EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
DECEMBER 31, 2023
11:00 AM

As a courtesy to others, please silence your phone.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND INVITATION Rev. Timothy T. Boggess

PRELUDE *Pastorale* Craig Phillips
(Connor Landers, French Horn)

CALL TO WORSHIP Jeff Bartell

Arise, shine; for your light has come!
The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

The mystery of the ages is revealed;
the eternal plan of God is known to all.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Let us kneel down before him
to give him honor, glory, and praise.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Let us offer him all the treasures
of our hearts and our lives.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

***HYMN 152** *What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright* PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

What star is this, with beams so bright,
more lovely than the noonday light?
'Tis sent to announce a newborn king,
glad tidings of our God to bring.

'Tis now fulfilled what God decreed,
"From Jacob shall a star proceed";
and lo! the eastern sages stand
to read in heaven the Lord's command.

While outward signs the star displays,
an inward light the Lord conveys
and urges them, with tender might,
to seek the giver of the light.

O Jesus, while the star of grace
impels us on to seek your face,
let not our slothful hearts refuse
the guidance of your light to use.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of glory,
you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world,
to reveal your love for all people.
We confess that we struggle to reflect this light.
We get so wrapped up in our own concerns
that we give little time and thought to yours.
In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin,
and pour out the gifts of your Spirit,
that, forgiven and renewed,
we may show forth your glory
shining in the face of Jesus Christ.

(a moment for silent reflection)

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

***SONG OF JOY 113** (v.3) *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM *Brightest and Best* Paul Sjolund

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all!

Shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Gifts of incense and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer the rarest oblation,
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

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SCRIPTURE READINGS Isaiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *Arrivals and Departures* Rev. Boggess

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.**

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY *Rose of Bethlehem* Lowell Alexander/
(Carrie Mills, soloist) arr. Steven Phillips

There's a Rose in Bethlehem
with a beauty quite divine,
whining glory from within
on a silent, holy night.
There's a fragrance much like hope
that it sends upon the wind,
reaching out to every soul
from a lowly manger's crib.

Refrain:
Oh, Rose of Bethlehem,
how lovely, pure and sweet,
born to bring the dawn of God's love,
born to sing Love's song to me.

There's a Rose in Bethlehem
colored red like mercy's flood.
Tis the flower of our faith,
tis the blossom of God's love *(continued next page)*

though its bloom is fresh with youth,
surely what will be God knows.
For a tear of morning dew
Is rolling down the Rose. (refrain)

***DOXOLOGY 608** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* PRAISE GOD (Hopson)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

***HYMN 150** *As with Gladness Men of Old* DIX

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 to thee.

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

As they offered gifts most rare
at thy manger, 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 heavenly king.

Holy Jesus, every 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.

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** Rev. Boggess

POSTLUDE *Dance* Craig Phillips/
(Connor Landers, French Horn) arr. Steven Phillips

The postlude concludes our worship today. It's the custom of this congregation to sit and enter into this moment with gratitude and celebration.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2050 Oak Street • Sarasota, FL 34237
(941) 955-8119 • www.firstpressarasota.org