

# Festival of Our Lord's Epiphany

January 5, 2025

## Order of Worship: Holy Communion, Setting Four

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### **Congregational responses are printed in bold type.**

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PRELUDE & BELLS *We observe a moment of silence for prayer and meditation.*

WELCOME

Blessed be the Kingdom...now and forever **and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

*We stand* OPENING HYMN

#301

“Bright and Glorious is the Sky”

### ✠BRIEF RITE FOR CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS✠

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thought of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 is kept for reflection and personal confession.*

*1John 1:8-9*

Most merciful God... **we confess that we are born captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you- who believe and repent- of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

✠HOLY COMMUNION✠

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

LITANY *Kyrie Eleison* Lord, Have Mercy!



Ⓐ In peace, let us pray to the Lord.    ☩ Lord,    have mer - cy.



Ⓐ For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-vation, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord,    have mer - cy.



Ⓐ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord,    have mer - cy.



Ⓐ For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.    ☩ Lord,    have mer - cy.



Ⓐ Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord.    ☩ A -    men



**A** Glo-ry to God in the high- est, and peace to his peo- ple on earth.



**B** Lord God, heav- en- ly king, al- might- y God and Fa - ther:



We wor- ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je- sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa- ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a- way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat- ed at the right hand of the Fa- ther; re- ceive our prayer.



For you a- lone are the Ho - ly One, you a- lone are the Lord,



you a- lone are the Most High, Je- sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir- it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa- ther. A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Let us pray...O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

Next Steps Weekly Memory Verse: MATTHEW 2:2

*We have observed his star at its rising and have come to worship him.*

*We sit* FIRST READING ISAIAH 60:1-6

<sup>1</sup> Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. <sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. <sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. <sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

<sup>6</sup> 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 proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE & MEDITATION: PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the king's son;

<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your people righteously  
and the poor with justice;**

<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,  
and the little hills bring righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **He shall defend the needy among the people;  
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup> He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup> **He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,  
like showers that water the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> In his time shall the righteous flourish;  
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>10</sup> **The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute,  
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.**

<sup>11</sup> All kings shall bow down before him,  
and all the nations do him service.

<sup>12</sup> **For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress,  
and the oppressed who has no helper.**

<sup>13</sup> He shall have pity on the lowly and poor;  
he shall preserve the lives of the needy.

<sup>14</sup> **He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,  
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.**

SECOND READING EPHESIANS 3:1-12

<sup>1</sup> This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—  
<sup>2</sup> for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for  
you, <sup>3</sup> and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few  
words, <sup>4</sup> a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of  
Christ. <sup>5</sup> In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now  
been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup> that is, the Gentiles have  
become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus  
through the gospel. <sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's  
grace that was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am the very least of all the  
saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of  
Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God  
who created all things; <sup>10</sup> so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety  
might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was in  
accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup> in  
whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
 You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 2:1-12

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> 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.” <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> ‘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.’” <sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord **Praise to You, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

#308

“O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!”

We sit. SERMON

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

*Proclaim*  
**The Wise Men**

*We stand.* PROFESSION OF FAITH Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic\* and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the + resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

\*means whole, entire Christian

#### PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

With joy and gratitude for the gift of Jesus, let us draw near to our heavenly Father in prayer, asking his mercy for the Church, the world, and all who need his loving-kindness.

