

and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
the glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,  
and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders, of His love.

### BENEDICTION

Go forth as a light to the nations.

**We go forth, following the star of Christ's birth.**

Go forth as a people of blessing.

**We go forth, proclaiming hope to the poor and needy.**

Go forth as a light to the nations.

**We go forth, with God's blessings.**

*\*Scifres, Mary; Beu, B.J.. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020: Worship Planning Resources for Every Sunday of the Year (p. 11). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.*

### POSTLUDE

**“Sing We Now of Christmas”**

**DANA MOODY**

*Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live, a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be uploaded to our website.*

*The flowers on the altar are presented to the glory of God. by an anonymous donor.*

### PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

*Members of the Church*

*Nursery Care Providers: Lisa and Brooks Ryno*

*Prayer Partner: Brenda Swoope*

*Lay Reader: Kelly Castellow*

*Audio-Visual Operator: Julian Baker*

*Greeter: Joanne Rooks*

*Pastor: Rev. Ned Alderman*

*Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance*

*Financial Secretary: Edna Bess*

*Coastal Virginia Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Beth Givens*

*Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Bishop Sue Hupert-Johnson*



***Oaklette United Methodist Church***

***"God's Body in this Community"***

*“Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people.”*

***January 4, 2026***

***Epiphany***



*Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A cry room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and directions to these rooms.*

### GREETING

### JOYS AND CONCERNS

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER

**Loving, sustaining God, like the mighty oak, may our branches at Oaklette church embrace those around us in this community. Use us as an instrument to welcome and shelter your people. Deepen our roots so that our branches are strong. Let the Holy Spirit flow like a river through our church, so that we may do your will. In Jesus' holy name, amen.**

### OPENING SCRIPTURE

**Ephesians 1:3-14 CEB**

Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ. You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God’s own people, resulting in the honor of God’s glory.

PRELUDE “How Brightly Shines the Morning Star” DANA MOODY

PASSING OF THE PEACE

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)\*

Let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.  
Let the voice of the needy be heard throughout the land,  
and the plea of the widow be answered.  
Let God be praised and Christ proclaimed,  
and let the whole world see the glory of our God.

OPENING PRAYER\*

O Lord our God, your glory shines as far as the east is from the west, from the north to the south, so that all people may see and be radiant, so that every heart might thrill and rejoice. Guide us on our baptismal journey in Christ. Overwhelm us with the joy of your presence. May we enter your house and pay homage to him whose infant arms were already reaching out to the ends of the earth that all might be gathered in. Amen.

*\*Long, Kimberly Bracken. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 (pp. 39-40). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.*

HYMN “We Three Kings” #254

We three kings of orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.  
Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown Him again  
King for ever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a Deity nigh,  
prayer and praising, all men raising, worship Him, God most high.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Your kingdom come; **Your kingdom come,**  
Your will be done; **Your will be done,**  
On earth; **On earth,**  
As in heaven; **As in heaven.**  
Give us today; **Give us today,**  
Our daily bread; **Our daily bread.**  
And forgive those; **And forgive those,**  
Who sin against us; **Who sin against us.**  
Save us from the time; **Save us from the time,**  
Of trials; **Of trials.**  
And deliver us; **And deliver us,**  
From evil; **From evil.**  
For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours forever.  
**For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours forever.**  
Forever; **Forever,**  
And ever; **And ever.**  
Our Father; **Our Father**  
In Heaven; **In Heaven,**  
**ALL: Holy is Your name.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God is our deliverer, helping those who call to God for justice. As people of God, we participate in God’s care for creation and for all who are in need. We bring to God our offerings with glad and generous hearts.  
*Long, Kimberly Bracken. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 (p. 42). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

Merciful God, may your justice roll down like waters, your righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. May these gifts and offerings be an answer to your call – a call to deliver the needy, rescue the weary, and defend the poor and the defenseless. In the holy light of your redeeming love, we pray. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

HYMN “Joy to the World” #246

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare room  
and heaven and nature sing and heaven and nature sing,

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom.  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone cold tomb.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and sacrifice!  
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**All: Eternal God, following only a star in the sky, kings of old left their families and their lands to find a child whose birth was so profound, it was proclaimed in the heavens above. When we would rather sit comfortably in our homes than make spiritual pilgrimages of our own, clothe our feet of clay in walking shoes and send us on our way. At this season of light, help us shine your light in the darkness to honor the King of kings. Open our shut-up hearts to those in need, that the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh might not be the last gifts offered to the one who brings light into our lives. Amen.**

Leader: The power that brought light and salvation to the kings of old is at work in the world today, granting eternal life to those who turn to God.

*Scifres, Mary; Beu, B.J.. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020: Worship Planning Resources for Every Sunday of the Year (pp. 9-10). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.*

**ANTHEM**

**GOSPEL READING**

**“A STAR SHONE BRIGHT”**

**CHANCEL CHOIR**

**Matthew 2:1-12 CEB**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We’ve seen his star in the east, and we’ve come to honor him.” When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. They said, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

““You, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel.””

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you’ve found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him.” When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

**LESSON**

**“The Wisest Thing About the ‘Wise’ Men”**

**REV. NED ALDERMAN**

**THE LORD’S SUPPER**

God is with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Let us open our hearts.  
**We open them up to our God.**  
Let us give thanks to the God of Light.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**  
Bright shining God, inner light of all faithful souls, we celebrate your gifts of love, creation, and art. We rejoice that you have made us in your image and call us to live in your limitless love. You bring peoples and leaders to the dawn of your rising. You sent your only child, our morning star, to light a way in our night and lead us to justice and peace. Your Holy Spirit shines good news into our lives. Each daybreak you call us to feed the hungry, bring recovery of sight, liberate the oppressed, heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds, and keep watch for the dawn of your commonwealth on earth. For all this we give you thanks. And we praise you, joining our voices with all life on earth, and the company of heaven, who forever sing their hymns to proclaim the glory of your name.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is my body given for you. Whenever you do this, do it in remembrance of me. After supper, he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do it in remembrance of me. Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**  
By your Spirit, bless this bread and this cup that they may become for us the presence of Christ among us. Shine your light and your love on the offering of our lives. Enlighten us that we may be your people, the body of the risen Christ, the light of the world, set apart to serve this earth that you have made. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we praise you now and forever, O Eternal Light.  
**Amen.**  
*Long, Kimberly Bracken. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 (pp. 190-191). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.*

**THE LORD’S PRAYER (singing)**  
Our Father; **Our Father**  
In Heaven; **In Heaven**  
Holy is Your name; **Holy is Your name.**