

# Welcome to Worship

Ginter Park Baptist Church

Zoom Meeting ID: 804 359 2475 • 3401 Brook Road, Richmond VA • 804-359-2475  
Epiphany Sunday • January 4, 2026 • 10:30 AM

## GATHERING & REFLECTING (10:20 AM)

During this time of reflection, we invite you to take a few moments to prepare yourself for worship. Take a few deep breaths and settle into the quiet. Center yourself through art by coloring the attached picture. Slip off your shoes and remember that you are on holy ground. No matter what this time looks like for you, your whole self is welcome in this space.

## CHIMING THE TRINITY

Lisa Horn

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Shawne Soper

\*Responsive readings like this one are a part of worship. The congregation's part is in **bold**.\*

Leader: Long ago, travelers lifted their eyes to the night sky—not just to admire the stars, but to search for meaning, direction, and truth.

**People:** **We come as seekers—watching, wondering, waiting.**

Leader: God met the Magi in the light of a star and led them on a journey that changed everything.

**People:** **We come ready to follow where God leads.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the One who still shines in our darkness.

**All:** **We lift our eyes. We follow the light. We worship Christ.**

## INVOCATION PRAYER

### HYMN NO. 173

“As with Gladness Those of Old”

DIX

\*Some of us stand while singing, and others don't. Please join us in song in whatever way you are comfortable.\*

## SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

Shawne Soper

\*Prayer requests are shared out loud with the gathered community. If you have a joy or a concern to share, please raise your hand to request the microphone\*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### THE LORD'S PRAYER (ALL)

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.

### HYMN NO. 172

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

KINGS OF ORIENT

*We will sing the refrain after the first and fifth stanzas only*

SCRIPTURE

[Matthew 2:1-12](#)

Anita Laffoon

One: This is the Word of God, for the people of God

**Many: Thanks be to God**

SERMON

“Stargazing”

Anita Laffoon

HOLY COMMUNION

TIME OF REFLECTION & RESPONSE ““Shine, Jesus, Shine’ with‘Stargazing’”

Arr. Horn

ANNOUNCEMENTS & THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

HYMN No. 151

“The First Noel”

THE FIRST NOEL

CLOSING COMMISION

Anita Laffoon

One: One: Magi, braving distance and desert to find you, and bewildered shepherds, compelled by an angel’s invitation,

**Many: allowed light to be their guide.**

One: And it is still the light that calls us to you; the light of beauty that whispers its truth

**Many: in surprising ways and places;**

One: the light of compassion that kneels, and washes road-soiled, life-battered feet;

**Many: the light of joy that glows even in the darkness of grief and suffering;**

One: It’s always been about the light with you, Jesus; and it’s always about the light for us.

**Many: Please lead us, now and always, out of darkness and into your marvellous light.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ is with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

\*\*Our services are hybrid, meaning there are cameras in the worship space to allow those joining us via Zoom to fully participate. If you would rather not be on camera, we have marked the areas where our cameras can't see you.\*\*



Are you visiting with us today? We'd love to get to know you better!

Scan the QR code to tell us more about you.

## **Announcements**

### **Metro Richmond at Prayer**

During the week of January 4, we pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: For racial reconciliation, healing, and justice in Metropolitan Richmond. For an end to all personal and structural racial prejudice and discrimination.

### **Pray for our Ministry Partners**

RPS Foundation - The mission of Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation is to partner with Richmond Public Schools to actively develop philanthropic resources and community relationships that support the goal to improve student learning and achievement in preparation for success in college, career, and community.

### **Left Brain News**

Left Brain has some exciting news - a property that we have been looking at has become available to rent, and we think it would make a great home for GPBC! The property will be available February 1st, so we need to let the owner know ASAP whether we are interested in renting or not. **We will have a called business meeting TODAY, January 4th, right after worship to vote on this.**

### **Page Turners' Book Club**

The book club is reading "The Correspondent" by Virginia Evans, and they will gather for discussion on January 18 at 4pm at the home of Dixie Leathers.

### **Day for All People**

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy's annual Advocacy Day in partnership with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light is coming up! They bring hundreds of people of faith and goodwill from across Virginia to Richmond to engage in the legislative process. Join them in- person for inspirational presentations, informative workshops, and effective advocacy on **January 21, 2026**. Register on their website - [www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org](http://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org)

### **Thursday Morning Bible Study**

The Thursday morning Bible study group will not meet January 8 and 15. All are invited to join when the class resumes January 22, 2026 at 10 am at the Ashland location, 10981 Richardson Road.

### **Save the Date!**

Our annual Chili Cook-off and Bingo night will be January 31st! Mark your calendars, and start preparing your favorite recipes!

### **Backpack Update**

Our backpacks are being prepared at 10981 Richardson Rd, Ashland 23005. Dixie and Connie will continue as co-facilitators of the program. Contact one of them to volunteer. Don't forget to bring in your paper bags!

