

Service of Worship
Epiphany Sunday

January 3, 2016

10:30 AM

Welcome to this service of Worship and Holy Communion.
The Lord's Table is open to all who come seeking the presence and peace of Christ. The cup contains unfermented juice, and we serve gluten-free bread.

*those who are able, please stand.

GATHER AND PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *As with Gladness Men of Old* Pelz

CHIMES

INTROIT

THE PEOPLE OF GOD GATHER

OPENING PRAYER (*let us pray together ..*)

Radiant God, light for all people and all places, by the guidance of a star you led the Magi to worship the Christ Child. By the light of faith lead us to worship you in peace and love, and guide us in your way, in the name of Christ, light of the world. Amen.

***HYMN # 172**

We Three Kings of Orient Are

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*let us pray together . . .*)

One: Strangers, foreigners, outsiders –

names we give those whose ways unsettle us,
or those we fear for changes they may bring.

**All: O God, help us remember
that your people
were strangers, foreigners, outsiders
in Egypt, Canaan, and Babylonia.**

One: Strangers, foreigners, outsiders –
too often we ignore their wisdom
or discount their understandings.

**All: O God, help us remember
that the magi were outsiders
who came to honor Jesus
because of their insights.**

One: Strangers, foreigners, outsiders –
we define them as “other”
so we can keep our distance,
so we can withhold our empathy.

**All: O God, help us remember
there are no strangers, foreigners, or outsiders,
for you have made us all,
and in you we are all one.**

One: Forgive us when we draw our circles in tightly and forget that you are the maker of diversity here on earth, and in the vast cosmos of galaxies and stars.
Silence for reflection

One: Amen.

***WORDS OF GOD'S ENDURING LOVE**

One: God brings together people of different nations, different languages, different classes, different ages, different viewpoints and replaces division with forgiveness, and conflict with love. God forgives and loves you that you might be one with all.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***MUSICAL RESPONSE # 155 (refrain)**

Angels We Have Heard on High

**Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

GOD'S WORD BOTH ANCIENT AND NEW

SCRIPTURE READING

Old Testament Isaiah 60:1-6 OT pg. 690

ANTHEM

SCRIPTURE READING

The Gospel Matthew 2:1-12 NT pg. 2

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

(Children through second grade may go to the nursery.)

SERMON

GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND

OFFERING

**Invitation
Offertory**

Noel Nouvelet

Lau

*** DOXOLGY** Tune: *What Child Is This*

**So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh;
Come, one and all, 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.**

***Prayer of Dedication** *(let us pray together . . .)*

Loving God, as Magi approached the child Jesus, we come with awe and wonder, and we bring gift—ourselves, our time, our money, and our commitment. Send us home changed by coming here. Through the Christ we pray. Amen.

***HYMN # 176** (vss. 1-3) *Sing of God Made Manifest*

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE PRESENTATION

Congregational Response – presenting of the candle
This is the candle that stands for the Christ, the light of the world and lamp unto our feet. He is the light that came into the world to overcome darkness, and even the darkest darkness cannot overcome it.

Congregational Response – presenting of the bread
Because Jesus took the bread from the meal which he ate with his disciples, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them, saying “This is my body which was broken for you and all others for the forgiveness of your sins.

Congregational Response – presenting of the cup
This is the cup of the new covenant. Jesus told his disciples that the cup symbolized his blood, which would be shed that all might know forgiveness and have eternal life.

COMMUNION PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION *with the Lord's 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. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

(You are invited to come forward, take a piece of bread, dip it into the cup, eat and return to your seat. The elements can be brought to you if you wish. All are welcome!)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *(Let us pray together.)*

God, you are making us into one body of Christ, nourished at your table with this bread and cup. Thanks you for feeding our hunger and relieving our thirst. Send us into the world to show mercy, and to be part of your healing presence. Amen.

