

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Hours: Mon and Fri 9:00-1:00 and Wed 1:00-5:00

Church Office: 610-868-4441

E-Mail: bethanyunitedchurch@rcn.com

Web address: www.uccbethany.org

Matt Miller, Consistory President

Susan Wright, Director of Music



January 14, 2024

“Moving Forward United in Faith”

“Committed to Christ, United by Love. We are about God, Christ, the Word, and the Future. No matter who you are or where you are on Life’s journey, you are welcome here. We are Bethany United Church of Christ.”

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 14, 2024

10:45 AM

If you are looking for a church home, we invite you to become part of the community of faith and mission here at Bethany.

**(*) PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE
(Bold Text is said or sung by everyone)**

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: "We Three Kings of Orient Are" ...Hopkins, arr.
R. Graham piano/organ duet

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: This is the fullness of time, the midst of the Christmas season.

P: This is the fullness of time, when we live the promise of Christmas.

L: This is the fullness of time, the cusp of a brand-new year.

P: This is the fullness of time, when we live our new life in Christ.

L: This is the fullness of time, the gathering of God's worshipping children.

P: This is the fullness of time. Give us your sense of peace and joy in this time and in this season. Let us worship with joyful praise.

*HYMN: # 184 What Child is This

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

O God, here we are together in this sacred place of worship. Declare to us today through word the way in which you would have us live. In this season of love,

help us love. In this season of giving, help us give. In this season of hope, help us to be hopeful. In this season of grace, lead us to graciousness. Forgive us when we settle for so much less than what you offer. May we come to see as you see, love as you love, share as you share, and live as you would have us live. In the name of the Baby Jesus, we pray. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE:**

Leader: Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" Let us offer each other a sign of peace. The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (unison): #229 The First Nowell. vs. 6**

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly lord, who hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with his blood our life hath brought. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

READING OF SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Psalm 72: 5-11

* Matthew 2:1-12

Leader: This is the Good News

People: Thanks be to God

SERMON: "What Do You Really and Truly Believe?"

OFFERING INVITATION

"When they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Through Jesus, let us offer to God a sacrifice of praise.

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES and GIFTS

OFFERTORY: “Behold that Star” arr. F. Cunkle
Chancel Choir

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE: #236 As with Gladness. Vs. 1 & 3

**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 splendor see.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude 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.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS, GIFTS AND
SELF

**Creator of all, during this time of year when we joyfully
and expectantly give and receive gifts, help us
understand what it truly means to receive the gift of
your only begotten Son. In turn, may we willingly give our
gifts to you—our time, our talents, and indeed our very
selves. Amen.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER – PASTORAL PRAYER

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For
thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

*HYMN: #233 We Three Kings Verse 1 and refrain, vs. 2 vs. 3 and refrain, vs. 4 vs. 5 and refrain.

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION: #235 Brightest and Best of the Stars. Vs. 1

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, dawn on our darkness and come to our aid; star of the east, the horizon adorning, guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

*POSTLUDE

Our worship ends, our service begins!



FLOWERS and BULLETINS are dedicated to the Lord with a prayer that he will guide us in the New Year as we, the congregation, seek to create church growth thru participation in community outreach while encouraging one another to provide opportunities for growth and fellowship at Bethany.

by Len & Rebecca Kesselring

GREETERS: Dan & Margy Sabetti

USHERS: Dan & Margy Sabetti

LAY READER: Diane Diefenderfer



Scriptures

Isaiah 60: 1 - 6 NRSV

60 Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶ A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD

Psalm 72: 5 – 11 NRSV

⁵ May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

⁶ May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.

⁷ In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

- ⁸ May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
- ⁹ May his foes bow down before him,
and his enemies lick the dust.
- ¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts.
- ¹¹ May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.

Matthew 2: 1 - 12 NRSV

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.

AUDIO & VIDEO RECORDINGS If you or anyone you know would like to receive the link to the audio recording of the worship service, please let Bill Rumble know at wrumble@ptd.net. A copy of the bulletin is included with the audio link. Thank you, Bill, for making sure we are able to see and hear the services.

CHURCH CANCELLATIONS

If worship is cancelled due to weather conditions, announcements will be on TV Channel 69 – WFMZ. Also, if we have your email address, an email will be sent.

From the Secretary,

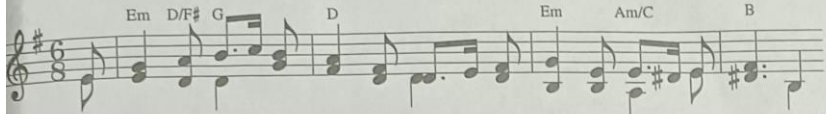
Since things have changed here at Bethany there will be some changes made to the office hours. I will still be here three days a week but some of the days and times will change. Starting next week January 8th I will work Monday from 9am - 1pm, Wednesday from 1pm - 5pm and Friday from 9am - 1pm. I will change the bulletin and answering machine to reflect these changes. As always it never hurts to call first if you are stopping by.

