



Epiphany Theme: Remembering Faithfully

January 21, 2024

Third Sunday After Epiphany

Prelude

Clair de Lune

Debussy

Please respect those who wish to sit in silence.

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

Prayers: We pray for the family of **Debra Houghton**, who passed away recently.

Happy Birthday this week: Nikki Irish, Stephen Bouma, Trudy Knapp-Rhodes, & Pat Sharp!

Fair Trade Coffee: Thank you to **Lou & Pat Lamberty, Chad & Laura Mitchell, & Bev Fleckten** for sponsoring coffee for the month of January.

Wednesday Night Family Night: Family Night will resume this Wednesday January 24th.

Church Chat: Interested in becoming a member here at First Central? Join us following worship today in Scott's office.

Office Volunteers Needed: We're in need of volunteers to help out in the church office! Volunteers assist with answering the phone, greeting visitors, and occasional small projects. Available shifts include Monday mornings (9am – noon) and Wednesday afternoons (noon – 3pm). If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Lizz B. (lizz@firstcentral.org)

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting will be held in the parlor next Sunday, January 28th following worship. Lunch will be provided – Reubens, grilled cheese, and salad! – and a free will offering will be collected to help cover the cost of food. Childcare will also be provided during the meeting.

Youth Group: Youth group will be going to Pirate Putt in Council Bluffs today, 6-7:30pm! Meet and pick up there.

CEO Dinner: January's CEO dinner will be at the Olive Garden on 76th and Dodge next Thursday, January 25, at 5:30pm. If you'd like to attend, please RSVP to the Pfeifers.

Eves Retreat: Thanks to Deb Kirwan, we have a retreat scheduled at the Creighton University Retreat Center, March 1-March 3, 2024. The center is located in Griswold, Iowa. The cost will likely be a bit more, probably around \$180 for the weekend. We won't have a firm number until after the retreat. Please let Sara Sharpe know asap if you want to make a reservation.

Activities for the Coming Week

January 22-27

Monday: Staff Meeting, 1:30pm
Tuesday:
Wednesday: Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
Family Night, 5:30pm
Choir Practice, 7pm
Thursday: Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
CEO Dinner, 5:30pm
Friday: Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
Saturday: Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 1pm
Writing Group, 10:30am – 1:30pm

Sunday, January 28

Lectionary Readings: Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

FIRSTForum: Quilt Pop-Up! Do you have a quilt with a story to tell? Bring it to the back of the sanctuary on January 28th, and tell us about it. We can't wait to hear your stories! Facilitated by Deb Kirwan and Sara Sharpe.

FIRSTKids: The kids will have Sunday School following the Conversation with the Kids

FIRSTYouth: Youth Group is doing an escape room at the House of Conundrum! Stay tuned for more details.

Kids Choir: There is no Kids Choir next Sunday, January 28

Worship: Our faith has a rich and deep history, with various admonitions "to remember." How does our own remembering fit within the context of sacred memory? How does this remembering structure our moral framework?

*Greeting and Passing of the Peace

"The Peace of God be with you."

In Unison: **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

*Let us rise in body or spirit.

Call to Worship

Steve Jackson

Everlasting God, our souls wait for you.

You are our Mighty Rock. We will not be shaken.

Everlasting God, our souls wait for you.

You are our hope. We place our trust in you.

Everlasting God, our souls wait for you.

You are our refuge. We rest in your abiding love.

