



1st Sunday after Christmas / Epiphany Sunday

**First United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming, Just Peace,
Immigrant Welcoming Congregation
January 1, 2023 – 10:30 a.m.**

Welcome to worship! Are you visiting us today? We invite you to fill out our [virtual visitor card](#).

Prelude

In Dulci Jubilo

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Music

Where Two or Three Are Gathered

Bruce Harding (2002)

Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there, I am there.

Call to Worship

One: Although the beckoning star heeded by wise travelers long ago no longer leads the way,

All: The manger-born Christ is still to be found and followed.

One: We are not brought to our knees in surprise as were those journeyers of old,

All: Yet our desire to worship can be as deep as theirs.

One: And though we do not bear gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh,

All: We offer ourselves and what we have.

One: The story continues. The good news abounds. There is a living Christ to discover and serve.

All: Let us rejoice and be glad!

Opening Hymn

Arise, Your Light Is Come

#164 (Festal Song)

V1 – Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.

V3 – Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
Bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

V2 – Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
Proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

V4 – Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

Time with Children

Let the children come unto me, for theirs is the realm of God.

All who believe must become like a child; theirs is the realm of God.

Statement of Commitment: Our Church Covenant

We covenant together with God and one another, trusting in God's continuing guidance, to seek to understand and do God's will, to explore the mystery of Christ, and to witness to God's reconciling love.

Scripture

Isaiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Ed Langerak

Sermon

Epiphany and Epiphanies

John Barbour

Prayer Hymn

As With Gladness Those of Old
(Verses 1-3 only)

#159 (Dix)

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.

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.

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.

The Prayers

We will join in prayer aloud and in silence. All joining worship online are invited to share prayers with the congregation by using the chat function at any point during this time.

Prayer Response

I Will Do a New Thing in You



“I will do a new thing in you; I will do a



new thing in you; What-ev - er you ask for, what-



ev - er you pray for, noth - ing shall be de -



nied,” sa-ith the Lord; sa-ith the Lord! Lord!

Prayer of Jesus

You are invited to speak the words most meaningful to you, or follow with the version here:

Our God, 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 Our Gifts

Offertory

Three Great Kings

Russell Schulz-Widmar (2013)

Three great kings in elegant array
Come marching through the midnight
stillness.
Crowned in gold, they make a fine display;
A star they follow into Bethlehem.
A gift each brings for the King of kings:
Pure gold and myrrh and finest incense.
A gift each brings for the King of kings,
The Savior born in Bethlehem.

All the town is lighted by a star;
The stable glows as bright as noontday.
Angel choirs are coming from afar
To praise the Holy Child of Bethlehem.
They seek the child and the mother mild;
Their Savior poor lies in a manger.
They seek the child and the mother mild,
The Savior born in Bethlehem.

Prayer of Thanks

Loving God, we come to you seeking to be wise people. May our gifts be a sign, as were the gifts for those travelers of old, that wisdom is marked by an offering of self and substance to the Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Communion Hymn

Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life

#331 (The Call)

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: such a way as gives us breath;
Such a truth as ends all strife; such a life as conquers death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: such a light as shows a feast;
Such a feast as mends in length; such a strength as makes a guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: such a joy as none can move;
Such a love as none can part; such a heart as joys in love.

Invitation & Telling the Story

Blessing the Meal

Sharing the Bread & Cup *(Please ready your bread and cup for partaking)*

Music During Communion

Angels from the Realms of Glory

tune: Litherop
Peter Cutts (1925-)

Angels from the realms of glory, Sages, leave your contemplations; All creation, join in praising
Wing your flight o'er all the earth; Brighter visions beam afar. God Creator, Spirit, Son,
Ye who sang creation's story, Seek the great desire of nations; Evermore your voices raising,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth. Ye have seen his natal star. To th'eternal Three in One:

*Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn king.*

Hymn of Sending

Give Thanks to God

God Rest You Merry

Give thanks to God and sing glad praise, what God has done proclaim!
Let all who seek the Holy One rejoice and bear the name
Of Jesus Christ who leads us forth, God's promises to claim.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.

Now to our God sing praises, all you within this place,
And with true love and harmony each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth efface.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.

Benediction

Postlude

Bourrée in G Major

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

We're so glad you worshiped here today!

Thanks to this week's leaders:

Ushers: Ed Langerak, Lois Langerak, Linda Larson, Chuck Madsen, Nalani McCutcheon, Kathy Sandberg
Digital Greeter: Carl Henry

And thanks to our guest preacher, John Barbour, for giving our pastors the Sunday off from preaching responsibilities.

