

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

4500 East Hampden Avenue | Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113 | www.Bethany-Denver.org | 303.758.2820

Epiphany Sunday



Casual Blended Worship Service

January 4, 2026

10:00am

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT WORSHIP

- ♦ **Welcome to Bethany!** If you have questions or would like to consider making Bethany your church home, visit our website, Bethany-Denver.org, or stop by the Newcomer Nook after worship. The pastoral team, consisting of Pastor Gary Sandberg (he/him), Pastor Nate Preisinger (he/him), Deacon Debra Alba (she/her) and Director of Pastoral Care Janet Mortinsen (she/her), is available to speak with you.
- ♦ Bethany Lutheran Church values people of diverse race, sexual identity, ethnicity, and political affiliation. **All are welcome at Bethany Lutheran Church** and this community is enriched because you are here. We are together for good!
- ♦ **Sunday Worship services:** 8:30am Traditional - worship follows traditional Lutheran liturgy. 10:00am Casual Blended – a flow of worship that includes the elements of Lutheran worship with music that spans multiple genres and brings some creative ways to engage the theme of the day. Worship leaders are generally dressed more casually. **The two services resume on January 11.**
- ♦ **Participating in Worship:** There will be times during worship when you are invited to stand, but if it is more comfortable or more meaningful for you to remain seated, please feel free to do so.
- ♦ **Communion Statement:** Everyone gathered for worship is invited to take part in Communion. Jesus did not place any barriers around who received communion and neither does Bethany.
- ♦ **Safety:** Bethany Lutheran Church is committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or have concerns, please speak with one of our staff or designated leaders. We are here to listen and to support you.
- ♦ **Hearing Assistance Device:** Please see the Sound Tech in the A/V booth at the rear of the Sanctuary if you need a hearing assistance device.
- ♦ **Worship Servants:** Thank you to all the A/V team, Ushers, Communion Servers, Altar Guild, Musicians, Embrace Volunteers and Sacristans for your work to greet people and make worship happen. We always welcome Worship Servants - go to www.signupschedule.com/Bethany to sign up!
- ♦ You are welcome to bring beverages into the Sanctuary but please use a covered container. And enjoy your food outside the Sanctuary (although we understand small children may need snacks!).
- ♦ **Children at Bethany:** Children and youth are a blessing from God and we love having children in the Sanctuary! Additionally, we offer several options for children and families to feel comfortable in a variety of spaces on Sunday mornings:
 - ⇒ **Fidget Station:** We know that all of God's children (young and old) are wonderfully and fearfully made in the image of God. And, at Bethany, ALL are welcome to worship. Available outside the Sanctuary's north doors is a Fidget Station. Children and adults are invited to use these fidgets and art supplies to aid in your spiritual growth and presence in worship. Please return items to the station when you are finished.
 - ⇒ **Busy Bags:** Near the Sanctuary doors you will find premade bags perfect for littles. Grab one on the way in and return it on the way out.
 - ⇒ **Nursery:** For directions to our staffed Nursery, please speak with an usher.

+ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS +

Gathering Music

As with Gladness Men of Old

Michael Burkhardt

Welcome to Worship

To fill out your digital connection card, go to www.tinyurl.com/BethanyConnect.

Deacon Debra Alba



Song of Praise

Shine, Jesus, Shine

ELW 671

Refrain



Shine, Je - sus, shine, fill this land with the Fa - ther's glo - ry;
blaze, Spir - it, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, riv - er, flow, flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy;
send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

A Time of Confession

Deacon Debra Alba

Gracious God,

We admit that we have fallen short. In what we have said and done, and in what we have left undone, we have not loved you or our neighbors as we should. We have carried worries, guilt, and burdens that we struggle to release. We confess these to you now, trusting in your mercy. Forgive us, God. Lighten our load and guide us into a new way of living. Amen.

God's Gift of Forgiveness

Friends in Christ, hear this good news. God is merciful and full of love. Through Jesus, your sins are forgiven and your burdens are lifted. You are set free to walk in God's grace and to live in the joy of the resurrection. **Amen.**

Opening Song

As with Gladness Men of Old

ELW 302

You are invited to face the cross as it enters.



