

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY WITH THANKSGIVING AND HOPE  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**November 30<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Dear Lord, as we prepare for this holiday season, help our family to keep our eyes on you and remember to put you first in everything we do. Help us to prepare to welcome the baby Jesus into our hearts, as we prepare to welcome friends and family into our home. In the name of the Baby Jesus we prepare to welcome, we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup> Advent Candle**

**Carol: “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”**

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear.

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

2. O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

3. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things, far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go.

4. O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease, Fill all the world with heaven's peace.

**Litany: based on Psalm 80:1-7 and 17-19**

**Leader:** Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel, who led Joseph like a flock, O you who sits on a throne and shines forth before humankind.

**All: Restore us, O God; make your face shine upon us that we may be saved.**

**Leader:** How long, O God Almighty, will we feel separated from your love and our neighbors feel that you have abandoned your people?

**All: Restore us, O God Almighty; make your face shine upon us that we may be saved.**

**Leader:** Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand,

**All: Our Lord Jesus**

**Leader:** The son of man you raised up for yourself,

**All: Our Lord Jesus**

**Leader:** And we will not turn away from you. Revive us and we will call on your name.

**All: Restore us, O Lord God Almighty; make your face shine on us that we might be saved.**

### **Words of hope:**

It's time to get ready. We'll decorate, buy presents, put up a tree, cook and bake special treats, visit and welcome friends and family, go to parties and be in programs. Why? Why do we do all these special things at this time of year? Why, because it's Christmas time, that's why! But lots of people don't really know why it's such a special time. Lots of people don't know that the real reason we celebrate at Christmas time is because God loved us enough to send us Jesus to bring us back to God, so that we could know more about God and be saved from all the things that keep us away from God. A few minutes ago we sang a song asking Emmanuel to come and be with us. Emmanuel means "God with us" and is one of the names for Jesus. The Baby Jesus we wait to celebrate is God, with us. God sure does love us to come all the way from heaven to be with us. How about this week we show God that we love Jesus by telling someone, someone different each day, "I love you and Jesus loves you." God likes it when we tell others about Jesus and when we love each other. After all, Jesus is the reason we celebrate Christmas. Jesus brings us hope by loving us. We can bring others hope by loving them.

### **Carol: (If you do not know this one, just read the words as a poem) "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"**

1. Come, Thou long expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.
2. Born Thy people to deliver, Born a Child, and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit, Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Dear Lord, thank you for loving us enough to send your son Jesus, our Emmanuel. Help us to prepare for him everyday and to show your love to others as we do so. You give us hope that we can be with you always because of the Baby Jesus who we eagerly await. Bless this family as we prepare to welcome him. In his wonderful name, we pray, Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
BEGIN THE JOURNEY IN PEACE  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**December 7<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Prince of Peace, as we enter into this week of preparation for your birth help us to look to you for ways to help bring “peace on earth and good will to men.” We have remembered that Jesus is the reason for the season during this last week. We have done a lot of cleaning and decorating and shopping to get ready. Help us this week to prepare our hearts to bring your peace to those around us. In the name of Baby Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent Candles**

**Carol: “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”**

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”
2. Christ, by highest heav’n adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of the Virgin’s womb;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail th’incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”
3. Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”

**Litany: Psalm 85:8-13 NRSV**

**Leader:** Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people,

**All:** **To his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.**

**Leader:** Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,

**All:** **That his glory may swell in our land.**

**Leader:** Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

**All:** **Righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

**Leader:** Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

**All:** **And righteousness will look down from the sky.**

**Leader:** The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

**All:** **Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.**

### **Words of Peace”**

“Peace on earth and good will to men” was the message that the angels brought to us on the night that Jesus was born. Do you think we have learned that lesson yet? Is the world at peace and do we live together with “good will to men?” Maybe the reason that we have not learned to live together in peace is that we haven’t gotten the message that Jesus is the answer to enough people yet. Too many people still don’t know Jesus. Another reason we don’t have peace on earth is that even those of us who do know Jesus don’t do what Jesus taught us to do. We don’t live with God first in our lives and we don’t take care of each other. Wars won’t stop until we learn not to fight with each other over the little things. If we can’t stop fighting over little things like who gets to choose the TV channel, or who is going to take out the trash, or who is right this time, how are we going to stop fighting over the big things. Peace comes when we stop fighting and start trying to understand each other. This week, let’s try to be peace bringers instead of fighters. When we catch ourselves starting to argue or fight over something, let’s try to find a peaceful way to stop. If we can do that maybe we can help Jesus bring “peace on earth and good will to men.”

