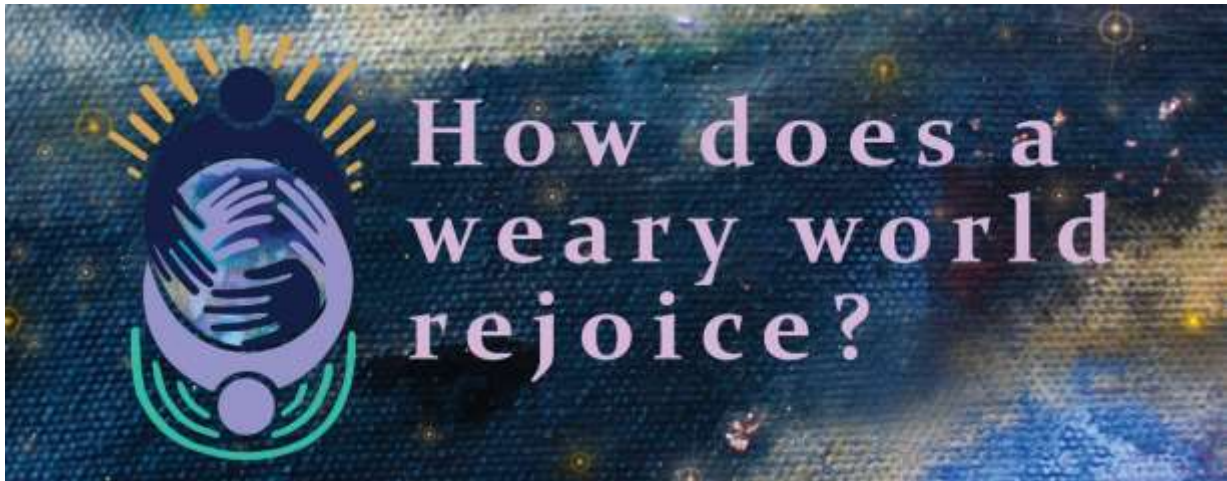


Old First Presbyterian Church



The Sunday after Epiphany January 7, 2024

Worship Through Praising God

Please fill out a guest card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate or give it to an usher.

Silence is requested as we prepare our hearts for worship.

** At the asterisk, please rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude	Improvisation on We Three Kings	David Holden (1911-1992)
Welcome and Church Life		The Reverend Erwin Barron
Introit		Shaker Melody
	I danced in the morning when the world was begun, and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth. At Bethlehem I had my birth. Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the Lord of the dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.	
		Sydney Carter (1915-2004)

***Call to Worship**

Rowena Richie

Leader God of the weary traveler,
our feet are dusty from the roads we've traveled
this past week,
this past year,
every day of our lives.

**People We've followed your star here,
looking for a glimmer of hope.**

Leader And now, after a long journey,
we set our baggage down.

**People We have arrived. We're here,
and we're on holy ground.**

Leader You may not show up where we expect you,
but we trust that you are here nevertheless.

**People Be known to us
in the hope of the star,
the peace of a baby snuggled in the manger,
the joy of arrival, and
Love that could not stay away.**

Leader We are here.
You are here.

**People And we are so very grateful.
Amen.**

***Hymn 151 We Three Kings of Orient Are**

1 We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

**Refrain O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never
over us all to reign.

3 Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh,
prayer and praising gladly raising,
worshiping God Most High.

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone cold tomb.

5 Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
sounds through the earth and skies.

**Prayer of
Confession**

Rowena Richie

**God of rhythms, we confess:
Our faith would not be what it is without rituals.
Unlike you, we depend on bread and water.
We have to return to this space again and again
to hear old, familiar stories.
For if we stopped,
we know it would not take long before we lost our way.
Forgive us for our fragility, and thank you
for giving us ordinary rituals and rhythms to hold onto.
With grateful and humble hearts we pray. Amen.**

***Assurance of
Forgiveness**

Leader

Friends, it is not enough to hear once a month or once a year
that we are forgiven.
We need to hear it every single week.
Every single week we need to be reminded
that we are held in God's loving embrace.
So hear this good news:
no matter where we are on our journey of life, love, or faith,
and no matter what we have done or left undone,
we belong to God.
We are claimed.
We are known.
We are forgiven.

People

**This is the good news of the gospel!
Thanks be to God! Amen!**

***Hymn 113**

Refrain Only

**Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

Offering

Ushers will now receive the offering. You may also make your offering electronically using the kiosk in the narthex or this QR-code:



Anthem

From *Christus*

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Soprano

When Jesus, our Lord, was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judea;
behold, from the east to the city of Jerusalem there came wise men
and said:

Soli

Say, where is He born, the King of Judea?

