



First Reformed United Church of Christ

Where People Discover...
The Love of God...
The Power to Love Others...
The Ability to Love Ourselves.

The Worship of God

January 3, 2021
Epiphany and Holy Communion

EPHIPHANY

Prelude "The First Noel" Ashley Clasen, Pianist
[arr. Melanie Bober]

Invitation to Worship Rev. Elizabeth Horton
The Magi had a dream.
They dreamed of a Messiah.
They dreamed of just rulers.
They dreamed of a new day for all people.
The Magi had a dream, and this dream led them to action.
They journeyed to unknown places. They followed a star. They walked for days to get to Jesus.
So, may we be like the Magi. May our dreams inspire action. May we worship the one true God.

Special Music "Arise, Shine for Your Light Has Come" Ellen Peterson

Scripture Reading Isaiah 60:1-6 Patti and Jerry Lovell

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

An Epiphany Prayer "We Suffer from Lack of Light" Patti and Jerry Lovell

Lord, we suffer from lack of light.
We have become too much like creatures found at the bottom of the sea.
Unrecognizable.
We have been deprived of light for too long.
We are not ourselves.
We do not recognize the hollow eyes staring back at us in the mirror.
We are not at our best.
We settle for less than what is righteous.
We are not the people that you created us to be.
We need your light.
Shine your light into our darkness, so that we might again find our way.
Help us to see clearly, to choose wisely, and to walk as People of the Light.
Amen.

Hymn "We Three Kings of Orient Are" Ellen Peterson

Scripture Reading Matthew 2: 1-12 Rev. Horton

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 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." 3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They told

him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 6 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" 7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." 9 When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 On 3 entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Prayer of Illumination

God of the Milky Way,
We, like the Magi, are walking toward you.
One foot in front of the other, we are walking toward you.
It is our very prayer to move your way.
So, if you can, leave the light on and the front door unlocked.
Leave a fire in the hearth and food on the stove.
And when we start to get lost or doubt our dreams,
Give us the will to persevere.
We are walking toward you, O God.
So, like the parent that throws open the door,
Open the door to us through this text. Amen.

Hymn

"Beautiful Star of Bethlehem"

Ellen Peterson &
Carolyn Robbins

Sermon

"Unexpected Gifts"

Finding Our Star Word

Rev. Horton

The magi saw and followed a Star, trusting it would guide them on a Spirit-filled journey to the Christ child. During 2021, we would like to invite you on a Spirit-filled journey to draw you closer to the Divine guide by giving you a Star Word.

Click on this link to receive your word for 2021: [Wheel of Star Words](#)

Once you have received a Star Word from the Wheel, write it down and place it somewhere you will see it every day. Post it on your mirror, car dash, refrigerator, screensaver. Look up its meaning. Pray about the word. Think about what it might mean for you. Find Bible passages that have your word or one similar. Look for the ways your word grows in meaning for you throughout the year. Think of your Star Word like an intention, an invitation or even a challenge for receiving God's guidance for you in 2021.

Holy Communion

Rev. Horton

Invitation to the Table
Communion Prayer
Words of Institution
Partaking of the Bread and the Cup
Prayer of Thanksgiving

Benediction

Postlude

"What Child Is This"
[Mark Hayes Tune: "Greensleeves"]

Ashley Clasen

Join our **Fellowship & Prayer Concerns** after worship from 12-12:30PM and catch up with your church friends! **Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)**

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FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Ministers: The Congregation

Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Horton (elizabeth@frucc.org, cell/text #336-972-8895)

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Admin. Asst.: Carolyn Robbins (carolyn@frucc.org) Financial Secretary: Paula Lopp (paula@frucc.org)

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

1st...Gerri Hill

3rd...Carroll Spivey

5th...Jianna Miller...Smithie Parrish

6th...Gennie Lou Byerly

OUR CHURCH AT PRAYER

OUR MEMBERS:

*Stacey & Sarah Potts, Heidi & Ron Hutcheson and the Family of Margot Everhart, Susan Odom (at home), Ellen Bouchard, Kelly Greathouse, Lisa Price, Deanna Michael

OUR MEMBERS AT HOME AND IN CARE FACILITIES:

Peggy Bates, Janelle Bunn, Marzell Crofts, Ruth Essick, Pattie Everhart, Vogen Everhart, Lib & Jimbo Hinkle, Marguerite Leonard, Bob Shaak, Lib Sink, Katherine Skipper, Carolyn Spivey, Adena Wall

Piedmont Crossing: Mary Berrier

OUR FRIENDS:

*Clarke Ward (father of Jay & Cathy Whitley's son-in-law), Miriam Logan (Sarah Potts' grandmother), Ken Richardson and family (friend of Camille Morgan), Wendi Greene (Bill Robbins' sister), Ashley Thomason Hutcheson (Ron & Heidi Hutcheson's daughter-in-law), Barbara Miller (Eddie Yates' mother), Angie Bouchard (Lee and Ellen Bouchard's youngest daughter)

**Indicates newly added. Names will remain on the list for 4 weeks. To add a name to the prayer list please call the church office (336-248-2617).*

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, January 3: EPIPHANY and HOLY COMMUNION

9:45AM Adult Sunday School: "Company's Coming" Week 6
Week 6: Living the Celebration (Smithie Parrish, facilitator)

[Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

Join the Zoom Meeting [HERE](#).