### **Carol: “Silent Night”**

1. Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and Child, Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!
3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth! Jesus, Lord at Thy birth!

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Prince of Peace, help us to be bringers of peace. Help us to stop fighting over the little things in our lives. May our hearts be filled with your love and may understanding be more important than being right. Help us to keep our tempers in check while those around us are losing theirs. Help us never be too busy to help someone else. In your lovely name, we pray. Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
THE JOURNEY CONTINUES IN JOYFUL ANTICIPATION  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**December 14<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Father of Joy, thank you for this night. Thank you for the opportunity for this family to meet with you in joy as we continue to prepare for Christmas Day. As we celebrate together the anticipation of your coming birth, may we also renew our commitment to you as our Lord and Savior. In the name of the Christ Child, we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent Candles**

**Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

**Carol: “Joy to the World”**

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,  
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns; Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
3. 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.
4. 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.

**Litany: Psalm 126 NIV**

**Leader:** When the Lord brought back the captives to Zion, we were like men who dreamed.

**All:** **Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy.**

**Leader:** Then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”

**All:** **The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.**

**Leader:** Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the Negev.

**All:** **Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.**

**Leader:** He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow,

**All:** **Will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.**

### **Words of joy and anticipation:**

What brings you joy? There are lots of things that make us laugh and have fun and keep us joyful. Did you ever wonder what gives God joy? Believe it or not, God has joy from us when we believe in him and return his love. God wants us to be his friends and so he sent us Jesus to teach us how to do this. When Jesus was born, God knew that we would have a chance to get to know God better. That made God very glad and filled God with joy. When we love one another and get along in peace that makes God glad. God sent the angels to sing of his glory and to proclaim to the world that Jesus would bring peace between God and mankind. When we help one another and give to one another that makes God glad. When we tell people about Jesus and how much he loves us that brings God joy. So when you think about the things that bring you joy, think also about the things that bring God joy. When God is pleased with us we also will have more joy. And we can anticipate or look forward to Christmas Day with even more joy.

### **Carol: "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

1. Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply Echo back their joyous strains.

Chorus: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be, Which inspire your heav'nly song?
3. Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
4. See within a manger laid Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth!  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, With us sing our Savior's birth.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Father of all joy, help us to look for reasons to laugh and rejoice this week. Help our family to continue our preparations for Christmas Day with joy and great anticipation. Help us keep the fun in the decorating and baking and gift giving. But help us also to remember you in all that we do. In the name of the Child of joy, so soon to be born, we pray. Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
LOVE SUSTAINS US AS THE JOURNEY NEARS COMPLETION  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**December 21<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Father of love, thank you for this family and for the love that is given to us and to each other. As we prepare for this last week before Christmas Day, help us to spread that love to everyone we see. During this past week we have tried to keep your joy in all we did and to bring you joy also. As we think about all the gifts we are about to give and receive, help us to remember the greatest gift of all, the Baby Jesus, soon to be born again and in whose name we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Advent Candles**

**Carol: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

1. O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love,  
O morning stars together Proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.
3. How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv’n!  
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heav’n.  
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still The dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in; Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

**Litany: Psalm 89:1-4 NRSV**

**Leader:** I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;  
**All:** **With my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.**  
**Leader:** I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
**All:** **Your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**  
**Leader:** You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one,  
**All:** **I have sworn to my servant David;**  
**Leader:** ‘I will establish your descendants forever,  
**All:** **And build your throne for all generation.’”**

### **Words of Love:**

Hope, peace, joy and love – these are some of the gifts we receive from the Christ Child. We have hope because Jesus gave us something to look forward to even when things seem to be going wrong. We can have peace because Jesus is in our hearts and can sooth all our fears and calm our hearts through all the storms of life. We can laugh and enjoy life because Jesus came to give us lots and lots of his joy even after we die. But most of all Jesus gives us love because God is love. God loved us so much that he let Jesus leave heaven and come to live with us here on earth just to give us his love. The four candles we have lit over these four Sundays in Advent stand for the hope, peace, joy and love that the Baby Jesus comes to give to us again and again every time we need them.

