

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

January 6, 2019 10:00 AM

Epiphany Sunday

PRELUDE *Sinfonia* – J. S. Bach Adam Peithmann

WELCOME Rev. Kevin Pleas

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME OF SILENCE

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL

INTROIT *As With Gladness* Chancel Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

LEADER: Blessings to God, who gives hope in the darkness of our lives.

PEOPLE: **Blessings to Jesus Christ, who reveals God's love unto the world.**

LEADER: Blessings to the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to be a light for others.

PEOPLE: **Blessings, honor, and glory to God, today and forever. Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN NO. 176 *Sing of God Made Manifest*

OPENING PRAYER (UNISON)

Lord God of the nations, we have seen the star of your glory rising in splendor. The radiance of your incarnate Word pierces the night that covers the earth and signals the dawn of justice and peace. May his brightness illumine our lives and beckon all nations to walk as one in your light. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, God forever and ever. Amen.

TIME WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

OFFERING FOR OUR CHILDREN'S MISSION PROJECT

SCRIPTURE READING: Proverbs 17:17 & 18:24 (CEB)

"Friends love all the time, and kinsfolk are born for times of trouble."

"There are persons for companionship, but then there are friends who are more loyal than family."

MESSAGE: Through the Dark Forest

CLOSING PRAYER

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Barbara Papagian

LEADER: God, in your mercy

PEOPLE: **Hear our prayer**

SILENT MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

In this time of quiet rev'ence, God, fill us now with everlasting peace, and may each and ev'ry day we live bring true faith in your abiding love.

OUR MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY – To the tune of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts;

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)

Loving and receptive God, creator of a Bethlehem birth and sustainer of the whole human family, we come to you seeking to be wise women and wise men. Like the gifts of those travelers long ago, may our gifts be a sign that wisdom is marked by an offering of self and substance to the Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 1:1-18

Sam Knowles

SERMON

The Light and the Darkness

Rev. Kevin Pleas

THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive the sacrament, members and visitors.

We serve non-alcoholic grape juice, bread and a gluten-free alternative, usually rice cakes.

CHORAL ANTHEM *In Remembrance of Me* – arr. Robert F. Douglas Chancel Choir
(text from hymn no. 403)

INVITATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Light of the World: you gave us the transforming birth of the child Jesus as a light for our path. Yet we confess that we shut our eyes to the light. We admit that we do not want to see the gift you have given us. We acknowledge our reluctance to see and share our gifts with our sisters and brothers. We are often dazzled by the glitter and tinsel the world has made of Christ's birth. We ask that your Spirit be lit within us, that we may share your gifts of peace and justice with all people. We seek to receive, and return the gift of Christ's birth and death, again and again. For it is in his name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, O God, that you have come to us through Jesus Christ, both in the midst of time and history in the city of Bethlehem, and in the timeless presence of Christ's Spirit as we receive the gifts of bread and wine. Send us out into the world rejoicing, ready to share your love with the people we meet; through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

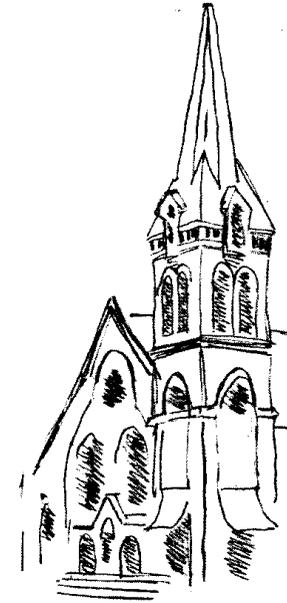
*CLOSING HYMN NO. 124 *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Fugue in G Major* – J. S. Bach

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

First Congregational Church



January 6, 2019

Manchester, New Hampshire
United Church of Christ

508 Union Street, Manchester, NH * 603-625-5093
Sunday Worship 10:00 AM (9:30 Summer)

You are welcome here!
An Open & Affirming Congregation