

ADVENT IN PLAIN SIGHT

Finding the magic of Christmas in ordinary objects.



FIFTH AVE. UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

323 South 5th Avenue, West Bend WI 53095

First Sunday After the Epiphany/Baptism of The Lord ~ January 7, 2024

Polly Bertelsen, Liturgist

Dave Bertelsen, Congregational Song Leader/Choir Director

Deanna Gibeau, Accompanist

Rev. Clarissa Martinelli, Senior Pastor

JOIN US IN PERSON OR ONLINE ~ Sundays, 9:30 A.M.

WELCOME TO FIFTH AVE. UMC

We Are Glad You Are Here! We are so thankful that you have joined us today for Worship. We would love to get to know you and help you get to know us. Join us following worship for Fellowship Hour. There will be yummy refreshments and coffee and lots of *friendly faces*.

***Note: L - denotes worship "Leader"; P - denotes "People"**

~FAITH ON THE GO~

You can contact Pastor Clarissa at any time: you're going into the hospital; you would like a prayer said for you; you are not able to come to church for more than a month; you have a question or concern about something at church; your conscience is troubling you and you want assurance of God's grace; you're wrestling with a spiritual issue or have a question about something the Bible says; you have a friend or relative who wants to know more about Jesus; fellowship with the Pastor. This is not an exhaustive list. You can certainly contact Pastor Clarissa at other times too. In addition to Pastor Clarissa, Ellen Johnson, as our Lay Servant, is available to assist you in these needs as well. Their contact information:

Pastor Clarissa: 847-721-1826; Ms. Ellen Johnson: 262-339-7673.

~GATHERING GOD'S PEOPLE~

PRELUDE:

"In a Quiet Sanctuary"

Mercy Bartlett

GREETING:

Pastor: Come siblings of Christ as we celebrate Epiphany and Jesus' **BAPTISM**. We hopefully embrace the opportunity to marry the revelation and wonder of **EPIPHANY** with the affirmation of Jesus' nature as fully human and fully divine at his **BAPTISM**. We join the magi and the crowds as they encounter **LOVE** made flesh, dwelling on the earth in a simple home as a child and being cleansed in the **WATER** of a flowing river. Our Advent in Plain Sight series concludes with seeing God in **STARS** and **WATER** – surrounded by the love of the **ONE** who came to save the world.
All are invited; all are welcome!

~MEDITATION FOR GATHERING~

BAPTISMAL PRAYER MEDITATION:

Pastor: We take time from our busy schedules to reflect on the holiness of **BAPTISM**. We stand amazed at the wondrous works of God. God's goodness radiates through us as we experience the joy of coming into fellowship. We come with humble and willing **HEARTS**. We remember our **BAPTISM** and pray for all who will turn from their old life of sin to a new life in Jesus Christ. We pray that God will bring us and them into sweet fellowship found through **BAPTISM** and remind us of the truth that lies in its holiness.

CENTERING MUSIC:

“Adagio”

Lani Smith

CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: In the beginning, God...

P: Swept over WATERS, spoke light into existence, created day and night and called it good.

L: As the days and nights of creation filled with life, God...

P: Made humanity out of the dirt to love and tend creation, to be loved and tended by God.

L: As we lost our way, God...

P: Sent Jesus, Love Incarnate, to show us the way back.

L: On the day Jesus came to the banks of the Jordan River to be baptized, God...

P: Declared, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

L: Let us, then, follow Jesus into the waters, remembering our **BAPTISM** in which God...

All: Claims us as beloved children, the family of God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

L: Holy God, Eternal Spirit, we thank you for **BAPTIZING** us into one body in Jesus the Christ. Wash over us with your Spirit, that, like Jesus, we may serve you in serving humanity. **BAPTIZE** us with the fire of your truth, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

All: We are incredibly stubborn, O Lord. We have entered the season in which Your LIGHT has been given to the world, your blessings have been poured out on the world, and yet all we can think about is our own problems, our own needs, our own desires. Help us to desire you, Lord. Help us to yearn for your presence. Pour your BAPTISMAL waters over us again, cleansing us from our self-pity and arrogance. Nourish and heal us so that we may joyfully serve you. Wash away our jealousy, greed, and all negative thoughts and behaviors that stand in the way of our truly being the people you have called us to be. Again, let us receive the blessings

offered in creation, in the birth and baptism of Jesus, and in the ministry of the saints of light. We ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

L: The love of God is always offered to us, freely, joyfully, for all eternity. Rejoice, dear friends, this is the Good News of our Lord. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN:**

"How Great Thou Art"

UMH 77

~WE PROCLAIM~

***PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Genesis 1:3-5 and Mark 1:9-11 (Unison)**

L: Gracious God, give us humble, teachable, and obedient **HEARTS**, that we may receive what you have revealed and do what you have commanded. Amen.