*Proclamation Hymn

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

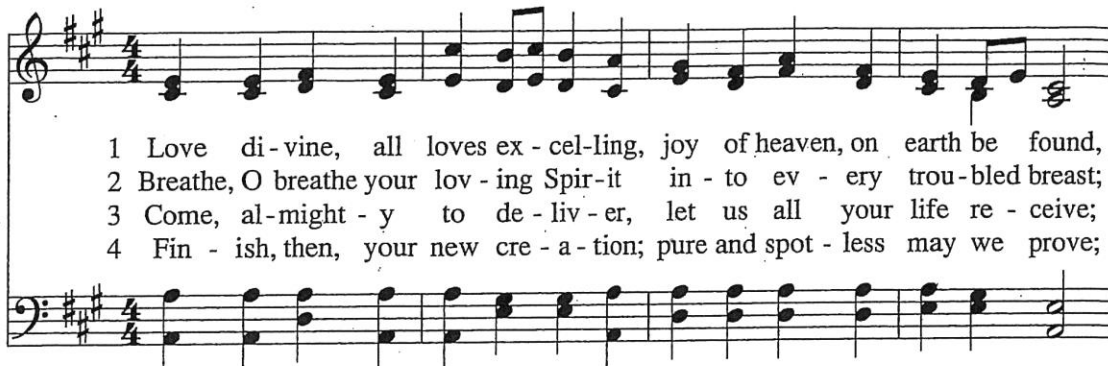
Black Hymnal, No. 43

BEECHER

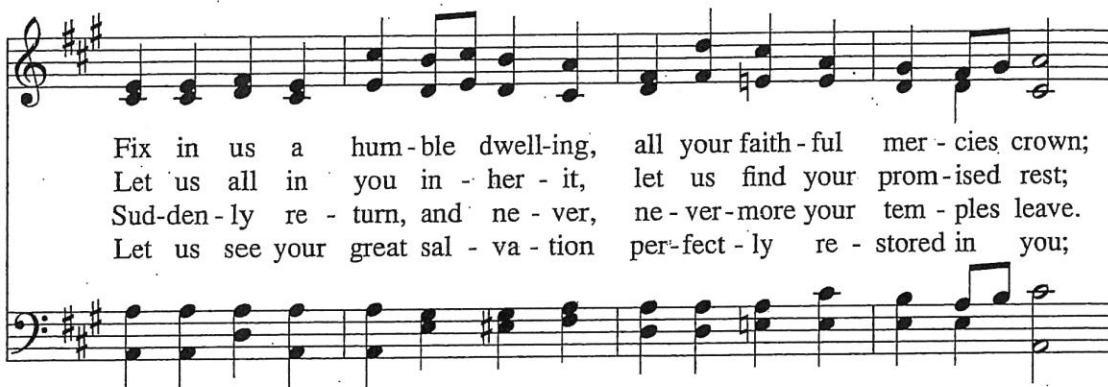
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Mal. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Eph. 5:27

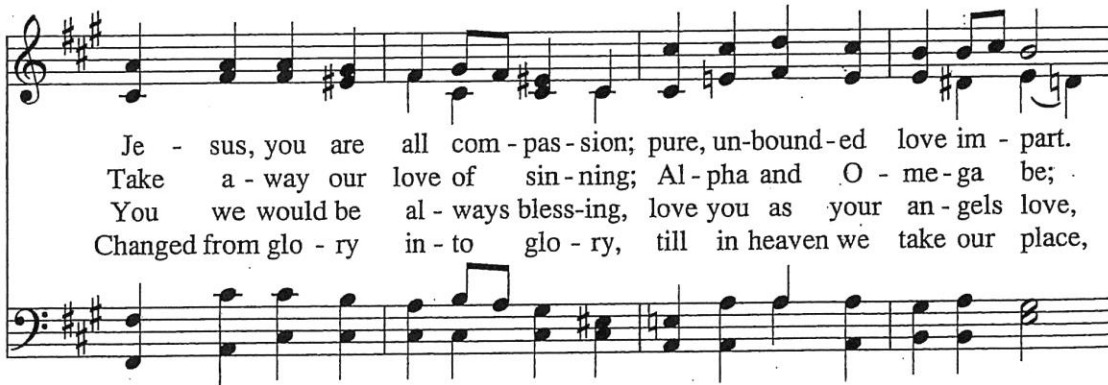
Charles Wesley, 1747; alt.



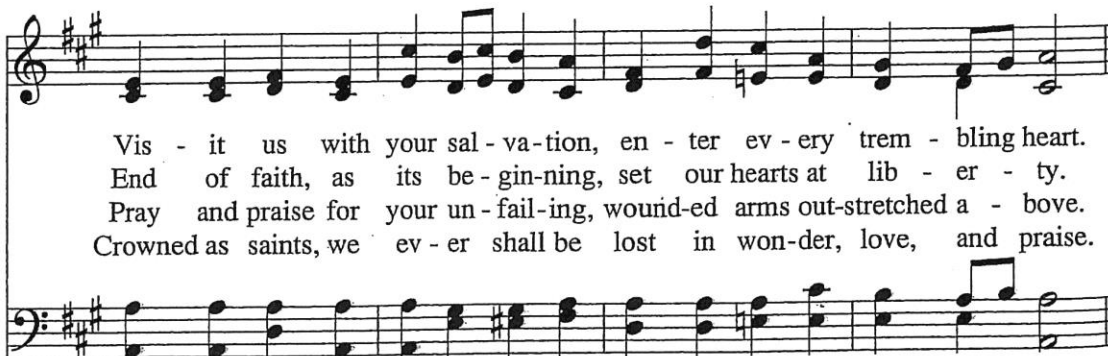
1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, joy of heaven, on earth be found,
 2 Breathe, O breathe your lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-ery trou-bled breast;
 3 Come, al-might-y to de-liv-er, let us all your life re-ceive;
 4 Fin-ish, then, your new cre-a-tion; pure and spot-less may we prove;



Fix in us a hum-ble dwell-ing, all your faith-ful mer-cies crown;
 Let us all in you in-her-it, let us find your prom-ised rest;
 Sud-den-ly re-turn, and ne-ver, ne-ver-more your tem-ples leave.
 Let us see your great sal-va-tion per-fect-ly re-stored in you;



Je-sus, you are all com-pas-sion; pure, un-bound-ed love im-part.
 Take a-way our love of sin-ning; Al-pha and O-me-ga be;
 You we would be al-ways bless-ing, love you as your an-gels love,
 Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry, till in heaven we take our place,



Vis-it us with your sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-ery trem-bling heart.
 End of faith, as its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.
 Pray and praise for your un-fail-ing, wound-ed arms out-stretched a-bove.
 Crowned as saints, we ev-er shall be lost in won-der, love, and praise.

***Invocation**

God of Many Seasons, we enter into your presence with joy and thanksgiving. we acknowledge all the ways that you meet us as we gather in your name. May our songs and prayers be a sweet sound in your ears. May we demonstrate our trust in you through both praise and lament. May our hearts yearn, our spirits stir, and our souls wait in holy hope and expectation. Amen.

***Gloria**

Black Hymnal, No. 759

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen. Amen.

Conversation with the Children

Dena Higginbotham

Anthem

Glory to the Father

Hovland

First Testament Lesson

Psalm 51:6-12

Pew Bible, page 492

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Speaking Truth

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

***Hymn**

O Grant Us Light

Black Hymnal, No. 469
HESPERUS

O Grant Us Light

Ps. 43:3

Lawrence Tuttielt, 1864; alt.

1 O grant us light, that we may know wis-dom that you a -
 2 O grant us light that we may find where er - ror lurks in
 3 O grant us light, that we may learn how dead is life from
 4 O grant us light, when soon or late, all earth-ly scenes shall

lone can give, That truth may guide us as we go,
 hu - man lore, And turn to you our seek - ing minds,
 you a - part, How sure is joy for all who turn
 pass a - way, In you to find the o - pen gate,

and vir - tue bless the lives we live.
 and love your ho - ly Word the more.
 to you an un - di - vid - ed heart.
 to death - less home and end - less day.

***Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Holy One, we can be so impatient. We have become used to instant gratification and have forgotten the holiness of waiting. Help us to rest in your timing. Encourage us to persevere through struggles and storms. Reveal the unfolding of your desire before our eyes. Empower us to be agents of truth and transformation in the world. Infuse us with new life. Amen.

***Assurance**

Beloved, while we wait, we have grace to love fully, pursue liberty, and seek a just world. The Holy One has given us the blueprint and invitation to the path of new life. Follow Jesus with grace and in truth.

Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Offertory

To a Wild Rose

MacDowell

***Hymn of Dedication**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***Offertory Prayer**

Our communities and world rely upon the generosity of those who have received the Creator's abundance. We offer our gifts in the knowledge that some wait on us to act, to share, and to give. Eternal God, magnify these gifts that we return in gratitude and for your glory. Amen.

***Recessional Hymn**

As With Gladness Those of Old

Black Hymnal, No. 159

DIX

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

Bouma

May you hear laughter in the wind.
May you see hope in the light.
May you find courage in your faith.
May you know joy in your God. Amen.