*A brief silence*

Holy God, thank you for Jesus. He shares our life, and shares your life with us. He grew in wisdom and understanding, and gives us the Holy Spirit so we can, too. He takes our sin, and gives us his pure, holy grace and love. He is your unfailing Light in the darkest days and places we endure. Thank you.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son adorned the earthly Temple with his presence as a baby and as a growing lad. He is your Holy of Holies in our midst. Make your Church a Temple fit for his habitation. Grant that it may adorn his dear presence with faithful words, heartfelt worship, and deeds of love and mercy. May it draw all people to Jesus' feet, there to learn from him the Good News of our salvation.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Grant to your persecuted servants your imperishable inheritance of grace, faithfulness, and endurance. Make us generous in aiding, defending, and praying for them. Turn the hearts of their adversaries away from sin and hatred, and toward you in repentance and faith.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Bless this congregation, so that people gladly come here to encounter you in Word and Sacrament, in fellowship, learning, and service. We pray for our mission to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus; to support Solid Rock our mission in action; and that you send us adults for baptism. Make us wise in the ways of charity and faithfulness, so that all may find your precepts to be sweeter than honey.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray your favor upon this new year; upon our hopes for a better future; and upon all who find no release from the sorrows and cares of the previous years. Give us wisdom and strength to seek your will for our common good. Draw us toward that eternal New Year that you alone shall bring.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Solomon prayed for wisdom to lead your people according to your precepts. The wise men heeded your guiding and warning words. The prophets attended to your wisdom and counsel. Give that wisdom to all of our earthly rulers. Fill them with deep love for justice, mercy, wisdom, and integrity. Let all people live free from the consequences of malice, stupidity, and calamity. Crown not just this new year, but all of our years, with the blessings of your peace.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

These are perilous times, dear Lord! Guide, strengthen and protect our military and first responders. May they accomplish all that is in accordance with your will. Return them swiftly to their loved ones. Bring them healing, hope, and renewed opportunities to serve you in the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Be the light and salvation of everyone who calls on you in times of trouble. We plead especially for: {List}. Grant them health, wholeness, and hope. Ease the burdens and bless the labors of all who care for them. Refresh their spirits, and bind us all together in cords of mutual care and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

The generations rise and fall and pass before you, O Lord. We entrust our beloved dead into your merciful care. We pray for the families of {List}. Comfort those who grieve, and whose hope falters. Give us eyes to see the suffering around us; lips to pray and encourage; hands to extend in blessing; and hearts to beat with compassion and forgiveness. Grant to all whom you have redeemed through your dear Son, a portion in the imperishable inheritance you have prepared for them. Bring us into your Kingdom, where you reign in unity with your Son and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Thank you for hearing our prayers, dear Lord. We entrust them, and our lives, into your merciful care. **Amen.**



SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also, with you.**

*We briefly greet those in our row with the words "Peace be with you."*

OFFERTORY SONG *Giving back to God*



*First- and second-time guests are not expected to give a monetary offering; your Connection Card and your presence this morning are your gifts.*

*Safe, secure & easy electronic giving is available on our website [stpeterhallettsville.org/giving](http://stpeterhallettsville.org/giving) or by scanning this code.*

*We stand #284*

*"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

*v3 only*

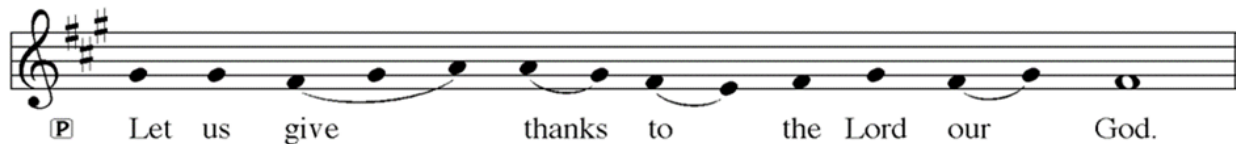
**3 What can I give him, poor as I am?**

**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 give him--give my heart.**

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



It is indeed right and salutary . . . and join their unending hymn:

5PM SPOKEN



#### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven & earth...

As he comes to us in his holy supper. **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

In the night in which he was betrayed, ... Do this for the remembrance of me.

