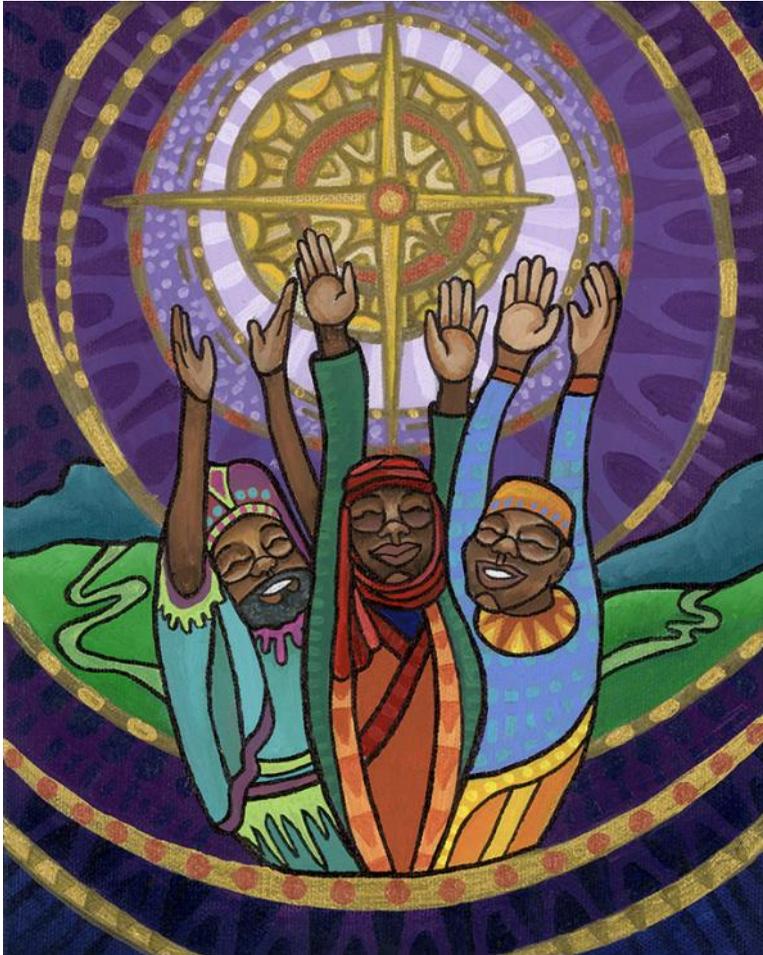


**First Congregational United Church of Christ
Sunday, January 5, 2020
Epiphany**



Every member is a minister in the community

*Greg Briggs, Interim Pastor Leah Dice, Office Manager
Roger Waters, Music Minister Shelley Fisher, Music Minister
Lynette Webb, Childcare Supervisor Larry Minch, Custodian*

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Pastor Greg: pastor@chxucc.org, * 616.283.2971 cell

Office Hours 9 a.m.— 3:30 p. m. Mon—Thurs

Welcome to our church family!

You are invited to join us today for refreshments in our Fellowship Hall following the worship service. If you are a guest, please feel free to use the welcome cards available in the pew and place in the offering plate.

(indicates that all who would like and are able are invited to stand. **Bolded** text is to be read by the entire congregation. Traditional unison prayers are in italics and are also read in unison.)*

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Words of Welcome, Announcements, and Signing of the Fellowship Pads
Ringling of the Steeple Bell and the Lighting of the Candles

PRELUDE

INTROIT Choral Introit

* CALL TO WORSHIP

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

All: **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?'

All: **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?'

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

* GATHERING HYMN #189. Angels, from the Realms of Glory

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal God,

You sent Mary on a journey to Egypt and led Hagar through the desert.

You lit the wilderness way for Moses and produced manna for his family.

Send us into this new year with fire to see by, bread to live by, and loved ones to travel with, as we follow your voice in the world.

Where you go, O Lord, we will go;

and where we lodge, you will lodge,

for we are your people, and you are our God. Amen.

GIVING OF STAR GIFTS

WE PRAISE GOD AND GIVE THANKS THROUGH OUR GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Jesu Bambino” Dave Smith- Baritone

* Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.*

ANTHEM “Sing an Alleluia” Wagner

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

Page 1155

Matthew 2:1-12

Page 1497

THE MESSAGE

Interim Pastor Greg Briggs

* **HYMN OF REFLECTION** #184. What Child Is This

***GOD’S PEOPLE IN PRAYER**

Sharing our Joys and Concerns

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to Christ’s Table - *All are welcome, no exceptions*

Prayer of Reconciliation

We search for your light, Star Caster, but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation. Our motives for seeking the Christ child 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 Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, fill us with the light of your joy and love.

Assurance of Pardon

Every moment is a new beginning, a fresh start with God. In every moment, grace is present, forgiveness granted, and love revealed. You are forgiven, loved,

and restored. Begin this moment afresh now, with God and with one another, and share the Good News. Amen.

Communion Prayer

People of Advent: the Lord be with you!

And also with you!

People of Christmas, lift up your hearts.

We lift our hearts overwhelmed with grace to the One who was born for us.

People of the Star, offer your songs of joy and thanksgiving to God.

We will sing our praises to the One who has revealed glory and hope in the Babe of Bethlehem.

Telling the Story

Sharing of Bread and Cup

(Communion will be served by intinction, where the congregation comes forward and dips the bread into the cups of wine. The wine is non-alcoholic and gluten free bread is available.

If you are not able to come forward for communion let an usher know or raise your hand at the end of communion, and we will come to you.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Prayer of our Savior

Prayer of our Savior

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, for ever. Amen.

