

**Astoria First United Methodist Church**  
*January 3, 2021*

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*Feast of the Epiphany*

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**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mary Frances**

**CENTERING MUSIC**

*“The First Noel”*

**Mary Frances**  
UMH #245

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**Pastor Michael**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Gloria Jones**

On this day, we remember the gift of God's Word, who gathers us together from the farthest parts of the world to worship in joy and hope. On this day, we remember the simple graces of the bread and the cup, those plain gifts shaped by God's love into nourishing hope. On this day, we rejoice in the gift of light. Come let us worship the God of light and joy and peace. We come to kneel at the cradle of the babe, the light incarnate. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

**OPENING PRAYER**

**Pastor Michael**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*“Ephesians 3:1-12”*

**Gloria Jones**

For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles, assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in[b] God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

**SPECIAL MUSIC***“A Star Shown Bright”***Mary Frances****UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION****Gloria Jones**

Most holy and most loving God, we admit to you and to each other, that we are creatures who either through foolishness or willfulness often choose darkness instead of light. Here and now, we surrender to you our fears and proud opinions, our short-sighted folly, and our pompous wisdom, our deep-seated sins and our apathy towards change and renewal. Please forgive the darkness and pain we have inflicted on others and restore the light-starved hopes and ideals within our own souls. Trusting your grace, we earnestly pray: “Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us through Christ Jesus our Savior. **AMEN**”

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION****WORDS OF ASSURANCE****Gloria Jones**

My friends, Epiphany is good news! God is revealed to the world. The Light comes not to sear and blind us but to save us. Christ Jesus came into this world to save all who miss the mark of God’s intention and God’s desire for our healing. In the Name of Jesus the Christ, I declare, your sins are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL LESSON***“Matthew 2:1-12”***Pastor Michael****SERMON***“And Then There was Light”***Pastor Michael****JOYS AND CONCERNS****Mary Frances****PASTORAL PRAYER****Pastor Michael****LORD’S PRAYER****Pastor Michael**

*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. And 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***

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**CELEBRATING HOLY COMMUNION**

*(Please remember to bring the communion elements of the bread and juice with you today)*

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**BENEDICTION:****Pastor Michael**

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## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**We welcome to our friends from the Warrenton UMC  
as they join us for worship.**

**As a follow-up to our recent Four Week Advent Study,  
We are beginning another study in the new year.  
Topic: Extraordinary Men and Women in the Bible  
Start Date: January 12, 2021 End Date: March 23, 2021  
Time: 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. by Zoom**

**We still need volunteers for liturgist each week.  
Please call Sue Hicks or Mary Frances Gunn if you wish to help.**

**If you want to provide special music – let Mary Frances know.**

**We now have recordings of the worship services available as a link.**

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