This Week at First UCC:

Sunday, January 1

10:30 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary)

Wednesday, January 4

5:30 p.m. WYFF

6:00 p.m. Facilities Committee

7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 5

10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl Knitting Group

Sunday, January 8

9:15 a.m. Faith Formation

10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

6:00 p.m. Evening Gathering Worship

Coffee Hour Volunteers and Coordinator Needed

Volunteer hosts are needed for Coffee Hour! We have open dates in November and December. Volunteering is easy to do, and orientation will be provided for those who are new to Coffee Hour hosting. Interested? [Sign up to host here](#). First UCC is also looking for a volunteer to serve as the Coffee Hour coordinator. If you are interested, please contact church@firstucc.org.

Sunday Morning Book Group Starting New Book

The Sunday Morning Book Group has just started reading and discussing the book, "Do I Stay Christian? A Guide for the doubters, the disappointed, and the disillusioned" by Brian D. McLaren. We meet on zoom at 9am each Sunday and have room for 2 more people to join. Contact Linda at ralinlar@gmail.com if you're interested in learning more.

Safety & Security Task Force to Start in the New Year

The Council has approved the formation of a Safety & Security Task Force to begin its work in the new year. This group will focus on creating all sorts of emergency plans and may suggest changes to the building and to standard practices to keep our building and our members and friends safe. We are looking for people with a wide variety of experience and skills to serve on this task force, including those with experience in mental health, public health, fire safety, public safety and security. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please contact Gary Carlson to be considered.

New Office Manager & Director of Communications Needed

We once again find ourselves in need of a new Office Manager and Director of Communications. If you know anyone interested in this important part-time position, please have them contact Cindy Maddox at seniorminister@firstucc.org.

From the Organist Search Committee

As you all know, one of the changes that will occur in the coming year is the retirement of our beloved Theo Wee. The important work of hiring a new organist deserves to be shaped by the congregation's sense of our musical life, and to that end we ask you to share your thoughts about the role of music at First UCC by responding to [this survey](#). Your responses will be anonymous unless you choose to identify yourself, and only the members of the search committee, listed below, will see the full results. Those

results in turn will help the committee communicate to others the values that we place on music in worship and elsewhere. The committee does not foresee drastic changes to the shape of our musical life together, and the congregation's responses to this survey are only one part of the process. But it is an important part, and we hope that you will take the time to share your thoughts with us by the end of this month. Please share your thoughts [here](#).

With thanks,

Chris Brunelle, for the organist search committee:

Ben Gottfried

Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

Marty Hodel

Cindy Maddox

Carolyn Melby

Mary Savina

Welcome to Worship at First UCC!

We are an Open and Affirming, Just Peace, Immigrant Welcoming Congregation.
Wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome here!

We especially welcome all who are visiting this morning. Please let us know you're here by sharing your information in a welcome pad.

Worship Information

First UCC worships at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. Worship is also live streamed each week on Zoom and YouTube. Whether you are joining us in person or online, we are glad to have you here!

Giving to the Church

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of First UCC's ministry. Give online by visiting firstucc.org and clicking "Donate Online Now!" under the "Giving" tab, place your gift in the offering plate, or send in your gifts via mail.

News & Announcements

Keep up to date with all of the latest news and upcoming events! Subscribe to The Chronicle, First UCC's weekly e-newsletter, at firstucc.org, and find First UCC on Facebook and Instagram. Past issues of The Chronicle are available at firstucc.org.

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Three Great Kings © 2013 Birnamwood Publications
tune Litherop © Oxford University Press

JESUS MAFA. Visit of the Three Wise Men, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48292>. Original source: <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr> (contact page: <https://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr/contact>).

First UCC Leadership & Staff

Ministers: All the people

Moderator: Deb Gottfried

Senior Minister: Rev. Cindy Maddox

Associate Minister: Rev. Lauren Baske Davis

Director of Music: Chris Brunelle

Organist: Theo Wee

Spirit Voices Director & Arts Coordinator: Bob Gregory-Bjorklund

Audio Visual Technician: Brynn Artley

Office Manager & Director of Communications: Position Open

Finance Manager: Pippa Younger

Sexton: Mark Fischer

T. S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi" (1927)

'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.' 5
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet. 10
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty, and charging high prices: 15
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly. 20

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky.
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow. 25
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon 30
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for 35
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I have seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms, 40
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.