

South Canyon Lutheran Church

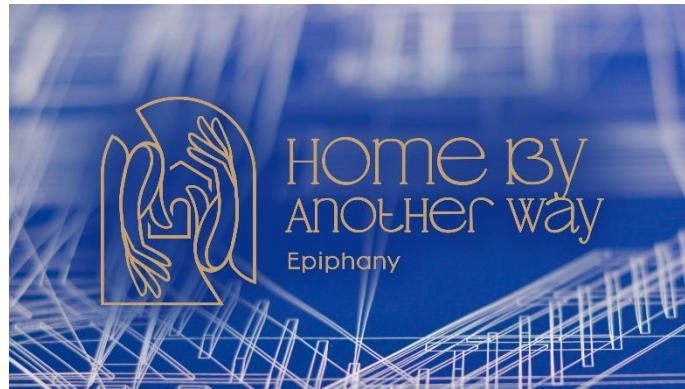
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“Home of Friend-Ship Preschool”

January 4 & 5, 2025 - Epiphany

5:30 PM & 9:00 AM



Muscle Memory

*Going home is a form of
muscle memory.
Start the car.
Turn on the lights.
Turn left,
turn right.
Pass the big oak tree
and the empty school yard.
Look for the house with
the light on.
Look for the house with
the open door.
Look for the house that
says, “Welcome home.”
You’ll know when
you’ve arrived—
that’s the thing about
muscle memory.*

*But I am learning things
of love,
and home is not home
unless all are welcomed,
and muscle memory is not
justice unless all are safe.
So I’m asking—
can we start the car
and get totally lost
chasing what is right
far off on the horizon?*

*Can we drive off the road
and get a flat tire
if it means paving the way
for justice and truth?*

*Can we circle the trees
and miss the school yard
completely
if this new way home
includes space for grace?*

*Can we waste our time
driving in circles
if it gives us time
to add people to the car?*

*I am learning,
muscle memory and faith
are not one and the same.*

*So I am asking,
Will you start the car?
Will you turn on the lights?
Will you take a deep breath?
It might be time to get lost.*

*It might be time to find a
new way home.
Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed*

(9 am) PRELUDE

“Praise the Lord” from “Olivet”

Ludwig van Beethoven, arr. Homer Whitford

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*INVOCATION

We gather for worship in the name of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We come to this place – Each of us on our own path.

*The path is winding, And the path is not always clear,
and the path changes, but we are here.*

God is walking us home. What a gift it is to not walk alone.

Let us worship Holy God.

*GATHERING SONG

Arise Your Light Has Come!

ELW 314

**Arise, your light has come! The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.**

**Arise, your light has come! Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.**

**Arise, your light has come! All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.**

**Arise, your light has come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.**

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

I imagine that, for the Magi, walking to Bethlehem was not easy. I imagine that following a star for navigation was definitely not easy. However, I imagine that the hardest part might have been not knowing where the road would lead.

Friends, we are not always the best versions of ourselves when we are faced with uncertainty or changing plans. Facing the unknown pulls on every ounce of our anxiety and fear. It rings all our stress alarms and can erode our patience, our calm, our sense of perspective.

Fortunately for us, we worship a God who is gracious beyond imagination and meets us on every twist and turn of the road home. So let us pray together now, knowing that even in our worst moments, we are held by God.

God of changed plans, The Magi heard in a dream that they were to take a new way home—a different path, an untraveled road. And to our amazement, they did just that. The Magi packed their bags and went home by another way.

We wish that change could be easy for us, but more often than not, when whispers of change come, we tend to clench our fists and hold on tighter.

Forgive us for resisting change that might be holy. Forgive us for ignoring that there is more than one road home. Forgive us for failing to hear your invitation. Guide our steps to unfamiliar places. Gratefully we pray, amen.

No matter which roads we take in this one wild and precious life, God walks with us. God never leaves our side. When the road changes and we find ourselves on a new path home, God is always there. So hear and believe this good news: Your sins are forgiven.

