

First United Church

Sunday, January 2, 2022 -- 10:30 a.m. – Pre-Epiphany

Purpose: Building Relationships,
Living God's Transforming Love.

Gathering

Prelude: Rise Up, Shepherds, and Follow Spiritual, arr. Mark Hayes

Welcome, Announcements, Candle-lighting

Introit: What Songs were Sung John Jacob Niles
Beth Horst, soloist

Call to Worship:

The story is that, in ancient times, learned ones were guided by a star.

We too come seeking God's guidance, looking for signs of God's presence in many different places.

We are led by teachers and mentors and spiritual friends.

We are fed through the nurture of family and loved ones.

We are inspired when corporations and nations practice good stewardship and act justly.

We watch for your influence upon them and invite your Spirit to be at work in our midst.

Inspire us, O God, and lead us into your future.

Yes, inspire us, O God, and lead us into your future.

Prayer of Approach:

God of promise,

God of radiant Light, on this first Sunday of the year we join in worship to proclaim our trust in you. We come to worship with joy and adoration and our attentiveness. We come to experience the love and wonder of this blessed season. Unfold more of your mystery, that our minds and our eyes and our hearts may be guided by your light and focused on your wisdom for our own journeys. So we pray in the name of Jesus, Light of the World. Amen

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay akeeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. R

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. R

4 This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay. R

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. R

6 Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. R

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12

Nancy Lennox

Ministry of Music - The Three Kings
Beth Horst, soloist

Peter Cornelius

Story Sermon: "A Latter-Day Wise One"

Time of Offering:

Prayer of Dedication:

We too, like the wise ones, bring our gifts most rare. Hearts full of yearning, hands offering to help, outreach activities seeking to bring a ray of hope and uplift to peoples' lives, prayerful spirits, and financial resources to support the ministry of this congregation. May some light like that in the star that guided the wise ones be reflected and transmitted through our gifts. So may the love and transforming power of the Christ child be channeled to bring life and renewal to other lives and to our world. Amen

For God alone my soul awaits in silence.

Prayers of the People

Our Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kin(g)dom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil
For Thine is the kin(g)dom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen**

• **Hymn** "As With Gladness Men of Old"

VU 81

- 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 your splendour see.
- 2 As with joyful steps they sped,
to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before
Christ, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with eager pace
ever seek your throne of grace.
- 3 As they offered gifts most rare
at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to you, our heavenly King.
- 4 Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds your glory hide.
- 5 In the heavenly country bright
none shall need created light;
you its light, its joy, its crown,
you its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing
hallelujah to our King.

• **Blessing**

Postlude – Noël Suisse (abridged)

Louis Claude Daquin