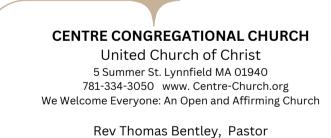


Children ages 4 to 12 years are invited to join us in the Kid's Classroom after Children's Time. This week we will be learning about Epiphany and the Magi.

Worship Notes. Music licenses: One License with license #A-733437, and CCLI License #A-2267261 and Streaming #CSPL169342, Size A



Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School



# **Epiphany Sunday**

Rev. Thomas Bentley

# **CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

United Church of Christ 5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

> January 7, 2024 10:00 am

Prelude	"Morning Star"	Arr. Wells	"Who Would Think That What Was Needed" p.153	
Welcome and A	Announcements		1.Who would think that what was needed	
			to transform and save the earth	
Call to Worship (from Isaiah 60:1-3)		Kathi Martin	might not be a plan or army,	
		proud in purpose, proved in worth		
Leader: Arise	shine, for your light has come!		Who would think, despite derision,	
	bry of God has risen upon us!		that a child should lead the way?	
Leader: For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples,			God surprises earth with heaven,	
	d will rise upon us, and God's glor		coming here on Christmas Day.	
	ht of God is with us;			
•	nations' leaders will be drawn to	the light of God.	2.Shepherds watch and sages wonder,	
-	light now dwells with us;		monarchs scorn and angels sing;	
	e: Come, worship God, and shine	such a place as none would reckon		
			hosts a holy, helpless thing.	
Opening Prave	pening Prayer (in unison) Kathi Martin		Stable beasts and passing strangers	
			watch a baby laid in hay:	
Holy God, we come to You knowing that we do not always believe we are God surprises earth		God surprises earth with heaven,		
•	r image. We don't believe we are g	-	coming here on Christmas Day.	
	worthy of Your love. At times, we			
We don't believe they are good enough or worthy. We refuse to accept			3.Centuries of skill and science	
them. We abandon them, forgetting they are children of God. Forgive us			span the past from which we move,	
	ig in Your love, the love that is for	yet experience questions whether,		
loved the world You sent us Jesus. Call us back to Your ways of love, that			with such progress, we improve.	
we may love our neighbors as ourselves for You have loved us. In the			In our search for sense and meaning,	

we may love our neighbors as ourselves, for You have loved us. In the name of Christ, who is Love, we pray. Amen.

Opening Hymn "As with Gladness, Those of Old" #159

lest our hopes and humor fray,

God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

1 As with gladness those of old did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright; so, true Morning Star, may we evermore your splendor see.

2 As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed, there to bend the knee before One whom heaven and earth adore; So may we with willing feet ever seek your mercy-seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare at that manger plain and bare; So may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy, All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.

4 Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way; and, when mortal things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glory hide. New Testament Reading Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6 Kathi Martin The Message

I take it that you're familiar with the part I was given in God's plan for including everybody. I got the inside story on this from God himself, as I just wrote you in brief.

Only in our time has it been made clear by God's Spirit through his holy apostles and prophets of this new order. The mystery is that people who have never heard of God and those who have heard of him all their lives (what I've been calling outsiders and insiders) stand on the same ground before God. They get the same offer, same help, same promises in Christ Jesus. The Message is accessible and welcoming to everyone, across the board.

#### **Children's Time**

Children ages 4-12 will leave to go to the Kid's Classroom and will return for Communion to sit with their families.

Call to Offering Offertory

Offertory"Good News"Sleeth\*Hymn of PraiseTune: Old HundredthPraise God from whom all blessing flow;<br/>Praise Christ, all creatures here below;<br/>Praise Holy Spirit evermore;<br/>Praise Living God, whom we adore.Prayer of Dedication

Joys and Concerns Pastoral 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 Anthem

" I Ponder"

Courtney

Gospel Reading Matthew 2:1-12 Kathi Martin pages 877-878 in pew Bible

Message: "God's Promises for Everyone"

Sacrament of Holy Communion INVITATION

**Rev. Tom Bentley** 

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Most loving and gracious God. Forgive our sins; those we commit knowingly and those we do without perception of how they hurt others. Open our hearts to your Holy Spirit to hear your truth, to understand our failure and to reach a new level of understanding. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

# **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Pastor: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. All: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven

#### **COMMUNION PRAYER - Rev. Tom Bentley**

Pastor "...and so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise you name and join their unending hymn: All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord. God of power and Might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes In the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

# WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

Pastor: Let us unite in the words of remembrance... All: We remember and give thanks for such love and Goodness, and mercy. WORDS OF BLESSING

#### HOLY COMMUNION

The pastor will offer instructions as how to receive the elements, and when to eat the bread and drink the unfermented wine

# PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION (unison)

Almighty God, we give thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world and courage and peace rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Closing Hymn	" Who Would Think That What Was Needed"		
Benediction			
Postlude	"Christmas Morning Song"	Blake	



Our Ushers today are David Bjorkman Jeff Langill Kathi Martin Jeff Law

Please join us for coffee hour, hosted by Peter and Laurel Caputo