

Sunday, January 10, 2021
The Celebration of Epiphany

8:30 and 10:30 am

Welcome to Worship from First Presbyterian Church

**We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate
in the worship, service, and program life of First Pres!**

- Please visit the church website: www.firstpresevansville.com to stay up-to-date on our ministry and service opportunities.
- Please visit our Facebook page - First Presbyterian Church - Evansville, Indiana. We hope you'll "like" us!

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

WE GATHER TO CELEBRATE NEW LIFE

THE MUSIC FOR GATHERING

"What Child is This?"

arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

THE CALL TO WORSHIP – SUSAN/BECKY

Welcome people to worship and invite them to join in the call to worship.

One Arise, shine! Your light has come!
All Behold the glory of the Lord!
One For darkness shall cover the earth
 and thick darkness shall envelop the people.
All But the Lord will arise upon you,
 and the glory of the Lord will arise upon you.
One Nations shall come to your light,
All And kings to the brightness of your dawning.
One The light shines in the darkness,
All And the darkness cannot overcome it.

THE OPENING PRAYER – SUSAN/BECKY

Let us pray.

God of every nation,
by the light of a wondrous star you led wandering magi to the humble infant Jesus,
revealing to them your salvation of the world.

In the miraculous and the mundane,
in union with all who have glimpsed the light of your grace,
lead us to Christ,
that we may offer our worship and serve him with sincerity of heart;
for he lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

THE HYMN

Puer Nobis Nascitur

“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.**

THE CALL TO CONFESSION – SUSAN/BECKY

Isaiah proclaimed: Darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and God’s glory will appear over you.
Let us acknowledge the darkness of our lives,
repent of our sin,
and receive the light of God’s mercy.

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*in unison*) – SUSAN/BECKY

Let us pray.

**Merciful God, Light of the world,
we confess that we have not resisted the darkness of sin.
You deliver the poor and the helpless, but we have ignored their cry.
You take pity on the weak and the destitute,
but our hearts are hard in the face of their need.
You heal the wounded and save the oppressed
but we place our trust in callous violence and numerous lies.
Forgive us, we pray.
Awaken in us sincere repentance that we may shine
with the light of your saving grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

THE SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS – SUSAN/BECKY

Beloved of God, thrill and rejoice in God's goodness.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

THE WORDS OF WELCOME – SUSAN/BECKY

The Greetings Among the People of God

Introduce yourself and welcome again.

The Concerns of the Church

Congregational Meeting this morning at 9:30 am via Zoom.

Emphasize the new adult study that begins this Wednesday.

WE HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF NEW LIFE

THE PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING – SUSAN/BECKY

As we open the pages of Scripture, let us pray that the Spirit of God will be with us, opening our eyes and our ears in order for us to have a fuller and more complete understanding of what God is saying to us.

O God, nations shall come to your light and rulers to the brightness of your dawn.
By the compelling radiance of your Spirit, draw near to us, reveal your truth,
and teach us faithful obedience to your holy Word. Amen.

THE LESSON FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES – SUSAN/BECKY Isaiah 60:1-6

The first lesson for the day is taken from the prophecy of Isaiah.

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;

your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

THE PSALM OF THE DAY – SUSAN/BECKY

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

The Psalm for the day is verses taken from Psalm 72.
Please join me in reading these words.

- One Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;
**All that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;
that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the little hills bring righteousness.**
- One He shall defend the needy among the people
and shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
**All He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.**
- One He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.
In his time shall the righteous flourish;
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
**All The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute,
and the rulers of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.**
- One All kings shall bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.
**All For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress,
and the oppressed who has no helper.**
- One He shall have pity on the lowly and poor
and shall preserve the lives of the needy.
**All He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.**

THE SPECIAL MUSIC

"Coventry Carol"

arr. Charles Maggs

THE LESSON - KEVIN

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea,
wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child

who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

THE SERMON

Kevin Scott Fleming

“Conundrum of Kings”

WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF NEW LIFE

A TIME OF INTENTIONAL SILENCE

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH – SUSAN/BECKY

As God’s people, let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ.

**Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation;
in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible.
All things have been created through him and for him.
He himself is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.
He is head of the body, the church;
he is the beginning,
the firstborn of the dead,
so that he might come to have first place in everything.**

**For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.**

Col. 1:15–20

THE MORNING OFFERING – SUSAN/BECKY

As our focus for ministry in this new year is directed beyond our walls,
our gifts have renewed purpose and importance.
The world is hurting.
There is hunger. There is sickness. There is unemployment.
There is frustration. There is violence. There is injustice.
Our work could not be clearer. Our calling could not be more profound.

