

EPIPHANY 2021 WORSHIP VIDEO



Greeting

Rev. Chad Abbott

Call To Worship

*Call to Worship written by Sarah Are/used with permission and license from Sanctified Art LLC/
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Rebecca Braganza and Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette

One: The Magi had a dream.

**All: They dreamed of a Messiah.
They dreamed of just rulers.
They dreamed of a new day for all people.**

One: The Magi had a dream,
and this dream led them to action.

**All: They journeyed to unknown places.
They followed a star. They walked for days to get to Jesus.**

One: So may we be like the Magi,

**All: May our dreams inspire action.
May we worship the one true God. Amen.**

Prayer Of Illumination

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Rev. Nikki Shaw

God of the Milky Way,
We, like the Magi, are walking toward you.
One foot in front of the other, we are walking toward you.
It is our very prayer to move your way.
So if you can, leave the light on and the front door unlocked.
Leave a fire in the hearth and food on the stove.
And when we start to get lost or doubt our dreams,
Give us the will to persevere.
We are walking toward you, O God.
So like the parent that throws open the door,
Open the door to us through this text.
Amen.

Special Music “Arise, Your Light Is Come”

The Mayflower Quartet

from First Congregational UCC, Indianapolis, Indiana:

Meagan Johnson, soprano

Alice Rutherford, alto

Sean Baker, baritone

Sean Baker, orchestra on keyboard

Children’s Sermon

Christy Pursell

Scripture Reading Matthew 2: 1-12, NRSV

Lynnette Schuepbach

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, **2** 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.” **3** When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4** and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 ‘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.’”

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8** 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.” **9** 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. **10** When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11** 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Special Music **“In the Bleak of Midwinter”**
Violinist, Rev. David Long-Higgins

Sermon **“Unexpected Gifts in An Unexpected Time”**
Rev. Andrew Warner, Rev. Shana Johnson, Rev. Chad Abbott,
and Rev. David Long-Higgins

Generosity Moment
Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

Star Words
Rev. Shana Johnson

The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Rev. Chad Abbott, Rev. David Long-Higgins, and Rev. Shana Johnson

Invitation to the Table

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Can you remember the first time you saw a shooting star,
or the first time you saw the Milky Way?
There is something so shockingly holy about it.
One minute it's a normal night,
the next minute the sky is taking your breath away.

I feel that same sense of awe here at this Table.
For one minute we are moving through our day to day lives,
And the next we're being told that this Table has room for everything,
And that at this Table all can be fed.
Where else in the world do we hear those messages?
It can take our breath away.

So today you will be invited,
as you always are, to come to this Table.
And you are not invited
because of what you have or have not done.
You cannot be invited because
you're a good Christian or a good person.
You are invited, simply because you belong to God,
and that is enough.

So come to this Table.
Come with your questions,
and your doubts, and your fears.
Come with your hope, your awe,
and your love for the world.

Come with all of you,
authentically and honestly.
For God is undoubtedly at this Table,
and God is inviting you.
Let us pray. . .

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

adapted Great Prayer of Thanksgiving originally written by Sarah Are/used with permission and license from Sanctified Art LLC/sanctifiedart.org

God of starlight,
There has always been something holy
about stars for us. We wish on them.
We look for them.
We celebrate when we see them
streaking across the sky on summer nights.
We map out their designs,
and consider glimpses of the Milky Way
holy enough for bare feet.

There has always been something holy
about stars. We know that.
You know that.
The Magi *must* have known that.

So today we come to you in prayer,
trusting that if you can paint the stars in the sky,
Then surely you can hear us over the noise.

So first we pray for people wishing on stars:
We pray for those for whom 2020
was a year full of hospital rooms and isolation.
We pray for those who lost love in 2020.
We pray for those who lost life in 2020.
We pray for those who lost a job, a home, or a sense of
hope in 2020.
We pray for parents forced
to homeschool children in 2020,
And for children who missed their
friends in 2020.
We pray for the milestones
canceled in 2020,

And for the breath that was stolen
in 2020.

However, at the same time,
We also say a prayer of gratitude
for all the stars you have left for us this last year—
The signs and mile markers of hope on the horizon.

For example, we could not have survived without
the birthday parades and the sidewalk chalk.
And oh how we needed the slower schedule,
and the family around dinner tables.
We thank you for the gifts of technology,
backyard gardening, and sourdough bread.
We thank you for every variety of essential workers,
from grocery store clerks and teachers,
to internet technicians and doctors.
We thank you for the quiet that came
with less cars on the road and less planes in the sky.
We thank you for protesters demanding justice
and for leaders like the late John Lewis
who refused to give up on a broken system.
In so many ways, 2020 was a turbulent year,
and in so many ways, you were there,
leaving stars in the sky,
painting hope on the horizon.

So today, in this new year,
we ask that once more you would give us a sign.
Pour out a double portion of your Spirit
on this bread and cup,
and on our star words,
So that these ordinary objects might provide us
a glimpse of something more.

For like the Magi,
we are seeking you.
Like the Magi,
we are looking up.
Like the Magi,
we just need a sign.
Guide our feet.
Show up in the mundane and the
extraordinary. Be in the stars in the sky
and in our everyday lives.
We are hopeful, O God.
We are hopeful as
the confidence of children wishing on stars. Amen.

Words of Institution and Prayer of Consecration

Partaking of the Elements

Prayer After Holy Communion

Special Music “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Members of Zion UCC in Delaware, Ohio

under the director of their Music Director, Mr. Brian White

Benediction

Rev. Shana Johnson

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of our individual Conferences**

**Our final video was edited and produced by Nick Luer,
a member of Friedens UCC in Irvington, Illinois
in the Illinois South Conference of the United Christ of Christ.**

**Thank you to all who took the time to participate,
record and be a part of this special project.**

**This worship service is a gift of appreciation and love for all of our
local pastors, musicians, worship leaders, and worshipers.**

**May You, the wonderful people of our Conferences,
be guided by the Divine Light of Christ’s love in every path of life.**

Wishing you a holy and blessed Epiphany,

Shana, Chad and Dave

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

in order of appearing

Rev. Chad Abbott,
Conference Minister of the Indiana Kentucky Conference

Rebecca Braganza,
Conference Administrator of the Indiana Kentucky Conference

Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette,
Minister of Search of the Indiana Kentucky Conference

Rev. Nikki Shaw,
Director of Communications for Indiana Kentucky, Illinois South and Heartland Conferences

The Mayflower Quartet from First Congregational, Indianapolis, Indiana
Meagan Johnson, soprano
Alice Rutherford, alto
Sean Baker, baritone
Sean Baker, orchestra on keyboard

Christy Pursell,
Executive Administrator of the Illinois South Conference

Lynnette Schuepbach,
Communication Coordinator of the Illinois South Conference

Rev. Andrew Warner,
Generosity Outreach Officer of the United Church of Christ

Rev. Shana Johnson,
Conference Minister of the Illinois South Conference

Rev. David Long-Higgins,
Conference Minister of the Heartland Conference

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer,
General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ

Mr. Brian White,
Music director of Zion UCC, Delaware, Ohio

Members of Zion UCC Choir, Delaware, Ohio