

A Sermon for the 2nd Sunday after Christmas
January 4, 2026



Come to New Life!

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[Second Sunday after Christmas – The Episcopal Church](#)

Star of Wonder

Star of Night

Star of Royal Beauty Bright

Westward Leading

Still Proceeding

Guide us to thy perfect light

We know that the Wise Men travelled by night and that these seekers were guided by the star across deserts and kingdoms, the mystery of God revealing God's self through creation, the mystery of light breaking into darkness.

They were astronomers, scholars who studied the stars and used them for navigation. What is astounding – even now – is the fact that the travelers from the East, most likely from Persia or Babylon – the wise men – linked the star with the birth of the new king of the Jews. These seekers reached Jerusalem after months of searching the skies and began 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.” The new king, Jesus, had his own star, a brilliant light that they had never charted, never predicted. The wise men understood it as a sign; a revelation; a summons. History records that they followed until they found him.

In a recent message from National Cathedral, Dean Randy Hollerith reflected on the wonders revealed by modern astronomy. He spoke of the Hubble Telescope's first clear images in 1993 — images that stretched human imagination to its limits. And then the James Webb Telescope, which has taken us even deeper into the universe's past.

Earlier this year, Webb captured light from the oldest supernova ever seen — light that has been traveling toward us for **13 billion years**.

Think about that.

That light began its journey long before the events described in Genesis. Long before the formation of Earth. Long before there was a “you” or a “me” or a human story at all.

We are looking at light **older** than our knowledge of creation. **Older** than our Scriptures’ first words. **Older** than the dust from which God formed humanity.

Astronomers speak of this with awe — because in that moment, we are witnessing the long story of creation unfolding, carried to us on waves or particles of light.

And here is the miracle:

In a universe so vast, so ancient, so full of violent explosions and collapsing stars, **Earth exists** — a small, blue, fragile world perfectly suited for life.

The right distance from the sun.

The right atmosphere.

The right balance of water, gravity, temperature, and time.

It is as if creation itself was tuned — delicately, intentionally — so that life could flourish, so that we could breathe, love, seek, and know God.

The God who set galaxies spinning is the same God who chose to enter this world as a child. The same God who guided the Magi. The same God who guides us still.

What the Magi saw in the child was not simply a remarkable baby, but the incarnation of the God who was present at the beginning of creation — the God who spoke light into being.

The God who created all things
is the God who comes down through the millennia
to take on human flesh
so that we might know Him.

This is the heart of Epiphany:
God made visible. God made knowable. God made near.

Jesus says in Revelation 22:16, “I am the morning and the evening star.” Venus — overwhelmingly bright after sunset and before sunrise — has long been called a star because of its brilliance. It is a light that breaks open the darkness at both ends of the day.

When we moved to Ohio, I learned that Venus is the morning and evening star. Not long after, I woke in the night to a brightness streaming through our bedroom window. I knew instantly what it was. The room was bathed in that light — a light that pushed back the darkness so gently, so completely, that I didn’t want to go back to sleep.

I simply sat in it.
No words.
No need to wake anyone.
Just the quiet presence of light — *THE* Light — filling the room.

That moment taught me something the Magi already knew:
When God’s light appears, you stop.
You look.
You let it guide you.

The Magi followed the star until it brought them to Jesus. And when they found Him, they knelt. They offered gifts. They allowed

the light to change their direction — literally and spiritually — as they returned home by another road.

Epiphany invites us into the same posture.
To be seekers.
To watch for the light.
To trust that God still illuminates our path — sometimes faintly, sometimes brilliantly — but always faithfully.

Christ is our guiding star.
Christ is the light that reveals truth.
Christ is the one who leads us home.

**Star of Wonder, Star of Night,
Star with Royal Beauty Bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.**

Amen.