



Service for the Lord's Day

Epiphany/Baptism of the Lord

January 7, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Please SILENCE ALL Personal Electronic Devices Before Worship.

We Gather as God's People

Welcome to our worship service. Take a moment to quiet yourself as we prepare ourselves for worship.

Welcome and Preparation for Worship

Welcome to Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church! In this space, we invite you to bring all of who you are - your identity, your beliefs, your doubts, your questions, and your story wherever you are on your journey in life. Our prayer is that together we will experience God's presence.

The Gathering Music "Behold That Star" arr. Mark Hayes

The Welcome and Announcements

Prelude "The Light of the World Is Jesus" arr. Richard Miles

Call to Worship [Responsive]

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Baptized to begin lives of faith,

Many: we would witness to all you do in our midst and in your world.

One: Baptized to serve,

Many: we would speak up for the voiceless, we would bring justice to those who have none.

One: Baptized to speak,

Many: we would heal, and not hurt; we would bless, and not curse.

One: Baptized to do justice,

Many: we would not play favorites, but treat each person as Your Beloved.

One: Let us worship the One who loves us, the Beloved!

The Opening Hymn PH # 66 (verses 1 & 2) "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

We Three kings of Orient are, Bearing gifts we traverse a far.

Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright;

Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light!

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King for ever, ceasing never Over us all to reign.
O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light!

The Call to Reconciliation

One: Why do we huddle in the shadowed corners of life, rather than running to the Light of life? Why do we love the wrong we do rather than grasping the good news offered to us? As we struggle with such questions, let us speak to God of all we have failed to do, seeking hope and grace as we pray,

The Prayer of Confession [Responsive]

One: We search for your light, Star Caster,

Many: **but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation.**

One: Our motives for seeking to find Christ are not always pure,

Many: **for we expect him to fulfill our desires, rather than your hopes for us.**

One: We want the gifts of wealth, health, success, fulfillment,

Many: **rather than those of servanthood, of compassion, of peace.**

One: Forgive us, Shaper of our lives,

Many: **that we are so foolish to put our needs ahead of your grace.**

One: Help us to be like those wise people of so long ago, who found hope, instead of a destination;

Many: **who found grace, instead of gratitude; who found salvation, instead of a sign.**

One: As we journey with your Son, Jesus Christ, fill us with the light of your joy and love.

Many: **Amen.**

Two+ *(A new way to share the peace of Christ and greet one another.)*

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

Question: "What is one thing you hope to do or see in 2024?"

We Listen for God's Word

The Prayer for Illumination [Responsive]

One: Let us pray... God, you reach into our lives not through instruction, but story.

Many: **Open our hearts to be attentive: that seeing, we may perceive, and hearing, we may understand, and understanding, may act upon your word, that still lives and speaks to us. Amen.**

The Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12

Inclusive Bible

After Jesus' birth—which happened in Bethlehem of Judea, during the reign of Herod—astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the newborn ruler of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay homage." At this news Herod became greatly disturbed, as did all of Jerusalem. Summoning all the chief priests and religious scholars of the people, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. "In Bethlehem of Judea," they informed him. "Here is what the prophet has

written: ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, since from you will come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star’s appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, after having instructed them, “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report back to me—so that I may go and offer homage, too.” After their audience with the ruler, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at seeing the star and, upon entering the house, found the child with Mary, his mother. They prostrated themselves and paid homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented the child with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

They were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

One: For the Word of God in Scripture, For the Word of God among us, For the Word of God within us,

Many: We give thanks to God!

The Reflection

Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler

The Musical Response “As with Gladness Men of Old”

We Respond to God’s Love

The Renewal of Baptism Vows and Affirmation of Faith

One: Hear these words from Holy Scripture: “Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (I Corinthians 12:12-13, 27)

Sisters and brothers in Christ, our baptism is the sign and seal of our cleansing from sin, and of our being grafted into Christ. Through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the power of sin was broken and God’s kingdom entered our world. Through our baptism we were made citizens of God’s kingdom, and freed from the bondage of sin. Let us celebrate that freedom and redemption through the renewal of the promises made at our baptism.

I ask you, therefore, to remember your baptism and the promises we make when we baptize, as we reaffirm our faith, witnessing in word and water to what we believe:

***ALL:* We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit...claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us**

with the bread of life and cup of salvation, and calls men and women to all ministries of the church. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

One: Remember your baptism and be thankful. In the name of the Parent, Child, and Spirit.

