



CELEBRATION OF THE GOSPEL  
 by the people of God  
 gathered in the meeting house of  
 Shiloh United Church of Christ

**Meditation**

*He is the Way.  
 Follow Him through the Land of Unlikeness; You will see rare beasts, and have unique adventures.  
 – From “IV Chorus” of W.H. Auden’s Christmas Oratorio*

**The Prelude to Christian Worship** . . . . . “To Follow The Star” . . . . . Ritter

**Welcome and Concerns**

**\*Call to Worship**

One: We gather in the Light that was before, is now, and ever will be.  
**All: We seek the Light’s ancient wisdom.**  
 One: We gather in the Light that is God’s continuing gift.  
**All: We live into the Light’s new wisdom.**  
 One: We gather in the Light that is our own, emerging anew each day.  
**All: We seek to share this wisdom, nurtured in the Light from Bethlehem’s cradle. Let us worship God!**

**\*Unison Prayer of Invocation**

**God of promise, open our eyes this morning, that we may see your light in the darkness. Open our hearts, that we may perceive your promises fulfilled in the babe of Bethlehem. May we, like the Magi, have a star to guide us on our journey. May this time of worship bring us closer and may the good news of the birth of light illuminate our souls. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.**

**Hymn** . . . . . “We Three Kings” . . . . .

**Witness to Our Sacred Story**

First Lesson: Isaiah 60:1-16  
 Second Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-12  
 Third Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

**Sermon**

“Take the Long Way Home”

**Piano Solo By Jessie Sechrist** . . . . . “*The Friendly Beasts*” . . . . . See Hymn No. 138

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Silent 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. Amen.**

Presenting our Tithes and Offerings before God

**Invitation to the Offering**

God’s Light is most obvious when we hold out our hands to give and receive together. So let us give from God’s Light within us and let us receive the blessings of God’s Light from others.

**\*Offertory Response** “Doxology” . . . . .No. 780

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, You heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self**

**Like the Magi who came to offer their gifts to the baby Jesus, we offer our gifts to you, O Compassionate One. May our financial and spiritual gifts become expressions of our love. With these gifts we give you the best we have to offer. Use these humble sacrifices to make your light shine more brightly in the world. Amen.**

**Sacrament of Communion**

**Hymn of Communion** . . . . . “*Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*” . . . . . No. 347

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH #887 A New Creed**

Leader: We are not alone, we live in Gods’ world.

**People: We believe in God:**

**Who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
The Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and other by the Spirit.  
We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**To celebrate God’s presence,  
To love and serve others,  
To seek justice and resist evil,  
To proclaim Jesus,  
crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone. Thanks be to God.  
Amen.**

**Invitation**

One: Jesus Christ said: I am the bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger; you who believe in me shall never thirst.

**All: In company with all who hunger for spiritual food, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the sharing of this life-giving bread.**

One: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God’s people.

**Confession of Sin**

One: God is present to us, but we don’t always feel it. God is good to us, but we can’t always accept it. Fact is, there are things within and around us that attempt to step between us and our relationship to God’s goodness. There are things that we think, things that we do, that act to separate us from God. The church calls that “sin.”

**All: God of all mercy, I confess that sin grips me and I cannot break free. The sin is in my mind, on my lips, in my acts done or even ignored and stands between me and you. My entire heart is not always yours. My love of neighbor falls short. In the name of Jesus, have mercy on me. Grant me your renewing forgiveness. Lead me on your paths of righteousness, and I shall delight in you, and I shall follow you, giving glory to your holy name. Through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

One: The God who gives, gives all. The God who loves, loves all. The God who forgives, forgives all. Through Christ, our sins, everyone one of them: the sins of commission, the sins of omission, the sins we confessed with contrition – all are forgiven.

**All: By the grace of God, we are forgiven. Alleluia!**

**Exchanging the Peace of Christ** *(Please, wave to one another.)*

One: Let us greet each other in Christian Friendship.  
The peace of God be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

**Hymn** ..... *“Let There Be Peace on Earth”* ..... See Insert

**Prayer of Consecration**

**Sharing The Bread and The Cup**

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Hymn** ..... *“As with Gladness Those of Old”* ..... No. 159

**\*Benediction** *(those who are able, please stand)*

One: Go forth in the light of God’s star.  
Go forth committed to a journey of faith and courage.  
Go forth to give the precious gift of your life to Christ.

**All: We will go forth and let the star guide us.**

**We will share with others the journey of life.**

**We will praise God, for the gift beyond measure – Jesus Christ! Amen.**

**The Postlude** ..... *“The Light That Shines in Darkness”* ..... Peterson

**Prayers for Our Community of Faith**

Nancy Hamme, Helen Luckenbaugh, Stewart and Marie Wagner, Marguerite Lochman, Arlene Myers, Charlotte Rohrbaugh, Helen Byers, Charles Smith, Mary Emma Elicker, Catherine Lochman, Elona Ellis, Mary Ann Downs, Vanessa Seifarth, Bev Kirk, Julene Bechtel, Jim Bentzel Sr. Phil Myers, Joanne Overviller, Milton Hoak, Dottie Limbert, Donna Krone, Elva Winter, Mary Rodgers, Oscar Bupp, Bob and Margie Behler, Chuck and Sandy Baboian, Sandy Barnes, Staff and Residents at Providence Place, Audrey Gerber, Richard Gruver, Rosabel Bentzel

**Those Who Grieve for Their Loved Ones**

The Minck Family, The Fix Family, The Harper Family, The Arnold Family, The Krout Family, The Harman Family

**Prayers for the Week**

**Morning Prayer:** ( by Nylse Esahc)

As a child of yours, Lord, I know that I am your masterpiece though I feel so far from it. Help me to remember my worth in you when I’m faced with challenging situations. When I feel depressed, help me to remember that I’m fearfully and wonderfully made in your image – a replica of you and that you loved me so much you thought that I was worth dying for. I don’t know too many people that would die for me, but you did, and I’m eternally grateful and humbled. I submit all to you today. Amen.