The magi brought gifts to Christ at his nativity
and offered their lives in worship.
With thankful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Let us pray:

Loving God, we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ,
through whom we have become fellow heirs,
members of the same body and sharers in your promise.
Receive the gifts we offer in unions with Christ our brother,
and help us to live to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.

You may give online at <http://firstpresevansville.com/giving/>

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Sharing of Joys and Concerns
The Spoken Prayers

With the boldness and confidence of God's children,
let us pray, saying,

One Gracious God, Lord of light,
All **Hear our prayer.**

Loving God, in Christ you embrace people of every nation
and make them members of the same body,
sharers in the promise of the gospel.
For the holy church of God,
that through its faithful witness
the wisdom of God in its rich variety
be known in heaven and earth.
Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, you judge the people with righteousness
and the poor with justice.

For nations, rulers, and authorities
to forsake violence and be guided by the light of truth,
that righteousness may flourish
and justice abound in every land.

Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God of ages, in your sight nations rise and fall,
and pass through times of peril.

Now when our land is troubled be near to judge and save.

May leaders be led by your wisdom;
may they search your will and see it clearly.

If we have turned from your way,
help us to reverse our ways and repent.

Give us your light and your truth to guide us.

Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, wise men from afar came to visit the holy family
and found a place of rest and worship.

For our city of Evansville, and all the places we call home,
that we may be a community of hospitality
welcoming the stranger,
and sheltering the refugee,

Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, in your providence, the land yields prosperity
for the people that righteousness may prevail in the land.

For our planet earth,
that we may dwell peacefully with nature,
be good stewards of its resources,
and share its abundance for the sake of human flourishing.

Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, you defend the cause of the poor and give
deliverance to the needs, and save those who are oppressed.

For those who suffer the cruelty of poverty,
and all who endeavor to transform systems
of economic injustice,

Gracious God, Lord of light,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, you take pity on the weak.
For those who are enfeebled by disease
or whose spirits are debilitated by illness,
that they may be restored to wholeness of life.
Gracious God, Lord of light,
Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, because you have called us your children,
we are bold to ask for what we need,
confident in your goodness.
Hear the prayer we offer from the silence of our hearts.

The Silent Prayers
The Lord's Prayer (*in 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.**

WE DISPERSE TO SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS OF NEW LIFE

THE HYMN

"As with Gladness Men of Old"

Dix

**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.**

**As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed,
There to bend the knee before Him whom heaven and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet ever seek Thy mercy seat.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at that 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.**

**Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
There they need no star to guide, where no clouds Thy glory hide.**

THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World”

arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

Leading worship this morning:

Pastor Rev. Kevin Scott Fleming
Liturgists Susan Colman (8:30), Becky Sparks-Thissen (10:30)
Director of Music Robert Nicholls
The Handbell Choir of First Presbyterian Church, Mark G. Fox, Director

Happening at First Presbyterian Church

The **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** is today at **9:30 a.m.** for the purpose of electing officers for the class of 2023 and approving changes to the pastor’s compensation. All members of First Presbyterian are welcome to attend via Zoom; the link was shared via email prior to the meeting.

Join **Kevin Fleming on Zoom** for a 12-session discussion of Morgan Guyton’s challenging book, ***How Jesus Saves the World from Us* on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. starting January 13.** It is a powerful, eye-opening treatise that should change the way we think about and practice our faith. You can purchase a copy of the book from Amazon (or your favorite bookseller) or order one from the church (\$14). See the Forms tab on the First Web homepage or contact the church office to register. When you register for the study, you will be sent a link to join via Zoom.

The congregations of One God One Community join with other congregations across the country for a **national moment of unity and remembrance** as part of a memorial to remember and honor lives lost to COVID-19, with the ringing of the church-bells on **Tuesday, January 19, at 4:30 p.m.** Join us online on the church’s website (firstpresevansville.com) or Facebook page.

We continue to offer thirty minutes of **music on Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.** Robert and occasional guests will use the various instruments in the sanctuary to provide you with music at the midday on the church’s website and Facebook page. You can also see all of the previous recitals on the church’s YouTube page.

This week’s **daily reading schedule** includes:

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| Sunday, January 10 | John 1:29-34 |
| Monday, January 11 | John 1:1-18 |
| Tuesday, January 12 | John 1:19-28 |
| Wednesday, January 13 | John 1:29-42 |
| Thursday, January 14 | John 1:43-51 |
| Friday, January 15 | John 2:1-12 |
| Saturday, January 16 | John 2:13-22 |