

Epiphany Sunday

Jan. 5, 2025

11AM Worship



Welcome to Seattle First Baptist Church. All are welcome.

We gather on the unceded ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people, past and present. With gratitude, we honor the land itself and the legacy of the First People of Seattle, the Duwamish Tribe. May we remember that the oppression of Native peoples is not a relic of the past, but continues today. And may we, through God's Spirit, repent and walk forward together, changing systems that discriminate as we live into authentic diversity and healing.

*If it is comfortable, you are invited to stand.**

Announcements

Pastor Anita Peebles

Prelude

“We Three Kings”
arr. JOEL RANEY

Christian Broughton

Call to Worship

Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

One:

How did you get here?

Left side of the room:

I walked, eyes looking up, following the star.

Right side of the room:

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

Left side of the room:

I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender step.

Right side of the room:

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

All:

I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

One:

Tell me again. How did you get here?

All:

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

One:

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

All:

Let us worship our gracious God.

***Hymn 159**

“As with Gladness Those of Old”

DIX

Time with Children

Pastor Anita Peebles

Scripture

ISAIAH 43:16-21 (NRSVUE)

Norah Walker

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down; they cannot rise; they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Reader: For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us, and for the word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Call to Giving

Megan Walker

***Hymn 157**

“Brightest and Best”

MORNING STAR

Prayer

Pastor Anita Peebles

Anthem

“Carols For Seekers”

Sanctuary Choir

arr. JOSEPH M. MARTIN

Seekers come to find the Promised One! Behold, His star is shining bright with glory!
Seekers, come! To earth is born a Son! Behold the wonders that the Lord has done!
See a sign blazing in the night, it calls us all to begin a sacred journey.
Diamond bright in the eastern sky is falling on the one true Light!
Shine holy light, with golden ray. Show us the morning star.
Life's darkest shadows drive away. Show us the morning star.

Scripture

MATTHEW 2:1-12 (NRSVUE)

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘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.’” Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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.” When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Reader: For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us, and for the word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon “Overwhelmed with Joy” Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

Communion and Star Words Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove
and Pastor Anita Peebles

***Hymn** “Magi, We of Orient Are” THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

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| <p>1. Magi, we of Orient are;
bearing gifts, we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.
<i>Refrain: Oh, star of wonder, star of light,
star with holy beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!</i></p> <p>2. Gold for thee in Bethlehem found;
gold, for each shall wear a crown.
Peace forever, ceasing never;
anthems of peace resound! [<i>refrain</i>]</p> | <p>3. Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns divinity nigh;
Prayer and praising, voices raising;
Spirit, who dwells inside! [<i>refrain</i>]</p> <p>4. Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone cold tomb. [<i>refrain</i>]</p> |
|--|---|

Benediction Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

Postlude “A Carol for the New Year” Christian Broughton
ALFRED V. FEDAK

What are star words? (from *a Sanctified Art*)

The use of star words, also called “star gifts,” is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year that has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. We have written guiding words on individual stars. During the worship service, we will invite you forward for communion and to draw your star. We encourage you to trust the word you have drawn and not to replace it. We invite you to place your star word somewhere you will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to your word.

There are several theological statements being made with star words:

The Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.

We trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words offer a

tool to actively seek and reflect on God's presence among us, both in the moment and in hindsight.

We recognize that it is often easy to miss God throughout our daily lives. Having an intention word to consider both in present days, as well as to reflect on at the end of the year, allows for us to see God in ways we may not have seen God before. This is the greatest gift.

We know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. We believe that star words invite a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful new way to connect with God.

By not looking at or sorting through the star words at their selection, we practice the spiritual task of receiving. It is not we who are in control in this moment. Instead, we trust that God is present, and we let go of our desire to cultivate or control.



Children are a treasured part of our community. Please find a Worship Adventure Packet or a Busy Box at the tables in the foyer. Children are free to use these resources in the pews or in the Wiggle Room, a mostly soundproof room on the north end of the sanctuary where young worshippers and people who need to move around can see and hear the service.

Every minor in the Wiggle Room must be attended by an adult.

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