



Covenant Presbyterian Church

January 2, 2022 – 10:00 AM

Covenant is an accepting, welcoming community sharing the glory of God's love with all.

PRELUDE

“We Three Kings” arrange by Linker

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND PRAYER REQUESTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP** † Liturgist: Please stand as you are able and join me in the call to worship

Leader: We come to this place—

People: each of us on our own path.

Leader: The path is winding,

People: and the path is not always clear,

Leader: and the path changes,

People: but we are here.

Leader: God is walking us home.

People: What a gift it is to not walk alone.

Leader: Let us worship Holy God.

***HYMN #150** “As With Gladness Men of Old”

Ribbon

1 As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led to thee.

2 As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet

ever seek thy mercy seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare
at thy manger, rude and bare,

so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.

CALL TO CONFESSION † Liturgist

I imagine that, for the Magi, walking to Bethlehem was not easy. I imagine that following a star for navigation was definitely not easy. However, I imagine that the hardest part might have been not knowing where the road would lead. Friends, we are not always the best versions of ourselves when we are faced with uncertainty or changing plans. Facing the unknown pulls on every ounce of our anxiety and fear. It rings all our stress alarms and can erode our patience, our calm, our sense of perspective. Fortunately for us, we worship a God who is gracious beyond imagination and meets us on every twist and turn of the road home. So let us pray together now, knowing that even in our worst moments, we are held by God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION † Liturgist

Cross

God of changed plans,

The Magi heard in a dream that they were to take a new way home—a different path, an untraveled road. And to our amazement, they did just that. The Magi packed their bags and went home by another way.

We wish that change could be easy for us, but more often than not, when whispers of change come, we tend to clench our fists and hold on tighter.

Forgive us for resisting change that might be holy.

Forgive us for ignoring that there is more than one road home. Forgive us for failing to hear your invitation.

Guide our steps to unfamiliar places.

Gratefully we pray, amen. (Silence for Personal Confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

No matter which roads we take in this one wild and precious life,
God walks with us. God never leaves our side. When the road changes and we find ourselves on a new path home, God is always there.

So hear and believe this good news:

No matter where we go, no matter what we do, we are claimed, loved, and held by God. Thanks be to God for a love like that.

HYMN #654

“In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful”

Ribbon

In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful; in the Lord I will rejoice! Look to God; do not be afraid. Lift up your voices the Lord is near. Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

PASSING OF THE PEACE The peace of the Lord, be with you all. **And also with you.**

HYMN #188 "Jesus Loves Me"

TALK WITH CHILDREN

Erin Wise

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION † Liturgist

Holy God,
You speak to us in Scripture and in prayers,
in sunrises and sunsets,
in friends and in strangers,
in dreams and in songs.
You are speaking all the time,
and how often do we miss it?
Still our minds so that we can listen with a depth that we have not heard before.
Still our hearts so that we can receive with open arms what it is you are offering us
today.

We know you are speaking,
so we are listening.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

THE FIRST READING Ephesians 3:1-12

The mystery of the ages, revealed to all. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING Matthew 2:1-12

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON "Home By Another Way"

Notepad

HYMN #315 "In the Midst of New Dimensions" (v. 1, 4, 5)

Ribbon

1 In the midst of new dimensions,
in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples
wandering in their separate ways?
(Refrain)
God of rainbow, fiery pillar,
leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey
now and ever, now and ever,
now and evermore.

4 We are man and we are woman,
all persuasions, old and young,
each a gift in your creation,
each a love song to be sung. (Refrain)
5 Should the threats of dire predictions
cause us to withdraw in pain.
may your blazing phoenix spirit
resurrect the church again. (Refrain)

PRESENTATION OF OFFERING † Liturgist: The Magi came bearing gifts, because that is what we do when we love someone. We prepare. We celebrate. We drop off casseroles and flowers. We bring gifts. It has always been that way. So today, we are invited to do the same for God. We are invited to bring our gifts as a sign of our love. And instead of gold, we'll give our tithes and offerings. Instead of frankincense, we'll give our talents and our energy. Instead of myrrh, we'll give our time. We give because we love. It has always been that way. Let us give our tithes and our offerings now.

Offertory

"I Wonder As I Wander" by John Jacob Niles

*Doxology #606

Ribbon

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication † Liturgist

Cross

God of new beginnings,
We offer these gifts to you today because we love you.
The world will tell us to keep our money to ourselves,
to hold it tight, to tuck it away,
but just as the Magi made a different choice, we make a different choice. Instead, we
give what we have,
trusting that when we live like we belong to one another,
we will see a better world.
So take these gifts
and use them for your good.
With hope we pray, amen.

