



**Seventh & James Baptist Church**  
**January 7, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.**  
**Epiphany**

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**Chiming of the Hour**

**Meditation**

“Impression on *We Three Kings*”

(KINGS OF ORIENT,  
John Henry Hopkins)  
Alfred W. Fedak

**Welcome and Call to Worship**

Leslie Rosencrans

One: Beloved child of God, you are welcome here....

**Many: We give thanks to God for bringing us into this moment of worship.**

One: For no matter who you are or where you've been, you matter to God and to us.

**Many: Our hearts rejoice and give thanks for all those who have come before us and made a place for us to worship, pray, sing, wonder, doubt, believe, and just be.**

One: May the love of God through Christ our Lord convince you of your worth and invitation into this body of believers as we worship together in thanksgiving and hope.

**Choral Summons**

“The First Noel”

Traditional Carol

The first Noel the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;  
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

**Processional Hymn, No. 150**

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

**Litany of Chasing Stars**

Katie Cook

One: We marvel at men who would be so passionate about prophecy that they would follow the light of a star across the known world to meet a new king.

**Many: Open our eyes to your guiding light.**

One: They came bearing gifts and stayed sensitive to your guidance even as it changed from starlight to a warning in a dream.

**Many: Help us to follow, even when the way changes.**

One: We want to chase our dreams with the same kind of intensity as these faithful Magi, but so often we are tethered by self-doubt, practical considerations, and fear.

**All: God help us to follow your light wherever it may lead us.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving** Katie Cook

**Old Testament Reading** *Isaiah 60:1-6* Sean Sutcliffe

**Epistle Reading** *Ephesians 3:1-12* Matt Rosencrans

**Hymn, No. 151** “We Three Kings”

**Gospel Reading** *Matthew 2:1-12* Daniel Farris

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

**Prayers of God’s People** Daniel Farris

**Offertory** “Christ is the World’s Light” (CHRISTE SANCTORUM)  
Robert A. Hobby

*During the offertory, we invite you to prayerfully consider your stewardship of all the resources God is entrusting to you. The work of God at Seventh & James is dependent on the financial generosity and volunteer service of its members and friends. Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship. Join us as you respond to God’s call.*

**Doxology**

*(Sung to Veni Emmanuel, tune of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”)*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God, above ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

## Children's Sermon

Leslie Rosencrans

*All children are invited to come forward for the Children's Sermon.  
Preschoolers [ages 4-kindergarten] may then go to Extended Session.*

## Responsive Reading of Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Scott Turner

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

**Many: May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.**

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

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

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

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

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

**Many: May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.**

One: May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

**Many: For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.**

One: He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

**All: From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.**

## Anthem

“Arise and Shine, Your Light Has Come”

John Purifoy

Arise and shine, your Light has come, and the glory of God now rises upon you!

Lift your eyes for His joy appears as bright as the morning dawn.

Arise and shine for your Light has come. You shall see and be not afraid.

All the wonder of nature will sing and proclaim now the praise of the Lord!

Light of the world, into our hearts let thy glory shine.

That we may follow now thy star until we reach thy shrine.  
Light of the world, we worship thee. Our gifts to thee we bring!  
Accept our grateful hearts, O Lord, while praises to thee forevermore we sing!

**Sermon**

“Follow the Light”  
*(Matthew 2:1-12)*

Erin Conaway

**Silent Reflection**

Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step.... The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the next step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let’s rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all shadows away.

— Henri Nouwen

**Hymn of Commitment, No. 165**

“Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”

*If you would like to make a public profession of your faith in Christ  
or request membership in this congregation, our ministers  
will greet you at the front of the sanctuary.*

**Congregational Response**

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place; we offer you our love, our care, our kinship, and our hopes; we hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, by God’s grace. Amen.

**Pastoral Blessing**

Erin Conaway

**Choral Benediction**

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

Kathleen Thomerson

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.  
In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

**Postlude**

“Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light” BWV 248

J.S. Bach

## **Today at Seventh**

**Our Pianist today** is David DeLoach.

**The Sanctuary Flowers** honor and celebrate the first year of Daniel Farris' ministry at Seventh & James. Thanks be to God for Daniel, Rachel, Ava, and Sefton.

Hearing devices are available at the sound booth for any who need assistance.

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