

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

Epiphany of the Lord & First Sunday of Christmas

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

January 1, 2023

* Please stand if you are able

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

ORGAN PRELUDE: *"Wachet auf; Ruft uns die Stimme"* by JS Bach

WELCOME, AFFIRMATION OF MISSION STATEMENT

& ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Erika Wulster

**As disciples of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, we
experience God's unconditional love, and we witness to
others by discovering and sharing our gifts.**

CHORAL INTROIT:

Chancel Choir

* CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Shepherds arose from their fields and went to Bethlehem,

**People: Magi from the East, versed in astrology, followed the
star and found the child;**

Leader: This child, so distinct and unique, was unlike any other child, is the
revelation of God to simpletons and the sophisticated;

**People: The Magi offered their gifts of frankincense, gold,
and myrrh; filled with joy, they bowed to worship.**

Leader: They bowed to worship and in worship, the Christ-child.

**People: They worshiped the Christ, the revelation of God for
the people of God.**

Leader: With mindful preparation, heartfelt expectation, and joyful
celebration, let us worship, let us worship God.

* HYMN OF PRAISE: *No. 56 The First Noel* (vv. 1, 3, 6)

***The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay akeeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.
And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.***

Cont'd.

***Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught,
And with His blood our life hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.***

EPIPHANY PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *In silence then unison*

Eternal God, whose Son, Jesus, is the light of the world: In Jesus' penetrating light, we acknowledge our unacknowledged shadows and inner darkness; in his constant grace our casual love; in his generous giving our grasping; in his equal justice, our dire prejudice; in his fortitude our fear of failure; in his unconditional, inclusive love, our deep divide and divisiveness; in his wholeness, our brokenness and our sins.

In your mercy, awaken us to and forgive us of our inner darkness. Make us mindful of our mortality, that we may know the enduring hope of his eternity; in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS:

Pastor: As God's Epiphany people, be fully alive to the joy of Christ's light and birth. Celebrate that we are Christ's light to the world.

People: In freedom and forgiveness, let us forgive one another.

* EPIPHANY CELEBRATION: *No. 28 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice v. 3*
***Good Christian friends, rejoice, With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all, To gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!***

* EXCHANGE OF CHRIST'S PEACE: *Share Christ's peace by using the peace sign or by waving to those in the Sanctuary or on your Zoom screen*

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS & OFFERTORY

* DOXOLOGY & PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *(v. 1, No. 110, GTG)*
Love Has Come

***Love has come, a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.***

DECLARING GOD'S WORD

HEBREW BIBLE READING: Isaiah 60: 1–6

The light had come and is revealed to the nations.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 2: 1–15, 19–23

The origin of Jesus is revealed.

ANTHEM: *See Amid the Winter's Snow*

Chancel Choir

MEDITATION: *Bumpy Start*

Pastor David Harvey

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *The Nicene Creed, A.D. 325*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. Amen.

* COMMUNION HYMN: *No. 66 We Three Kings of Orient Are* v. 1–3, 5

***We three kings of Orient are, Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star.***

***Refrain: 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 forever, ceasing never, Over us all to reign.***

[Refrain]

***Frankincense to offer have I: Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, we are raising, worshipping God Most High.***

[Refrain]

***Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia, Sounds through the earth and skies.***

[Refrain]

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE:

Deacon: Listen to these precious and gracious words of the Lord Jesus:

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light". Matthew 11: 28–30

This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

John 6: 40

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if those who hear my voice open the door, I will come in to them and eat with them, and they with me.

Revelation 3: 20

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, & THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Pastor: Holy Lord . . . as we pray together:

All: O God, awaken within us the grace of Jesus' humility, the miracle of his hospitality, and the mystery of his generosity that we may live as beacons of Jesus' light and true ambassadors of Jesus' peace. This we ask as we pray together in Jesus' name, saying "Our Father, who art . . . the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

OFFERING OF THE ELEMENTS: *Approach the Table, receive the bread, take the cup, and return to your pew.*

SHARING THE BREAD: Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* (Jn. 6:37) Let us eat this bread in remembrance of Christ and may the spirit that is in him be in us also.

DRINKING THE CUP: Jesus said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches, apart from him, we can do nothing."* Let us drink this cup in remembrance of Christ and may the spirit in which he died be our Spirit.