**Evening:** (by Rachel Wojo)

Dear Father, I can’t sleep.  
I’m tossing and turning. Again.  
I’m so thankful You never grow weary  
And You never sleep.  
I’m thankful that You are here with me right now,  
Even when my mind won’t stop churning  
And my head won’t stop spinning.  
Even when I know that worrying gets me nowhere  
And my heart needs to rely on You.  
I need You — the Good Shepherd —  
Because counting sheep just doesn’t work.  
Would you comfort my heart as only You can?  
Will you rescue me from my own spiral of thoughts?  
For I know that when I rest in You,  
peace like a river overflows my soul and  
I can praise You in advance for sweet rest.  
Amen.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here at Shiloh UCC, where God is still speaking"

**THIS WEEK**

- SUN 9:15 **Second Sunday after Christmas/Communion**
- MON 1:00 Women's Guild (100)
- WED 9:30 Bible Study (100)
- 5:30 TOPS (100)
- THURS 6:30 NA Group (100)



- THE ALTAR FLOWERS are presented to the glory of God in loving memory of parents, Charles A. and S. Elizabeth Hoffman and sisters, MaryAnn Lehman and Ruth Hoffman by Donald Hoffman.
- LITURGIST: Natalie Fuhrman



**OFFERING** is continually being collected for our missionaries, **Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson**.

**THE CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor	Rev. Melinda LaMontagne, Ph.D. pastormelinda@shilohucc.com
<b>Pastor Melinda office hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</b>	
Director of Music	Stephanie Limbert
Organist	Sandra Bamberger
Missionaries in Costa Rica	Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson
Early Learning Center Director	Allison Hartnett
Administrative Assistant	Maira Rivera
Facebook Page	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/shilohuccyorkpa">www.facebook.com/shilohuccyorkpa</a>



**SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

January 3, 2021

John 1:1-18

**Another Road**

In a few days, Christians around the world will celebrate the feast of Epiphany. Like so many of our Christian observances, this one contains the seeming contradictions of human and divine. It is on the one hand an acknowledgement of the divine nature of Jesus, which was recognized by the Three Magi who came to visit the Christ Child. On the other hand, it is a celebration of Christ's appearance to all people, as The Magi are often thought to represent Christ's Gentile followers.

It is not uncommon to tell stories to try and make sense of our stories, especially the ones that hold contradictions like Epiphany. In Italy on this day, Italian Christians tell the legend of Befana. The story goes like this:

Befana was an old woman, who was renowned throughout the village for keeping the most meticulously clean house. All of her energy and time went into creating a beautiful home. When the three Magi followed the star through her village, they naturally stayed with her in her lovely abode. They told her about the Christ Child, whose star they followed. After a day's rest, the three began again to follow the star, and they urged Befana to come with them. Befana said no at once, for if she left the village, who would keep her house clean and neat? The more she thought about the Christ Child, the more Befana was compelled to see and know more about him. Quickly packing a bag of sweet treats and carrying a broom for the new mother, Befana hurried down the road. But the Magi had already gone on ahead. Although she hurried to catch up with them, Befana could not find the Magi and to this day she searches for the Christ Child. Although her search for the Child was not successful that night, on Epiphany Eve, Befana travels still, visiting each child in Italy. And for each child, she leaves a gift, because she now knows that the Christ Child can be found in each young person.

Questions for reflection:

- How does the story of Befana help you understand the story of Epiphany in a new way?
- How does this story embody the paradox of this season's celebration both of Christ's divinity and his ministry to all people?
- How can your life be a story that tells a story about the meaning of Epiphany?



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8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE  
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The Women's Guild will try to meet **January 4 at 1:00 p.m.** in room 100. Please be advised we will social distance and wear masks. We will work on the new book Bad Girls of the Bible, **Chapter 2: Bored to Distraction Potiphar Wife**. Joyce Mummert will be leading our study. ***We invite all women of the church to join us at any time.***



Yeah! There will be more singing at Shiloh UCC! The Worship and Music Committee is planning to hold **drive-in sing-alongs once a month on a Sunday afternoon at 1:00 PM!** (weather permitting) You can email any requests for your favorite hymns to the office to assist with planning. Please watch for additional information about these events on the church's website. Hopefully, you will plan to join the group!

**GROCERY GIFT CARDS = CONTRIBUTION TO CHURCH.** Weis and Giant grocery gift cards are available for purchase. For every dollar of gift cards purchased, \$.05 is donated to the church by the grocery store. This contribution is used to support our Missionaries, Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson in Costa Rica. Please contact the office if you interested in purchasing one.



**BULLETIN SPONSORS are needed.** The cost is \$20 and may be placed in your regular offering envelope. Please call the church office **2 weeks prior** to your date to have your "Special" wording placed in the bulletin.

**THE 2021 TEAM LISTS FOR GREETERS, USHERS, NURSERY AND OFFERING DUTY** are available in the welcome center. This will not be in effect unless we are holding in person worship services again. The lists may be picked up during office hours or you can request to have them mailed or emailed.

