Epiphany of our Lord
Sunday, January 10, 2021

Journey of the Magi

By T.S. Elliot

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times when we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities dirty and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wineskins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.
All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,

We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

Prelude

Improvisation on "*As With Gladness Men of Old*"

Blessing of the Church

P: May peace be to this house (of God) and to all who enter here. By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.

Proverbs 24:3-4

Proclamation

P: As we prepare to ask God's blessing on our church, let us listen to the words of scripture.

A: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 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. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

John 1:1-4, 14, 16

Hymn: ELW 302 "*As With Gladness*"

1 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 by thee.

INSCRIPTION

20 + CMB + 20

20 two thousand

20 and twenty years ago.

The magi of old, known as

C Caspar,

M Melchior, and

B Balthasar followed the star of God's Son who came to dwell among us

+ Christe mansionem benedica +

+ Christ, bless this house, +

and remain with us throughout the new year.

Hymn: ELW 302 "*As With Gladness*"

3 As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle, 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 heav'nly king.

5 In the heav'nly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing
alleluias to our king.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.
C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.
O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

[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.

L: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Hymn: Gloria Canticle (Setting 5)

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12

[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.
L: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (Setting 5)

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

[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.
P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Gospel Acclamation (Setting 5)

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

ELW 314 “Arise, Your Light has Come!”

1 Arise, your light has come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.

2 Arise, your light has come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

3 Arise, your light has come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

4 Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.

Apostle’s Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Remembering the Church, the world, and all those in need, let us offer our prayers to God. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: Blessed be God, who gave us the light of the world and who desires that all people should come to know Christ's love and grace. Fill our hearts with your radiance and truth that we might walk as children of light. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: Praise to you, almighty God and Father, you proclaimed Christ your Son at his baptism in the waters of the Jordan. Make your church holy that we who have been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit may live as witnesses to your grace and love for all people. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: Lord God, through the ministry of your Son we have received grace upon grace. Bring light to those who dwell in darkness, joy to those in sorrow, hope to those in fear and despair and healing to those who suffer. We pray especially for those we name before you: Dennis, Carol, Nancy, Pastor Steve Swanson, Renee, Vicki, Rhea, Lupe, Betty, and all those diagnosed with COVID-19. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: Thanks be to God who calls us to witness to Christ's love in our community. We give you thanks for the ministries of our congregation, and the blessings of Concordia Church, Concordia Place and Concordia Day. Use our gifts for those you have called us to serve. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: God of light and truth, whose love knows no bounds in your Son, Jesus. Bring us to a deeper understanding of the Gospel, help us to accept the challenge of Christian living, and lead us to the joy of faith in the family of your church. Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

A: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

C: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

ELW 671 "*Shine Jesus Shine*"

Refrain
Shine, Jesus shine
fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit blaze
set our hearts on fire;
Flow, river flow
flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your Word,
Lord, and let there be light

1 Lord, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, light of the world shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me. *Refrain*

2 As we gaze on your kingly brightness
so our faces display your likeness
ever changing from glory to glory
mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me. *Refrain*

Benediction and Dismissal

P: Almighty God,
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,
proclaimed joy through the angels,
sent the shepherds with good news,
and led the magi by a star,

bless you this day ☩ through the Word made flesh.
Amen.

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

François Couperin, "*Trio et Gloria*" from *Messe pour les Convents*

Announcements

- Concordia Place's Wishing Starts gift drive brought joy to many families this year, when sometimes joy has been in short supply. Through support from Concordia Church, four other local churches and Thrivent Action Team funding, we were able to purchase coats for 29 children and provide groceries for 16 teens and their families ($50 worth for each family). We were also able to spread the word on social media, which led to the purchase over 30 toys by our Concordia Place supporters and Concordia Church members. We're so grateful for the generosity of our community this year, and with your support, we were able to put big smiles on many young faces this Christmas. Thank you to everyone who participated!
- We appreciate your continued gifts to Concordia Church! Remember, you may give in three ways:
    1. Text-to-give: Text "Concordia" to 73256 and follow the link you receive
    2. Give online at onrealm.org/concordiafaith/give
    3. Send a check via mail to the church