



**First Church of Christ in Mansfield
(Congregational) United Church of Christ**

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250

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All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY + JANUARY 2, 2022

Welcome to Our Guests!

*We're delighted you have joined us for worship; the members are the ministers of this church...
if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us!*

Playing the Chimes and Prelude

Centering in the Spirit

Julie Menard

Opening Hymn

We Three Kings

CH172

Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer

Hear these words of Paul to the Ephesians: This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

When have we sought easy answers rather than leaning into mystery?

When have we forgotten that we are all one body, fellow heirs, sharers in the same promise?

silence

**Radiant Morning Star, you are both guidance and mystery, Visit our rest
with disturbing dreams, and our journeys with strange companions.
Grace us with the hospitality to open our hearts and homes to visitors
filled with unfamiliar wisdom bearing profound and unusual gifts.
Amen.**

Song of Praise

Paul Vasile

Glo-ry to God, whose good-ness shines one me, and to the Christ, whose grace has
end, world with-out end, A - men. World with-out end, world with-out
par - doned me, and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free! As it
end, A - men. World with-out e - nd, world with-out end, A - men.
was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ev-er shall be, A - men World with-out men!

Epistle

Isaiah 60:1-6

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.

Psalter

Psalms 72

Give the ruler your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a ruler's child.

May they judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

**May they defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.**

May they live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon,
throughout all generations.

**May they be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.**

In their days may righteousness flourish and peace abound,
until the moon is no more.

May the rulers of Tarshish and of the isles render them tribute,

may the rulers of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

May all rulers fall down before them, all nations give them service.

**For they deliver the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.**

They have pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

**From oppression and violence they redeem their life;
and precious is their blood in the ruler's sight.**

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

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." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet '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.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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." 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Reflection

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that, through our words and deeds, we may be a Light to those who are searching for direction and a sign of hope for those seeking to begin again

For greater unity and cooperation within the human family: that God will heal the wounds of racial bias, open hearts to the talents of every person, and help us work together against violence, addiction, and poverty

For members of the administration and Congress: that God will give them a clear understanding of the issues before them and wisdom to effectively address them for the common good

For all who are ill: that God restore the sick, protect the human family from the Covid virus, and give strength to all healthcare workers

For all recovering from natural disasters: that God will guide them through the challenges that they face, renew their spirits, and open the hearts of many to assist and encourage them

For those bound by fear: that God will free their spirits, help them to trust God's providence, and open a vision of the future for them

For all who have died: that the Light of God's love may lead them into the joy of God's presence forever

For a deeper awareness of the signs along our spiritual journey: that we learn from the people and experiences in our lives how to recognize God's presence and invitations

For God's blessing on the New Year: that God will fill the coming days with health of body, mind, and spirit; renew the gifts of the Spirit within us, and inspire us with new ways to share the Good News with others

For a great utilization of our gifts and talents: that like the magi, we may offer all our gifts to God and use them in the service of God's reign

**Our Father/Mother/Creator,
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/sins/trespases,
as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/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.**

Musical Offering

What Child is This

Howard Drescher

*Offerings may be placed in passed plates, mailed to:
First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC.*

Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250, or given online at www.myfcc.info

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise
5 God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

Prayer of Dedication

Living God, your radiance shines in the beauty of creation. May our offerings support the work of this church, lifting up your hope and new life in our community. We dedicate ourselves to serving you through Jesus, the Light of the World. Amen.

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

God is with you.

And also with you.

Open up your hearts.

We open them up to God and one another.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Glorious God,
we celebrate your gifts of light, love, and all of creation.
We rejoice that you have made us in your image,
and touched all of creation with the light of your love.
You call us to live in your limitless love.
You sent your only child, Jesus, our morning star,
To light the way through our night,
and lead us to justice and peace.
Your Holy Spirit shines your Good News into our lives.
With each new day,
you call us to feed the hungry,
liberate the oppressed,

heal the broken hearted and bind up their wounds,
 and keep watch for the dawn of your reign on this earth.
 For all of this we give you thanks.

And we praise you,
 joining our voices with all life on earth and the company of heaven,
 who forever sing their hymns to proclaim the glory of your name.

Musical Response

Santo Santo Santo

Traditional Argentine

San - to, san - to, san - to. Mi co - ra - zon te a - do - ra! Mi
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you! My

5
 co - ra - zon te sa - be de - cir: San - to eres, Se - nor!
 heart knows how to say to you: Ho - ly are you, Lord!

On the night he was betrayed,
 Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks
 broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,
 Take, eat; this is my body given for you.
 Whenever you do this, do it in remembrance of me.

After supper, he took the cup, saying,
 This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood,
 shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
 Whenever you drink it, do it in remembrance of me.

By your Spirit bless this grape and grain
 that they may become for us the presence of Christ among us.
 Shine your light and your love on the offering of our lives.
 Enlighten us that we may be your people,
 the body of the risen Christ,
 the light of the world,
 set apart to serve this earth that you have made.

Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 we praise you now and forever, O Eternal Light.

Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

All are welcome at Christ's table; we offer non-alcoholic juice and gluten-free bread.

Hymn

The First Noel

CH151

Benediction

May the bright star of Christ illumine our hearts and minds
so that we may be light to the world.

And the blessing of God,

Creator, Christ, and Comforter

be with us and remain with us always. Amen.

The Week Ahead...

Sunday, January 2 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

Monday, January 3 10am First Church leads Worship at St Joseph Living Center

Tuesday, January 4 7pm Prayers at the End of the Day on Facebook

Wednesday, January 5 1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 6 9:30am Sewing and Service in Fellowship Hall
7pm Music Ministry in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 9 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle