

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
Second Sunday after Christmas  
Epiphany Sunday  
January 5, 2025

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: We gather wondering, 'Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?'

Many: **We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of grandparents.**

One: We gather asking, 'where will we find the Child of Christmas?'

Many: **We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.**

One: We gather wanting to know, 'where will we find the Christ who has come for us?'

Many: **We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.**

\*Opening Song: “The First Noel” #229

### \*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

**Radiant One, your majesty awes us, and your righteousness humbles us. Shine your light amongst us as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.**

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

We search for your light, Star Caster, but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation. Our motives for seeking to find Christ are not always pure, for we expect him to fulfill our desires, rather than your hopes for us. We want the gifts of wealth, health, success, fulfillment, rather than those of servanthood, of compassion, of peace. Forgive us, Shaper of our lives, that we are so foolish to put our needs ahead of your grace. Help us to be like those wise people of so long ago, who found hope, instead of a destination; who found grace, instead of gratitude; who found salvation, instead of a sign. As we journey with your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, fill us with the light of your joy and love.

## A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Up, on your feet! Grace has been poured into our hearts, love has flooded our souls, the light of hope shines in us.

Many: **This is the light which has come to all, the light we will carry and give to everyone we meet. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 60:1-6

\*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH inside back cover of hymnal (read together)

### \*GLORIA PATRI #734

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.**

FOCUS SCRIPTURE Matthew 2:1-12 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE: “Back to Our Own Countries” Pastor Chris

Communion Song: “O Love, How Deep, How Broad” #244

## GATHERING AT CHRIST’S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord’s Prayer (debts/debtors), Sharing the Bread and Cup

## SANCTUS

**Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

**God of Light and Love, we cherish this table in this season when the nights are long and cold. Through this meal, the Christ, and our neighbors, our hearts have warmed. May the comfort in our souls sustain us through winter and nudge us to create welcoming spaces for our neighbors. With gratitude, we leave here energized to kindle your love in this world. Amen.**

## PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

## OFFERTORY

**\*DOXOLOGY**

#34

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

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Giving God, may these gifts reveal your greatness, generosity, and glory. We give thanks for the privilege of being in communal and covenantal care with our neighbors as manifested by the sharing of resources. Amen.

**\*Closing Song:**

“We Three Kings”

#233

**\*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

**POSTLUDE**

**\*Indicates all who are able please stand**

The Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication are by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. The Communion Liturgy is a combined adaptation of Epiphany communion liturgies by Michelle L. Torigan and Rev. Erin Counihan. The Prayer of Thanksgiving is by Michelle L. Torigan.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Antonia Rupert
January Radio Sponsor:	Pastor Chris and Pam Burtnett

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**Sunday, January 5:** 10:30am – Worship – Sacrament of Communion  
Coffee  
Food Pantry  
Undecorate from Advent/Christmas after worship

**Tuesday, January 7:** 9:30am. - Pastor at Feed Mill

**Wednesday, January 8:** 7pm.- Board Meeting

**Thursday, January 9:** 8:30am. - Ministerial Meeting in Fellowship Hall

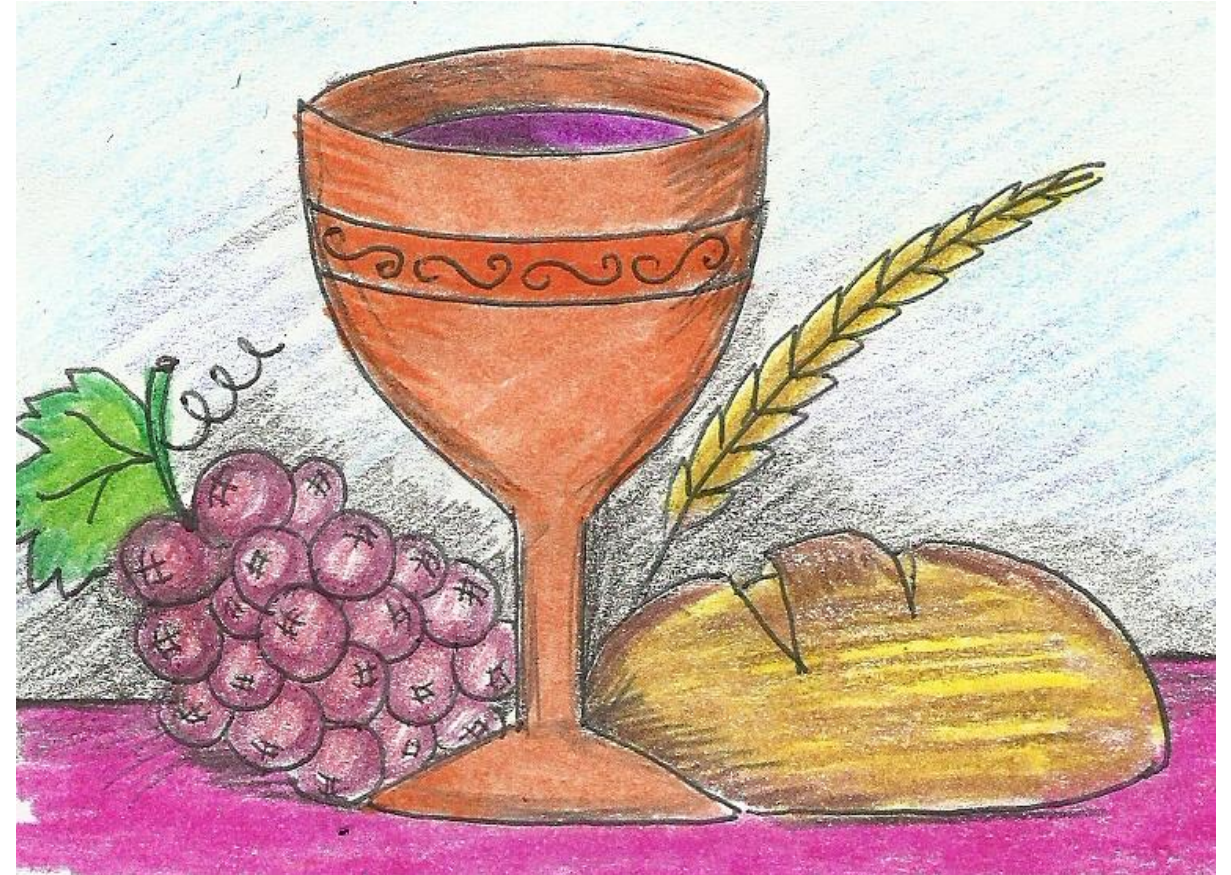
**Sunday, January 12:** 10:30am – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee

**Sunday, January 12:** Annual Reports are due

**Sunday, January 26:** Annual Meeting after Worship and potluck

If anyone would like to be on a committee, change committees or office, please let Helen Scuffham know.

**Our Daily Bread** “God is with Us 10 Christmas: Reflections and The December/ January/February 2024-2025 issue of “Our Daily Bread” may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.



*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
166 Years*

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