

St. John's United Church of Christ

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

10 A.M. Worship January 12, 2025

Epiphany Sunday

WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Ringling of the Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

*(Please note the * indicates when you should stand)*

Members and Visitors please make note of your attendance by signing in on the pew pads.)

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Peace be with you

And also with you

Prelude

"Patapan"

arr. Larson

*The Call to Worship

We gather wondering, where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?'

We will find the Babe

in the laughter of children,

in the wisdom of grandparents.

We gather asking, 'where will we find the Child of Christmas?'

We will find the Child

where the needy are gifted with hope,

where the oppressed are set free.

We gather wanting to know, 'where will we find the Christ who has come for us?'

We will find our Hope

where fear is overwhelmed by grace,

where hatred is overwhelmed by love,

where all people are overwhelmed by joy.

Hymn

"The First Noel"

#151 vs 1-4

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.

Refrain:

Noel, 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:
[Refrain]

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:
[Refrain]

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. [Refrain]

***Gathering Prayer** *(In Unison)*

God of promise and light, open our eyes this morning, that we may see your light in the darkness. Open our hearts, that we may perceive your promises of justice and righteousness fulfilled in the babe of Bethlehem. May we, like the Magi, have a star to guide us on our journey. May this time of worship bring us closer to you, and may the good news of the birth of light and love transform our lives. Amen.

Time for the Child in us All

Pastor Katie Jo

"Child of Blessing, Child of Promise"
Child of God your loving parent,
Learn to listen for God's call
Grow to laugh and sing and worship,
Trust and love God more than all.

Special Music

"Jesus, the Light of the World"

Elderkin arr. Larson

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Matthew 2:1-12

The Visit of the Magi

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east 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 magi 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 in the east, 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 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.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Message

Lovely star in the sky, Banishing the night,
Shine down and hallow us, Light up our path.
Star shining in the East, Be our true guide;
Lead us to Bethlehem, Where the childe lies.

Royal child lying there, manger for a bed,
with all the animals sleeping in hay;
angels sing reverently, worship the child,
lowly in majesty, ruler of all.

What can we do to show our devotion true?
Shall we present to him sweet smelling gifts:
Far mountain's frankincense, sandalwood, myrrh?
Shall it be precious gold, pearls from the sea?

None of these things of price would give Jesus joy;
How then will we express thanks for his birth?
One present, one alone, Christ would desire:
Love from our deepest heart, our own best love.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (*In Unison*)
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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD**Invitation to Give Generously**

(Thank you for being so generous in your care of St. John's UCC and its mission, through your participation and giving. Your stewardship makes a difference. You may make your offering several ways including in church, online, by text at 833-502-0657, or mail. We are grateful for your support.)

Offertory**"Wexford Carol"****arr. Carter*****Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication** (*In Unison*)

God of light and promise, we bring our gifts to further your work in a dark world. May they bring your light to those overwhelmed by darkness, pain, and loneliness. Accept these gifts of money, time, and our very selves. Let them shine for all to see and experience your love. Amen.

COMMUNION**Invitation****Remembering the Story**

Blessing the Elements

Sharing the Meal (*gluten free wafers are individually wrapped on the bread trays*)

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*In Unison*)

Holy God of stars and sinners, we give thanks for this meal that nourishes and challenges us. Here we proclaim our call and potential to be a family that truly cares and watches out for each other. May this Holy Meal draw us close, as Your children, to feast on the bread of hope, to be refreshed by the nectar of your grace, and to make room for all your children to be fed. In the Name of Emmanuel, we pray, Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

Hymn	"We Three Kings"	#172 vs 1-4
We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star. [Refrain] 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. [Refrain]	Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a Deity nigh; prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God on high. [Refrain] Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom, sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]	

Benediction

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Pastor: **Rev. Katie Jo Bielke**
Director of Music: **Ruth Notch**
Liturgist: **Helen Stortz**
Usher Team: **John Bartelt**
Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship/Lockup: **Helen Stortz**
Flautist: **Jennifer Adams**
Communion Service: **Donna Switzer & Helen Stortz**

**All poinsettias remaining in the sanctuary today need a home.
Feel free to take one or more poinsettia(s) home after the service today.**

Announcements

We pray for
**Karen (Scooter) Beatty, Kevin Beatty, Rev. Dwayne Dollgener,
 Elizabeth Hart, Cherie Messina, Mark Strothmann and Gloria Vaclavik.**
 Please let us know your prayer concerns.
 If you have private prayer concerns please speak with Rev Katie Jo Bielke

Global Ministries requests that we pray with **Sierra Leone** this week

01/19/25 Service Liturgist: Susie Pisoni Usher Team: Phil Difani Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Helen Stortz Special Music: Clarinet	01/26/25 Service Liturgist: Laura Ayers Usher Team: Ken Ruff Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Helen Stortz	02/02/25 Service Liturgist: Carol Tindira Usher Team: Jim Pisoni Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Council Member
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... Looking Ahead

Thu	1/16/25	1:00 PM	Movie Day "The Ultimate Gift"
Fri	1/17/25	8:00 AM	Bimonthly Newsletter
Sun	1/19/25	11:00 AM	Budget Cafe
Tue	1/21/25	10:00 AM	Book Club "The God of the Woods"
Thu	1/23/25	5:30 PM	Table Fellowship
Sun	1/26/25	9:20 AM	Loaves & Fishes
Sun	1/26/25	11:00 AM	Mission Meeting canceled for January
Sun	1/26/25	11:00 AM	Annual Meeting
Sun	1/26/25	5:00 PM	Newsletter Articles Due EOD
Tue	1/28/25	6:30 PM	Women's Game Night
Mon	2/3 & 2/17	8:00 AM	Bimonthly Newsletter
Sat	2/8	3:00 PM	Everybody's Big Birthday Bash
Wed	2/19	10:00 AM	Book Group Beartown

Please check your News Notes/Website for specific information around upcoming activities
<https://www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org/fellowship>



online giving



St. John's News & Events

Join us on Sundays
 9:00 a.m. - **Fellowship** in Fellowship Hall
 10:00 a.m. – **Sunday School**
 10:00 a.m. – **Worship**
 In-Person, Facebook Live, or Virtual

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Movie Day "The Ultimate Gift"



Table Fellowship



Women's Game Night

