January 4, 2026
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Epiphany Meditation

The Epiphany of Christ is the revelation of God's light in the darkness, not only for Israel, but for all the world.

— Henri Nouwen

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ **January 4, 2026**
Joint Service **Greenfield 10:00am**
Epiphany of the Lord / Lift Up

Community News
Prayer List and Prayers of the People
Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

In this holy season of Christmas,
Christ comes to us again.
In this quiet, after the harried days of December,
God invites us to pause and reflect.
Our journey has led us here.
The Spirit is with us now.
Let us bow down as sages of old,
And worship Christ our King.

* *Invocation*

Christ of power and justice, help us embrace the power that comes from love, and guide us to seek the justice that love reveals. Open our hearts and minds, that we may hear your wisdom in this time of worship. Open our lives in the year ahead to the power and strength of your loving Spirit. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* ***"The First Noel"*** CH #265

Prayer for Yearning

Light of the world, we yearn to walk in the light, but the shadows are all around and oh-so-familiar. Pull us from the darkness of fear and gloom – familiar places where we hide from you, from ourselves, and from others. Shine upon us with your grace, and pull us forward with your love. For

we yearn for the courage of sages of old who left hearth and home to draw closer to you. Give us the passion to stand up for justice, to share our gifts and talents generously, and to offer our love unconditionally. For we long to build your realm upon this earth. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Arise! Shine! Christ the light has come, and this light will guide us well.

Old Testament Reading **Isaiah 60:1-6 NRSV**

The Ingathering of the Dispersed

60 Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
2 For darkness shall cover the earth
and thick darkness the peoples,
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
3 Nations shall come to your light
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

4 Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together; they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.
5 Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
6 A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Epistle Reading **Ephesians 3:1-12 NRSV**

Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles

3 This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for[Christ Jesus for
the sake of you gentiles, **2** for surely you have already heard of the
commission of God's grace that was given me for you **3** and how
the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above
in a few words, **4** a reading of which will enable you to perceive my
understanding of the mystery of Christ. **5** In former generations this
mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been
revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: **6** that is,
the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body,
and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of
God's grace that was given me by the working of his
power. **8** Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace
was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless
riches of Christ **9** and to make everyone see what is the plan of the
mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, **10** so that
through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might
now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly
places. **11** This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he
has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** in whom we have access
in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel* **Matthew 2:1-12 NRSV**

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.) **TH #497**

The Visit of the Magi

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of
Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, **2** asking, "Where is
the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his
star in the east and have come to pay him homage." **3** When King
Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with
him, **4** and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the
people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be
born. **5** They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been
written by the prophet:

6 '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.' "

7 Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them
the exact time when the star had appeared. **8** 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." **9** When they had heard the king, they set
out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in
the east, until it stopped over the place where the child
was. **10** When they saw that the star had stopped, they were
overwhelmed with joy. **11** 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. **12** And having been warned in a dream
not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another
road.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

*** Meditation Hymn** ***"Arise, Your Light Is Come"*** **NCH #164**

Today's Message

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic/Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

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.

*** Sung Response** *"Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"* TH # 501

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement
Offertory (MH)
* Doxology TH # 551
* Offertory Prayer
Gracious God, bless these gifts, that they may be as impactful as the gold, frankincense, and myrrh given to the Christ child by kings long ago. May our treasures bring honor to your name and support justice in your world. May our worship bring humility to our hearts, and may our time and talents bring love to life in all that we say and in all that we do. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Come to the table of grace.
All are welcome here.
Come to the table of love.
This is the feast of God's compassion for all.
Come to the table of joy.
Christ invites us to celebrate his presence.

* *Communion Hymn "Let Us Break Bread Together"* CH #460

Holy Communion Litany

Christ be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
Let us give our thanks to God.
It is right to give God our thanks and our praise.

Communion Prayer (responsively)

It is a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks and praise to you O God. You set a star in the sky to guide the magi and you warned them to go home by another way. And so, with all your creatures on earth and the heavenly chorus, we praise your name saying…

Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in God's holy name. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you O God and holy is your child, Jesus Christ who on the night in which he gave himself up, took bread, broke it and said, "Take, eat, all of you." This is the bread of life. Whenever you eat it, do so in remembrance of me." After supper, he took the cup saying, "Drink this all of you. This is the new covenant, poured out for the healing of the world. Whenever you drink it, do so in remembrance of me." Pour out your presence on these gifts of bread and cup and on the gifts of bread and cup on the tables in our homes. May they be for us the very presence of Christ in our midst. Pour out your presence on us, so that we may become carriers of Christ's light to the world. So, with grateful hearts, we unite our voices in prayer, using the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

*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.

Sharing the Bread and Cup — **Pew Communion**

Prayer of Thanksgiving (unison)

Most Holy God, in deep gratitude for this moment and this meal, we offer ourselves to you. Send us out to live as changed people; ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us and encourage many through us. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn* ***"We Three Kings"*** **CH #288**

* *Benediction*

Arise, shine, as you go into the world!
We will shine as we go into the world!
Shine with love and justice.
We will shine for all the world.

* *Three-Fold Amen* **TH # 558**

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

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