Postlude

The Horsemen

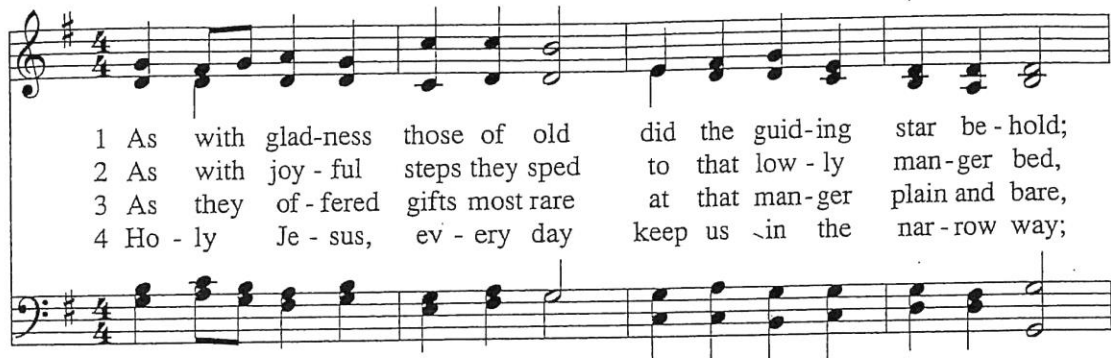
Kayalevsky

As with Gladness Those of Old

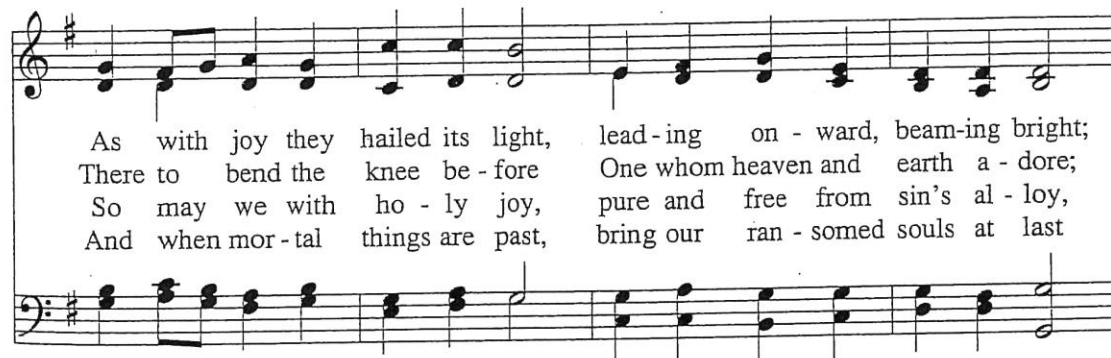
159

William C. Dix, 1861; alt.

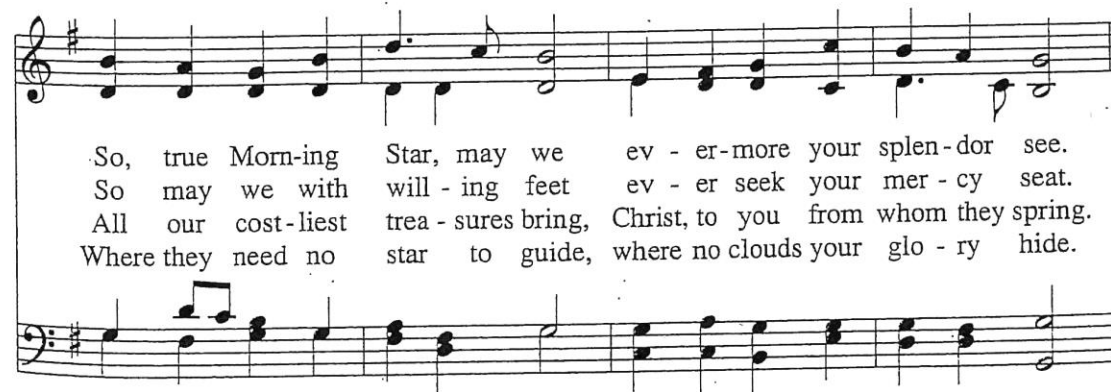
Matt. 2:1-12



1 As with glad-ness those of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped to that low-ly man-ger bed,
 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at that man-ger plain and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-ery day keep us in the nar-row way;



As with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be-fore One whom heaven and earth a-dore;
 So may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
 And when mor-tal things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last



So, true Morn-ing Star, may we ev-er-more your splen-dor see.
 So may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek your mer-cy seat.
 All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.
 Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glo-ry hide.

After reading the Epiphany gospel, William C. Dix penned this hymn. Dix, the manager of a marine insurance company, was

Tune: DIX 7.7.7.7.7.
 Conrad Kocher. 1838