* **HYMN OF PARTING** #223. Star-Child

* **BENEDICTION** Choral Response

* **CHORAL RESPONSE**

WORSHIP RESOURCES USED TODAY:

- Cover Art—Pittman, Lauren Wright. Shining Hope, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57077> [retrieved January 2, 2020]. Original source: <http://www.lewpstudio.com> - copyright by Lauren Wright Pittman.
- Call to worship, Prayer of Reconciliation, Communion Prayer—Thom Shuman <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2019/12/day-of-epiphany-abc.html>
- Prayer of the Day—Benjamin Smith, <http://moonhat.blogspot.com/>
- Assurance of Pardon - Rev. Mindi Welton Mitchell—<http://rev-o-lution.org/>

Star Gift—An Epiphany Blessing

In many Christian cultures, the season of gift giving is celebrated on Epiphany instead of Christmas Day. Here is a gift from the church to each of you.

A star gift is simply a star-shaped piece of brightly colored paper with a word printed on it. Every person who comes to church on Epiphany Sunday receives a star gift and is asked to reflect on that word for the coming year. As Simeon told Mary, so we are invited to “ponder these words in our heart.”

We are invited to ponder what significance this word might have in their lives, and how God might be speaking to them through that simple message, even if the word doesn’t seem to initially ‘fit’ or seem right. Just as the magi sought Jesus by the stars, so to are we seeking Jesus, trusting that God uses many signs (stars) to guide us closer to the divine presence.

After worship, we will have crayons and coloring pencils at the fellowship tables for you to decorate your stars if you wish. Many people choose to put their stars on their bathroom mirrors or in some other place where they see them every day.

You may also take stars for other people in your life, and give them to whomever wants one. If you’d like, we can mail a star too.

“For last year’s words belong to last year’s language and next year’s words await another voice.” - T. S. Eliot

Worship Attendance December 29~ First Light Service: 10 Sanctuary Service: 28
Bible Study, December 31– 3

This Week's Schedule

Sunday 01/05	Mon 01/06	Tues. 01/07	Wed. 01/08	Thurs. 01/09	Fri. 01/10	Sat. 01/11	Sunday 01/12
9:00 am First Light Service 10:30 am Sanctuary Worship 1:00 pm Diaconate Meeting	5:15pm Council Meeting 6:00pm Baby Diaper Pantry & Personal Care Pantry	10:00 am Bible Study		7:00 pm Church Choir Practice			9:00 am First Light Service 10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> <p style="margin: 0;">January 26, 2020 All Church Annual Meeting After Worship</p> </div>							

Our Church's Holiday Giving

This Advent and Christmas Season, the church had many opportunities to give, including to the regular operations budget, staff holiday gifts, and special collections for the local and wider church community. And wow did you give!

Operating Budget: Though our numbers for the year still need to be finalized, it looks that the church overcame the projected deficit of \$9,600 to finish the year \$2,500 in the black, an improvement of \$12,000.

Special Offerings: The Cookie Walk, the Christmas Fund special offering, a special offering for two families in need over the holidays, and an offering for the Women's Resource Center as part of our Blue Christmas Service. Total raised—\$5,949. We also participated in the Community Christmas project by donating socks and jelly.

Worship and Devotions: Our Advent Devotions focused on a needed but sensitive subject, how to have better (and difficult) conversations. We also held our second Blue Christmas Service for those that struggle during the holidays.

As we transition into 2020, as we shift from the Christmas to the Epiphany Season, as we get ready for the winter season, and as we prepare to welcome a new pastor sometime this year;

Thank you and bless you for your ongoing generous, Christ seeking spirit. Well done, good and faithful servants. May this be the year the Christ centered spirit lasts all year long.

Praise and Prayer Request List

Healing Diagnosed with Cancer	Rev. Ginny Titus Loretta Hasley (Julia Heddle) Jack Lehmkuhl Robert Rowe Ruby Hayward Tina Bowen	Michelle James Evelyn Schwartz (continued healing) Ann Chappelle Olsen (Alice P.M.) Donna Waters Jill Ostrum (Alice P.M.) Brody Roberts
Healing	Jane Piccard Marilyn Knapp (Lani Ochs) Delores Cain Jesse Wilcox Rev. Leroy Sutfin Donna Waters Marty Merz Betsy Teeuwissen Anne Banfield Verna Truman	Robin Messing Caitlyn Cruzak (John Young) John McKown Jerry Corley Judy Willey Aurora Sargent Brook Bixby (Gay Kiteley) Connie Doan (Chris Gengle) Chris Kenney (Betty Renton) John Peterman Amy Meyer (Alice P.M.)
Prayer	Birth of Bre'lin Carpenter First Responders Immigrants and Refugees Faith Leaders and World Leaders	Victims of Natural Disasters Those living with Mental Illness Roger & Donna Waters Susan Denomy (Betty Wadland)
Prayer	U.C.C. Church of the Month	First Congregational UCC—Cheboygan, MI
Grieving	Family of Elaine Drury Family of Linda Adkin	Family of LaRue Kenney Family of F. James "Doc" Stewart
Military	Nate Powell Joshua Wojan Wesley Moulden SGT Ian Tompkins	SFC Alex Weller SGT Adam Soldan Captain David Knowles Jr. EMN3 Cary Tompkins (Linda Moore)

Please be sure to sign any Care Letters in the vestibule outside the Sanctuary.

Gifts of Serving

THIS WEEK

NEXT WEEK

JANUARY 5TH

JANUARY 12TH

GREETERS/USHER:

John & Sue Dixon

Chuck & Gay Kitley

COFFEE HOUR:

LAY READER:

Julia Heddle

Could be you!

Altar Flowers:

Bulletin Sponsorship:

Bob & Ruth Chapman

Bob & Ruth Chapman

