

Everybody's Church

First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham

Sunday, January 7, 2024, 10:00 am, Epiphany Sunday

Vision Statement

As Everybody's Church we commit ourselves to serving Christ by cultivating mission, inclusion and community.

Inclusion Statement

As Everybody's Church we strive to be a faithful, open and inclusive community. We welcome the full participation of all people of any ability, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other life circumstance.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Lou Nyiri

GATHERING MUSIC

"Brightest and Best"
Chancel Choir

Heber

*The music this morning is offered as an act of worship,
therefore, please refrain from applause.*

†When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or in spirit.

Please join in reading those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Maddie Buley

One: Arise, shine; for your light has come!

The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Many: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

One: The mystery of the ages is revealed;
the eternal plan of God is known to all.

Many: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

One: Let us kneel down before him to give him
honor, glory, and praise.

Many: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

One: Let us offer him all the treasures of our hearts and our lives.

Many: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

All: Let us worship God!

†HYMN 744

"Arise, Your Light Is Come!"

Hymntune: FESTAL SONG

TIME WITH THE YOUNGER CHURCH

Martha Piesko

*After Time With the Younger Church, children 3 years old—5th grade
will proceed to their classrooms.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Ted Thode

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. You sent Jesus among us to bid us be a light for others. Yet, too often, we hide our lamps, dimming the brightness of your Love. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice; we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, baptize us once again with your Spirit, that forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory, that shines for us in the face of Jesus Christ.

Confession acknowledges the reality of sin in our personal and corporate lives. This practice relieves us from the burden of sin and reminds us of the promise of God's forgiveness and grace sealed in our baptism.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

†RESPONSE 581

“Glory Be to the Father”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

One: Holy One, giver of all light, lift up our hearts and minds to Christ,
the morning star that never fades.

Many: By the light of your Holy Spirit reveal to us your saving Word
and lead us to offer our lives to you in service and in love;

All: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 60:1-6

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

SECOND TESTAMENT LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Star Catchers”

Rev. Lou Nyiri

“[The Magi] left for their own country by another road.” – Matthew 2:12

OFFERING INFORMATION

*Members and guests, please sign the Fellowship Pads
to let us know of your presence with us.*

OFFERING OF OUR LIVES AND RESOURCES

MUSICAL OFFERING

“Cradle Song”
Chancel Choir

Halley

†THE DOXOLOGY

“The First Nowell”

Then entered in those wise men three,

Full reverently upon their knee,

And offered there in his presence

Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Children: Why do we give thanks at this table?

Please follow along with the reading on page 690 of the Old Testament in your Pew Bible.

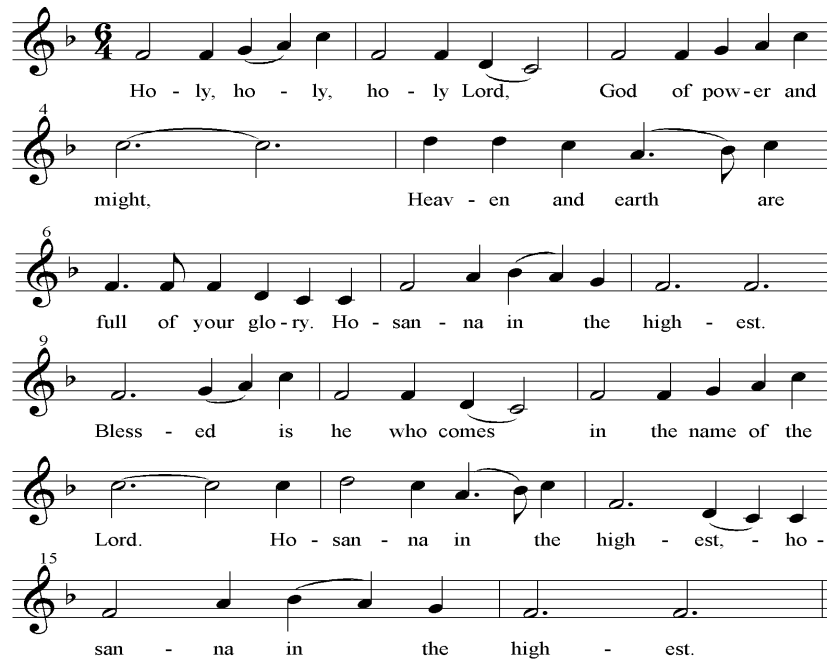
Please follow along with the reading on page 2 of the New Testament in your Pew Bible.

