

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

January 5, 2025, 9:30 a.m.



Epiphany

The feast of Epiphany concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. 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.

+GATHERING+

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

WELCOME & OPENING CONFSSIONAL DIALOG

God-with-us, we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter,
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.

We have made power and wealth our idols,
while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.

We have overlooked the shepherds,
expecting good news in prettier packaging.

Too often, we have valued violence
instead of your peace.

Turn us from our ways to your ways.

Through Jesus Christ, forgive our sins.

Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, ✠ forgiven in Christ and sent to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people. Let us spread the light of Christ now. **Amen.**

CANDLE LIGHTING (*Turn the bulletin page first and Always keep the lighted candle straight and tip the unlit candle*)

PRELUDE Christ, Be Our Light

arr. Mark Hayes

GREETING

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

GATHERING HYMN Christ Be Our Light ELW 715 (vs. 1, 2 & 5)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you revealed the incarnation of your Son by the brilliant shining of a star. You enlighten our souls to shine the light of your mercy and justice over all lands. Accept our lives as the treasure we offer in your service, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, and now let our prayers rise up to you as incense. **Amen.**

(slowly extinguish your candle to let the smoke rise).

+WORD+

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

First Reading:

Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.

A reading from Isaiah, chapter 60.

¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

² 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.

³ Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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. *Isaiah 60:1-6*

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

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

¹ Give the king your jus-tice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

² **that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **Let him defend the needy a-mong the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that wa- ter the earth.**

⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹ May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

¹² **For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³ He has compassion on the low-ly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴ **From oppression and violence he re-deems their lives, and precious is their blood ¹ in his sight.**

Second Reading:

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

A reading from Ephesians, chapter 3.

¹ This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ 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:

⁶ that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ 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. ⁸ 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, ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Ephesians 3:1-12

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (*all sing*)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Alleluia. We have observed his star ^l at its rising,* and have come to ^l worship him. *Alleluia.* (*Matt. 2:2*)

Gospel:

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

The holy Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 2. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

Matthew 2:1-12

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

The First Noel

ELW 300

L: APOSTLES’ CREED

Let us profess our faith using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the
life everlasting. Amen.**

L: PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

Bless the work of all who engage in dialogue with people of other traditions and faiths. Bridge our differences with a shared mission of revealing your boundless love to the world. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Restore the glory of creation. Send rain to water-parched lands. Revive ecosystems and habitats threatened by a changing climate, and protect the peoples and creatures who live in them. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Frustrate the plans of tyrants and oppressors. Encourage the work of community organizers and activists who speak out against injustice and who reveal your righteousness to those who govern. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Liberate this congregation from a yearning for the past while it is called to your future. Fuel in us a passion for discovery. Give us the boldness to dream and to imagine our ministries in new and different ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

God our healer, our prayer list grows and we lift these loved ones up to your care (*see list below*) and we add these names and concerns aloud or in our hearts before you now...(*time is allowed for additions*).

Freda Ahl, Janice, Lance, and Patricia Becker, Darlene Berg, Barbara Bowers, Nancy Carpenter, Dale Chamberlain, Rusty Cunningham, Nancy Denehy, Jennifer Dzen, Patti Kelley, Bob and Joan Lagasse, Robin Landrette, Amanda LaValley, Jim and Julie Lemming, Bruce Messenger, Nick Miano, Rich Milke, Lil Milbrandt, Norma Jean Murano, Donna Ouellette, Karlene Pearson, Marge Pearson, Callum, Krista, and Paul Rescsanski, Allen Riley, Dan Rios, Bob Rowe,

Dave Schroeder, Steven Siecienski, Tracey Simpson, Jay Steeves,
Johanna Tessman, Kirsten Trumbull, Danna Vough, Carole Wedler,
Marge Wilson

We give thanks for your holy ones who now rest in your radiant glory. Make us, with them, sharers in the boundless riches of Christ, our hope and promise. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

+MEAL+

God feeds us in the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

OFFERTORY CHOIR ANTHEM Sing We Noel N. Goemanne

Refrain: Sing we noel, noel, noel, sing we noel!
Christ was born for us today; Love and peace be here to stay.
Now we raise to heaven our voice, Sing we now, rejoice, rejoice!
Sing we noel, noel, noel sing we noel!

