

January 5, 2025
ORDER OF WORSHIP

+ Please rise in body or in spirit

PRELUDE *How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*
Johann Pachelbel

WELCOME

CENTERING MUSIC *Christmas Star* John Williams
In the Style of Claude Debussy

CALL TO WORSHIP

How did you get here?

Left side: I walked, eyes looking up, following the star.

Right side: I ran, lunging for a love that is bigger than me.

Left side: I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender step.

Right side: I ambled like a river, caught up in God's flow.

I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

Tell me again. How did you get here?

I am here by God's grace and love's pull.

Welcome home. This is God's house. There is room for you here.

Let us worship our gracious God.

+HYMN The First Nowell NCH # 139

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

God of new beginnings, We admit that we often follow the well-worn path, simply because others have been there before. Sometimes this is holy and humble, but there are days when a new path needs to be tread. On those new-beginning days, O God, give us the courage to follow your star. Give us the courage to go home by another way. Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new direction for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor. For when you are doing a new thing, we

want to have the courage to follow. With hope in our hearts we wander, we travel. Amen.

MOMENT OF QUIET PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

PASSING CHRIST'S PEACE

ANTHEM *Beautiful Star of Bethlehem*
Adger M. Pace & R. Fisher Boyce/arr. Sheldon Curry

LESSON FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT Matthew 2:1-12

THE MESSAGE

HYMN We Yearn O Christ, for Wholeness NCH# 179

THE COMMUNION

This is the Table of the Lord and all who wish to receive here are welcome! We will receive first the bread and then the juice. Please hold each as you receive them so we might partake together.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE 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

CALL TO GENEROSITY

OFFERTORY *Carol of the Epiphany* John Bell

+DOXOLOGY (melody: Angels from the Realms of Glory)

All creation, join in praising God Creator, Spirit, Son.
Evermore your voice is raising to the eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

RECEIVING OUR STAR GIFTS

+HYMN Hark the Herald Angels Sing NCH # 160
(Jesus the Light of the World)

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

RESPONSE *Who Would Think That What Was Needed*
John Bell and Graham Maule

POSTLUDE *Toccata on "Light of the World"*
Jim Strathdee/arr. Jeanette Gross

Announcements

Welcome to the First Congregational Church of Wallingford! If you are visiting with us this morning, we extend a special welcome and greeting to you. First Church is a part of the United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

The flowers on the altar are given in memory of Fenella "Penny" Tongco Reyes Seichter on her birthday, January 5th, always remembered, always loved, by Jim Seichter.

Serving the church today: Michael May, Heidi Bonassar, Greg Whitehouse, Ushers. Lori Folk-Barron, Sarah Mather, Debby Voelker, and Louise Zemina, Sacramental Ministers. Rick Voelker, Chimes.

Today we celebrate **Epiphany Sunday**, the arrival of the Wise Men. You will receive your **Star Gift Epiphany Word**, a word to guide you on your spiritual journey in 2025!

First Congregational Church begins a year of celebration celebrating our 350th year of Ministry and Mission. We have many fun and meaningful events planned. Our first is a Kickoff Dinner Saturday, January 18 at the church. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for children 5-12, and includes dinner, entertainment, games, and fun. Children under 5 are free. Call the church office to order your tickets. (203) 265-1691.

Rev. Dr. Meredith Jeffers, Interim Pastor
Dr. Jeanette Gross, Minister of Music
Ms. Maureen Czentnar, Office Manager
Mr. Tony Annunziata, Sexton/
Ms. Madison Torre, Coordinator Sunday School
and Youth Ministries