**First Free Methodist Church of Saginaw**

Epiphany of the Lord

January 8, 2023



*“When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy." (Matthew 2:10)*

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**Prelude**

**\*\*Greeting/Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship** (*spoken responsively*)

L: O God, our Covenant Friend

**P: You have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives**

L: We thank you for your loving care

**P: Which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place**

L: You set us in a world filled with your glory

**P: You have filled our hearts and have given us your peace**

L: You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit

**P: We praise your holy name, O God**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “We Three Kings of Orient Are” #202 (vv.1-2,5)

**We three kings of Orient are**

**Bearing gifts we traverse afar**

**Field and fountain, moor and mountain**

**Following yonder star**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain**

**Gold I bring to crown him again**

**King forever, ceasing never**

**Over us all to reign**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**Glorious now behold him arise**

**King and God and sacrifice**

**Alleluia, Alleluia**

**Earth to heav’n replies**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**\*Passing of the Peace**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: O God, Searcher of all our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own. As we come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant with you, reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us. Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being, and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever, as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples…

**P: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**\*Gloria Patri**

**Congregational Reading:** Wesleyan Prayer

**P:** **I am no longer my own, but Yours. Put me to what You will, rank me with whom You will. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by You or laid aside for You; exalted for You or brought low by You. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, You are mine, and I am Yours. So be it. Amen.**

**Congregational Hymn:** “Come Thou Long –Expected Jesus” #157 (vv.1-2)

**Come, thou long expected Jesus**

**Born to set thy people free**

**From our fears and sins release us**

**Let us find our rest in thee**

**Israel's strength and consolation**

**Hope of all the earth thou art**

**Dear desire of every nation**

**Joy of every longing heart**

**Born thy people to deliver**

**Born a child and yet a King**

**Born to reign in us forever**

**Now thy gracious kingdom bring**

**By thine own eternal spirit**

**Rule in all our hearts alone**

**By thine all sufficient merit**

**Raise us to thy glorious throne**

**Gospel Lesson**: 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.

**Sermon**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Hymn of Response:** “As With Gladness Men of Old” (vv.1-4)

**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**

**As with joyful steps they sped**

**Savior, to thy lowly bed**

**There to bend the knee before**

**Him whom heav’n and earth adore**

**So may we with willing feet**

**Ever seek thy mercy seat**

**As they offered gifts most rare**

**In that dwelling 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**

**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**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants. Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. As pleasing to Christ, we collect this morning’s tithes and offerings.

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer**

**\*Closing Hymn**: “Shine, Jesus, Shine” (vv.1-3)

**Lord, the light of your love is shining**

**In the midst of the darkness, shining**

**Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us**

**Set us free by the truth you now bring us**

**Shine on me, shine on me**

**Shine, Jesus, shine**

**Fill this land with the Father's glory**

**Blaze, Spirit, blaze**

**Set our hearts on fire**

**Flow, river, flow**

**Flood the nations with grace and mercy**

**Send forth your word**

**Lord, and let there be light**

**Lord, I come to your awesome presence**

**From the shadows into your radiance**

**By the blood I may enter your brightness**

**Search me, try me, consume all my darkness**

**Shine on me, shine on me**

**Shine, Jesus, shine**

**Fill this land with the Father's glory**

**Blaze, Spirit, blaze**

**Set our hearts on fire**

**Flow, river, flow**

**Flood the nations with grace and mercy**

**Send forth your word**

**Lord, and let there be light**

**As we gaze on your kingly brightness**

**So our faces display your likeness**

**Ever changing from glory to glory**

**Mirrored here may our lives tell your story**

**Shine on me, shine on me**

**Shine, Jesus, shine**

**Fill this land with the Father's glory**

**Blaze, Spirit, blaze**

**Set our hearts on fire**

**Flow, river, flow**

**Flood the nations with grace and mercy**

**Send forth your word**

**Lord, and let there be light**

**\*Benediction**

L: Before all heaven and earth, I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God. I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion, and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant, to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Go in peace to love and serve. Amen.