(Meeting ID: 890 2652 8333 Passcode: 634119 Dial in: +1 929 205 6099 US)

10:45AM Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) or Facebook [HERE](#).

12:00PM Fellowship & Prayer Concerns

Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)

TUESDAY – January 5:

12:00PM 2CFAR meeting via ZOOM

Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#). (Meeting ID: 873 4191 8684 Passcode: 222495)

7:00PM NO ADULT BOOK STUDY THIS EVENING

WEDNESDAY, January 6:

5:30PM High School Youth via ZOOM. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 988 9882 1207 Passcode: FRUCC)

5:00PM Board of Trustees Meeting (Parlor)

5:30PM Board of Property Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

SUNDAY, January 10: RENEWING OUR BAPTISM

9:45AM Adult Sunday School: FOLLOW ME

WEEK 1: Baptism of Jesus ([Mark 1:4-22](#))

"Tearing Apart the Heavens"

10:45AM Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) or Facebook [HERE](#).

12:00PM Fellowship & Prayer Concerns

Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)

FIRST REFORMED UCC ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOOKING TOWARD SUNDAY: A MESSAGE FROM REV. HORTON

How do you want to begin this New Year? Are you looking for purpose and intent to guide in 2021?

Join us for worship this week as we look toward the STARS on this Epiphany Sunday, as we celebrate when the Magi from the East saw the Wondrous Star and followed it -- trusting it would guide them to the Christ Child.

During this service you, too, will receive your own "STAR" to follow on a journey. It will be a Star Word given to you through an interactive link, called a Wheel of Words. Think of your Star Word like an intention, an invitation, or even a challenge for receiving God's guidance for you in 2021. I will explain the process more fully during worship.

Once you receive your *Star Word*,

- Write it down.
- Place it somewhere you will see it every day – your mirror, car dash, screensaver, refrigerator, etc.
- Pray about the word. Think about what it might mean for you.
- Look up Bible passages that contain your word or one similar.
- Listen and watch for the ways your word expands in meaning for you throughout the New Year.

We will also begin this new year by sharing Holy Communion together in worship. Have your choice of bread and cup ready at the beginning of the service.

I look forward to talking with you about your Star Words!

Looking ahead with hope and faith,

Elizabeth

CHRISTMAS FUND for the VETERANS OF THE CROSS And EMERGENCY FUND

We have extended the deadline for offering for the Christmas Fund until December 6, 2021. The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a tangible expression of God's love and light in the world for over 115 years. One of the four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ, the Christmas Fund provides UCC congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in compassion to those who have faithfully shepherded our Church and who now find themselves facing worrisome financial needs. The United Church Board of Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards, on behalf of the whole church, passes on this direct support so that these needs may be met and our support may be felt.

Please mail any contributions to the church office or donate online from the church website, frucc.org

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN WORSHIP SERVICES

We invite you to take part in our worship service by reading Scripture or saying a prayer. We will provide the Scripture text and easy instructions for recording yourself with your device at home. If you would like to read in worship service, please click on this Sign-Up Genius link to sign up for a Sunday: [Worship Reader](#)

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL & WORSHIP SERIES: Follow Me

Beginning January 10, our Worship Series and Adult Sunday School will coordinate, using the same scripture for the series, **Follow Me**. This series helps us renew our commitment on the path of discipleship in this new year. We will challenge ourselves to grow deeper in faith and open up to new possibilities in this new year. Let us embrace the call to follow.

LECTIONARY READINGS AND THEMES

January 10th: Baptism of Jesus

Mark 1:4-22

"Tearing Apart the Heavens"

January 17th: Second Sunday after the Epiphany

John 1:43-51

"Anything Good"

January 24th: Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Mark 1:14-20

"Follow Me"

January 31st: Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Mark 1:21-28

"What Have You to Do with Us?"

February 7th: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Mark 1:29-39

"She Began to Serve"

February 14th: Transformation Sunday

Mark 9:2-29

"But Only Jesus"

The ZOOM link and facilitators will be included in the weekly news update.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT!

If you happen to miss a week of our worship services and other events that are shared on our Facebook and YouTube pages, they will remain on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)'s history, so you may go back to watch any time.