#### LORD'S PRAYER

*Matthew 6:9-13*

**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.**

*We sit.* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

*Holy Communion is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ present and received in, with, and under the bread and wine. All who are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and who believe the Lord's words "This is my body given for you" and "This is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins" may receive Communion. Young children, not yet receiving Communion, may receive a blessing.*

(Matt 26:26ff, Mark 14:22ff, Luke 22:19ff, 1 Cor. 11:24ff)

*Communion administration occurs in a continuous fashion at the Communion rail. The ushers will guide you to the rail. To receive the elements, extend your hand, palm up, to the ministers. White grape juice is available in the center of the trays. For those unable to consume either bread or wine, the Church affirms the Lord's full presence in each element alone. Once you have received the elements, return to your seat by the side aisles. If you do not desire to receive Holy Communion, you may remain seated.*

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION HYMN

#195

"Lamb of God"

*John 1:29*

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Lamb of God" in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace." The music is written in a simple, accessible style with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat.

*We stand* POST-COMMUNION BLESSING, SONG, & PRAYER  
May the true body and blood...keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

#267

“Joy to the World

*v1*

Let us pray... Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

BENEDICTION

*Numbers 6:24-26*

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

#302

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
100 North Promenade, Hallettsville, Texas 77964  
(361) 798-2808 www.stpeterhallettsville.org

Our mission is Christ's mission – "I will build my church"  
by developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Wednesday, Jan 8 Confirmation returns 6:00 pm -8:00 pm

Sunday, Jan 12 Next Steps Class (*Baptism*)\_10:30 am-3:00 pm (*lunch provided*)

Saturday, Jan 11 "Let's Fiesta!" Solid Rock Bingo Night

Wednesday, Jan 15 Family Faith Night returns 6:00 pm-7:30 pm

**YTD (Jan-Nov '24)** \$257,884.39; **EXPENSES** \$276,398.25  
**DIFFERENCE +/-** -\$18,513.86(*due to increased insurance rate*)

**Attendance:** Sunday, Dec 29: 9AM 86

**Openings for:** (2025 Flower/Radio Sponsorships are available)

### **Serving This Weekend Jan 5**

**Sunday AM:** *Assisting:* Barbara Grindeland

*Communion Set Up:* Barbara Koehn

*Communion Clean Up:* Judy Drozd

*Organist:* Denise Drozd

*Ushers:* Donald Muehr, Ramon Lopez, Clayton Muehr, & Chris Chudej

*Acolytes:* Finley Poeling & Karlie Hotz

*Power Point Sunday:* Judy Garmon

*Altar Flowers given by* James & Rida Chovanetz in thankfulness for God's Blessings

*Radio Ministry given by* Women in Mission in memory of Billy Drozd

**Sunday PM:** *Assisting:* Aileen Peck

*Communion Clean Up:* Aileen Peck

*Organist:* Denise Drozd

### **First Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### **SAVE THE DATE IN FEBRUARY:**

Sunday, Feb 2 St. Peter Blood Drive 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Sunday, Feb 2 Financial Peace Begins 6:30 pm-8:30 pm

Wednesday, Feb 5 Confirmation 6:00 pm -8:00 pm

Wednesday, Feb 12 Family Faith Night 6:00 pm -7:30 pm

## **This Week @ St. Peter**

**Sun** Jan 5, 9:00 am Worship(LAMB Sunday), 10:00 Coffee Time,  
10:30 am Adult/Youth Christian Learning, 5:00 pm Worship Service  
**Mon** Jan 6, 1:00 pm Quilting  
**Tue** Jan 7, 9:30 am Nursing Home Service,  
6:00 pm Learning Commission, 7:00 pm Prayer  
**Wed** Jan 8, 6:00 pm Confirmation  
**Thu** Jan 9, 6:00 pm Solid Rock Board, 6:30 pm AA/Al-Anon  
**Sat** Jan 11, 6:00 pm Solid Rock Bingo  
**Sun** Jan 12, 9:00 am Worship), 10:00 am Coffee Time,  
10:30 am Adult/Your Christian Learning