### **Worship isn't the same without you...**

...and we'd love to have your help! We need volunteers to help on Sunday mornings by leading the Call to Worship and the Prayers of the People, and to facilitate the Zoom room. Contact Anita to sign up!

## **Hymn Texts**

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### **As with Gladness Sages Bold**

As with gladness sages bold did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,  
so, true Morning Star, may we evermore your splendor see.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed,  
there to bend the knee before One whom heaven and earth adore,  
so, may we with willing feet ever seek your mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger plain and bare,  
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;  
and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed lives at last  
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.

### **We Three Kings**

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 forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God on high.

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom,  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold him arise, Christ 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.

### **The First Noel**

The first Noel, the angel did say; was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night:  
Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

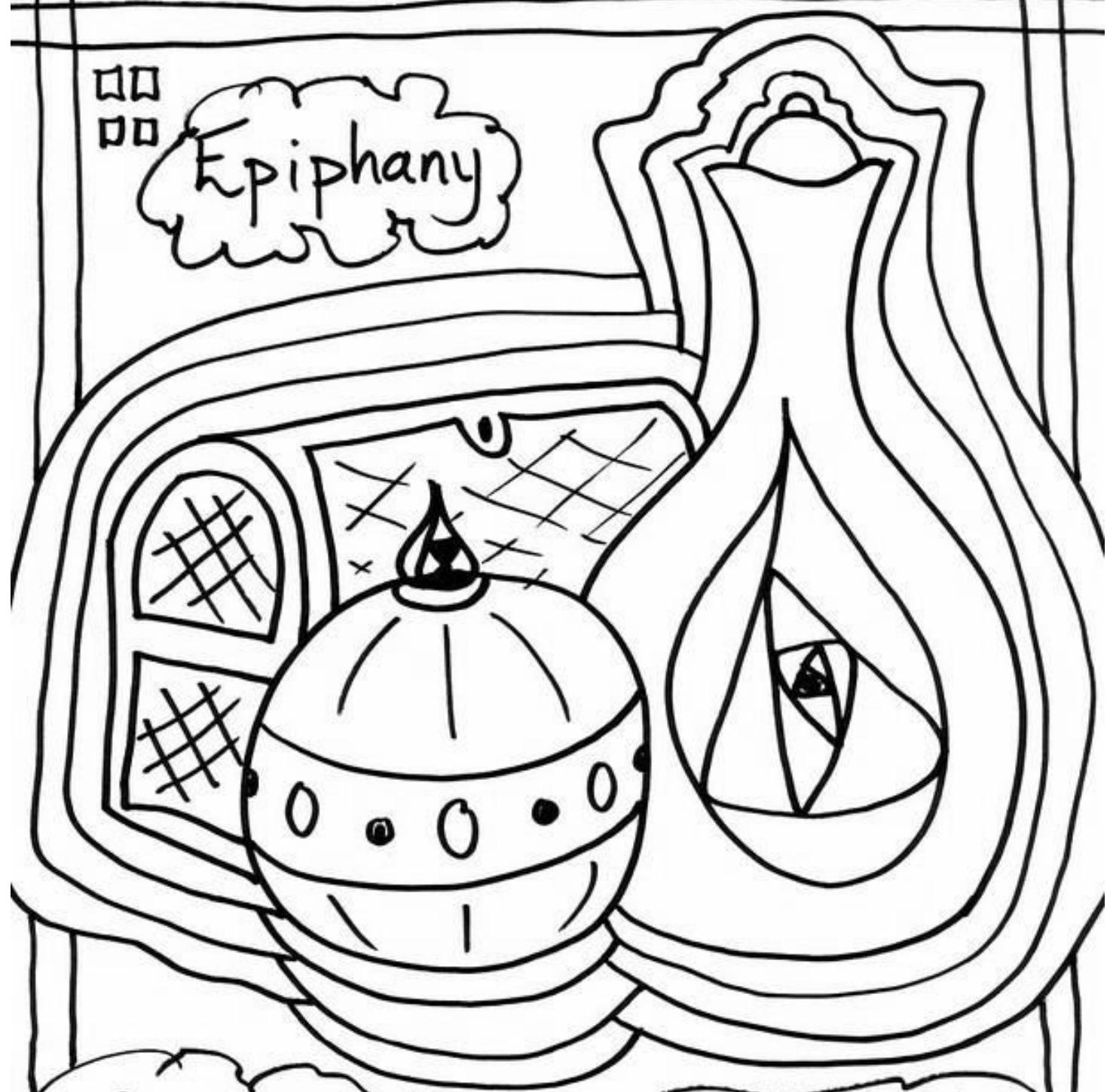
And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went:  
Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense:  
Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.



Epiphany



Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh  
Gifts for a King