Many: Amen.

The Music *Tune of PH # 469* "Water Has Held Us"

Water has held us, moved by creation. Out of dark chaos, broke forth the light.

Up from the deluge, showing God's promise, has come a rainbow, gladdening the sight.

Water has saved us, as the sea parted for Israel's children, walled on each side.

This love has led us, helped us in trouble, on far horizon, God's cloud our guide.

Water has cleansed us, bathed with forgiveness, has, with clear blessing, washed sin away.

Jordan's strong currents God's Son announcing, made a beginning, baptismal day.

Water has touched us, fresh on our foreheads, showing an inward, spiritual grace.

Into God's fam'ly, we have been welcomed. As sons and daughters, we take our place.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

(Following receiving the elements, you are invited to touch the water in the baptism font, remembering your own baptism.)

The Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Holy One be with you

Many: **And also with you.**

One: Open your hearts to the One who is Love.

Many: **We open our hearts to you, O God.**

One: Let us give thanks to God, who welcomes the stranger.

Many: **To the One who reaches across every border, we give thanks and praise.**

One: In wonder of your expansive embrace, we give you praise, O God. Through your radical welcome, you reveal the limitations of our own imaginations. You break down walls and boundaries we don't even realize we have erected. Like the magi guided by the light of star through foreign territory, you call us all towards you. You lead your people across borders of hate and into lands of curious and different. You strengthen us as we journey, learning and unlearning stories about one another. Gathered in your presence, we come to recognize the gifts of community rich in diversity.

Therefore, we join our voices with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens, singing praise to you

Many: **Holy, Holy, Holy One God of justice and love. Heaven and earth are full of your wonder, Hosanna among us.**

One: You move in mysterious way, O God. This journey with you is filled with more questions than answers. Each time we think we have you figured out, you surprise us

again, revealing yourself in new ways. In Jesus, we saw your radical welcome of strangers extended in challenging ways. Ways that disrupt our traditions and unsettle our comfort zones. Jesus broke religious rules in order to include all people.^[1]^[SEP]He lifted up the sacredness of the people and places deemed unclean. He cared more about the well-being of the oppressed than his own reputation. Jesus taught us to rethink your presence among us, but we couldn't accept it. Resistant to transformation, your people sent him to the cross.

On the night of his arrest, Jesus shared a meal with his companions. He took bread blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:

“This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

After the meal, he took the cup, blessed it, and shared it saying: “This cup that is poured out is the new covenant.”

In remembrance of all you have done to save us, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Many: Christ was birthed among us. Christ was killed among us.^[1]^[SEP]Christ rises again among us.

One: May the same Spirit that lifted Christ from the grave be poured out on these gifts. Make this bread and this cup be an extension of your welcome that knows no bounds. Fill us with the courage and faith to join you in the work of tearing down walls that exclude and pointing to the Sacred in the margins. In collective longing for a taste of your Kingdom on earth, we join together in echoing the prayer of Jesus:

ALL: 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 Words of Institution

The Breaking of Bread and Sharing of Cup

(You are invited to come forward to receive the elements. We ask that you sanitize your hand prior to receiving the elements of communion. You will receive a piece of bread from the server, then take the bread, dip it into the cup, and partake, before returning to your seat.)

The Prayer after Communion [Responsive]

One: God, this meal we shared together is a remembrance of your radical embrace of the outcast and oppressed. May it strengthen us as we open our minds and hearts to new ways of recognizing your presence among us. Amen.

Many: Amen.

Offering of Our Tithes and Our Gifts to God

We Depart to Do God's Will

Closing Hymn PH #411 “Arise, Your Light Is Come!”

Arise, your light is come! The Spirits call obey;
show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

The Sending Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler

One: Baptized, let us go to live in faith.

Many: We will bring healing to the broken and offer God's joy to those who grieve.

One: Baptized, let us go to serve.

Many: At the side of Jesus, we will serve the hungry, we will give shelter to the homeless.

One: Baptized, let us go to be a voice.

Many: We will echo the Spirit calling for peace, we will never stop speaking against
injustice.

One: Baptized, let us go to do what is right.

