

**First United Methodist Church of Freehold
Bulletin**

**Sunday, January 1, 2023
New Year's Day
Epiphany of the Lord**

Announcements: Verl McKinney

Prelude

Welcome: Rev. Yoseb Jeon

*Call to Worship:

Leader: God is with us as a new year begins.

People: We bring our bright possibilities and lingering questions.

Leader: Like Mary and Joseph, may we trust God guiding us forward.

People: We bring open hearts and discerning minds.

Leader: Like God did for Jesus and his family, may God make a home for us.

People: We bring our relationships and stories, knowing God is in them.

All: Let's pay attention to where God is showing up!

*Opening Prayer: (In Unison)

Lord, your guidance calls us out of comfortable spaces into the unknown. Those comfortable spaces seem safe, but you know they limit our possibility. Help us to trust in you, seek you out, to turn to you in every possible moment with everything. May you continue to come among us, shaking up our lives and shaking up the world. Amen.

*Opening Hymn: "What Child Is This" UMH #219

*Praise Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" UMH #234
(v. 1, 2, 3)

Prayer Hymn: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" UMH #218
(v. 1, 2)

Pastoral Prayer:

[For those joining us online, please submit your prayer requests in the comments on the virtual attendance sheet, or email the church office. Your prayer requests will be lifted up in next Sunday's service.]

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12 Lyn Johnson
The Magi Visit the Messiah

Message: "Our Response to the Light" Rev. Yoseb Jeon

Wesley's Covenant Renewal (See Insert)

Offering: Today's Communion Offering will benefit Human Relations Day. Gifts to Human Relations Day support Community Developers, United Methodist Voluntary Service and Youth Offender Rehabilitation programs.

Offertory: "He Is My Child" Kristen Samu

*Doxology: "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" UMH #95

Offertory Prayer: (in Unison)

God of love and abundance, as we enter this new year full of possibilities and hope, we give you thanks. We lift up to you our offerings that you would bless them and increase them, so that the good news of Jesus Christ will be spread far and beyond this place. We pray this with committed and hopeful hearts in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

*Passing of the Peace

Celebration of Communion: UMH pages 12-14
*Sung Responses: "Communion Settings" TFWS #2257 (b, c, d)

Communion Hymn: "Let Us Break Bread Together" UMH #618

Communion Prayer: (In Unison)

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Closing Hymn: "Joy to the World" UMH #246

*Benediction: Rev. Yoseb Jeon

*Postlude

Scripture Passage for Sunday, January 1, 2023

Liturgist: Lyn Johnson

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^[a] 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^[b] 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^[c] 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^[d] my people Israel.’ ”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi^[e] 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,^[f] until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped,^[g] 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.

John Wesley's Covenant Renewal Service

The Invitation

Leader: Let us gathered here before the Lord now in covenant commit ourselves to Christ as his servants. Let us give ourselves to Him so that we may fully belong to Him. Jesus Christ has left us with many services to be done. Some of these services are easy and honorable, but some are difficult and disgraceful. Some line up with our desires and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we please both Christ and ourselves, but then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.

Jesus Christ, we offer You this prayer:

People: Let me be Your servant. Let me follow your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. I give myself completely to your will.

Leader: The power and strength to live as true servants is given to us in Christ. We accept the place and work that He gives us, acknowledging that He alone will be our reward.

People: I am not my own. I am Yours alone. Make me into what You will. Rank me with those You will. Put me to use for You. Put me to suffering for You. Let me be employed for You. Let me be laid aside for You. Let me be lifted high for You. Let me be brought low for You. Let me be full or let me be empty.

Let me have all things or let me have nothing. With a willing heart, I freely give everything to Your pleasure and disposal.