## **Serving Next Weekend Jan 12**

**Sunday AM:** *Assisting:* Marilyn McAda

*Communion Set Up:* Barbara Koehn

*Communion Clean Up:* Judy Drozd

*Organist:* Denise Drozd

*Ushers:* Donald Muehr, Ramon Lopez, Clayton Muehr, & Chris Chudej

*Acolytes:* Ariel Muehr & Caroline Duty

*Power Point Sunday:* Sophie Teltschik

*Altar Flowers given by* Lee & Cindy Rother in memory of Joe Ray Prasek

*Radio Ministry given by* Women in Mission in memory of Celia Ann Kruse

**Sunday PM:** *Assisting:* Daniel Drozd

*Communion Clean Up:* Janis Muehr

*Organist:* Janis Muehr

## **Our Prayer List:** *Requests listed 4 weeks under **Concerns For** unless otherwise requested.*

Concerns for: Ruth Rouse, Abi Kraatz, James Kubecka, Jonathan Brooks, Margie Renger, Jerry Brown, Joseph Williams, Johnny Draper, Howard Loewe, Leroy Schroeder

Extended concerns: Jim Brandt, Edmund Koerth, Barbara Tackett,

Charlotte Hartmann, Melissa Grice, Michael Drozd, Misty Fletcher Remmers, Cody Rice Jr,

William Lane, Brandi Orsak, Jeffrey Morgenroth, Charlie Garmon, Carrie Besetsny, DeWayne

Dixon, James Evans,

Pr. John Schmidt & family (*Missionary in Ghana*)

Other Concerns: first responders (*military, law enforcement, firefighter, medical*), Safe House Church (*Hallettsville*); San Miguel (*Ft. Worth*) and Houston Oromo Lutheran Churches, President

Biden; President-elect Donald Trump,

our country; and those facing unrest & unemployment

Grieving Families of Buddy Hermes, Joseph Orr, Helen Spies,

Beverly Green, Larry Stillions, Elroy Tesch, Francis Christ, Bill Drozd,

A.J. Kutac, Celia Ann Kruse, Milton Mika, Evelyn Lishinski, Sarah Sralik, Carl Tieken,

Dorothy Ehler

ENTRANCE HYMN (ELW) *Bright and Glorious Is the Sky* (ELW 301)

1 Bright and glorious is the sky,  
radiant are the heavens high  
where the golden stars are shining.  
All their rays to earth inclining  
beckon us to heav'n above,  
beckon us to heav'n above.

2 On that holy Christmas night  
through the darkness beamed a light;  
all the stars above were paling.  
all their luster slowly failing  
as the wondrous star drew nigh,  
as the wondrous star drew nigh..

3 Sages from the East afar,  
when they saw this wondrous star,  
went to find the king of nations  
and to offer their oblations  
to the child, the newborn king,  
to the child, the newborn king.

4 Him they found in Bethlehem,  
yet he wore no diadem;  
there they saw a maiden lowly  
with an infant pure and holy  
resting in her loving arms,  
resting in her loving arms.

5 Guided by the star, they found  
him whose praise the ages sound.  
We too have a star to guide us,  
which forever will provide us  
with the light to find our Lord,  
with the light to find our Lord.

6 And this star, as bright as day,  
that will never lead astray  
with its message so appealing,  
is the word of God, revealing  
Christ, the way, the truth, the life,  
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW) *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!* (ELW 308)

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 line, King David's son,  
our Lord and Savior, 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, precious diamond, 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!  
Oh, 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 Oh, let the harps break forth in sound!  
Our joy be all with music crowned,  
our voices gaily 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!  
Praise to Christ, who reigns in 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.

CLOSING HYMN (ELW) *As with Gladness Men of Old* (ELW 302)

1 As with gladness men of old  
did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright;  
so, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led by thee.

2 As with joyful steps they sped,  
Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
there to bend the knee before  
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;  
so may we with willing feet  
ever seek thy mercy seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare  
at thy cradle, rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.

4 Holy Jesus, ev'ry day  
keep us in the narrow way;  
and when earthly things are past,  
bring our ransomed souls at last  
where they need no star to guide,  
where no clouds thy glory hide.

5 In the heav'nly country bright  
need they no created light;  
thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
thou its sun which goes not down;  
there forever may we sing  
alleluias to our king.