All that we have is a gift from God. In gratitude, we return a portion of those blessings to the work of God in the church.

You are invited to contribute your loose change to the offering plate. This loose change goes to the Deacons to help support their efforts to meet the immediate needs of food, clothing and shelter in our greater community. Those quarters (and dollars) really add up to help those in need!

People: We give thanks for God's creation,
for making us in God's image.
We give thanks because God never gave up on us,
even though we were not faithful to God.
We give thanks because when it was time,
God sent the only Son, Jesus, to show God's love for us.

Children: How do we praise God for all this?



Leader: With all the faithful of every time and place,
this song is sung to God's glory:

Children: What do we remember at this table?

People: We remember God's Son, Jesus:
He healed the sick and restored sight to the blind;
He welcomed strangers and ate with outcasts.
Dying on the cross, He saved us from our sins.
Risen from the dead, He gives us new life.

Children: How are we able to remember?

People: We are able to remember
because of the gift of the Holy Spirit,
God's first gift to those who believe,
who will complete God's work in the world.

Children: Why do we eat bread at this table?

Leader: On the night before He died,
Jesus took bread, blessed it, and gave it to his friends.
He told them to eat it and remember him.
And ministering in Jesus' name, we do likewise.

Children: Why do we drink from the cup at this Table?

Leader: After the meal, Jesus took the cup, and gave it to them
as the promise that our sins are forgiven.
And ministering in Jesus' name, we do likewise.

Children: But this is just everyday bread and grape juice.

"Holy, Holy, Holy" Land of
Rest, Words and Music:
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Leader: Let us pray that the everyday bread and juice
will become holy:
Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and cup,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

People: **Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
All glory and honor are Yours,
Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**

Leader: Since this meal brings us together with all Christians,
let us pray for the needs of the world, the church,
and all of God's children.

(The pastor offers prayers asking God to help all those in need.)

Leader: Now, together let us pray the family prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: **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.**

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

*The elements will be served together in the pews; beginning with bread,
followed by the cup. Please partake as you receive. As you pass the bread say,
"The bread of heaven, broken for you." The response is "Thanks be to God."
As you pass the cup say, "The cup of salvation, poured out for you." The
response is, "Amen." ALL the bread is gluten-free.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

†HYMN 151 "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

†BENEDICTION

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

POSTLUDE "In Thee Is Gladness" Bach

Andrew Herbruck, Director of Music Ministries, is playing the service.

Our liturgist this morning is Maddie Buley. Maddie is a junior at Marian High School where she is a goalie for the Lacrosse team and the systems lead for the State Championship and World-qualifying Mech Warriors robotics team. She is passionate about Formula 1 racing. On Sundays she can be found in the nursery during the Mom's group and otherwise in worship or assisting in CrossWalks.

The chancel flowers today are given by Kathy and Bruce Nyberg in loving memory of Kathy's mother Mary MacKenzie. A long-time member of this church, she was the beloved grandmother of Eric Nyberg and Elizabeth Gumbis and great-grandmother of Ian, Charlie, and James Nyberg and of Mary, Katherine, and Emma Gumbis.

Visitors, thank you for joining us today; please use this QR code
to register your attendance:



Hymntune: KINGS OF
ORIENT

Welcome in Christ's name
to First Presbyterian Church!
You are welcome here just
as you are at whatever
place in your spiritual
journey that you find
yourself. If you have any
questions about who we
are, what we believe, or
what we do, please ask one
of our elders or pastors.
They will be pleased to visit
with you. Please know that
you are invited to join us
for coffee and goodies
following the service in
Calvin Hall.

744 Arise, Your Light Is Come!

1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
 2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
 3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,
 4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun - tains burst in song!

show forth the glo - ry of your God, which shines on you to - day.
 pro - claim the cap - tives' lib - er - ty, good ti - dings to the poor.
 bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
 Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

Echoing imagery from Isaiah 61:1–2 and other passages, this text was created as an inclusive-language alternative to an older hymn using this late 19th-century tune. Because it is a song of encouragement rather than a song of praise, it is not directed to God but to people.

151 We Three Kings of Orient Are

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
 2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice:

field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais - ing glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

O 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!

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.