Thank you,

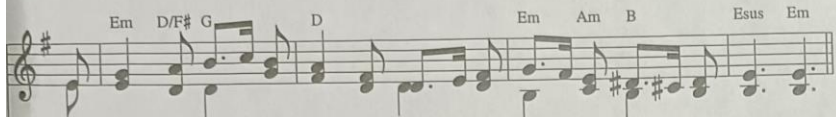
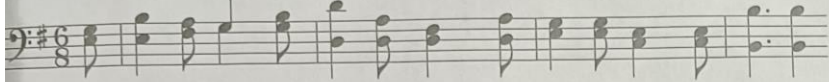
Debbie

What Child Is This

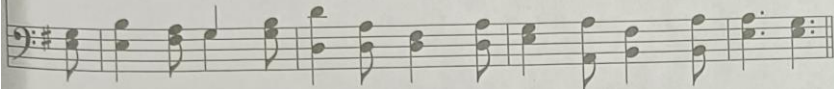
184



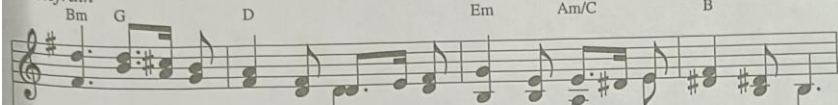
- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Ma-ry's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come peas - ant, king, to own him;



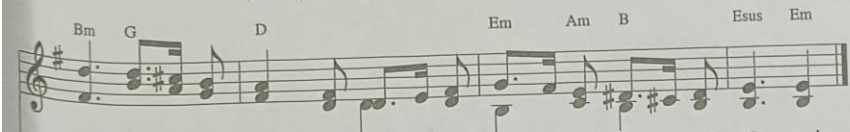
Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear: for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 the King of kings sal - va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



Refrain



This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the Vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!
 joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!

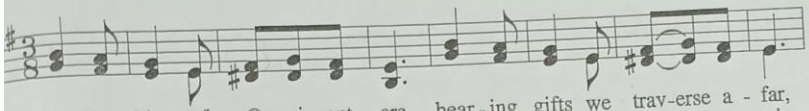


WORDS: William C. Dix (1837-1898)

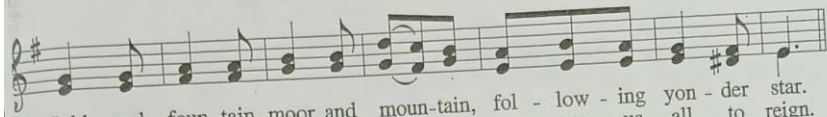
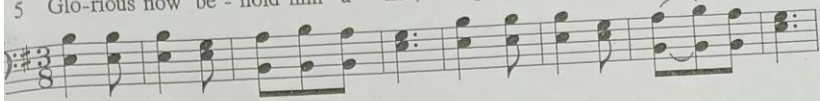
MUSIC: *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871

GREENSLEEVES
 8.7.8.7.Ref.

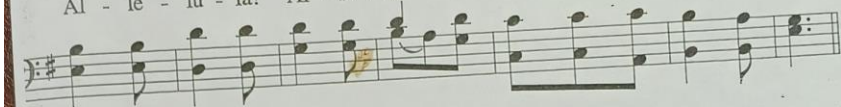
We Three Kings of Orient Are 233



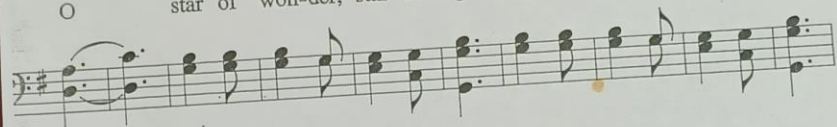
1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are, bear - ing gifts we trav - erse a - far,
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I, in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom:
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;



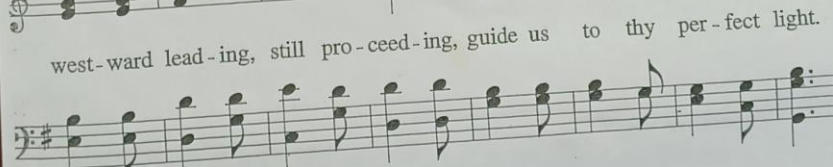
field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
prayer and prais - ing, voic - es rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God on high.
sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.



Refrain
O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.



The Gifts of the Magi

Traditionally these gifts have also been interpreted to have a specific symbolism.

The gold represents Christ's kingship; frankincense, a sweet-smelling resin used in worship, his priesthood; and myrrh, an ointment used in burial, foreshadows his death.

Myrrh is also closely related to the passion of Jesus, who was offered it as he hung upon the cross, "And they offered him wine mingled with myrrh; but he did not take it" (Mark 15:23).

This interpretation of the three gifts has been passed down since the first few centuries of Christianity and is held up as the primary meaning behind the gifts, even though the Magi themselves may not have fully understood the impact of their Christmas presents.

Thank You

Bethany and her members would like to thank Len Kesselring for preparing and leading the service today. It is always nice to have someone step up and share their thoughts with us. Thanks Len!

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

TODAY SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

10:45AM Worship in the sanctuary with Len Kesselring
as worship leader.

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours
7PM Darts here vs. Holy Cross

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

1PM 5PM Office Hours
6PM Choir banquet in FH at the Café on 5th

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

7PM Consistory

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

10:45AM Worship in the Sanctuary with Rev. Dr. Dave
DeRemer. Please stay after church to help remove
decorations.

Choir party

**Today is the last day to sign up for the After
Christmas Party!**

**Don't forget your \$2.00 exchange gift!!! Party
time 6 pm this Wed. Jan 10th.**

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

TODAY SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

10:45AM Worship in the Sanctuary with Len Kesselring as our worship leader. Please stay after church to help remove decorations.

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours
7PM Darts @ First UCC

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

1PM 5PM Office Hours
5:30PM Handbell Choir
7PM Chancel Choir

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

10:45AM Worship in the Sanctuary with Rev. Dr. Dave DeRemer. Join us as we celebrate our first communion of 2024.

From the Secretary,

Since things have changed here at Bethany there will be some changes made to the office hours. I will still be here three days a week but some of the days and times will change. Starting last week January 8th, I will work Monday from 9am – 1pm, Wednesday from 1pm – 5pm and Friday from 9am – 1pm. I will change the bulletin and answering machine to reflect these changes. As always it never hurts to call first if you are stopping by.

**Thank you,
Debbie**