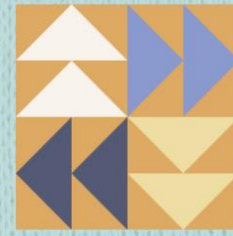




Farragut
Presbyterian
Church



WORDS
FOR THE **BEGINNING**
— THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT —

Epiphany Sunday
JANUARY 5, 2025 ~ 9:00 a.m.

This service is being recorded by video and audio means.

*We invite you to stand as able.



~We Gather~

Greeting

Rev. Matt Nieman

Prelude

Emmanuel (God With Us Forever)
Musical Ensemble

CCLI Song # 7044185 Anthony Skinner | Bryan Torwalt | Katie Torwalt | Kyle Lee
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Call To Worship

How did you get here?

I walked, eyes looking up, following the star. I ran, lunging for a love that is bigger than me. I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender step. I ambled like a river, caught up in God's flow. I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

Tell me again. How did you get here?

I am here by God's grace and love's pull.

Welcome home. This is God's house. There is room for you here.

Let us worship our gracious God.



*Opening Songs

First Noel (It's All About You)

Verse 1

The first Noel 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

Chorus 1

Born is the King born is the King
Born is the King of Israel angels will sing
Praises we'll bring all for the first Noel

Verse 2

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
(go to Chorus 1)

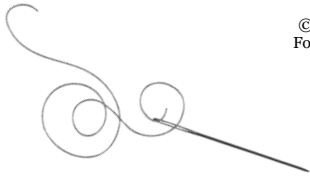
Verse 3/Refrain

Noel Noel Noel Noel
Born is the King of Israel
Noel Noel Noel Noel
Born is the King born is the King
Born is the King of Israel *(go to Chorus 2)*

Chorus 2

Be glorified how we adore You
Be magnified it's all about You
Be glorified how we adore You
Be lifted high it's all about You

Matt Pelt, Melody Noel, Michael Barkulis CCLI Song #7247076
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We Open Our Hearts

Verse 1

One thing that we ask Lord
One thing that we seek
You're the reason we're here now
Giving everything 'cause You are everything

Verse 2

Our hearts are on fire
Our praise it won't end
Our God King of Glory
We usher You in

Chorus

We open our hearts and we wait for You
We open our hearts and we wait for You
We open our hearts and we wait for You
We open our hearts and we wait for You

Bridge

Spirit blow upon this place
Show Your glory have Your way
We will not be moved 'til all we have is You
Spirit fill us with Your life
All that's dead now come alive
'Cause all we want is You

Bryan Torwalt, Dustin R. Smith, Joseph Zwanziger, Katie Torwalt, Stuart Garrard, Tosha Zwanziger CCLI Song #7048931
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*Prayer of Confession

Rev. Matt Nieman

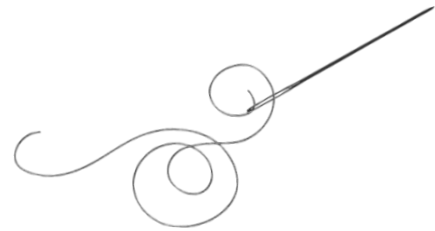
**God of new beginnings,
We admit that we often follow the well-worn path, simply because others have been there before. Sometimes this is holy and humble, but there are days when a new path needs to be tread. On those new-beginning days, O God, give us the courage to follow your star. Give us the courage to go home by another way. Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new direction for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor. For when you are doing a new thing, we want to have the courage to follow. With hope in our hearts we wander, we travel.**

(please continue in silent prayer)

*Declaration of Forgiveness

*The Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.



~We Proclaim~

Prayer for Illumination

God of starlight, we long to follow you. Like the Magi, we want to pick up the hems of our robes and run in your direction. Like the Magi, we want to kick up dust with our feet and make a joyful ruckus following your guiding star. Unfortunately, the stars can be hard to see from here. Your still, small voice can be hard to hear from here. So just as you guided the Magi, guide us. Draw our attention to your Word. Reveal what it is you want us to hear today, so that we can follow you. With hope in our hearts we pray, Amen.