COMMUNION BLESSING:

Deacon: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: For the complete reign and rule of Christ's kingdom on and over our lives, we praise you, O God. We rejoice that because He lives and lives in us, we are assured that nothing past, present nor things to come shall separate us from your great love, revealed in Jesus our Lord. Amen.

DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

* HYMN: *No. 68 What Star Is This, with Beams so Bright*

*What star is this, with beams so bright, More lovely than the
noonday light? 'Tis sent to announce a newborn King,
Glad tidings of our God to bring.*

*'Tis now fulfilled what God decreed, "From Jacob shall a star
proceed"; And lo! the Eastern sages stand
To read in heaven the Lord's command.*

*O Jesus, while the star of grace Impels us on to seek Your face,
Let not our slothful hearts refuse
The guidance of Your light to use.*

*To God the Father, God the Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One,
May every tongue and nation raise
An endless song of thankful praise.*

* CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE & BENEDICTION

* CHORAL BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *"For Unto us a Child is Born"* by GF Handel

Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!

ASSISTING DURING TODAY'S WORSHIP

Choir Director: Maggie Morokutti

Worship Leader/Communion Assistant: Erika Wolster

Pastor: Rev. David Harvey

Communion Preparation: Maggie Wilson

DLP: -

Sound System: Theo Padavano

Ministers: The Congregation

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

The Human Family: Persons and individuals impacted by the COVID-19; essential workers; the homeless; people of Afghanistan, Haiti, and the Ukraine; families impacted by gun violence

Men & Women Serving in the Armed Forces & America's Veterans

Those in elected office: The President, the Congress, State Assembly, local community servants

Healing for Friends & Families with:

Cancer: Judy Dales, Gordon Dugan, Samantha Elwell, Adam Hubble, Tracy Lance, Troy Lutz, Caitlyn McMorrow and her family, Jay Ohland Jr., Bill S., Andrew Shan, Robert Talmadge, Tracy Wolfe, Molly Grace Young, Alicia, Audrey, Darlene, Eva, Gail

Illness & Injuries: Les Ashburner, Sue Bonkowski, Derek Cameron, Elaine Canonico, Kyle Canonico, Lucy Cuipa, Noah Haiduc-Dale, Cameron McIntyre, Alyssa Ohland, Kaleigh Ohland, Jan Smith, Margaret Stephens, Betty Ann Weir, Ann, Tracy

Prayers of Condolences for the family of Gail Maier, mother of church member, Emily Maier-Arena and grandmother to Levi and Paige. Please keep her husband, Edward, Emily, Levi, Paige, and the family in your prayers during this extraordinarily difficult time.

THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH

Sunday, Jan. 1: *Happy New Year!*

10:00 AM Family Worship

Monday, Jan. 2

Office Closed

Tuesday, Jan. 3

10:30 AM Bible Study/OC

Sunday, Jan. 8

8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal

10:00 AM Worship

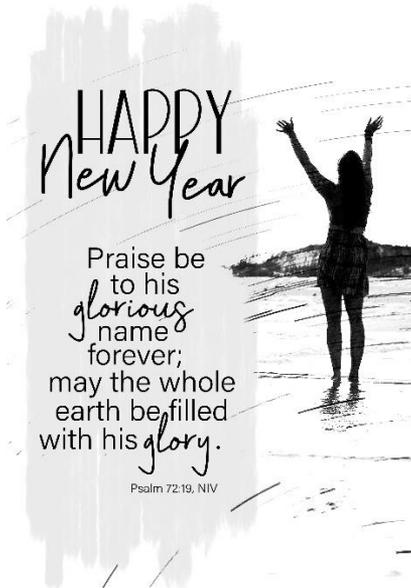
10:15 AM Sunday School

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interested in learning more about or becoming a member of the church? Please see Pastor Harvey or call (908) 362-5254 or email the church office at fpcb@ptd.net.

Annual Reports: Ministries and organization of the church please note that your Annual Reports will be due in the church office Tuesday, Jan. 24.

2023 Pledge Forms: Just a friendly reminder that it is not too late to turn in your 2023 pledge form! You may place your pledge form in the offering plate or mail/drop off at the church office. Additional copies are in the narthex and on the communication table in Fellowship Hall.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

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