HYMN #527 "Eat This Bread"

Eat this bread; drink this cup;
come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread; drink this cup;
Trust in me and you will not thirst.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

*HYMN #152

"What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright"

Ribbon

1 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.

an inward light the Lord conveys
and urges them, with tender might,
to seek the giver of the light.

3 While outward signs the star displays,

4 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.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Reprise of What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright”

† Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Assisting in Worship Today:

Jude McLean—Liturgist

Jason Guthrie—Vocalist

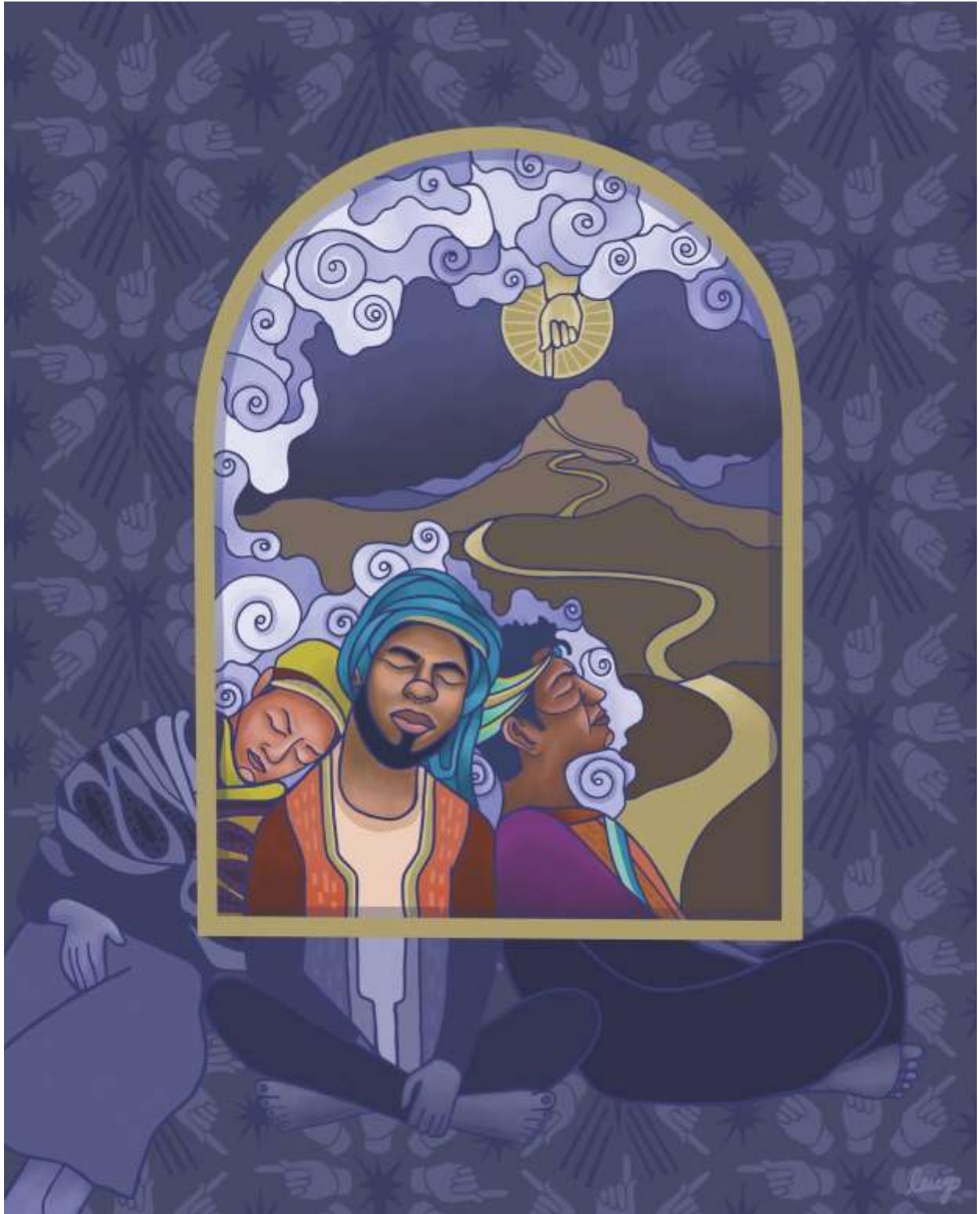
Cherie Brooks – Director of Music

Katie Wynkoop—Organist/Pianist & Assistant Director of Music

Erin Wise – Director of Children’s & Youth Ministries

Brian Biller – Media Production Specialist

Rev. Joel A. Esala – Pastor



"The Wise Men's Dream"
by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman