



Star of Bethlehem, Elihu Vedder 1879-80

First Sunday After Christmas
December 28, 2025

Reflections

"Jesus was manifested neither to the learned nor the righteous; for ignorance belonged to the shepherds, impiety to the Wise Men. Yet does the Christ attract them both to Himself, seeing He came to choose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and not to call the righteous, but sinners; that nothing great should exalt himself, none weak should despair."

St. Augustine (4th Century North African Bishop)

"Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

Invictus, William Ernest Henley

"Beyond this place of sin and tears
That life with Him! And His the aid,
Despite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and shall keep me, unafraid.

I have no fear, though strait the gate,
He cleared from punishment the scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate,
Christ is the Captain of my soul."

Invictus Redeemed, Dorothy Day

Order of Worship

GATHERING

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed,
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face –
Evermore and evermore!

This is he whom heav'n-taught singers
sang of old with one accord,
whom the Scriptures of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long expected;
let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heav'n, adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing:
all dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring,
evermore and evermore!

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!

Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord!

For he commanded and they were created.

And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;

his majesty is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.

Praise the Lord!

Psalm 148:1-6, 13-14

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

GATHERING SONG

All Creatures of Our God and King

All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing
O praise Him! Alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam,
thou silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
ye clouds that sail in heav'n along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
ye lights of ev'ning find a voice!
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

All ye who are of tender heart,
forgiving others, take your part,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,

praise God and on Him cast your care!
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless
and worship Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAISE SONG

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth,
You who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth;

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the new-born King.

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar,
Seek the great Desire of Nations;
you have seen his natal star;

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord descending
In His temple shall appear;

Though an infant now we view him,
He will share his Father's throne,
Gather all the nations to him;
Every knee shall then bow down.

CONFESSION & ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We

are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Galatians 4:4-7

RENEWAL SONG

God With Us

Oh You've come to bring peace to be love
To be nearer to us
You've come to bring life to be light
To shine brighter in us
Oh Emmanuel God with us

Our Deliverer You are Savior
In Your presence we find our strength
Over ev'rything our redemption
God with us
You are God with us

Oh You've come to be hope to this world
For Your honor and name
And You've come to take sin to bear shame
And to conquer the grave
Oh Emmanuel God with us

You are here
You are holy
We are standing in Your glory (Lord)

Oh God with us
You are God with us

PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN DISMISSED

LIFE TOGETHER

PREACHING OF THE WORD

“The Shepherd King”

Ben Tietje

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Matthew 2:1-6

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon Notes

RESPONSE

SONG OF RESPONSE

Glory to God

Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY

As With Gladness Men Of Old

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
Ever more be led to thee.

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.

Holy Jesus, ev'ry day
Keep us in the narrow way,
And when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds thy glory hide.

There forever may we sing
alleluias to our King

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

COMMUNION SONG

All Glory Be to Christ

Should nothing of our efforts stand
No legacy survive
Unless the Lord does raise the house
In vain its builders strive
To you who boast tomorrow's gain
Tell me what is your life
A mist that vanishes at dawn
All glory be to Christ

All glory be to Christ our king
All glory be to Christ
His rule and reign we'll ever sing
All glory be to Christ

His will be done His kingdom come
On earth as is above
Who is Himself our daily bread
Praise Him the Lord of love
Let living water satisfy
The thirsty without price
We'll take a cup of kindness yet
All glory be to Christ

When on the day the great I Am
The faithful and the true
The Lamb who was for sinners slain
Is making all things new
Behold our God shall live with us
And be our steadfast light
And we shall e'er his people be
All glory be to Christ

SENDING

SENDING SONG

Go! Tell It On the Mountain

Go! tell it on the mountain,
over the hills, and ev'rywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth:

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn!

BENEDICTION

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26

LIFE TOGETHER

CHURCH LIFE

MRFM \$500,000 Matching Gift - Now- Dec 31: Gifts + increased/new commitments.

Children's Ministry Assistant - Position opening. See Looking Up for details.

Winter Break - Dec. 14-Jan 4: 9am and 10:45am Worship; 10:15am Hope Cafe.

Office Hours - Closed Jan. 1-2

First Wednesday Fellowship - Jan. 7, 5:30-7pm: All welcome!

Prayer Service - Jan. 7, 7pm

Mahjong Women's Event - Jan. 24, 2-5pm. Register before Jan. 20!

Praying Life Seminar - Jan. 23-24. Registration open. See Looking Up.

Discovering Hope - Friday, Jan. 23, 7:30pm-9pm; Sundays, Jan. 25 - Feb. 22, 10am

Quito Missions Trip - Info packets in back of sanctuary and registration open.

PARENTS & CHILDREN

PJ Popcorn Party - Jan. 23, 6-8pm. 2nd-5th graders welcome! Registration open.

MS Great Wolf Lodge - Feb. 13-14. Registration open.

Kids Connection - *December Verse* - For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

FINANCIAL UPDATE AS OF DECEMBER 23RD, 2025

	Actual to Date	Budget through 12/31	Difference	
Income	\$1,358,087	\$1,482,783	-\$124,696	-8.41%
Expense	\$1,375,710	\$1,482,783	-\$107,073	-7.22%
Surplus (Deficit)	-\$17,624	\$0	-\$17,624	

ANNUAL MINISTRY BUDGET: \$1,482,783

Making Room for More	Campaign Goal	Campaign Commitments	Gifts Received
	\$8.6 million	\$5,243,302	\$3,671,688