

**The Falls Village Congregational Church**  
**December 31, 2023 10 a.m.**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas**  
**The Reverend Richard W. Reifsnyder, Worship Leader**

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**Welcome and Announcements**

**Ringling of the Bell**

**Prelude** – *O Come, All Ye Faithful* - arr. J. Carter

**THE CHURCH GATHERS TO PRAISE**

**Call to Worship** ( from Isaiah 40)

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

**God does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable; He gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.**

Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted.

**But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles.**

They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

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**Opening Prayer (Unison):**

**Gracious Judge: in your purpose our lives are lived, and by your grace our hopes are bright. Be with us this day and in the coming year, forgiving, healing, and saving; so that we may walk without fear, in the way of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn:** #172 “*We Three Kings*”

**Prayer of Confession**

**Eternal God: you make all things new, and forgive wrongs we can’t forget. We confess we have spent time without loving, and years without purpose, and the calendar condemns us for what we have failed to do. Forgive the past. Do not let evil cripple or shame**

**us. Lead us into the future, free from sin, free to love, and ready to work for your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.**

**Silent Confession**

**Assurance of Pardon**

**TO HEAR GOD’S WORD**

**Responsive Reading** Psalm 150, p. 768

**Gloria Patri** #35 in hymnal

**Passing the Peace of Christ:**

The Peace of Christ be with you

**And also, with you**

Let us pass the peace

**Scripture:** Isaiah 61: 8-11

Maria Bulson

Luke 2: 22-40

Rich Reifsnyder

**Prayer**

**Sermon:** “Simeon’s Dream—a 1<sup>st</sup> Person Narrative”

The Rev. Richard W. Reifsnyder

**TO RESPOND IN FAITH**

**Offertory** – *The Holly and the Ivy* - Traditional English Carol

**Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**THE CHURCH DISPERSES TO SERVE**

**Hymn** #149 “*Angels from the Realms of Glory*”

**Benediction**

**Benediction Response-** *God Be with You till We Meet Again*

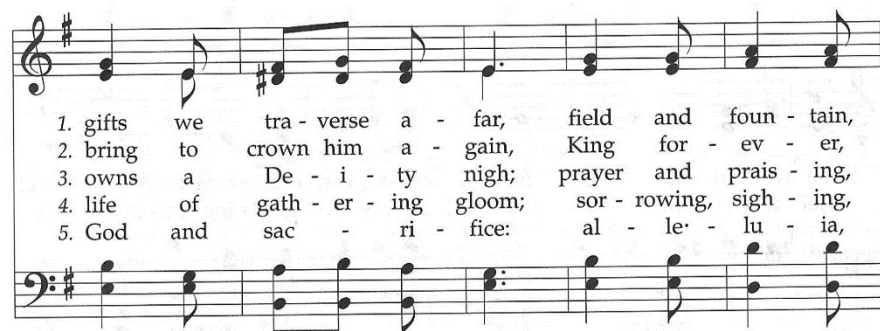
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Your tithes and offerings may be left in the plates at either entrance to the sanctuary.

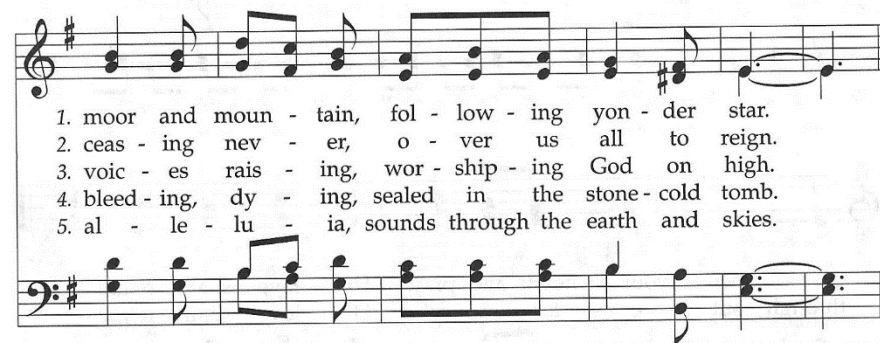
## We Three Kings



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

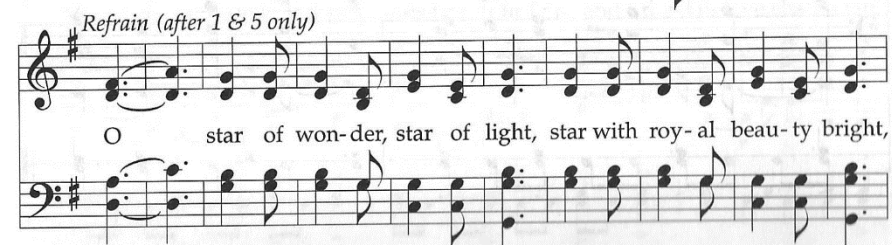


1. gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,  
 2. bring to crown him a - gain, King for - ev - er,  
 3. owns a De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,  
 4. life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,  
 5. God and sac - ri - fice: al - le - lu - ia,

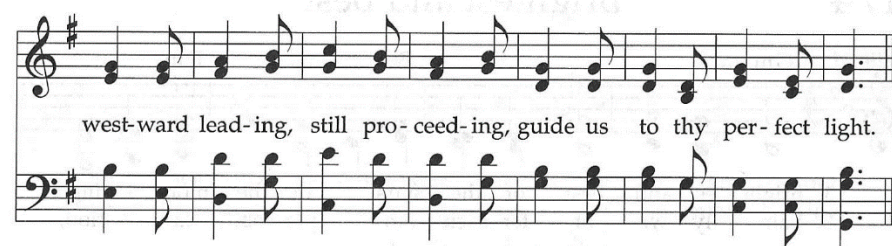


1. moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.  
 2. ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.  
 3. voic - es rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God on high.  
 4. bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.  
 5. al - le - lu - ia, sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain (after 1 & 5 only)



O star of won - der, star of light, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,

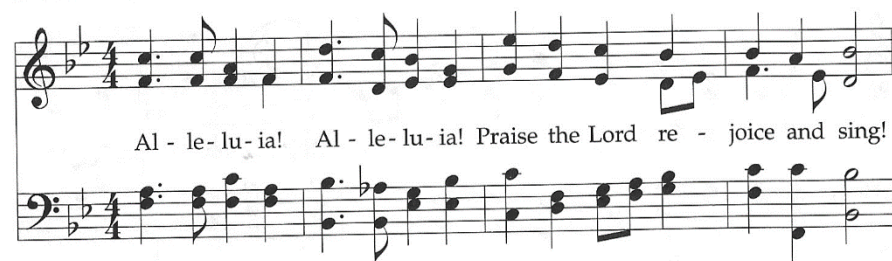


west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

## Psalm 150

Charles Wesley  
 Henry T. Smart

## RESPONSE



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the Lord re - joice and sing!

## R

- 1 Praise God!  
 Praise God in the sanctuary;  
**praise God in the mighty firmament!**
- 2 Praise God for mighty deeds;  
**praise God for exceeding greatness!**
- 3 Praise God with trumpet sound;  
**praise God with lute and harp!**
- 4 Praise God with tambourine and dance;  
**praise God with strings and pipe!**
- 5 Praise God with clanging cymbals;  
**praise God with loud clashing cymbals!**
- 6 Let everything that breathes praise God!  
**Praise God! R**

## *Scripture Lessons for December 31, 2023*

### *ISAIAH 61: 8-11*

<sup>8</sup>For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup>Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

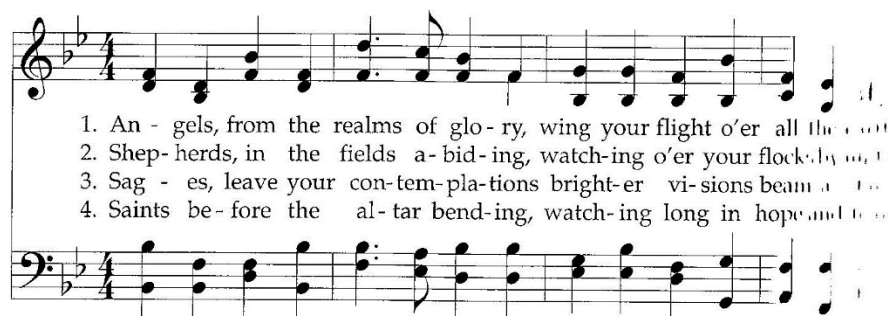
### *LUKE 2:22-40*

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

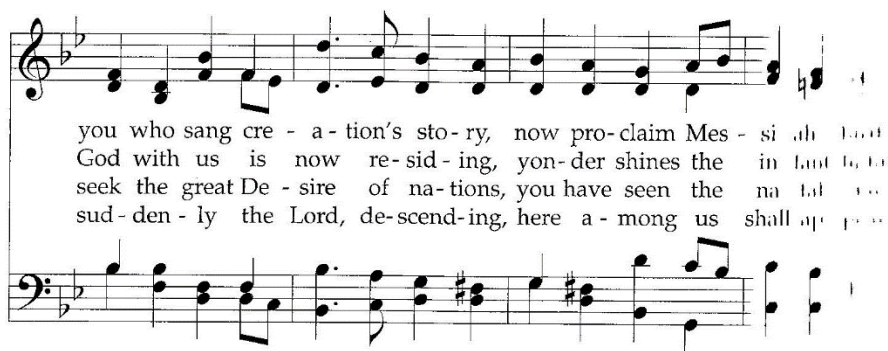
<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup>“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” <sup>33</sup>And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” <sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

# Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1-19



1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the host  
 2. Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flock by night  
 3. Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions bright - er vi - sions beam a - round  
 4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and love



you who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah born  
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - light - ning  
 seek the great De - sire of na - tions, you have seen the na - tal scene  
 sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, here a - mong us shall ap - pear

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King