All: Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

All: In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

CHANCEL CHOIR

"It's Gonna Be a Great Day"

Dave Bertelsen, Director

SERMON:

"ADVENT IN PLAIN SIGHT - STARS and WATER"

Pastor Clarissa

~EPIPHANY/BAPTISM OF OUR LORD HOLY COMMUNION~

All: We remind one another: Jesus welcomes everyone at this table. No one is turned away. If you seek God's presence, come and eat. If you are hungry for this spiritual food, come and eat. If you have questions and doubts, come and eat. If you feel unworthy, come and eat. This table is spread for all of us that we each might experience God's abundant and unconditional love. Come all are welcome. Amen

L: Gracious, life-giving God, as we who follow Jesus remember his **BAPTISM** long ago, may our lives be renewed, and our **BAPTISMS** confirmed afresh. And as we gather at Jesus' table, may we receive from your hands the gifts of earth and heaven. May this bread be for us his body, and this cup his blood, so that we who seek to live as his body in this world might be empowered by your Holy Spirit to follow him faithfully – from the **WATER** and into the world. Through him, with him, and in him, in the power of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor be to you, O God, now and forever. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: In his **BAPTISM** and in table fellowship Jesus took his place with sinners. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

By the **BAPTISM** of Jesus suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

We give you thanks, O God, for the mighty sweep of your love, that embraces all people and all nations. We thank you that you sent Jesus our teacher to us, who showed us the way to new life – a new life of love that gathers all of our diversity together in the one body in Christ. Bless this meal that we will share together today. As this broken bread was once scattered grain on a hillside, and then when gathered, became one loaf, so may we be brought together to make something wonderful. As this cup of the new covenant was poured out so that all might share in the signs of new life, so may our lives be poured out in compassion for our brothers and sisters everywhere.

Through the broken bread, we ourselves are broken open so that we might be open to God's spirit made manifest among us. Through the poured cup, we are inspired to pour ourselves out in generosity to the world. *And now with the confidence of your children, we offer the prayer our Savior taught us:*

All: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

All: We have been fed, Holy One, by your presence. We have been led, Eternal One, by your light. May we bask in this glow now and forevermore. Amen.

~PRAYERS, JOYS & CONCERNS~

Pastor: Lord in your mercy:

People: hear our prayer.

~PASTORAL PRAYER~

Pastor: God of grace and glory, you call us with your voice of flame to be your people, faithful and courageous. As your beloved Son embraced his mission in the waters of baptism, inspire us with the fire of your Spirit to join in his transforming work. We ask this in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

~INVITATION TO SHARING OUR GIFTS, TITHES, & OFFERINGS~

***DOXOLOGY:** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

All: God of redemption and new life, we focus once more this day on the greatest gift ever given -- Jesus, our Savior. At Epiphany, the story is told again of those who come before the young Christ child, seeking to give, eager to present the very best to this young king. In the process, they proclaimed what the religious world could not conceive: that this one Child of humble birth and stature, has come to bring God's saving love to all. As we leave one year behind and look with hope to the new year ahead, help us to live and give of ourselves as those who know every day what a great gift we have been given. May it move us to give our whole selves more freely! May we consider well how our giving proclaims God's love for all as we present our tithes and offerings. In the name of Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, we pray! **Amen.** (Genesis 1:1-5, Mark 1:4-11)

***CLOSING HYMN:** “Spirit Song” UMH 347

~SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION~

L As you go into the week ahead, may every water you touch be a reminder that you are named and claimed by God who binds you to this community of faith and all Christians of all times and places in love. **Amen.**

Pastor: Eternal God, you have come to us in Jesus Christ, given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. Bless us now with the grace we need to fulfill what you have called us to do. Renew in us, O God, all the gifts of baptism—strength for life's journey, courage in time of suffering, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the hope of new life; through Jesus Christ who makes us one.

***POSTLUDE:** “My Faith” Arr. E. Broughton

Please join us for Fellowship Hour in the lounge.