



THE OLD STONE CHURCH

DECEMBER 31, 2023

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

10AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE

O Little Town

Bob Chilcott

WELCOME

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

INTROIT

Love Has Come

BRING A TORCH

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, join the search for all God will reveal.
We are the church, committed to an encounter with mystery.
God has sent light to dispel our fears.
The glory of God has risen upon us.
The gospel of Christ reveals God's grace.
We share in the promise of Jesus Christ.
We gather and lift up our eyes.
Our hearts thrill to the sight and our lips rejoice.
Through us, the wisdom of God will be made known.
There is rich variety to meet each one where we are.
The radiance of truth surrounds us.
Boldly and confidently, we approach our God.

* INVOCATION PRAYER

God beyond knowing,
grant us today new glimpses of who you are
and what you intend for us to be.
The powers of this earth bow before you in humble adoration.
Mighty nations are tiny blips on the screens of your eternity.
Our lives are insignificant
except as you enlist us to be a part of your eternal purposes.
You draw us irresistibly toward the light.
We are attracted to your revelation.
We need the sense of purpose you engender among us.
Come, Holy Mystery,
to reveal as much of your truth as we can
stretch to understand and receive into our lives.
Amen.

* HYMN #151

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice:

field and foun-tain, moor and moun-tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais-ing glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

O 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!

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as “kings,” perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.

TEXT and MUSIC: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1857, alt.

KINGS OF ORIENT
 8.8.8.6 with refrain

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Philip Fritz

The God of justice and righteousness
 calls us to account for the ways we invest our hours and our resources.
 Amid the oppression and violence that many endure,
 God listens for our voices and watches for our works.
 What have we done with the commission entrusted to us by God’s grace?
 Let us confess our sin.
 Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
 followed by time for personal silent confession.
 Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of sovereigns and commoners,
we confess that we are often more impressed with famous people
than we are with your amazing glory.
The rulers of this earth are more real to us
than the One who reigns over time and eternity.
Your priorities are not foremost in our lives.
We reach for power and popularity more than for justice for the poor.
We are more focused on prosperity than on relief for the oppressed.
Our pursuits do not satisfy; save us from their fragmenting grip in our lives.
Cause a new epiphany among us, we pray.

(moment of silent confession)

KYRIE ELEISON

SINGAPURA

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy on us.

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God will judge us with righteousness
and deliver us from the oppressive greed to which we have succumbed.
The showers of God's blessings will fall on us like rain on new-mown grass.
Peace will abound in the hearts of those who give help to the poor and needy.
God commissions us,
as fellow heirs with Christ,
to fulfill the mission given to the saints.
Alleluia and Amen!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.
Let us offer a sign of peace to one another.

* GLORIA #583

Glory to God

GLORIA (Taizé)

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!
Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.
No gift is too small, except to the giver,
for we cannot receive what we are unwilling to share.
The riches God entrusts to us
cannot satisfy those who hoard them for their own purposes.
They are a delight only when they are invested on our knees before the manger.
The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

What Is This Lovely Fragrance?

French Carol
arr. Healey Willan

What is this lovely fragrance wafting like to the scents of flowers in Spring!
Shepherds, O tell us, whence such beauty, hear you not heavenly caroling?
What is this lovely fragrance wafting like to the scents of flowers in Spring.

What is this light so fair, so tender, breaking upon our wondering eyes?
Never the morning star so radiant followed his course over eastern skies.
What is this light so fair, so tender, breaking upon our wondering eyes?

Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps, seek the Saviour, born today.
Low at His feet we lay our treasure, heart's adoration, love for aye.
Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps, seek the Saviour, born today.

* DOXOLOGY #607

OLD HUNDREDTH

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

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

Philip Fritz

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**We reach for the boundless riches of the Christ,
even as we give the tithes and offerings we have pledged.
An abundance of things does not satisfy,
and the wealth of nations cannot buy peace.
Therefore, we join our efforts in the church to make a difference in the world,
not through instruments of oppression but through the power of love.
Employ our gifts in the service of Jesus Christ, we pray.
Amen.**

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE

All Things Come of Thee

Herbert C. Peabody

All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O God, nations shall come to your light
and rulers to the brightness of your dawn.
By the compelling radiance of your Spirit,
draw us near, reveal your truth,
and teach us faithful obedience to your holy Word.
Amen.

THE READINGS

Hebrew Scripture Isaiah 60:1-6 (NRSVUE)

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
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.
Nations shall come to your light
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
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.
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.
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 Holy Spirit has a word for each of us today.

With God's help we are listening.

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.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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“A New Epiphany”



* NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

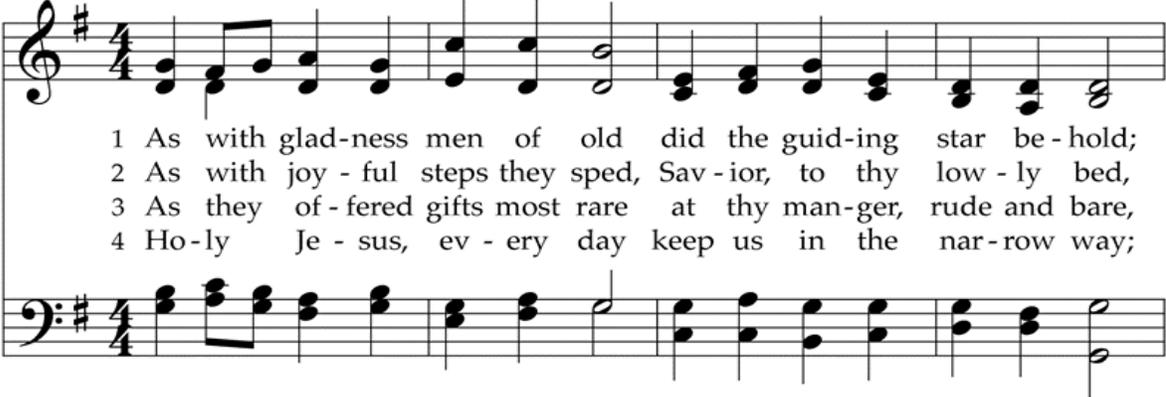
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

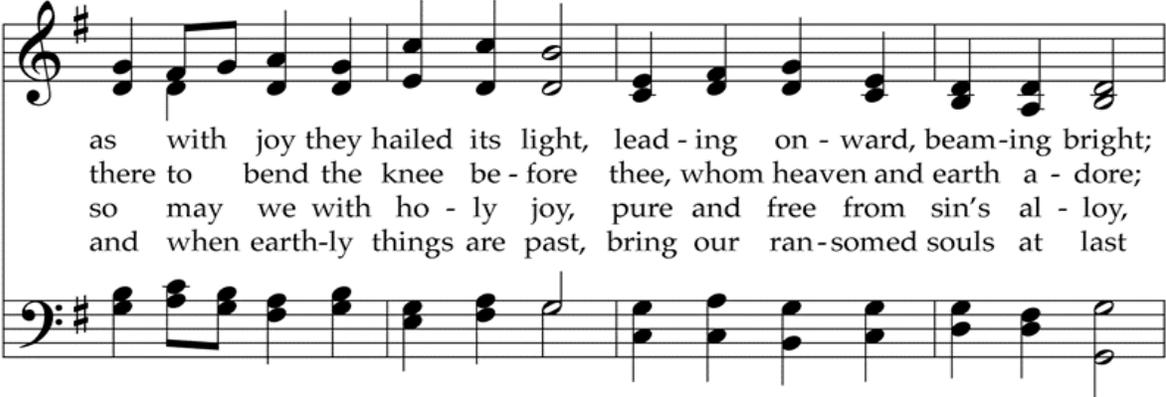
LIGHTING OF CANDLES, PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We ask all these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...

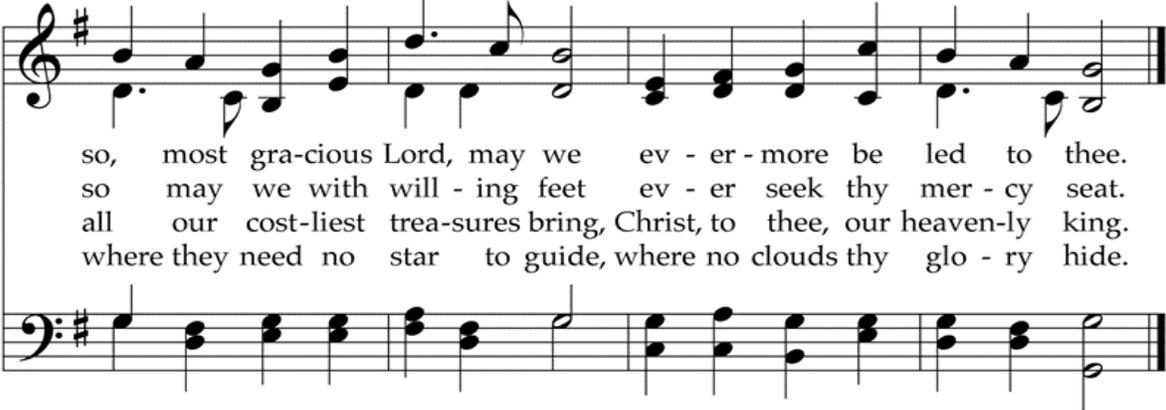
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen



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 man-ger, rude and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je - sus, ev - ery day keep us in the nar-row way;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam-ing bright;
 there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heaven 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



so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led to 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 heaven-ly king.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.

