawn on our dark - ness and lend us your aid.



Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,
an - gels a - dore him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion,
Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,



guide where our in - fant re - deem - er is laid.
mak - er and mon - arch and sav - ior of all.
myrrh from the for - est or gold from the mine?
dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.
guide where our in - fant re - deem - er is laid.

SINGING BOWL

Please Stand

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P: We give you thanks, O God, that in this bread and cup of Christ's very life, you give us food for our journey.

All: As you led the magi by a star, as you brought the holy family home again, guide us on the way unfolding before us. Wherever we go, may our lives proclaim good news of great joy in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

L: Great and saving God, you have gathered your scattered people around gifts of grain and wine, the body and blood of our Savior Christ.

All: As we, like the shepherds, return on our way, may we proclaim all we have heard and seen, praising you in word and loving deed for the gift of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Be Seated

A Story that Sends Us Out to Love and Serve

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHILDREN'S TIME: Pastor Tim

Please Stand

CANDLE LIGHTING

The pastor lights candle from the center candle.
Ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle,
then light the candle of the worshiper next to the aisle.

The lit candles should NOT be tipped –
tip the *unlit* candle when lighting from a neighbor's candle.



WORDS FOR THE JOURNEY

L: Jesus said to go into all the world.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: Into the big cities and small towns

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

L: Jesus said, "Feed the hungry"

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: Shelter the homeless

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

L: Heal the sick

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: Visit the imprisoned.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

L: And ask for nothing in return.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: Expect nothing in return.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

L: Love without expectation.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: Love without strings attached.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

L: Jesus loved for no other reason than to love.

All: We will love like Jesus loved.

P: We will do the same.

All: We will love like Jesus loved. Amen.

LIGHTS OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE GO OUT

P: O God, Light of the World, trusting you, we devote our hearts to learning and our lives to walking.

All: Teach us truth, that we may walk with courage.

P: Teach us mercy, that we may walk with humility.

All: Teach us forgiveness, that we may walk with compassion.

P: Teach us grace, that we may walk with strength.

All: Teach us wonder, that we may walk with praise.

P: Teach us goodness, that we may walk with those in need.

All: O God, Light of the World, learning from you, may we walk well. Amen.

SENDING HYMN: “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”
vs. 1,2

1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous - ness,
light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
Refrain
In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the
day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the
cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

DISMISSAL

L: Go forth to shine with the light of Christ’s love.

All: We will go forth to shine with the justice and peace of Christ’s light.

POSTLUDE