God planned these gifts a long time before Jesus was born and told us that he was coming in the Bible. A moment ago we read a Psalm about God's steadfast love and it told us that God promised David that his children would rule and one of his descendants would rule forever. Even then God knew that Jesus would come and that he would be a descendant of David. What a mighty God we serve who knows what we will need long before we need it! As we wait through these last few days before Christmas Day, let's remember the four gifts of hope, peace, joy and love that the coming of the Baby Jesus brings to us again.

### **Carol: "Away in a Manger"**

1.     Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
          The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;  
          The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
          The little Lord Jesus, asleep in the hay.
  
2.     The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,  
          But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes,  
          I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,  
          And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
  
3.     Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
          Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
          Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
          And fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Baby Jesus, as we wait impatiently for you to be born in our hearts once again on Christmas Day, we thank you for the hope, peace, joy and love you are coming to bring. Help us to look at you and remember what you taught us each day in everything that we do and say. Help us to show others that you are more than just a baby, but are the most important gift the people were ever given. In your special name, we pray. Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
LIGHT SURROUNDS THE ARRIVAL  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Father of the Christ Child, tonight we are especially thankful for the gift of Jesus. We have been getting ready for this night and all that it means for over four weeks. Our hearts are full of joy and praise for your love. Join with us as we worship you. In the name of the Christ Child, born this night, we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & 4<sup>th</sup> Advent Candles & the Christ Candle**

**Scripture: Luke 2:1-14**

**Carol: “What Child Is This?”**

1.     What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary’s lap is sleeping?  
       Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?

Chorus:     This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
              This, this is Christ the King, The Babe, the Son of Mary.

2.     Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?  
       Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
3.     So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, Come, peasant, king, to own Him;  
       The King of kings salvation brings, Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

**Litany: Psalm 96:1-6 NRSV**

**Leader:** O sing to the Lord a new song;  
**All:**     **Sing to the Lord, all the earth.**  
**Leader:** Sing to the Lord, bless his name;  
**All:**     **Tell of his salvation from day to day.**  
**Leader:** Declare his glory among the nations,  
**All:**     **His marvelous works among all the peoples.**  
**Leader:** For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
**All:**     **He is to be revered above all gods.**  
**Leader:** For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
**All:**     **But the Lord made the heavens.**  
**Leader:** Honor and majesty are before him;  
**All:**     **Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

### **Words of Light and Good News:**

Well, we made it to Christmas Eve. During this night the Baby Jesus is born and in the morning a very special celebration will begin. Everyone is going to be getting presents! Why do we give everyone presents? Is it because they give us presents, or because we have to give them? Or is it because we care about the people and want to please them? When God wanted to show us that God loved us, Jesus was born as a very special present. God's present to us was so special that wise men came and gave presents to him. So we show our thankfulness to God by giving presents to each other to show that we care about them, too. It's fun to give and receive presents. The special thing about God's presents is that they keep giving and giving. Presents like love, joy, hope and peace don't get broken or worn out. They are always fresh and new. And you can turn around and give them to someone else and still have plenty! So as you enjoy the presents you receive in the morning, remember also the presents God gives you and to give them away to other people so they can enjoy them as well. When the toys break and wear out, remember God's presents are still good always. So praise God and sing to the Lord and celebrate God's love in the Baby Jesus – the Christ Child born in our hearts once more this night! One other present which the Baby Jesus brings us is light. We will never have to live our lives in the darkness, unable to see God. That's why we light candles on this special night. The angels sang to bring us Good News. Jesus is born! Let's spread the Good News and shine God's light everywhere!

