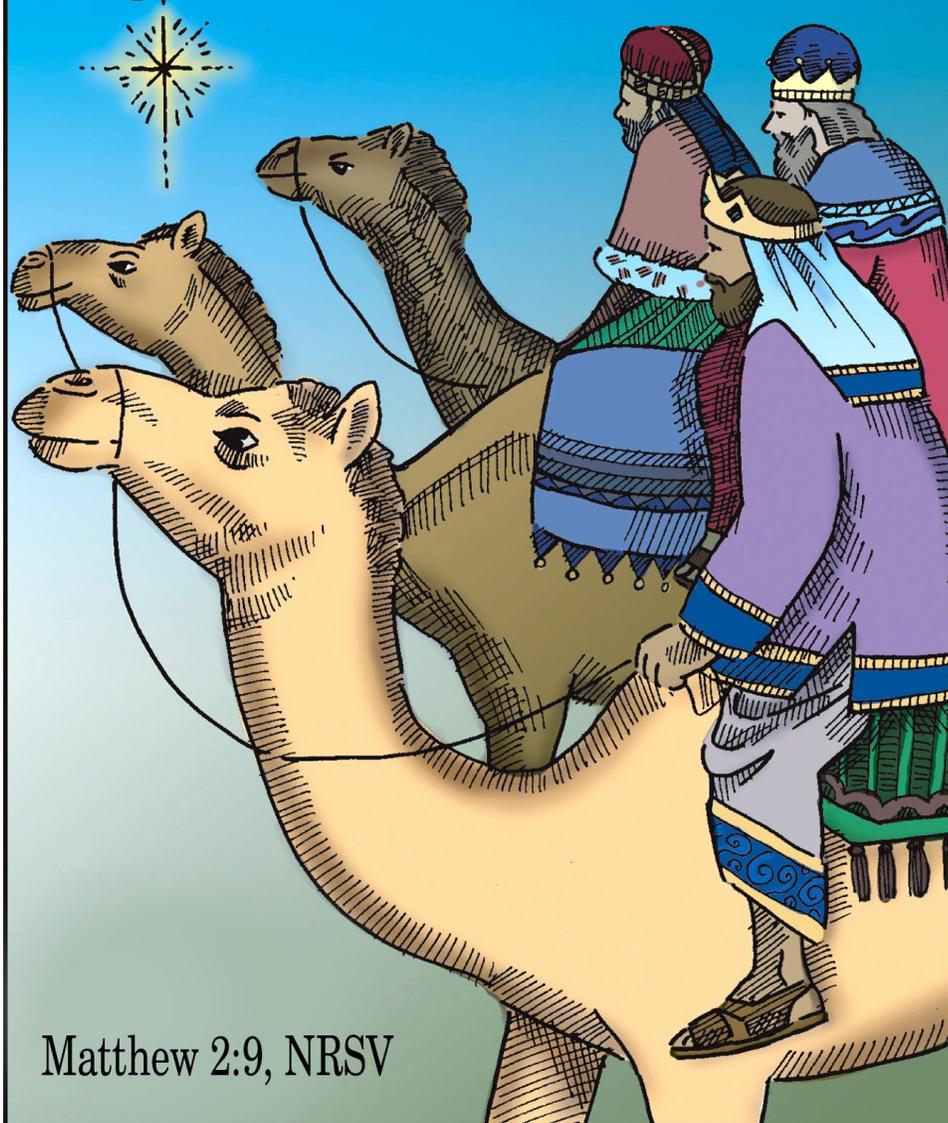


... and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.



Matthew 2:9, NRSV



Plymouth United Church of Christ Rev. David Huber, Pastor
2010 Moholt Drive, Eau Claire WI 54703 ☎ 715-835-5475 ☎ pucc.com

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Plymouth United Church of Christ

January 10, 2021

The Family of God Gathers

Prelude “March of the Three Kings” Lorie Line

Please let the prelude be a signal to prepare for worship.

Call to Worship †

L: We gather wondering, “Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?”