Scripture Readings: Matthew 2:1-12
Isaiah 43:16-21

[Pew Bible pg. 2]
[Pew Bible pg. 672]

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Words for the Beginning: The Road Isn’t Straight”

Rev. Matt Nieman

~We Respond~

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a with-us God, a God who is beside us in the mountains and valleys, holding our hand through every bump and turn. And in the chaos of our journey, we believe that God sees what we cannot always see: a path home by another way. Therefore, trusting in this ever-present and guiding God, we lace up our shoes. We look for God’s fingerprints in the world. We trust that there are paths still unexplored, paths that God has only begun to invite us down. And like the Magi, we dare to follow. May it be so, Amen.

Musical Reflection

Light of the World (Sing Hallelujah)
Musical Ensemble

CCLI Song # 7163734 Andrew Bergthold | Ed Cash | Franni Cash | Martin Cash | Scott Cash
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Call for Giving

~We Remember~

The Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

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.**

Words of Institution

The Communion of the People

“We Open Our Hearts” reprise

The Prayer after Communion



~*We Go Out Into the World*~

*Closing Song

Go Tell It On The Mountain

Verse 1

While shepherds kept their watching
Over silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light

Chorus

Oh I say go tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

Verse 2

The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo above the Earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth

Verse 3

Down in a lowly manger
Our humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation
On that blessed Christmas morn (*Chorus*)

Verse 4

I was a lonely seeker
I sought both night and day
I asked the Lord to help me
And he showed me the way

Verse 5

He made me a watchman
Upon a city wall
And if I am a Christian
I am the least of all (*Chorus*)

Tag

Go tell it
Go tell it
Go tell it
Go on and tell it

John W. Work Jr., Jonathan Smith, Zach Williams CCLI Song #7165586
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*Charge and Benediction

Today's music ensemble:

Sandra Bohlken, piano & vocals ~ Charles Needham, bass guitar ~ Joey Nieman, guitar & vocals
Kevin Zetina, percussion

Mindy Houlihan and Shannon Needham, vocals

Ushers ~ Darrell Sparks and Peyton Houlihan

A/V Team ~ Ken Ladrach, David Long, Mason Warren, Parker Morrell,
Turner Neely, & Kat Wilson

SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS

Hello Friends! Farragut Presbyterian Church is always looking for volunteers to assist in our worship services. If you can help in any of the submitted categories: usher, scripture reader, or communion server, please go to: <http://tinyurl.com/FPCvolunteerSignUp> and sign up in the appropriate available time slot. If you have any questions, please contact Mikie Lancaster, Ken Ladrach, or the church office (865/966-9547). Thank you for your help!



Please use one of the methods below to record your attendance with us today:



Scan this QR code and click on the generated google doc link, or

- Go to <https://tinyurl.com/record-FPC-attendance>, or
- Email the office at office@fpctn.org, or
- Sign the pew attendance pad.



Please join Presbyterian Women as we help stock the Sunset Gap food pantry during this season of high unemployment. In October, the pantry served 565 families, 2542 people, and in Nov they served 520 families (only open 3 weeks) for 2340 people.

Items most needed include flour, sugar, cornmeal mix, cooking oil, peanut butter, pasta & canned pasta sauce, canned meat, rice, mac & cheese, breakfast items, Ramen noodles and crackers.

The drive will be January 19- February 9. Items can be placed in the basket in the narthex.

If you have questions, contact Debbie Long.

SPECIAL THANKS to FPC volunteers, Men's Bible Study volunteers who prepared and fed the homeless in December at **VOLUNTEER MINISTRY CENTER** in downtown Knoxville. Wayne Walls, Jack Rightmyer, John Sharp, David Stutzenberger and Frank Dorman. If you would like to help with future monthly meals, check the table in the narthex to sign up, or contact Jean Peretz. The next date to serve is Tuesday, January 21.