- 1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
- 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
- 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
- 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
- 5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

Greeting

Deacon Debra Alba

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God,

you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Children's Sermon

Refrain

Shine, Je - sus, shine, fill this land with the Fa - ther's glo - ry;
 blaze, Spir - it, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
 Flow, riv - er, flow, flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy;
 send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

+ WE ENCOUNTER GOD'S WORD +

Today's Sermon is based on readings from:

Isaiah 60:1-6

Gretchen Hack

- 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 in 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.

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

Matthew 2:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi 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 in the east 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 magi 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 in the east, 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.

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

Sermon

Pastor Nate Preisinger

Sermon Notes



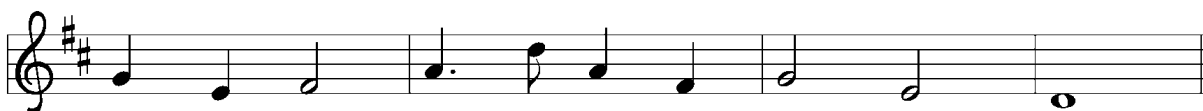
1 Bright and glo - rious is the sky, ra - diant are the
 2 On that ho - ly Christ - mas night through the dark - ness
 3 Sa - ges from the east a - far, when they saw this
 4 Him they found in Beth - le - hem, yet he wore no



heav - ens high where the gold - en stars are shin - ing.
 beamed a light; all the stars a - bove were pal - ing,
 won - drous star, went to find the king of na - tions
 di - a - dem; there they saw a maid - en low - ly



All their rays to earth in - clin - ing beck - on us to
 all their lus - ter slow - ly fail - ing as the won - drous
 and to of - fer their ob - la - tions to the child, the
 with an in - fant pure and ho - ly rest - ing in her



heav'n a - bove, beck - on us to heav'n a - bove.
 star drew nigh, as the won - drous star drew nigh.
 new - born king, to the child, the new - born king.
 lov - ing arms, rest - ing in her lov - ing arms.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877–1970, alt.
 Music: DEJLIG ER DEN HIMMEL BLÅ, Danish, 19th cent.
 Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress

A Statement of Our Faith (Apostles' Creed)

Pastor Gary Sandberg

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.

Prayers of the People

We Share God's Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please share a blessing of peace with others around you. After sharing the Peace, please be seated.

Abundantly Bethany

To fill out your digital connection card, go to www.tinyurl.com/BethanyConnect.

- ♦ **Christmas Un-decorating:** TODAY!
- ♦ **Wednesdays at Bethany:** Meals & children's ministries will resume on **Jan 14**.

+ WE WORSHIP GOD WITH OUR OFFERINGS +

OFFERING

You can give in the following ways; Thank you for your gifts!

- On our **website**, find the GIVE button in the header or under the Get Involved tab at **Bethany-Denver.org**
- Through **SubSplash** - Use your phone's camera to scan this **QR Code**
- **Mail** in your check to the office (4500 E. Hampden Ave. Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113)
- Sunday mornings, drop your offering in the silver plate at the doors as you exit



Offering Music

Kings Looking for A King

Dave Craven & Don Pullman

Sounds of Praise, dir. Paula Wills

*We have come from distant lands, we've crossed the sea and burning sands;
We have abandoned all our needs to go wherever this star leads.
Though we are kings almost unknown, we need to find this king enthroned;
Perhaps King Herod will know best where this little prince now rests.
We are kings looking for a king. We are kings looking for the King of Kings.
We need to find the King of Kings of whom we hear the angels sing;
Of whom the shepherds now have told. We'll bring to him a gift of gold.
Though we are kings we need a king of whom we too can praise and sing.
Who will lead us on through life and get us through our pain and strife.
His home's not in Jerusalem but in the town of Bethlehem.
Can you hear the way bells ring to announce the coming King?
We have come from distant lands, we've crossed the sea and burning sands;
We have abandoned all our needs to go wherever this star leads.*

+ THE COMMUNITY MEAL +

Invitation to The Communion Table

Pastor Gary Sandberg

Celebration of Holy Communion

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.

Blessing of the Bread and Wine

The Lord's Prayer *(Ecumenical translation)*

**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.**

Communion Instruction

Receive communion by dipping the bread into the wine. Pre-packaged communion sets are alcohol free; gluten-free options are available. Groups are welcome to visit a communion station together. Those who are not receiving communion are invited to cross their arms across their chest to receive a blessing.

