



*A Service of Worship for
Epiphany Sunday
2 January 2022*

This is not any map you know.

Forget longitude.

Forget latitude.

Do not think of distances
or of plotting the most direct route.

Astrolabe, sextant, compass:
these will not help you here.

This is the map
that begins with a star.

This is the chart
that starts with fire,
with blazing,
with an ancient light
that has outlasted
generations, empires,
cultures, wars.

Look starward once,
then look away.

Close your eyes
and see how the map
begins to blossom
behind your lids,
how it constellates,
its lines stretching out
from where you stand.
You cannot see it all,
cannot divine the way
it will turn and spiral,
cannot perceive how
the road you walk
will lead you finally inside,
through the labyrinth
of your own heart and belly
and lungs.

But step out
and you will know
what the wise who traveled
this path before you knew:
the treasure in this map
is buried
not at journey's end
but at its beginning.

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

“The Old Year Now Hath Passed Away”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #56

The First Nowell

“The First Nowell”

+Opening Sentences

Leader: Out of the stars in their flight, out of the dust of eternity
Here we have come,
Stardust and sunlight, mingling through time and space.

**People: Out of the stars we have come, up from time;
Out of the stars we have come.**

Leader: Time out of time before time in the vastness of space,
Earth spun to orbit the sun,
Earth with the thunder of mountains reborn,
The boiling of seas.

**People: Earth warmed by sun, lit by sunlight:
This is our home;
Out of the stars we have come.**

Leader: Mystery hidden in mystery, back through all time;
Mystery rising from rocks in the storm and the sea.

**People: Out of the stars, rising from rocks and the seas,
Kindled by sunlight on earth arose life.**

Leader: Ponder this thing in your heart; ponder with awe:
Out of the sea to the land, out of the shallows came ferns.

Words of Assurance

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn #53

“What Child Is This”

Greensleeves

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Maurice Duruflé
(1902-1986)

“Prelude to the Introit of Epiphany”

+Prayer of Dedication

**Although the beckoning star
heeded by the wise travelers long ago
no longer leads the way,
The manger-born Christ is still
to be found and followed.
We are not brought to our knees in surprise
as were those journeyers of old,
Yet our desire to worship can be as deep as theirs.
And though we do not bear gifts of gold,
frankincense, and myrrh,
We offer ourselves and what we have.
The story continues. The good news abounds.
There is a living Christ to discover and worship and serve.
Let us rejoice and be glad!**

*Doxology

Old Hundredth

*Praise God the Source of life and birth.
Praise God the Word, who came to earth.
Praise God the Spirit, holy flame,
All glory, honor to God's name! Amen.*

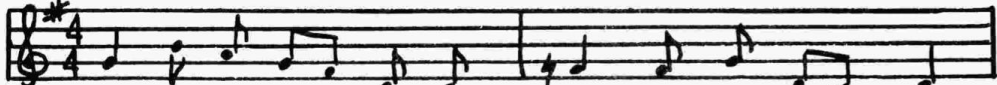
+Affirmation of Faith

**Peacemaking doesn't mean passivity.
It is the act of interrupting injustice
without mirroring injustice,
the act of disarming evil
without destroying the evildoer,
the act of finding a third way that is
neither fight nor flight but the careful,
arduous pursuit of reconciliation and justice.
It is about a revolution of love
that is big enough to set both the oppressed
and the oppressors free.
Peacemaking is about being able to
recognize in the face of the oppressed our own faces,
and in the hands of the oppressors our own hands.**

†Closing Hymn

Brightest and Best

Reginald Heber Kentucky Folk Hymn

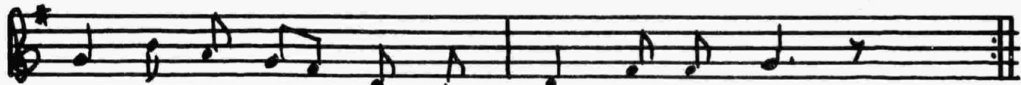


1. Hail the blest morn! See the Great Me - di - a - tor
Shep - herds, go wor - ship the Babe in the man - ger;

2. Cold on his cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing,
An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,

3. Shall we not yield Him in cost - ly de - vo - tion,
Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,

4. Vain - ly we off - er each am - ple ob - la - tion,
Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion,



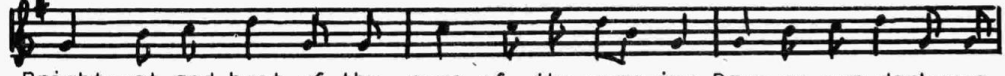
Down from the re - gions of Glo - ry de - scend!
Lo, for a guard the bright an - gels at - tend.

Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Ma - ker and mon - arch and Sa - viour of all.


O - dors of E - dom, and off - 'rings di - vine,
Myrrh from the for - est, and gold from the mine?

Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure;
Dear - er to God are the gifts of the poor.


Refrain:



Bright - est and best of the sons of the morn - ing, Dawn on our darkness ^{and}



lend us thine aid; Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,



Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.

Benediction

Postlude

Daniel Pinkham
(1923-2006)

“And All the Bells Rang Out the Good News” No. 7 from Versets for Small Organ

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **David Ramsey**.

Our Epiphany banners were created by **Nancy Henry**.

Our pastoral prayer is given by Deacon **Joyce Courtois**.

The Call to Worship is from *Circle of Grace* by Jan Richardson.

The Opening Sentences are from *Singing the Living Tradition, the 1993 Unitarian Universalist Hymnal* by Robert T. Weston.

The Unison Confession is by Jalal ad-Din Rumi.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Touch Holiness*, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C.

Tirabassi

The Affirmation of Faith is from *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* by Shane Claiborne.

Education 9:00 - 9:40 a.m.

Adult Education recorded education sessions will be made available on this page: [Adult Education Recordings](#).

Adult Education will not meet this Sunday, January 2. We will resume January 9 with the topic of Epiphany.

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website:

<https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>

Announcements

Calendar

Sun. Jan 2	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
Tue. Jan 4	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan 6	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan 6	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Fri. Jan 7	1:00 pm	Book Club, Zoom Meeting

Helpful Information

Visitor Cards: If you're a visitor with us, please submit a Visitors Card.

Celebrations and Concerns: If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please submit a Celebrations and Concerns Form.

Membership: If you are interested in learning more about Covenant, we encourage you to talk with one of the ministers or the worship leader. Email Office@covenanthouston.org.

Newsletter: To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to office@covenanthouston.org.

Office Hours: The church office is currently not open, but we are responding to emails and phone calls.

*Covenant Church affirms the sanctity, dignity, and equality
of human beings and the value of all life in the universe.*

*We welcome persons of all racial and ethnic heritages, all sexual orientations,
all gender identities, and all faith perspectives to our Christian community.*

*We stand for each individual's right to worship God and to respond
to God's call to ministry in her or his own understanding
of God's all-encompassing love.*

*We value a holistic approach to faith and seek to worship in ways that are
intellectually credible, emotionally stimulating, spiritually engaging
and contemporarily relevant.*

We value music and art and ritual to express what we cannot ever fully say.

*We value participation so that we might hear many approaches
to our shared faith.*

Covenant Church, an ecumenical, liberal, Baptist congregation

Members of Covenant, Ministers

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Jodi Bash, Director of Children & Youth

Director of Communication

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

David Lee, Interim Director of Music

Patrick Parker, Organist

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

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Pursuant to Section 30.07, Penal Code (trespass by license holder with an openly carried handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a handgun that is carried openly.