### **Carol: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"**

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!

Chorus: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, O sing, all ye bright hosts of heav'n above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Father, we do adore you and we come to worship you this night of nights. As we move into the celebration of Christ's birth and the giving and receiving of gifts, help us to remember the gifts your Son, Jesus brings. Help us to serve you by giving the gifts you gave us to the people around us. You have taught us the real meaning of love. In the name of our Lord and Savior, the Christ Child born again this night, we pray. Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM  
THE CELEBRATION CONTINUES IN ANTICIPATION OF NEW JOURNEYS  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**January 1<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Day**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Father of love, the world thinks that Christmas is over and we can forget about the Baby Jesus for another year. But we know better. For us, Christmas is not just a day but a beginning. God, as we begin a New Year, let us remember the reason that we are on earth, to praise you. Help us to use this Christmas season to begin again to love you more and to live for you more and to grow in our faith. Thank you for this past year and also for the New Year we begin today. In the name of the Christ Child we worship, we also pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & 4<sup>th</sup> Advent Candles & the Christ Candle**

**Carol: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"**

1. It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, From heav'ns all-gracious King!  
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.
2. Still thru the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heav'nly music floats O're all the weary world:  
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hov'ring wing,  
And ever o're its Babel sounds The blessed angels sing.
3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow,  
Look now! For glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the wing:  
O rest beside the weary road And hear the angels sing.
4. For lo, the days are hast'ning on, By prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever-circling years Shall come the time foretold,  
When the new heav'n and earth shall own The Prince of Peace their King,  
And the whole world send back the song Which now the angels sing.

**Litany: Psalm 148:1-5, 11-13 NRSV**

**Leader:** Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;

**All:** **Praise him in the heights!**

**Leader:** Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

**All:** **Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!**

**Leader:** Praise him, you highest heavens,

**All:** **And you waters above the heavens!**

**Leader:** Let them praise the name of the Lord,

**All:** **For he commanded and they were created.**

**Leader:** Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

**All:** **Young men and women alike, old and young together!**

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

**All:** **His glory is above earth and heaven.**

### **Words of celebration:**

Praise the Lord! What a wonderful way to start a New Year! We are still in the Christmas season. You know the song we sing called "The Twelve Days of Christmas." In that song we sing about all the gifts "my true love gave to me" on each of the twelve days of Christmas. Well, today is the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas. The twelve days of Christmas last until Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup>. In our time the twelve days of Christmas are not generally celebrated. Instead, we celebrate throughout Advent, Christmas Day (the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Christmas) and New Year's Day. In the old traditions each day had a special meaning. Today is the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, New Year's Day which reminds us that in Christ we are always able to start over. We make lots of mistakes in our lives, but God lets us start over every time we make a mistake. God still loves us just like our parents still love us when we make mistakes. We make New Year's resolutions, or promises that we are going to do this year that we did not do last year. What would you like to do better for God than you did last year? One thing we can always do better is to praise God. We can remember to thank God more often for all the wonderful things God does for us. Any time something good happens, we can praise God for it. When something bad happens, we can remember that God is with us to help us through it. God is special. God gave us someone special. Let's never forget just how special our God is. Let's praise our God every day! Only when we can praise God instead of praise ourselves will we have the "peace on earth, goodwill toward men" the angels sang about on Christmas Eve, and we are about to sing about in our next song. Let's praise God each and every day and let's have peace on earth!

### **Carol: "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"**

1. I heard the bells on Christmas Day Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat Of peace on earth, goodwill to men.
2. I thought how, as the day had come, The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along th'unbroken song Of peace on earth, goodwill to men.
3. And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong and mocks the song Of peace on earth, goodwill to men."
4. Yet pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on earth, goodwill to men."
5. Then ringing, singing on its way, The world revolved from night to day –  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime Of peace on earth, goodwill to men!