Communion Distribution

Communion Music

Born 'Neath A Star

Cynthia Gray

Sounds of Praise, dir. Paula Wills

Born 'neath a star was a child so small with no shelter o'er but a drafty stall;
Yet he'd be known as the Lord of All, born beneath a star that night.
Led by a star was a shepherd boy, after angels told him of wondrous joy;
Sent down to earth as a baby boy, born beneath a star that night.
And love filled the earth at the news of the Christ Child's birth,
And hope did abound that through Him peace would be found.
Led by a star were the wise men three, traveling miles and miles, the young child to see;
Bringing Him gifts, for a king He'd be, born beneath a star that night.
Under the star of the Christmas tree, we still share the joy of that ancient eve;
When Christ was born, the King of Peace, born beneath a star that night.
And love filled the earth at the news of the Christ Child's birth,
And hope did abound that through Him peace would be found.

Communion Song

The First Noel

ELW 300



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .
4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . up - on . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . great light, and . . so it con -
king was their . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . and stay right . . o - ver the
there in his . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

Refrain



night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

Table Blessing

+ GOD SENDS US TO SERVE +

Benediction

Pastor Nate Preisinger

Song of Sending

We Three Kings of Orient Are

WOV 646

You are invited to face the cross as it recesses to the center.



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,
owns a de - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
God and Sac - ri - fice; heav'n sings al - le -



moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
lu - ia: al - le - lu - ia the earth re - plies.



Oh, 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!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.

Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

Dismissal

Pastor Nate Preisinger

As we go forth into the week ahead we remember our calling as the people of Bethany.

Together we will:

**Worship and encounter a God who loves us;
Embrace healthy dialogue that promotes unity over division;
Respond to the needs of the world through generosity and action.**

With this as our mission, go in peace, serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Trumpet Tune in B Flat Major

David N. Johnson

Things To Know About - News & Events

- ♦ **Christmas Un-decorating:** Stay after the service and help un-decorate the church. Stop by the Mission Center desk for directions.
- ♦ **Breakfast with the Bible and Senior Ministries:** Will resume on **Jan 6**.
- ♦ **Discipleship Class:** Resumes on Monday, Jan 12. You are invited to join in, Mondays from 6:30-8:00pm. Contact Pastor Gary for information or to become a part of this class.
- ♦ **Wednesdays at Bethany:** Meals & children's ministries will resume on **Jan 14**.
- ♦ **Women of Bethany: Thursday, Jan 8, 10:00-11:30am.** Leslie Stevenson has planned a wonderful event for us (thank you Leslie!). A docent guided tour of the Governor's Residence has been scheduled. It's located at 400 E. Eighth Ave Denver, 80203. Parking is on the SW corner of 8th and Logan to the west of GR. Carpooling from Bethany is suggested. Lunch after the tour at Syrup Restaurant, 410 E Seventh Ave Denver, 80203. Register online at the link for the event on Bethany News. All are welcome!
- ♦ **Bethany Outdoor Adventures Hike:** Mark your calendar for **Saturday, Jan 24**, for the first Bethany Outdoor Adventures activity of 2026! Join in a morning of fun at Mount Falcon Park, a 25 minute drive west of Bethany on US Hwy 285. There will be 4 options for different levels of hikes or playing in the snow, followed by hot cocoa and cookies at a final meeting point. Please sign up on the Bethany News Page to see more detailed information and choose your activity. For questions or to be added to the list for future events, please email Lizza Aalto at taalto@aol.com.
- ♦ **Bethany Dinner Club:** This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know fellow Bethany people while sharing a meal. Groups of 6-8 adults gather to enjoy dinner in a home, brunch out or any meal in any location. The goal is fellowship! Each group meets three or four times in a four-month period as the role of host rotates. Couples and singles are welcome! Our Winter into Spring groups will begin in early February. Registration is open until **Jan 25**. Sign up at the link on the Bethany News for this event. Email Bethanybreakingbread@gmail.com with questions.

For more information and to see other announcements, please sign up for the email blasts by contacting the office - 303.758.2820, or visit www.Bethany-Denver.org/Bethany-news/

Epiphany House Blessing

It is traditional to bless your home on Epiphany - January 6.

Epiphany means "manifestation" or "appearance".

The church celebrates the revelation of Christ to all nations as represented by the Magi who came to worship Jesus on this day.

Pick up a kit at the Mission Center desk!