

# Corbin Presbyterian Church



January 3, 2021

11:00 a.m.

## I Imagine

I imagine they packed bags—  
Water and food, blankets and clothes.

I imagine they hugged loved ones and said,  
“We’ll be back soon.”  
And when loved ones said,  
“Don’t leave,”  
“It’s risky,”  
“You don’t even know what you’re chasing,”  
I imagine they put lips to forehead and said,  
“There’s a light in the darkness. I must chase that.”

And then I imagine they walked.  
I imagine they walked until legs were tired and knees gave out.  
Maybe they told stories on the road and laughed into open  
sky,  
Or maybe they sat in silence and prayed for more light.  
However the road unfolded, I imagine it was not easy.

I imagine all of this, not because I’ve chased stars,  
But because I have dreamed.

And these dreams for justice make the Magi’s story my own.  
For every time we fight for justice,  
We start in the dark.  
We hug loved ones and say,  
“There’s a light in the darkness, I must chase that.”  
We walk until we’re tired,  
And then we keep walking.  
We laugh at the open sky as a form of resistance.  
We pray in the night for signs of more light.  
And no matter how important the journey is,  
And no matter how much progress we make,  
The journey to justice is never easy.

And so I pray,  
That maybe one day,  
We will be like the Magi,  
And will walk ourselves into the light.  
Until then, don’t forget—  
There’s a light in the darkness. We must chase that.

# Order of Worship

Prelude

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

Johann Sebastian Bach

1685-1750

## Preparing for Worship

“Epiphany” means manifestation or revelation. At the Epiphany of the Lord we celebrate the manifestation of God’s saving purpose to all the nations of the world. Just as the magi came from a distant land to worship the Christ child, God’s covenant of grace is extended to all people who believe the good news of Jesus Christ. The symbolism of light is important—not only because of that star that guided the magi, but as it suggests the bright dawning of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ. As Christians, we are called to bear Christ’s light in the world.

*Book of Common Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2018*

## Gathering Around the Word

### Opening Prayer & Announcements

### Call to Worship

The Magi had a dream.

They dreamed of a Messiah.

They dreamed of just rulers.

They dreamed of a new day for all people.

The Magi had a dream, and this dream led them to action.

They journeyed to unknown places.

They followed a star.

They walked for days to get to Jesus.

So may we be like the Magi,

May our dreams inspire action.

May we worship the one true God.

### Hymn

#### The First Nowell

#### THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

**Refrain:** Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,

Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

**Refrain**

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;  
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

**Refrain**

This star drew nigh to the northwest; o’er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.

**Refrain**

## Call to Confession

### Prayer of Confession

God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. We confess that our sin and pride hide the brightness of your light. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice; we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, and pour out the gifts of your Spirit, that forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### Assurance of Forgiveness

Response

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

### Prayer for Illumination

#### Scripture Matthew 2:1-11

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> 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." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> '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.'"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> 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." <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> 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.

Meditation

Those Who Dream...Persevere

The Rev. Lisa R. Eye

## Responding to the Word

Hymn

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
That hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain

## Offering our Gifts to God

*Offering plates will not be passed, but will be placed on the table just outside the sanctuary doors. Those worshipping from home may send offerings to the church at 601 Master St., Corbin, KY 40701.*

As the magi entered the house, they knelt in joy and paid homage to Jesus.

Opening their treasure chests, they gave gifts to him.

So we come today, offering from our own treasure chests gifts to Christ, the light of the world.

Response

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come and all, to own him.

GREENSLEEVES

The King kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby.

Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

## Prayers of the People & Receiving the Gift of Star Words

*On Epiphany Sunday, it has become a prayer practice not only to remember and give thanks for the gift of Christ, the light of the world, but also to receive a gift to guide us in the new year: a star word. There are many reasons behind this tradition.*

*First, we know that 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.*

*Secondly, we trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us.*

*Star words are one such lens that might provide us with a way to look for God in our midst, but actively and in hindsight.*

*Finally, we know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to contemplation. However, this prayer practice invites a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful new way to connect with God.*

*So, in just a few moments, as you receive the communion elements, you will be invited to pick up a star word. However, as we prepare our hearts and minds for this centering moment, let us pray...*

## The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

*The invitation to the Lord's Supper is extended to all who seek to follow Jesus Christ. This is not a Presbyterian table, but the Lord's Table. Members, friends, and guests are welcome to share in this feast our Lord has prepared!*

### Invitation to the Lord's Table

### Great Thanksgiving & The Lord's Prayer

O Lord our God it gives us great joy to lift up our hearts and give you thanks and praise....

And with the confidence of children wishing on stars, we pray as our Savior has taught us, saying: **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.**

### The Words of Institution

### Communion of the People

*All who are worshipping in the sanctuary are invited to come to the table, maintaining a safe distance from others, pick up the prepared elements, and return with them to their seats. Once everyone is seated, the pastor will invite all who are in the sanctuary and those worshipping from home to partake of the elements together.*

## Prayer after Communion

God of ink black skies and starry nights,  
like the Magi of many years ago,  
we are here, seeking you.

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

And step by step, you have claimed us, loved us, and fed us.

Today we have received star words.

For some of us, 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 you would be in our dreams and in our waking.

Allow us to use these star words as a tool to see you in our everyday life.

May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi.

And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again,

filled with praise for the ways in which you have been present to us,

and transformed to be your body in the world to serve you with great joy.

In the name of our Savior and Lord, the Light of the World, we pray. Amen.

