

**Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church – January 3, 2021**  
**Epiphany Sunday**  
**Join us on You Tube!**

**Opening Music**

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

**Greeting**

**Call to Worship** [*responsive*]

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.**

Let us worship God together.

**Opening Prayer**

**Call to Confession**

The coming of Christ was not, and is not, widely welcomed.

Wherever there is epiphany there are also shadows:

the shadows of old dogma, refusing to fade;

the shadows of pride

the shadows of entrenched evil.

Let us make our confession together.

**Prayer of Confession** [*together*]

**Most holy and most loving God,**

**we admit to you and to each other,**

**that through foolishness or willfulness**

**we choose the shadows instead of the light.**

**We surrender to you our fears and proud opinions,**

**our short-sighted folly and our pompous wisdom,**

**our deep seated sins and our apathy about change and renewal.**

**Please forgive the pain we have inflicted on others,  
and restore the hopes and ideals within our own souls.  
Through Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen!**

*[Silence for Personal Prayer]*

**Assurance of Pardon** *[responsive]*

My friends, Epiphany is good news!  
The Light comes not to sear and blind us, but to save us.  
**Our sins are forgiven; we begin the year as new people.  
Thanks be to God.**

**Music for Reflection**

“What Star Is This”

**We Listen to God’s Word**

**Children’s Message**

**Carolyn Hayes**

**Scripture**

**Matthew 2:1–12**

<sup>2</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>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.’ <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> “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.” ’

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>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.’ <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were

overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the witness to God's word.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

**Sketchy Men on Camels**

Rev. Mary Austin

## **We Respond to God's Grace**

**Invitation to Generosity**

**Communion Music**

"O Sing a Song of Bethlehem"

**Invitation to the Communion Table and Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right, and our greatest joy...

**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 debts,

as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

## **The Breaking of the Bread**

*By the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ is present to us in this meal, and that presence comes through whatever elements we use. Please take the elements you have at home, and eat whatever kind of bread you have, and drink whatever cup you have prepared. The bread is the body of Christ, the bread of heaven, and the cup is the blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. Take and eat. Take and drink.*

## **Prayer after Communion**

## **We Depart for Service**

### **Announcements**

### **Passing the Peace**

Greeting: "The peace of Christ be with you."

Response: "And also with you."

### **Closing Blessing**

### **Closing Music**

"Born in the Night, Mary's Child"

Participating in the service:

Ms. Carolyn Hayes, Director of Children and Young Families

Mr. Wade Myers, Director of Music and Worship Arts

Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence

Rev. Mary Austin

The Call to Worship is from the writing of Thom Shuman. The Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon are adapted from *Feasting on the Word*.

Communion will also be served to GPC members and friends from 12:00 to 1:00 today in the GPC south parking lot and at Ballenger Creek Park in Frederick. All welcome.