



King Tingz, by Nicolette Faison
Inspired by Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

.... **Of the magi, the one bowing** is marked with the flower of frankincense on their robe. On their left shoulder is a map of modern Persia, reminding us of their journey back home having to take a new route because they defied the request of Herod. They are crowned with cornrows and covered with more greenery because of their position to the ground. While we celebrate the stars, I wanted there to be some grounding to the earth. As Jesus is both divine and human, he holds space in both worlds. **The king to the right** has soft myrrh flowers on her elbow and collar. Her outer arm is holding an infant, not Jesus, while her sleeve holds the Palestinian flag with the Arabic word *Nakba*, reminding us of the genocide of 1947. She is weeping for the children that Herod commits to murdering because of their defiance. Her golden crown is surrounded by a blue bandana, a quiet nod to Chola culture found on the West Coast, as Latino Christians have always emphasized the importance of *los reyes*. **The one to the left** is dripped in a starry durag and plated in gold. He has a subtle gold bottom grill and his face is celebrated in a gold pattern. He looks up to the sky, more concerned about navigation, as he is the guiding force for the three of them. I gave this king a durag after some research on Persian magi showed me variations of headwear or turbans that emulated that of a durag.

—Rev. Nicolette Faison



*The mission of GPPC is to embody God's love
by cultivating community, practicing hope, repairing harm, and doing justice as Jesus did.*

January 4, 2026

Epiphany Sunday

11:00am

+ indicates you are invited to stand

Bold print indicates congregation in unison

We are grateful to be gathered here in the Almond Creek-James River watershed, which we share with a diversity of plants and creatures, including the flowering dogwood, butterfly milkweed, striped bass, northern cardinal, and red fox.

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Powhatan Confederacy. May we nurture our relationship with all our neighbors, and our shared responsibilities to this watershed where we gather today.

GATHERING

The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world.

Gather your thoughts and feelings. Entrust yourself to God's saving grace.

Prelude

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

Johann Pachelbel

Greeting and Announcements

Introit

Doug Brown

When the wise men saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. Matthew 2:10

Call to Worship

[by Sarah Are Speed, adapted © a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org]

One: In the dark of morning,

All: the stars still shine.

One: In the depth of winter,

All: the birds still climb.

One: At the start of the year, tender and new,

All: God is here. God is near.

One: Do not rest in your fear.

All: God is here.

One: So like the stars and the birds,

All: Let us worship God.

+ Hymn 15] We Three Kings of Orient Are

Confession of Sin and Pain

[by Sarah Are Speed, adapted © a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org]

Kenyan traditional

Solo:

ALL:

Marty Haugen

For you, O Lord, my soul in still-ness waits; truly my hope is in you.

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Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Merely days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again. So today we pray—forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks. Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call. Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action. Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world. With hope, we pray.

Silent prayer

Assurance of Forgiveness and Healing

One: Family of Faith, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid, God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

All: Whether fear inspires us to action or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless. We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God! Amen.

+ Gloria (Hymn 117, verse 6) from While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

**All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
Good will to all from highest heaven begin and never cease!**

WORD

Where the scriptures are read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ, the living Word, is present by the power of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit also evokes our response. Through singing, affirmation, and prayer, with the help of God's Spirit, we discern Jesus Christ, receive Christ's grace, and resolve to follow Christ's way.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Matthew 2:1-18 (NRSVUE)

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, 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." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

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! "

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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." 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19

One: Give the sovereign your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a sovereign's offspring.

**All: May your people be judged with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.**

One: May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

**All: May the sovereign defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.**

One: May the sovereign live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

**All: May the sovereign be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.**

One: In whose days may righteousness flourish and peace abound,
until the moon is no more.

**All: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.
Blessed be God's glorious name forever; may the glory of the Lord fill the whole earth. Amen and
Amen.**

This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. 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: that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of God's power. 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 and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 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. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that God has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Carla Pratt Keyes

+ Hymn 377 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

+ Affirmation of Faith

[by Allan Boesak, adapted]

One: It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to destruction and loss—

All: This is true: For God so loved the world that God gave the only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life;

One: It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction—

All: This is true: I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly.

One: It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction rule forever—

All: This is true: Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of Peace.

One: It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek to rule the world—

All: This is true: To me is given authority in heaven and on earth, and lo I am with you, even until the end of the world.

One: It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the Church before we can be peacemakers—

All: This is true: I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, and your old people shall have dreams.

One: It is not true that our hopes for liberation of humankind, of justice, of human dignity of peace are not meant for *this earth* and for *this history*—

All: This is true: The hour comes, and it is now, that the true worshipers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.

One: So let us anticipate God's Epiphany in hope, even hope against hope.

All: Let us see visions of love and peace and justice. Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage: Jesus Christ—the life of the world.

+ Somos Uno (Hymn 322)

We are one in Christ Jesus, all one body, all one spirit, all together.

Somos uno en Cristo, somos uno, somos uno, uno solo.

We share one God, one mighty Lord, one abiding faith, one binding love, One single baptism, one Holy Comforter, the Holy Spirit, uniting all.

EUCHARIST

The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord. We celebrate with thanksgiving (eukharistia) the grace (kharis) with which Jesus welcomes us to sit at his table, eat what will satisfy our deepest hungers, and feed others as we've been fed. We offer ourselves in response to Christ's wonderful offering of love.

Offering



Everyone is invited to place tithes, offerings, visitor cards, or any other communications to the Pastor or staff in the designated wall boxes beside each door at the back of the Sanctuary or signal an usher to bring you the offering plate.

Monetary gifts and pledges to GPPC may also be given online at <https://www.ginterparkpc.org/giving>, or by using the QR Code to the left.

Offertory

Unto Us Is Born a Son

From *Piae Cantiones*
arr. David Willcocks

Unto us is born a son, King of quires supernal: see on earth his life begun, of lords the Lord eternal. Christ, from heav'n descending low, comes on earth a stranger; ox and ass their owner know, becradled in the manger.

This did Herod sore affray and grievously bewilder, so he gave the word to slay, and slew the little chilid. Of His love and mercy mild, this the Christmas story: O that Mary's gentle Child might lead us up to glory! O and A and A and O, *cum cantemus in choro* (with songs in the choir), let our merry organ go, *benedicamus Domino* (let us bless the Lord).

+ Doxology (Hymn 607)

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

Invitation to Communion

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

[by Rev. Anna Strickland © a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org]

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Beckoning God, from every corner we have come looking for you. A thousand monsters reared their heads along the way, threatening to derail us. But we are here nonetheless. We have gone over, around, under, and through our fear. And when we faced fears we couldn't evade, we took that fear by the hand and dragged it along with us on the journey, because we will stop at nothing to follow you. Your star calls us forward, ever forward toward our convictions, toward our dreams, toward a world that reflects your justice, peace, and love, toward our belonging in the great family of creation. Your star calls us forward, and the gifts that await are too great to hand over to fear. In this communion we share, in the Epiphany star words we are about to receive, may we find courage and strength for the journey. When fear threatens to stop us, may we hold onto these gifts and remember what lies ahead. When the journey is challenging, lift our heads to see our companions on the journey and the shining star that lights the way. You go with us, and if you are with us, what shall we fear? Beckoning God, we follow you into the unknown, with heads held high or knees quaking in fear. When the way ahead is unsure, we return to what we know: You are Emmanuel, God-With-Us. We join now in one voice to pray as Jesus taught us,

All: 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.

Breaking of the Bread

(Bread is gluten-free and vegan with honey.)

Please come forward to receive communion, along with a star word to guide you in seeking God this year.

Servers have used hand sanitizer. Hold your hand flat to receive the bread, then take a cup from the tray.

Then take a star word from the baskets at the front corners of the Sanctuary.

Please return to your seat by a side aisle.

If you cannot easily come forward, we will happily bring the elements to your pew.

After others have been served, please raise your hand to signal us.

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

Our worship and service do not end with the postlude; we go forth to love and serve God in our daily lives..

+ Hymn 145 What Child Is This

+ Charge and Blessing

+ The Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

+ Postlude

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

Andreas Armsdorff

ABOUT WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADERS: Director of Music is Doug Brown. Today's lector is Tyler Harris. The livestream operator is Wesley Neumann. Tom Hobbs is lead usher.

EPIPHANY STAR WORDS signify gifts of God's Spirit. We hope that in the coming year you may discover in your gift something of God's presence in, and purpose for, your life.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES AND LARGE PRINT HYMNS are available from an usher in the Narthex.

PLEASE TAKE THE PAPER BULLETIN YOU HAVE USED home for reference and/or recycling. Thank you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS about events in the life of GPPC are available through a weekly e-newsletter. If you would like to be added to the distribution, please contact Karen Mitscherlich at ginterparkpc@gmail.com.