

# Epiphany Observance

## INVOCATION

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** We have seen His star,

**C** and have come to worship Him.

## COLLECT FOR THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

**P** Let us pray: O God, who by the leading of a star made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*Sit*

ANTHEM     *Saw You Never, in the Twilight*     15th c. French tune; setting by Charles Wood     Ensemble  
Text in bulletin

*Stand*

## EPIPHANY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1–12

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the second chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>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, <sup>2</sup>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.” <sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>     “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.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup>After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup>And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## Michael Praetorius—Lutheran Composer Extraordinaire

2021 is a special year for those who love music in the Lutheran tradition. It is the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Michael Praetorius and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. He was born on February 15, 1571, and died on February 15, 1621—on his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Most people recognize him for his harmonization of “Lo How a Rose E’er Blooming,” which is the standard harmonization used in most hymnals.

Michael Praetorius is perhaps the quintessential Lutheran composer. Praetorius was the son and grandson on his mother’s side of Lutheran pastors. He intended to become a pastor himself but was heavily involved in music at an early age. He became the organist at St. Mary’s Church in Frankfurt at the ripe old age of 16 or 17. He remained in music his entire life, but his theological studies greatly influenced his thinking and composition.

His compositions fill around twenty large volumes of music which are almost exclusively based on Lutheran chorales and Lutheran liturgical music. His compositions range from two voices to as many as sixteen voices, the latter designed to be sung with groups located in various parts of the church, an early form of surround sound.

He also wrote extensively about music in three volumes known as *Syntagma Musicum* (*The Constitution of Music* or *Making Music Understandable*). The first volume is a treatise on music history from a biblical and liturgical standpoint. Volume 2 explains the musical instruments that were common during his lifetime and includes dozens of detailed pictures of all kinds of Renaissance instruments. The third volume gives musicians instruction on how to perform music in the correct style, a treatise on performance practice of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was planning on writing a fourth volume explaining how composers composed. Unfortunately, nothing of it survives.

We will be celebrating the Michael Praetorius anniversaries throughout the year with various compositions by him. We will also be providing more information on his life, musical style, and theological and music influence this year when we use his music in worship.

This morning Kim will be playing *To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord* by Praetorius, based on the Hymn of the Day, *LSB* 406.

A wonderful Sunday afternoon activity could include listening to his choral version of *To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord* for 2–16 voices and instruments on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRuZ1wmf2FY>