No matter where we go, no matter what we do, we are claimed, loved, and held by God. Thanks be to God for a love like that.

*GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy God,

You speak to us in Scripture and in prayers, in sunrises and sunsets, in friends and in strangers, in dreams and in songs. You are speaking all the time, and how often do we miss it? Still our minds so that we can listen with a depth that we have not heard before. Still our hearts so that we can receive with open arms what it is you are offering us today. We know you are speaking, so we are listening. Gratefully we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

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 his 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 he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, 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.’ ”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men 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 at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹When 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.

CHILDREN’S TIME WITH PASTOR

SERMON

“Home By Another Way”

Pastor Deb Grismer

***SONG OF THE DAY**

As with Gladness Men of Old

ELW 302 vs 1-3

**As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.**

As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,

so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.

***APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again; He ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you all. And also with you

Please share a sign of God's peace with those around you.

(9am) OFFERING

"Now Winter Fades from Light"

J.S. Bach, arr. Homer Whitford

(9am) OFFERING RESPONSE

We Three Kings

CCLI 38002 vs 5

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

OFFERING PRAYER

God of new beginnings,

We offer these gifts to you today because we love you. The world will tell us to keep our money to ourselves, to hold it tight, to tuck it away, but just as the Magi made a different choice, we make a different choice. Instead, we give what we have, trusting that when we live like we belong to one another, we will see a better world. So take these gifts and use them for your good. With hope we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of The Way,

We all have roads we travel.

We travel emotional roads—the narratives we tell ourselves, the mental places we revisit again and again, the assumptions and the fears we know by heart.

Holy God, hear our prayer.

Then there are physical roads—the places in our lives that we walk every day, grocery stores and coffee stands, subways and carpool lines.

Holy God, hear our prayer.

And then there are roads of our society—the paths carved out that we are expected to follow, dress and etiquette, education and rules, so many things unspoken, but built in stone all the same.

Holy God, hear our prayer.

So today we remember the Magi—who traveled, who knows how long, down a dusty road to get to you.

Holy God, we too want to be people that travel mental, physical, and cultural roads to get to you. We want to gather in your sanctuary. We want to remember you in our prayers. We want our hearts to know the way home, the way back to you, by perfect memory. Help us get to that place, for we long to be journeying toward you.

Holy God, hear our prayer.

In addition to the road the Magi traveled to you, we also remember the road they took home—a road home by another way.

*So, God, when the world cries out for violence and vengeance, show us that road—show us home by another way.
And when the world cries out in scarcity and fear, show us that road—show us home by another way.
And when we find ourselves on a path that could hurt us, show us that road—show us home by another way.
God we are walking. This life is a journey. Be in our steps, that we might be led to you. Be in our eyes, that we might see you. Be in our hearts, that we might be brave enough to go home by another way.*

*Holy God, **hear our prayer.***

Now with the confidence of children, we pray together, saying... Our Father...

LORD'S PRAYER

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***SENDING SONG**

Drawn to the Light

ELW 593

**People who walk in darkness have sought a light in the heart of the darkest night.
Just when we thought all would be lost, we were drawn to the light of God.**

Refrain

**Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the light and the morning.
Glorious and bright, oh, what a sight to be drawn to the light of God.**

**How can we tell a heaven from hell if ev'ryone dwells in the dark of night?
Morning dispels, gently compels, and we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain***

**Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the one who is shining bright,
bids us to come! Life has begun when we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain***

***BLESSING and DISMISSAL**

*As you leave this service, your service begins: Comfort the homesick. Open your doors to others. Seek sanctuary. Be brave enough to go home by another way. And remember that here in God's house, all are welcomed – so come back soon. In the name of our Foundation – God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit – go in peace. **Thanks be to God.***

(9am) POSTLUDE

“On this Day Earth Shall Ring”

arr. Gustav Holst

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

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