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ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**WE BRING OUR GIFTS TO GOD**

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[www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome](http://www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome)

*Epiphany Celebration*  
January 2, 2021

**Prelude**

*Kings from the East Came Riding*

**We are Called to Worship** – The prophet Isaiah invites us: Arise, shine! Your light has come! Glory to God in the highest. Darkness covers the earth, but God’s glory shines brightly. Lift up your eyes. Look around. The light of God’s love shines radiantly. Arise, shine! Your light has come! Let us worship!~

**A Time of Prayer**— God of light and love, shine upon our lives, as we welcome the mystery of your love. Guide us toward your true gift, for our hearts long to encounter with the holy. Quiet our expectations, that we might be surprised by the unexpected. Open our eyes, that we might find you in unanticipated places. Shine your light upon us, that we might see you clearly, and recognize your face in all people...

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)—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, forever. Amen.

**A Blessing for a Baby**

*Liv Schildmeier*

*Daughter of Greg and Katie, Granddaughter for Dick and Jan*

**Choir**

*God of the Ages, History's Maker*

## **We Hear God's Word**

*Matthew 2:1-12 (CEB)*

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. <sup>4</sup> He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

<sup>6</sup> *You, Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah,  
because from you will come one who governs,  
who will shepherd my people Israel.*"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you've found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him." <sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. <sup>11</sup> They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

## **Meditation**

*We Bring Our Gifts to God*

### **WE BRING OUR GIFTS TO GOD**

#### **2022 Council Installation**

President - Ted Schory

Vice President

Secretary - Cindy Yenna

Treasurer - Terri Bennett

Financial Secretary - Mindy Murphy

Building & Grounds - Greg Law

## 2022 Ministry Team Blessing

Board of Christian Education/Faith Formation Team

Pastor Parish Relations

Worship Team

Kitchen Team

Hospitality Team

Care Team

Fundraising Team

Strategic Plan Community Center Implementation Team

### Dedication of our Time & Talents

*We dedicate our time and talents in service to God and Christ's church*

### We Gather at the Table



**Set Your Place at the Table**—Communion was first celebrated in the homes of those in the early church. Friends and family would gather together to pray, singing songs, and break bread. We carry on that tradition today. Whatever you have on hand to celebrate communion will work just fine, because this ancient ritual is not about what we use for this meal or where we partake of it. Instead, it is about the act of remembrance. So, gather around the table, prepare your place, and remember that Christ is in our midst.

**Our Invitation**—In Christ we have found the greatest gift—love freely given, mercy overflowing, forgiveness that is abundant, compassion that restores. At Christ's table we find nourishment for the journey when we gather as one.

**The Words of Institution**—On the night when Jesus was to be betrayed, he gathered with his friends in that upper room to celebrate the Passover meal, a meal of remembrance of the liberation of God's people from slavery in Egypt, a journey that would lead them deep into the wilderness. After the meal was over, Jesus took the bread that was left, broke it, blessed it, and said, "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you." In the same way, he took the cup, the fruit of the vine, and pouring it out he said, "This is the cup of the new covenant, my blood shed for you and the forgiveness of sins. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, remember me." Today, we remember Christ's body broken for us and blood shed for us as bread is transformed into

mercy and wine into compassion. As we prepare to receive this holy meal, let us ready our hearts by confessing our sins to God. Let us pray.

**Our Confession**— There are times when we are drawn away from your light. We may feel inadequate, unworthy, or less than perfect. We forget that we are your children, your beloved creations, and that you reach out for us even when we turn away from you. Forgive us, O God.+

**Assurance of Grace**— The night is gone and the day has come. Christ, the Light of the World, born in the person of Jesus, reminds us that God’s light and love are for all of us — no matter who we are and no matter what we have done. We are loved and forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.+

**Blessing Our Meal**— Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts of bread and cup, that they may be for us the living presence of Jesus Christ, light of the world, our hope for all creation. Pour out your Spirit upon us, that we may become the body of Christ, as we serve creation and reflect the light of your love. Make us one with Jesus, and one with each other, as we walk in the light, singing your praises. Through Jesus Christ, light of the world, and through the Holy Spirit, radiance divine, all praise is yours, eternal God, now and forever, world without end. Amen.~

**We Share the Bread and the Cup** – As you eat the bread, remember, “This is the body of Christ broken for you.” Take and eat. As you drink the cup, remember, “This is the blood of Christ shed for you and the forgiveness of sins.” Take and drink.

**We Give Thanks**—Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ’s body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.+

## **We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving**

**Invitation**—As the Magi of old, guided by a star in the night sky, brought gifts of homage and gratitude, so we bring our gifts today. May these gifts scatter the shadows of those in need.+

**January Benevolence**—Emergency Assistance: Every so often a neighbor contacts Zion for assistance for things our Franklin Township Ministerial Association and our Southeast Association Eviction Ministry do not cover. This could be anything from diapers and formula to bus tickets or clothes. We want to ensure that we have funds available when the call comes to serve our neighbors. Please, consider donating to our January Benevolence offering to help support Emergency Assistance.

You can mail your offerings to our office or give online at [www.zionuccindy.net/donate](http://www.zionuccindy.net/donate)

**A Doxology for Advent**      *By Rev. Scott Cervas, to the tune of Greensleeves*  
These gifts we joyfully bring to you,  
to fill the world with meaning;  
our hearts and minds are longing for  
the life of which you are dreaming.  
This, this our gift we bring,  
our lives we share, your praise we sing;  
show us your vision, Lord,  
for hope, and peace, and caring.

**We Give Thanks**— O God, we come to you seeking to be as wise as the Magi, who gave of their most precious treasures — symbols of the giving of themselves to the Christ Child. May these gifts be a source of light in places where your light and love are needed most. Amen.+

## Hymn

*Arise, Your Light Is Come, #231*

**We Are Sent Forth with a Blessing**— May the light of the Bethlehem star, the wisdom of the Magi, and the hope that the Christ Child brings be with you always.+ Go forth to share the gifts of your lives in service to Christ's work. Amen.

## Postlude

*Postlude in C*

~Scifres, Mary; Beu, B. J.. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022 (pp. 11-12). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.  
+UCC Worship Ways.