

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP
EPIPHANY SUNDAY
January 6, 2019
11:00 A.M.
Together in Christ, Reaching Beyond Our Doors.

GATHERING TO PRAISE

PRELUDE "Chorale in E major" César Franck

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GETTING ACQUAINTED
Please take a moment to fill out the Attendance Card as it is passed.

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

This is God's house – a place of peace where we befriend one another in the name of Christ. Greet those around you as a sign of God's peace and Christ's friendship.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (from Howard Thurman's poem "The Work of Christmas")

One: Light the candle, hitch up the star.

ALL: Welcome the foreigner. Embrace the stranger.

One: Move from a whisper to a shout.

ALL: Spread the Good News around.

One: From mountain top to snowy field to chilly bay.

ALL: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

*HYMN OF PRAISE "I Want to Walk as A Child of the Light" No. 206

A TIME TO CELEBRATE OUR CHILDREN

"What Child is This?" (sung processional)

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? This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

(sung recessional)

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him; the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him. This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

CONNECTING WITH GOD IN PRAYER

UNISON PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

O God, the Magi endured a harsh journey in their search for the Christ. His birth inconvenienced his parents, Joseph and Mary, finally forcing their exile from everything familiar. We confess that we do not think of your son demanding sacrifice from us, but selflessness is what he expects.

The child Jesus brought turbulence into the world, but we confess that we have fled from seeking him in troubled places and people. We resent the inconvenience, the demands, the change of plans that your coming in

Jesus brings into our comfortable lives. In your mercy forgive us and embolden us to follow Christ on the pathway of his radically inclusive love. (silence)

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

No. 895

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Epiphany Carol"
Stephen Decesare
Sue Cobb and Susan Steele, vocalists

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 2: 1-12

(NT p. 12)

Leader: The Word of God. **All: For the People of God.** Leader: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Way of the Wise Ones"

BRINGING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

CELEBRATING HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Come forward as directed, where you will be given a piece of bread and which you may dip in the cup (gluten-free bread is also available). Please let an usher know if you cannot come forward so the elements can be brought to you. During this time you are invited to bring your offering forward to the plates available on the chancel. Those in the balcony may remain seated, servers will come to you. Our Stephen Ministers are positioned in the back of the sanctuary to offer a blessing prayer. You may stop there before or after receiving communion.

Thanksgiving and Remembrance (see below)

Sharing the Bread and Cup

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

O Visioning God, as we journey back home from Bethlehem, we hold with gratitude the joys of the celebration of Jesus' birth, and sharing in that birth with loved ones. By this bread and this cup, we remember you brought forth Divine Love in human form. It inspires us to continue our travels as your Body, living out your will in the New Year. Bless us and the gifts we bring for your service. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN OF COMMITMENT "As with Gladness Those of Old"

(see below)

*BENEDICTION

*You are invited to remain seated for the postlude as part of your worship experience.
(If you choose to exit the sanctuary during the postlude, please do so quietly. Thank you.)*

**All who are comfortable standing are invited to stand.*

A GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER FOR EPIPHANY SUNDAY

We give you thanks, O God, for making your love evident since the very beginning of time when you spoke the word which replaced the darkness of chaos with life-giving light. A light which has nurtured generations of people and plants and creatures, great and small. A light which also revealed the fear and hate caused by corrupt and evil actions.

And so you spoke the Word which would once and for all dispel the darkness of chaotic lives. Through your love for the world the Word became flesh and lived among us full of grace and truth. The angels caroled glory to you in the highest heavens and peace to all people on earth, and we join with them and with all people to praise your holy name:

Holy Lord, God of endless love, heaven and earth are surely full of your glory. The angels sang of it - we have been lavished with it. Blessed is he who was born that we might have life. Glory to God and on earth peace to all people.

Holy God, as the travelers with their treasures were overwhelmed with joy on finding Jesus, so we also are overwhelmed on finding out the depth of his love for us. For Jesus showed just how beloved we are to you, by loving us and giving himself for us.

On that night when he gave himself up for us, as he sat at the table and broke bread with his friends, he said: 'Take and eat; this is my body which is given for you. Remember me each time you do this.' After they had eaten, he took the cup, and said: 'Remember me as you drink from this, for it is my life, poured out for you - the beginning of a new relationship with God.'

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, O God, that we may experience the presence of the word-made-flesh – Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him – living out his ministry in the world today and every day. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

As With Gladness Those of Old

*As with gladness, those of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.*

*As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger-bed;
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heaven and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek the mercy-seat.*

*As they offered gifts most rare
At that mangerrude and bare;
So may we, with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ! to Thee our heavenly King.*

*Holy Jesus, every 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.*