

Second Sunday after Christmas - Epiphany (Observed)

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Sunday Morning Worship

Please join us online for worship this morning. The video will go "live" at 10:30am.

Call to Worship

Arise, shine; for your light has come!
The glory of God has risen upon us!
Tell the good news throughout the earth:
the saving grace of Jesus Christ is for all.
Come and adore the Savior of the nations.
We offer the gifts of our lives to the Lord.

Opening Prayer

Everlasting God, the radiance of faithful souls, who brought the nations to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising: Fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all the nations; through him who is the true light and the bright morning star, Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

God judges the nations with righteousness, and answers the poor with justice. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession

God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. We confess that our sin and pride hide the brightness of your light. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for injustice; we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, and pour out the gifts of your Spirit, that, forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

The mercy of the Lord is like rain, like showers that water the earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

Holy One, giver of all light, lift up our hearts and minds to Christ, the morning star that never fades. By the light of your Holy Spirit reveal to us your saving Word and lead us to offer our lives to you in service and in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 2:1-12

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

'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.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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." 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon

“The Gifts They Bring”

Musical Reflection

“We Three Kings”
Mitch Miller & The Gang

Prayers of Intercession and The 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 glory forever. Amen.

Benediction and Sending

Star Words for 2021 will be distributed on Wednesday, January 6 - Epiphany. If you do not live in the Ithaca, Michigan area, and would like a Star Word, please email Pastor Christina (pastor@ithacapres.org) with your address, and she will mail one to you.

*We resume in-person worship on Sunday, January 10.
Recorded worship services will be available on Sunday evening.*