Leader: Christ is Savior to those who are His true servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. To be His servant is to consent fully to His will. Christ accepts nothing less. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Now confirm this truth in holy covenant. Make it a reality in your life in these three ways:

First, set apart time in your day, more than once, to be spent alone with the Lord. Seek to perceive God's special care for you and gracious acceptance of you. Carefully think through the words of this covenant and its conditions. Examine your heart, even if you have freely given your life to Christ. Name the sins in your life. Reflect on whether you are willing to choose Christ's holy laws and strict commands. Be sure you are clear in all of these so you do not lie to God!

Second, uphold a serious spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant. Do not trust in your own strength and power but rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength. In this way, He will empower you to keep your promise.

Fourth, be determined to be faithful. You have given your heart and life to God. You have opened your mouth to dedicate yourself to the Lord. With God's power, never go back to your former way of living.

And last, be prepared to renew your covenant with God. Fall on your knees. Lift your hands. Open your hearts.

The Covenant Prayer

Leader: Let us pray together:

People: My righteous God, for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, see me now as I fall down before You. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done your will. You promise mercy if I turn to You with my whole heart.

Leader: God requires that you rid yourself of every idol in your life.

People: From the bottom of my heart, I here and now renounce every idol in my life, covenanting with You that I will not commit any known sin. By turning against Your will I have turned my love toward the world. In Your power I will watch for any temptation that will lead me away from You.

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God again, if you allow Him to be.

People: Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be Your servant and to serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

Leader: Jesus Christ is the only way and means to God. God has given us Jesus as the way and means to salvation.

People: Jesus, I here and now accept You and the only new and living Way. I join myself in covenant with You. I come to You hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of Your servants. With all my power, I accept You as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own unworthiness, and vow that You are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom and take You for my only guide. I renounce my own will and take Your will as my law.

Leader: Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

People: Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with You and accept whatever comes in life. Through Your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from You.

Leader: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

People: I here and now willingly take on Your yoke and burden. All Your laws are holy, just, and good. I accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

Leader: The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart.

People: O God, You know that we have made this covenant today in sincerity, without deceit or reluctance. If You find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right. And now, glory be to You, God the Father. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my God and Father. Glory be to You, God the Son. You have loved me and washed me from my sins in Your own blood. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to You, O God the Holy Spirit. By Your almighty power, You have turned my heart from sin to God. From this day forward I shall look upon You as my Comforter and Guide. O mighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through Your infinite grace, have become Your covenant servant. You are mine and I am Yours. So be it. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

**Opening Hymn:
"What Child Is This"
UMH #219**

(Verse 1)

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.

(Verse 2)

Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

(Verse 3)

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.

**Praise Hymn:
"O Come, All Ye Faithful"
(v. 1, 2, 3)
UMH #234**

(Verse 1)

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

(Verse 2)

True God of true God,
Light from Light Eternal,
Lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father,
Begotten, not created;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

(Verse 3)

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens
Of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Prayer Hymn:
“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”
UMH #218
(v. 1, 2)

(Verse 1)

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

(Verse 2)

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Doxology:
“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”
UMH #95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below:
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Communion Settings
TFWS #2257
(b, c, d)

Holy, holy, holy Lord;
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest!
Blest is the one who comes
In the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest!
(Communion Settings Continued...)

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest!
Amen. Amen. Amen.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest!

Communion Hymn
Let Us Break Bread Together
UMH #618

Let us break bread together on our knees,
(On our knees)

Let us break bread together on our knees.
(On our knees)

When I fall on my knees
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.
(On me)

Let us drink wine together on our knees,
(On our knees)

Let us drink wine together on our knees.
(On our knees)

When I fall on my knees
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.
(On me)

Let us praise God together on our knees,
(On our knees)

Let us praise God together on our knees.
(On our knees)

When I fall on my knees
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.
(On me)

Let us praise God together on our knees,
(On our knees)

Let us praise God together on our knees.
(On our knees)

When I fall on my knees
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy if You please.
(If You please)

Closing Hymn:
"Joy to the World"
UMH #246

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods,
Rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.