Mary now filled with heavenly joy: "Emmanuel" she named the Boy.
Heaven is near, "O do not fear," the angel said, "The Christ is here!"
Heaven came to earth, He saved us by His birth.
O mighty Child, O King of kings, the universe in praise now sings. Refrain

L: OFFERING PRAYER

God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh, you almighty and merciful God, have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God...

now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered by the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

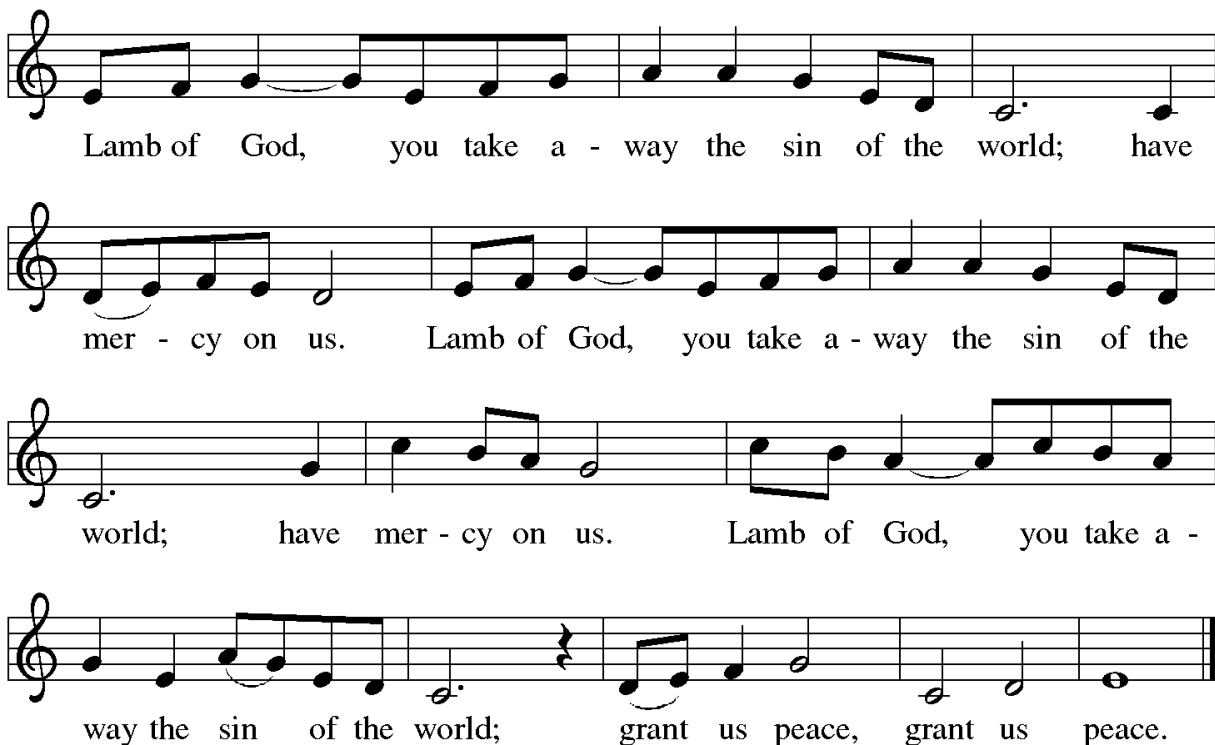
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

*At Faith **all** are welcome to receive Holy Communion. You are invited to come forward by the center aisle to fill in along the rail from the center to the sides. You may either stand or kneel to receive bread (or gluten-free wafers upon request) and wine (or white grape juice) in pre-filled glasses. Empty glasses can be placed in baskets provided as you return by the side aisles to your seat for silent meditation. If you need communion brought to you, please notify the usher.*

COMMUNION HYMN Lamb of God



The hymn is written on four staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, and some rests.

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.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

L: POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. **Amen.**

+SENDING+

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of love, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN **Jesus, the Light of the World** **ACS 914**
(if you are giving a reminder, come to the lectern during the last verse)

REMINDERS

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly! **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, January 5, 2025

Presiding Minister: Pastor Chris Dion

Minister of Music: Deacon Gwynne Hopko

Assisting Minister: Arlene Cresswell

Lector: Jill Little

Tech Team: Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Connor Pratt

Ushers: Denise Martin, Alan Rindfleisch, Donald Zurell

Altar Guild: Edie Valencis

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sunday, Epiphany January 5, 2025

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

9:30 a.m. Men's Group Meeting at Parkside Diner

6:45 p.m. Handbell Choir

7:30 p.m. Voice Choir

Thursday, January 9, 2025

6:00 p.m. Parish Life via Zoom

6:30 p.m. Confirmation Class

7:00 p.m. AA (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 p.m. Al Anon (YOUTH Room)

Sunday, January 12, 2025

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

10:30 a.m. Game Day, Sign up sheet on bulletin board

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, BRISTOL, CT

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Email: churchoffice@FaithBristolCT.org

Presiding Pastor Chris Dion, phone: 860-989-3507

Deacon Gwynne Hopko, Minister of Music