## Following the Word into the World

Hymn

We Three Kings of Orient Are

THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

Refrain: O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;  
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;  
Alleluia, Alleluia sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

Benediction

Postlude

Bring We the Frankincense of Our Love

EPIPHANY SONG

## Corbin Presbyterian Church

601 Master Street, Corbin, KY 40701 \* (606) 528-1444 \* [www.corbinpres.org](http://www.corbinpres.org)

The Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor

Clay Howard, Director of Music/Organist

Mary Begley, Administrative Assistant

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CorbinPresby/>

Zoom link for worship: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83307369561?pwd=NUJocHNlNmNMZEtiOUdGRW0vcEwzdz09>

### Session

Class of 2021

Tom Fish

Bob Martin

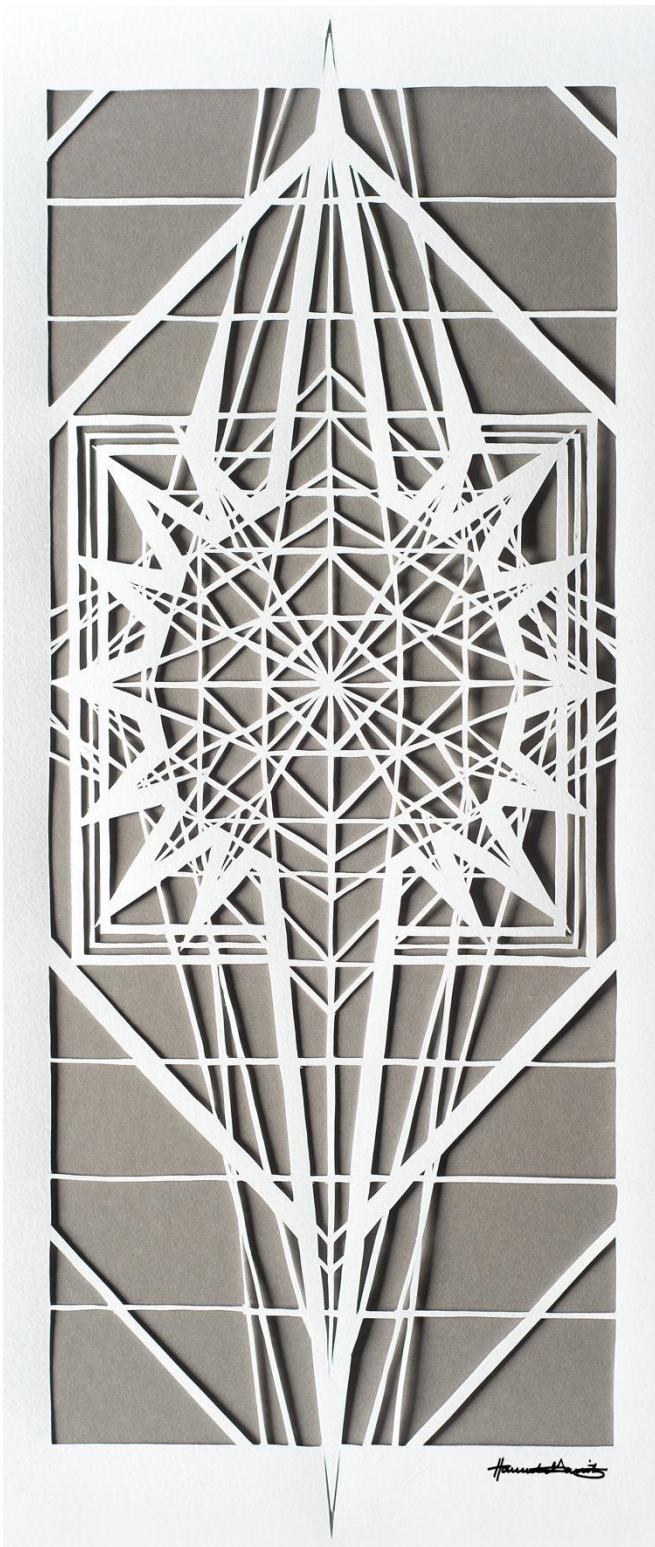
Class of 2022

Janet Martin

Doralene Webb

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am – 1pm

Rev. Eye may be reached by calling the Church Office or by email: [pastor@corbinpres.org](mailto:pastor@corbinpres.org)



## Another Road

By Hannah Garrity | A Sanctified Art  
Inspired by Matthew 2:1-12 | Paper lace

**Artist Statement:** This image is a meditation on the gift boxes spiraling out from the center of the Star of Bethlehem. The top of the central square opens as Mary receives the gifts of the three Wise Men. Multiple paths surround the star, portraying the wise decision of the Magi to return home a different way to resist the fear-ridden power of King Herod.

“When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him.” The power of fear is palpable; it is easy for a leader to share and to use to his advantage. In this story we are reminded of the wisdom that has been gifted to us by God through Jesus’ ministry—the wisdom to avoid imbibing and stoking fear. Knowing this wisdom to be true, and knowing Herod to be a leader who leads fearfully and by fearmongering, I wonder how often we humans can fall into this pattern.

We know the story well. The Magi’s decision buys time for Mary and Joseph to make a move that will eventually save the life of God incarnate. They choose to leave the country as refugees, to escape the oppression that Herod’s fear imposes on their child.

Can we combat the fear within ourselves—to see beyond it to the love and hope that are also held in every moment? With each decision, we first choose our lens. Can we make it our intention to see the world through love, not through fear?