

Epiphany of the Lord



**January 3, 2021
at 10:30 a.m.
on Facebook **Live****

**or on our church
website at
westminsterakron.org**

COME

Opening Voluntary

Prelude on “Divinum Mysterium”

Wayne Barlow

We welcome you to Westminster’s online worship service this Sunday. To set a more worshipful tone while watching this service at home, we encourage you to find a quiet space and light a candle.

If you are joining us on Facebook Live, then you can find a copy of today’s bulletin on our church website at westminsterakron.org.

*Call to Worship

Isaiah 60

Kate Clark

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

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.

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice.

Let us worship the God of light and life.


*Hymn 50 Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL

Unison



1. There's a star in the East on Christ - mas morn,
 2. If you take good heed to the an - gel's words,

Harmony



Rise up, shep - herd, and fol - low. It will
 Rise up, shep - herd, and fol - low. You'll for -




lead to the place where the Christ was born,
 get your flocks, you'll for - get your herds,

Harmony



Rise up, shepherd, and fol-low.
 Rise up, shepherd, and fol-low. Fol - low, fol - low, Rise up, shepherd, and



fol-low. Follow the Star of Bethle - hem, Rise up, shepherd, and fol-low.

ENCOUNTER

Call to Confession

Isaiah proclaimed: Darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and God's glory will appear over you. Let us acknowledge the darkness in our lives, repent of our sin, and receive the light of God's mercy.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, Light of the world, we confess that we have not resisted the darkness of sin. You deliver the poor and the helpless, but we have ignored their cry. You take pity on the weak and the destitute, but our hearts are hard in the face of their need. You heal the wounded and save the oppressed but we have placed our trust in the callous violence of war. Forgive us, we pray. Awaken in us sincere repentance that we may shine with the light of your saving grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Silence is observed.

Response 574 Lord, Have Mercy *Kyrie*
Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Beloved of God, thrill and rejoice in God's goodness. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

*Response 567 Glory Be to the Father *Gloria Patri*
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever, Amen. Amen. Amen.

*Passing the Peace
We invite you now to greet one another saying, **The peace of Christ be with you.**

Time for Church Life and Call for the Offering

The magi brought gifts to Christ at his nativity and offered their lives in worship. With thankful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Musical Reflection The Three Kings Peter Cornelius
Joel Rhoads, soloist

*Three kings from Persian lands afar to Jordan follow the pointing star:
And this the quest of the travellers three, where the new-born King of the
Jews may be. Full royal gifts they bear for the King:
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.*

*The star shines out with steadfast ray; the kings to Bethlehem make their
way, and there in worship they bend the knee, as Mary's child in her lap they
see; their royal gifts they show to the King:
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.*

*Thou child of God, lo, to Bethlehem the kings are trav'ling, travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace, shall lead thy heart to its resting place.
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring:
Offer thy heart to the infant King, offer thy heart!*

*Response

As with Gladness

DIX

**As with gladness sages bold
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 to Thee.**

Time with Young Disciples

Sheila Svoboda

GROW

Prayer for Illumination

Shine upon us, God of glory, and by your Spirit reveal to us the grace and truth of Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. **Amen.**

The First Lesson

John 1:1-14, 16

New Testament

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12 But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

16 From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

The Second Lesson

Matthew 2:1-12

New Testament

1 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 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.” 3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 ‘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.’”

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8 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.” 9 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. 10 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 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. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

At Its Rising

The Reverend Jon Hauerwas

SERVE

*Affirmation of Faith

God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ - the eternal Word made flesh. He is the long-awaited Messiah, one with us and one with God, fully human and fully divine, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary. To follow the Lord is to serve him wherever we are, without fitting in, light in the darkness.

Prayers of the People

We confess, Lord, that because we do not always behave the way we desire for ourselves, there are times when your abiding presence makes us squirm, when the brilliance of your light makes us scurry for cover. We are ashamed of some of the things we do as you walk alongside us, of some of the thoughts we entertain in the deep places of our hearts. Yet in your grace you continue to stick with us. Your faithful constancy is our companion in joys and a source of relief in sorrow.

Thank you for being with us through the many turns and twists our paths took last year.

And now as we enter a new year, bathed in the sacred light of Epiphany, we sense anew how much we need your providential presence. We know that in past months loved ones have suddenly died, precious jobs were suddenly terminated, illnesses both suspected and unexpected were diagnosed - and suddenly all of life changed. So many things surprised us about 2020, O God, and we do not have the vision that can penetrate the months ahead in this new year. All we can do is petition for your mercy and strength to face what is to come. But we pray too that you will keep us in good health, in perfect safety, and in the knowledge that we are loved by you and also by family and friends.

We need that sense of love, O God, because we know there are so many around us who lack this awareness. So many are lonely. So many endured the holiday season with only a grim determination to help them keep getting out of bed in the morning. The lonely among us are often the invisible among us. But you see them, and by the prompting of your Spirit, you can enable us to see and care for them as well.

We pray silently...

And finally, together as the people of God, let us offer the words of the Lord's Prayer, saying in one voice:

The Lord's Prayer

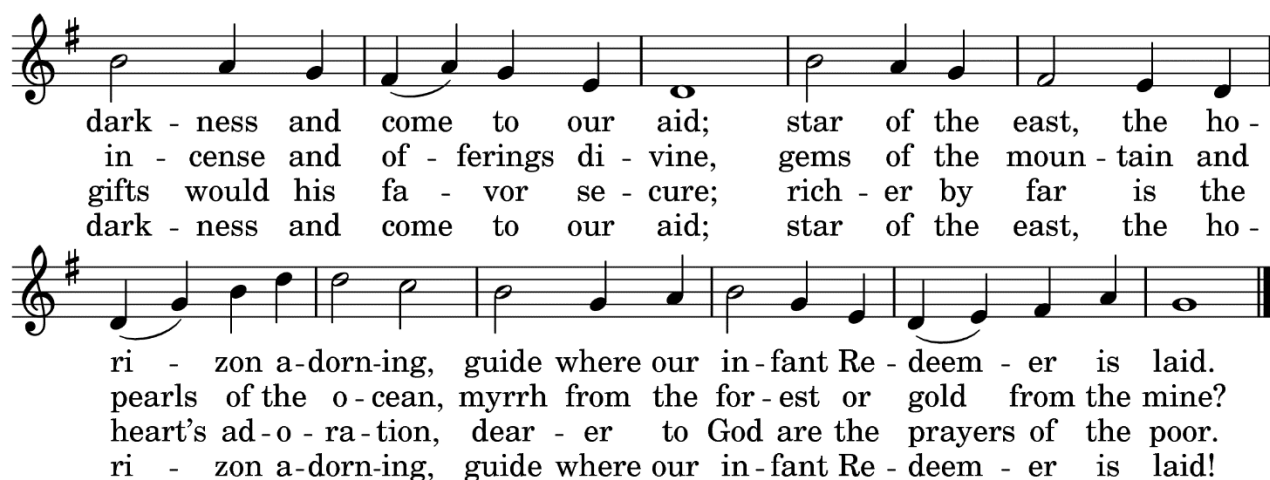
**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we
forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,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

*Hymn 67

Brightest and Best

MORNING STAR

1. Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing dawn on our
2. What shall we give him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion? Shall we bring
3. Vain - ly we of - fer each lav - ish ob - la - tion, vain - ly with
4. Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing, dawn on our



dark - ness and come to our aid; star of the east, the ho -
in - cense and of - ferings di - vine, gems of the moun - tain and
gifts would his fa - vor se - cure; rich - er by far is the
dark - ness and come to our aid; star of the east, the ho -
ri - zon a-dorn-ing, guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.
pearls of the o - cean, myrrh from the for - est or gold from the mine?
heart's ad - o - ra - tion, dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.
ri - zon a-dorn-ing, guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid!

*Charge and Benediction

Let your life bear witness to Christ,
the light who has come to the world.
And may God, the ruler of heaven and earth, dismiss you in peace;
Jesus Christ, the light of the world, uphold you in love;
and the Holy Spirit, the revealer of God's mystery, lead you in truth, now and
forevermore. Amen.

Voluntary The Entrance of the Kings Gian-Carlo Menotti
(From "Amahl and the Night Visitors")

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Script February/March Deadline is January 12. Please send your articles and pictures to Adam Kalcic at wpcsmedia1250@gmail.com.

First Sunday Food Collection starts today, January 3, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.
This month we are in need of the following:

Canned Chicken Tuna and Hamburger Helper Canned Corn Rice Mixes like Knorr or Zatarain's Cocoa Packets Pancake Mix Cereal (children's)	Canned Tuna Canned Fruit, Applesauce Canned Green Beans Jelly Pancake Syrup Prepared Meals like Chef-Boyardee
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Thank you for supporting our food collection and distribution projects.

New Year's Fellowship Event is today, January 3 at 4:00 p.m. Zoom link to join the meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85744261600?pwd=THVuVlZ2OXJlMXBpVnpJM3RlVHpuUT09> Passcode: 909310

To our Congregation I would like to provide Jon with some constructive feedback on an annual basis in the form of an evaluation. I would like you to give me feedback on his performance to give the Personnel Committee guidance on any issues of which you are aware. You can email me or call me as listed below. I would like to let him know both where he is performing well and where he can improve. Anything you write and send to me will be kept confidential within the Personnel Committee. Thank you all, John N. Childs at 330-253-1946
jnchilds@bmdllc.com

CALENDAR of CHURCH EVENTS for the week of January 3 - 9, 2021	
Sunday, 1/3 10:30 am Worship Service on Facebook Live 1:00 pm Food collection 4:00 pm Fellowship Zoom Meeting	Monday, 1/4 7:00 pm Zoom Bible Study Thursday, 12/31 9:30 am Zoom Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Zoom Adult Education

To give electronically on WPC website click under the tab "online giving" and use this QR Code.



The church office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday - Friday. Staff schedule in the office: **Monday** - Pastor Jon, Claudine Schooley, Debby Evrard and Dave Bodnar. **Tuesday** - Pastor Jon, Debby Evrard, Sheila Svoboda, and Dave Bodnar. **Wednesday** - Debby Evrard, Claudine Schooley, and Dave Bodnar. **Thursday** - Claudine Schooley, Debby Evrard, Sheila Svoboda, Adam Kalcic, and Dave Bodnar. **Friday** - Pastor Jon, Claudine Schooley, and Adam Kalcic.