GOD'S PEOPLE DEPART TO SERVE

***HYMN # 176** (vss. 4 & 5) *Sing of God Made Manifest*

***BENEDICTION**

CHIMES

POSTLUDE *All Glory Be to God on High* Albrecht

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EPIPHANY - The word epiphany means “manifestation” or “sudden appearing.” During the Season after the Epiphany, which lasts from January 6 until the beginning of Lent, the church focuses on making Christ known to the world, reading stories of call, prophecy, and discipleship.

Welcome the Rev. John Hottenstein as our guest preacher. After retiring as a member of the Syracuse University faculty, John served as administrator of the Spiritual Care ministry of the Interreligious Council of CNY, an interim pastor at Plymouth Congregational Church in Syracuse, and is a regular volunteer in spiritual care at University Hospital. He has served the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ in many capacities, most recently as chair of the Conference Minister Search Committee and as chair of the Oneida Association Committee on Authorization of Ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why do you think the church tells this tragic story right in the midst of Christmas joy?
2. What have been the "Egypt," the places of refuge and safety, in your life?
3. What is the "Nazareth" of your life, the unexpected home?
4. When have you had to change plans, to re-route your itinerary, to make a new life in a new place?
5. In what ways is God calling you to new places in your life of faith?

For further reflection

Paulo Freire, 20th century

"Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral."

Abraham Lincoln, 19th century

"Nearly all [people] can stand adversity, but if you want to test a [person's] character, give [them] power."

John Steinbeck, 20th century

"Power does not corrupt. Fear corrupts....perhaps the fear of a loss of power."

Taken from Weekly Seeds is a resource of Local Church Ministries of UCC.

Matthew 2:1-12 - The Visit of the Wise Men

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men 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 at its rising, 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 wise men 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 at its rising, 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.

Worship Service
Participants

Ushers and Greeters

Gail VanPatten, Shirley
Osterhoudt, and friends

Worship Leader

Gary Harrington

Lectors

Karen Downey

Nursery Volunteers

the Bertram family,
Grace Wright

Coffee Hour

Attendance

December 24 - 155
December 27 - 52

Life in the Parish
Week of January 3

TODAY – January 3

9:15 am – The Well
10:30 am – Worship service
11:45 am – Snack & Chat during
coffee hours
11:45 am – Striking of the Greens
3:00 pm – Epiphany Choir at
Grace and Holy Spirit church

MONDAY – January 4

Office opens at 10:00 am
7:30 pm – Al-Anon meets in RFR

TUESDAY – January 4

2:00 pm – Bridge Group
7:00 pm – Homer Brass rehearsal

WEDNESDAY – January 5

7:00 pm – Choir rehearsal

THURSDAY – January 6

Noon – Bible Study group

SUNDAY – January 10

Sunday School classes resume
10:30 am – Worship service
11:45 am – Christian Education
Ministry meets
12:45 pm – Youth Group meets at
Kmart, then to Walden Place

NOTES AND NOTICES

Today after service, the Trustees and Deacons will be available for a **Snack & Chat** to answer any questions or to provide updates on current business concerns. Also, Christian Education Ministry and volunteers will "**Strike the Greens**" and take down all of the Christmas decorations.

O Come Let Us Adore Him! The Council of Churches invites you to share in our **Epiphany Choir Festival** on **today at 3:00 pm** at Grace and Holy Spirit Church, 13 Court Street in Cortland. Our Festival gives everyone the chance to hear the music of the season, offered by many of the choirs from our area churches. A free-will offering will be received to support the ministry of the Council of Churches.

The Church Office will open at 10:00 am on Monday, instead of the usual 9:00 am.

The Youth Group will meet **January 10** at Little Caesar's in Kmart at **12:45** for pizza, then go to Walden Place at 1:30 pm to provide music and participate in an activity with the residents. Friends are welcome to come along and share their talents too!!

The Homer Congregational Church seeks a Child Care Coordinator. This is a part-time position, approximately 3-4 hours per week with presence required on Sunday mornings and during other events as requested. Normal duties are performed in the church facility. To apply, send resume to Resumes@homercc.org. Job description is available on our web site at www.homercc.com. For more information contact Karen Dudgeon.

