

WORSHIP HANDOUT

Sunday January 7th

Baptism of the Lord

Communion/Remembrance of Baptism

Sanctified Art: How Does a Weary World Rejoice

OPENING OF WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*SONG OF WELCOME We Three Kings UMH 254 v 1&5

*CALL TO WORSHIP

There are some days
when I need the reminder
that I belong to God.
Do you ever feel that way?

Yes. We do.

**The world can be a harsh place;
we often need that reminder.**

Well then, let us care for one another.
Let us speak the truth we each need to hear.
Church, you belong to God.
You are God's beloved.

Friend, you belong to God.

You are God's beloved.

Let us worship the God who knows our names.

Let us worship the God who calls us beloved. Amen.

SONG WHILE CHILDREN GATHER Rise and Shine

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

CALL TO CONFESSION (PA)

Our scripture passage for today tells the story of Jesus being baptized. The Gospel of Luke tells us that the sky opened up and the voice of God was heard saying, “You are my Son, whom I love; with whom I am well-pleased” (Luke 3:22). Friends, I don’t think that’s the only time God has said words like that. If I understand the promise of scripture, then I believe God delights in you. God created you. God loves you with the same passion that we hear God express in today’s scripture. So trusting that good news, trusting that we are beloved, let us go to God in prayer. For we know that the one who listens, listens with love. What greater gift exists than that? Let us join in our unison prayer of confession:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (liturgist/unison)

**Loving God,
From the very beginning, you breathed life into us and called us good. However, somewhere along the way we replaced “good” with “not enough.” Somewhere along the way we turned the volume up on that phrase and began to doubt our own self-worth. Forgive us, for this is not what you have taught us. For when the world tells us we are not enough, you call us beloved. Show us how to return to that truth. Show us how to let go of our weariness and rest in that good news. Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS (liturgist)

Family of faith, God's grace and understanding is deeper and wider than we could possibly

imagine. So say these words of grace with me:

Our story begins with belovedness.

Even when we lose our way,

even if we stumble and fall,

God never stops breaking through the clouds to claim us.

We are known. We are forgiven. We are beloved.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

ANTHEM Anthem: Bethlehemtown, by Robert C. Clatterbuck
(OneLic)

LESSON I Matthew 2:1-2, 10-12 CEB

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. ² They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. 11 They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

May God add a Blessing to this reading.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Beloved God,

Through the pages of scripture, you have sprinkled your love for us like an echoed refrain.

Despite its repeated truth,
we too often allow that good news to roll off of us like water,
barely allowing it to touch us.
Make today different.
As we read your Word aloud,
let the truth of your love for creation seep into our bones.
May we hear your echos of “beloved” deep within us
and respond with overflowing joy.
We are here.
We are listening.
Amen.

*LESSON 2: **Luke 3:21-22**

²¹ When everyone was being baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit came down on him in bodily form like a dove. And there was a voice from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness.”

This is the Word of God for all people.
Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE We trust our belovedness

*HYMN The First Noel UMH 245

TIME OF PRAYER

It is a prayer practice in churches all over the world to give people a star word on this Epiphany Sunday. There are many reasons behind this tradition. First, we know that the Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.

Secondly, we trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words are one such lens that might provide us with a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight.

Finally, we know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation.

However, this prayer practice invites a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful way to connect with God.

So in just a moment, you will be invited to select a star word. Consider this a guiding word for the year ahead. We invite you to remember your star word often, seeking the ways God might be moving through the meanings and definitions the word contains. However, as we prepare our hearts and minds for this centering moment, let us pray. . .

PASTORAL PRAYER

God of today, tomorrow, and yesterday, like the Magi, we are seeking you.

Like the Magi, we are bringing ourselves closer to you, step by step, and word by word.

So today we ask that you would make yourself known to us.

Reach into our spirits and give us a boost of confidence that love is real and we are not alone.

We know we're asking a lot for a group that brings very little. We don't have gold or frankincense or myrrh. We haven't spent the last several days traveling here by camel. We're no Magi, but we're yours. Instead, we bring ourselves to this worship service in hopes of catching a glimpse of you.

And we bring with us the concerns of our church and community...

(Add specific prayer concerns here).

As you hold the concerns of our community, we look for the ways you guide us forward. We pray that you would speak to us through these star words that we are about to receive, just as you have spoken to your people before. Let these words be an invitation and challenge for the year ahead; let them be light in the sky that guides us home.

Holy God, you were the God of yesterday, and we know you'll be the God of tomorrow, for you have loved us from generation to generation. So with grateful hearts, we pray together the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

Our Father...

Continue with the Lord's Prayer in the language and wording most familiar to you.

LORD'S PRAYER

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 now and forever. Amen.

STAR WORDS – passed in basket by ushers

(Isaac could you play some music during this time?)

L: Please take a word from the basket at random and may it help guide you on your journey throughout this year. If you are joining us online and wish to receive a word please comment or message us and we will send you one at random this week.

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

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

***UNISON PRAYER**

Almighty God,
giver of every good and perfect gift,
teach us to give to you all that we have and all that we are,
that we may praise you not with our words only,

but with our whole lives. Amen.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**I believe that the God I see in scripture is a God of love.
I believe that God created me and delights in that creation.
I believe the psalmist who says,
“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139)
I believe that, just as God called Jesus “beloved,”
God extends this same term of endearment to us.
I believe that no matter our earthly challenges,
nothing could strip me of that sacred title.
I could fail every test, miss every goal,
drop every ball,
and I would still be God’s beloved.
Therefore, I cling to this promise like a rock in the storm.
I anchor myself with this good news,
allowing the anxiety of the day to roll over me
as best I can,
because I know where I belong.
I am a child of God.
I am beloved.
I strive to live this way.
Amen.**

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION/REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

***BENEDICTION and RESPONSE Shalom to You UMH 666**

POSTLUDE