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Prince of peace, help us to love you and praise you more so that your peace may fill this world. As we continue to remember your Son, Jesus, help us to carry your love and peace with us in our everyday lives. As we celebrate the New Year, let us make new promises to you that we can keep. Help us to keep them. In your great name, we pray. Amen.*

**ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM/NEW ROADS OF DISCOVERY  
NEW JOURNEYS BEGIN WITH REVELATIONS  
FAMILY WORSHIP**

**January 6<sup>th</sup> – Epiphany**

**Opening Prayer:**

*Father of the Christ Child, we thank you for sending us your Son. May we be like the "wise" men, willing to travel to find you and bringing gifts to honor you. Help our family to look for you until we find you and give to you all that you so richly deserve. Bring us new revelations about you throughout the coming year. Be with us this day as we finish our Christmas celebrations for another year. In the name of Jesus, our Savior, we pray. Amen.*

**Light 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Advent Candles & the Christ Candle**

**Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12**

**Carol: "We Three Kings"**

1. We three kings of Orient are: Bearing gifts we traverse afar –  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain – Following yonder star.

Chorus: O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain: Gold I bring to crown Him again,  
King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign.

3. Frankincense to offer have I: Incense owns a Deity nigh;  
Prayer and praising, all men raising, Worship Him, God on high.

4. Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume Breathes a life of gathering gloom –  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

5. Glorious now behold Him arise: King and God and Sacrifice;  
Alleluia, Alleluia! Earth to heav'n replies.

**Litany: Isaiah 60:1-3 NIV**

**Leader:** "Arise, shine, for your light has come,

**All:** **And the glory of the Lord rises upon you.**

**Leader:** See, darkness covers the earth

**All:** **And thick darkness is over the peoples,**

**Leader:** But the Lord rises upon you

**All:** **And his glory appears over you.**

**Leader:** Nations will come to your light,

**All:** **And kings to the brightness of your dawn.**

### **Words of Revelation:**

Today is Epiphany, the celebration of the visit of the wise men. We like to think that there were three people and that they were kings in their own countries, but the Bible calls them wise men or magi, not kings and there is no mention of how many there were. The wise men were from a far country and so were not part of Judea. The wise men were gentiles. They were the first people outside of the Jews to welcome Jesus as the King of kings. They were the first gentile believers. They were wise because they understood what was unusual in the stars and so recognized the special star that led them to Bethlehem. They were wise because they had read the prophecies and understood things that others did not. They were wise because they came to see what the Lord was doing. They were wise because they worshiped the Lord in Jesus and brought their best gifts for him. There is a saying that we hear often lately which says "Wise men still seek him." Let's be wise and continue to seek the Lord. The wise men sought new revelations and so they found the new King, Jesus. Over the next weeks, during the season of Epiphany, God reveals many things about Jesus. This is what we call revelations. Let's see what new revelations we have about Jesus as we move away from Christmas and into the rest of the year.

The world has gone back to "business as usual." We know that we cannot stay in the celebration all the time, but we can remember the reason for the celebration all the time. Jesus is not just here at Christmas, he is with us all the time. We need to keep him in our thoughts in all our activities. Let's be "wise" and seek God and also be like the shepherds and tell what we know about Jesus to others, not just at Christmas, but all the time.

### **Carol: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"**

Chorus:       Go, tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
                  Go, tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born.

1.       While shepherds kept their watching O're silent flocks by night,  
          Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light.
2.       The shepherds feared and trembled When, lo! Above the earth  
          Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth.
3.       Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born  
          And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Father of the Christ Child, as we bring the Christmas celebrations to an end, help us to remember that the Child whose birth we have celebrated became much more than a sweet baby. The wise men who visited, bringing gifts, knew that this Child would be a king. And what a King he is! He is not just a king of an earthly kingdom, but the King of kings and Lord of lords. Let us go, and tell it to everyone we know. Jesus Christ is born, our Savior, our Lord, and our King. Help this family to remember this throughout the year and not just at Christmas time. Help us to look for new revelations about Jesus each day and live our lives as followers of the Christ. In the name of the Christ Child, born to be the King of kings and Lord of lords, we pray. Amen.*