Many: Finding you, God in Community, Holy in One, waiting for us to join you beside all
your Beloved children.

One: Beloved children of God, let us go to share the love, compassion, and mercy of the One
who names and claims us. Go in peace.

Many: Amen.

The Sung Response PH # 432 "Song of Hope"

May the God of hope go with us everyday, Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

May the God of justice speed us on our way, Bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace, Singing, share our joy with all,

Working for a world that's new, Faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Postlude "Now Sing We, Now Rejoice" arr. James Engel



Our liturgy this morning is from: Communion Liturgy ~ Enfleshed Communion
Liturgy.

Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church is committed to using language in such a way that all members of the community of faith may recognize themselves to be included, addressed, and equally cherished before God. Seeking to bear witness to the whole world, the church struggles to use language which is faithful to the biblical truth and which neither purposefully nor inadvertently excludes people because of gender, color, or other circumstance in life. (Book of Order, W-1.2006)

Everyone is invited to stay for fellowship and refreshment following worship today.

- Our musician today is Marian Korth.

ANNOUNCEMENTS —

- **Please pick up your 2024 Offering Envelopes, now available in Fellowship Hall. If we've missed your name, please notify the office.**
- If you would like to be added to the mailing list for our newsletter, *The Good News*, please send either your email (preferred) or snail mail address to the church office. (Our addresses are listed on the last page of the bulletin.)
- Help us save “pig dollars.” For us to receive a rebate, please turn in your receipts from the Cambridge Piggly Wiggly in one of three ways: **1.** Place them in the brown bag in the narthex. **2.** Cheryl Stitz will do a porch pickup of any receipts that you may have. Call her at 608-695-1838 to make arrangements. **3.** Receipts can also be mailed to the church office. All funds received are used for mission projects.

WORSHIP SERVICES UPDATE:

2ND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY, JANUARY 14 WORSHIP AT 10 AM

— In-person worship continues this Sunday in the sanctuary. Spread God's Love not the Cold and Flu! We are being reminded by health officials that with the rise in cases of respiratory illnesses, to once again pay attention to our own health and the health of our neighbors. We continue to have hand-sanitizer, offer masks for those who wish to wear them, and provide an online option of Facebook live for you to join us for worship if you are not feeling well.

PLEASE HOLD THESE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS IN PRAYER THIS WEEK —

Dale Febock
Jan & Nancy Kristiansen
Marilyn Schuster
Dick Trailer

Those suffering from the conflict and humanitarian crises in the Middle East and violence around the world and here in America.

Those recovering from fire and storm damage across the United States.

The families of: Sylvia Jensen; Fred Trailer (Dick's brother); Stub Lund; Barbara Baker (Judy Pearson's sister); Betty Mennenga (mother of Angie Williams), and other families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

If you would like to be added to our weekly prayer list, please leave word in the church office or contact the pastor. Permission to be included in this publicly posted list has been obtained from those listed or their families.

FOOD PANTRY WISH LIST: Cereal, Hearty Soups, Canned Meals (Ravioli, etc.), Instant Potatoes, Corned Beef Hash, Hamburger Helper, Salad Dressing, Ketchup, Cake Mix and Frosting, Sugar, Shampoo and Conditioner. Donation bin is located outside of the lower level middle school/food pantry entrance and monetary donations are gladly accepted via the Food Pantry website <https://cambridgecap.net/programs/nutrition/food-pantry/> or by mail to P.O. Box 54, Cambridge WI 53523. Thank you!

Church Schedule

Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. Sunday

Communion: First Sunday of each month

Pastoral Office Hours: Generally 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Wednesday or by appointment

Business Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday

(Church hours are approved by Session and posted on church entry doors.)

Telephone/Fax: 608-423-3001

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Visit us on Facebook: Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church

SESSION (Meets the second Sunday of each month.)

Class of 2024: Mare Stewart, Mark Touhey

Class of 2025: Joe Leto, Melanie Rumpf

Class of 2026: Randy Johnson.

CHURCH STAFF

Music—

Accompanists: Karen Brunk, Marian Korth, Angie Williams

Business Manager: Ruth Poole

Pastor: Pastor Scott Marrese-Wheeler: (608) 417-0231 cell;

Pastor@OCPChurch.com

Facebook: Scott Marrese-Wheeler