For we have seen His star, and are come to adore Him.

Choir

There shall a star from Jacob come forth,
and a scepter from Israel,
and dash in pieces princes and nations.

There shall a star from Jacob come forth,
as bright the star of morning gleams, so Jesus sheddeth glorious beams
of light and consolation!
Thy word, O Lord,
radiance darting, truth imparting gives salvation;
thine be praise and adoration!

***Hymn 134** **He rules the world with truth and grace,**
Verse 4 **and makes the nations prove**
 the glories of his righteousness
 and wonders of his love, and wonder of his love,
 and wonders, wonders of his love.

**Time with
Our Children**

***The Peace**
Leader Peace be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Worship Through Hearing God's Word

**Prayers of the
People**

The Reverend Erwin Barron

Prayer Partners

Diane Lewis, Betsy Lutz, Alfred Martin and Harriet MacLean, Larry
Marietta, Maryam, Dianne Middleton and Logan Donaldson, Cheryl Min

**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.

Star Words

The Reverend Lisa Robeck

Leader

Having prayed together, it is now time to receive our star words for the
coming year, 2024. During the music, we invite you to come forward and
draw a star word from the basket. If you're worshipping with us on-line,
please call or E-mail the church office to receive a star word for 2024.

Prayer

Leader

God of open horizons and open roads,
like the Magi so many years ago,
we are here, seeking you.

People

Step by step, we have wandered into this space
with the hope of feeling you in our midst.

Step by step, you have seen us, claimed us,
 and called us beloved.
 Today we have drawn star words.
 For some, these words are
 full of meaning, challenge, and invitation already.
 For others, these words are a blank canvas—
 inviting you into our lives.
 So as a new year dawns,
 we pray that just as you have spoken to the generations before us,
 you would speak to us again.
 Allow us to use these star words as a tool
 that might help us hear you more clearly.
 May they guide us,
 as the star guided the Magi.
 And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again,
 with mouths full of praise
 for the ways in which you have been present with us.
 Together we pray, with joy in our hearts.
 Amen.

Scripture Matthew 2:1-12

Leader For the Word of God in scripture,
 For the Word of God within us,
 For the Word of God among us,

People Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Reverend Lisa Robeck

Worship Through Responding to God's Word

***Hymn 150** As with Gladness Men of Old

- 1 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 be led to thee.
- 2 As with joyful steps they sped,
 Savior, to thy lowly bed,
 there to bend the knee before
 thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
 so may we with willing feet
 ever seek thy mercy-seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare
at thy manger rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.

4 Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed lives at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

***Charge and
Benediction**

Choir

KINGSFOLD

O sing a song of Bethlehem, of shepherds watching there
and of the news that came to them from angels in the air.
The light that shone on Bethlehem fills all the world today.
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth the angels sing alway.

Louis FitzGerald Benson (1855-1930)

Postlude

March of the Three Kings from *L'Arlesienne* No. 2, Farandole

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Old First Presbyterian Church

**Sharing God’s Love, Welcome, and Justice
on Our Corner, in Our City, and in the World**



www.oldfirst.org

415-776-5552

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Today’s Liturgy

The Call to Worship and the prayer for the Star Words are adapted from prayers by the Rev. Anna Strickland; the confession and Assurance of Forgiveness are adapted from prayers by the Rev. Sarah Speed; and the art on the cover is by the Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity – all three of | A Sanctified Art LLC: <https://sanctifiedart.org/>

Interfaith Food Pantry, January 13

Sign up now to pitch in when members of Old First and St Luke’s combine to staff the Interfaith Food Pantry on January 13. Of course, you can sign up for any or for every Saturday: Simply visit the sign up page by using the QR-code to the right or by visiting Old First’s homepage: www.oldfirst.org and following the link in the sidebar column.



This Week at Old First

Sunday January 7, Sunday after Epiphany

4:00 pm O1C: Sarah Cahill, piano, 20th and 21st Century Compositions

7:15 pm AA Friendly Circle, Fellowship Hall

Saturday January 13

9:00 am Interfaith Food Pantry: Volunteer today!
Simply use the QR-code to the right.

Sunday January 14

11:00 am Worship

2:00 pm Board of Deacons, On-Line

7:15 pm AA Friendly Circle, Fellowship Hall