P: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of grandparents.

L: We gather asking, “Where will we find the Child of Christmas?”

P: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.

L: We gather wanting to know, “Where will we find the Christ who has come for us?”

P: We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.

Prayer of Confession †§

We search for your light, Star Caster, but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation. Our motives for seeking Christ are not always pure, expecting him to fulfill our desires rather than your hopes for us. We want the gifts of wealth, health, success, fulfillment, rather than those of servanthood, compassion, or peace. Forgive us, Shaper of our lives, that we are so foolish to put our needs ahead of your grace. Help us to be like those wise people of so long ago, who found hope instead of a destination; who found grace instead of gratitude; who found salvation instead of a sign. As we journey with your Son, fill us with his light of joy and love. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon †§

L: Grace has been poured into our hearts, love has flooded our souls, the light of hope shines in us: in Jesus’ name, you are forgiven!

The Sign of Peace

Now please take a moment and share the peace with those in your household and/or offer a moment to send prayers of peace to those you love who are not with you.

Centering Music

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

The Service of the Word

Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14

L: Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king’s son.

P: May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

L: May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

P: May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

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

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

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

P: May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

L: May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

P: For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.

L: He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

P: From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

Gospel

Matthew 2:1–12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 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.” 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 wise men 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 at its rising, 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.

Sermon

Musical Offering “Shine for Me Again, Star of Bethlehem” by Dan Carter

Lynn McFadyen, Nancy Schwarzhoff

Please mail your offerings to the church or drop them off at the office.

The Response to the Word

Prayers of the People

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, for ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn Verses 1, 2, 5

“We Three Kings”

**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.**

**Born a king on Bethlehem’s plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign. *Refrain***

**Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia, alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies. *Refrain***

Benediction †§

L: L: Go forth into the world. Proclaim the good news of Christ. Receive the inheritance of God’s promise. Live in the light of the gospel and may Jesus Christ, light of the world, uphold you in love!
Amen.

Postlude “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Deb Zehms, Hannah Zehms

† <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com>

† *Feasting on the Word* Worship Companion, Year B, Vol. 1 ©2014 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

§ Modified/written by Rev. David Huber

Worship Leaders

Pastor: Rev. David Huber • Ministers: All the people of Plymouth • Pianist: Lynn McFadyen • Liturgist: Barb Kleist

We of Plymouth extend to you our hand of fellowship and an invitation to become a member. If you are interested, or have any questions, please speak with or send a note to Pastor David or our Moderator, Barb Kleist. Our table always has room for more.

This Week at Plymouth

Sunday, January 10

Prayers for the People

Monday, January 11

7:00 P.M. Leadership Team via Zoom

Sunday, January 17

OCWM offering

Cross illumination for January is sponsored by Mike & Marybeth Tschumperlin.

We pray for:

- The General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ Rev. John Dorhauer and Wisconsin Conference Minister Rev. Franz Rigert, along with all UCC staff at the national and Conference level
- These individuals/families: Micah & Jennifer Adams, Jackie Andersen, Ben Bechle (Ben Schaenzer), Pat (Gary) Burnam, Kay Bussing

Who we are...

Plymouth UCC is an Open and Affirming congregation, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of every person, since we are all created in God's image. We welcome into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, ethnic background, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socio-economic background, marital status and background. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, humor, and blessings of participation in our congregation.

Spiritual Care Package

Question for Reflection

Warned in a dream of Herod's evil intentions, the magi "left for their own country by another road." What could it mean for you to take "another road" as the church concludes the celebrations of the Christmas season?

Household Prayer: Morning

Loving God, do not let my good intentions become a means of evil. Do not let my trust become cooperation with sin. Do not let my naiveté become an opportunity for wickedness. Make me prudent in acts of mercy, firm in my resistance to evil, and wise in my discernment of wrong, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Loving God, in the journey of life guide me by the star that leads to Jesus, that I may return to you transformed by his love. Amen.

God is still speaking,