The first three stanzas here use an as/so structure to draw parallels between the coming of the Magi and the spiritual lives of the singers, summed up in the prayer of the fourth stanza. Even though this adapted German tune was named for him, the author did not care for it.

* BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

Arise, shine, for your light has come.

Take the light into the world and spread it around.

We see more now than when we came together.

We are ready to hear the world's cries and feel its pain.

Your heart will thrill and rejoice in your Savior.

Give yourselves as servants of the Gospel.

Christ has numbered us among the saints.

We are part of God's eternal purpose.

You are commissioned and empowered to serve.

Look for the star that will lead you day by day.

In boldness and confidence, we make our witness.

In the strength God supplies, we become helpers of the needy.

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Amen

John Rutter

POSTLUDE

Variations on Mendelssohn

arr. Janet Linker

*“My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”
Psalm 73:26*



We continue to keep in our prayers:

Ken Moser, Katelynn Fawcett, Andrew Buchanan, Marylou Eisaman,
Becky Jadlocki, Jackie Cole, Dean, Joyce Sabe, Caroline Poirier,
Nova and Tony Kordalski, Marlene Henne, Laurie Thomson, Frank Macuga,
Susan Ball, Shirley Daly, Karen Nestor, JoAnn Hood, Louis Handler,
Jenni Plants, Faith Battan, David, John and Alan, Herbert Glover and family

We pray for those struggling with illness, convalescing, homebound or in need.

Names are generally removed after four weeks unless there is a continuing need.

News from Session

Annual Congregational Meeting on January 21, 2024

Committee Reports for the Annual Report are due Monday, January 8, 2024



Epiphany House Blessing Bags

Please pick up your Epiphany House Blessing Bags located at the Public Square and Old Stone Center Doors



@ Old Stone Church

Sunday December 31 Epiphany

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

Sunday December 31 New Year's Eve

6:00PM Worship/Chapel

Monday January 1 New Years Day

Building and Offices Closed

Tuesday January 2

Building and Offices Closed

Sunday January 7 Baptism of the Lord

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:15AM Mission and Urban Wellness Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Monday January 8

Annual Committee Reports Due

Last Sunday Attendance

In-Person:69 Online:219

There are many ways to support The Old Stone Church

Online Giving: oldstonechurch.org/giving/	Mobile Giving: Text the keyword "oldstonecle" to 73256
Mail to: Old Stone Church Attn: Financial Office 91 Public Square Cleveland, OH 44113	Checks should be made payable to "Old Stone Church." If you would like to designate your contribution to one of Old Stone's mission projects, please make a note on the memo line.

All contributions are tax-deductible and will be appropriately acknowledged at year-end.

THE OLD STONE CHURCH

LOVING CHRIST, SERVING CITY—SPIRITUALLY, SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY—SINCE 1820

91 Public Square, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-2058

Phone: 216-241-6145 Fax: 216-241-6149

Website: www.OldStoneChurch.org E-Mail: info@OldStoneChurch.org

Music copied under ccli#1638695

Senior Pastor: Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams

Parish Associate: Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

Minister of Music: David L. Dettloff

The Old Stone Singers

Leah Jennings Brown, *soprano*

Cicely Schonberg, *soprano*

Val Sibila, *soprano*

Ian Atwood, *tenor*

Stephen Brown, *tenor*

Frederick Peterbark, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Margaret Raupp, *alto*

Elizabeth Rickel, *alto*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*

Christopher Clark, *bass*

Albert Donze, *bass*

Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

Class of 2023

Beth Buchanan
Robert Hubert Jr.
Judy Macuga
Harriet Niles
Marty Vassel
John Young

Class of 2024

Michelle Baron
Janie Chambers
Fred Heider
Bernard Medie
Bob Reid

Class of 2025

Willie Brown
Dave Finley

Church Deacons:

Class of 2023

Melissa Maffia
Pete Maffia
Alyssa Niepokny
Michael Rolan
Penni Rolan

Class of 2024

Scott Bailey
Bernie Bischel
Carol Hoagland
Amy Wheeler
John Wheeler

Class of 2025

Elie Medie
Mark Pichler

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