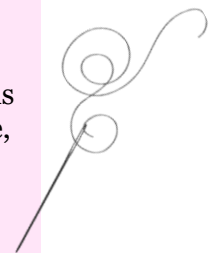


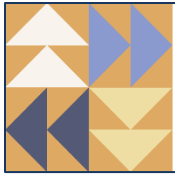
PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Kathy Emmerson, Marilyn Felts, Chuck Foriska, Frank Guess, Dixie Heflin, Beth and Jimmy Loyless, Ann McAnally, Irma McGuffey, Maria Medina, Tami Newsom, Irene Rice, Bruce Wilson, Brenda Luggie

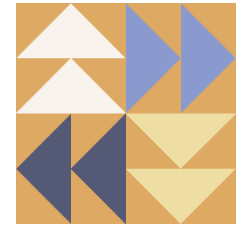
A Prayer for the New Year

Holy God who lights our way,
We thank you for this moment of respite along the journey, a moment to be filled with good things, reminded of our belovedness, and sent out to be your hands and feet in the world. Though we'd often prefer a straightforward, step-by-step plan for our lives, you've instead given us an invitation to wander, to seek, to take a different road, to be guided by a star. May this star guide us to look under every rock and around every corner, seeking you out everywhere, because everywhere is exactly where you are. And next year, when the road leads back to this very place, may we find that you were with us every step of the way.
With hope we pray, amen.





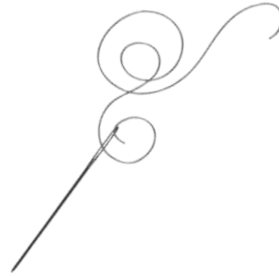
THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT



Field Notes

With tears in your eyes,
 you name all the bumps
 and zigzags your life has taken.
 With clenched teeth
 and a hummingbird pulse,
 you wake up
 and wonder—how did I get here?
 In the last 40 days of
 desert wandering, you say
 you haven't heard God's voice once.
 You say you miss when God was close,
 when God used to sing the harmony line.
 So you yell at the sky,
 begging God to drop a pin,
 to name the road,
 to draw you a map.
 You lament the way this life isn't easy.
 You ask me—was the road ever straight and narrow,
 or was that all a lie?
 But then you crest the mountain,
 and I don't hear from you for a while,
 because God was growing
 in the lilac field
 on the other side of the hill.
 God was scattered
 among the pebbles
 of the road you never planned to take.
 Isn't it amazing, you say,
 there are a million roads home
 and God walks every single one of them.

Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed



The Road Isn't Straight

The triangles in this quilt square point in multiple directions. Much like the magi's journey, the path that lies ahead isn't always clear or straight. Thankfully, we have the guidance of the Spirit to light our way.

Star of Bethlehem

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Matthew 2:1-12



They come from afar.
 I imagine the Magi as queens of wisdom, wealth, and power, bringing their entourage, a vast number of people, to care for them. They protect the Magi on their journey over the dunes and around the twists and turns, ensuring they arrive safely. They come

to pay homage to the baby, the holy child.

In this *Words for the Beginning* series, I began each painting with a circular energy. There is a central focus to each design. Each painting has an original quilt square pattern which repeats as the border. The center design is a different iteration of the same idea. For this design, the main motif is the star of Bethlehem. The Bible pages of Matthew 2 are torn apart and glued as a texture within the star points, representing our need to constantly break down fear in service to the God who calls us into a fearless life of love. The star pattern is overlaid in chalk and soft pastel, reiterating the power of God as our guide—who, in this text, is showing the way home by another road. In our own lives and communities, each of us is vulnerable to political corruption. How are we responding? Whom do we follow as our guide? God calls the Magi home by another road, and their choice to heed the call opens space for Jesus' ministry within the community, which will demonstrate the power of steadfast love. Shortly thereafter, God calls Mary and Joseph to journey to another land, to protect the Messiah until they are safe to return home. What parallels do we see in our own systems, and in our own lives? In this text, the Magi are dreaming my dreams. The imperial power threatens to kill the long-awaited Messiah. These kinds of threats exist in our own lives too. The Magi seek another way home. I dream of the winding road that is God's call. The road isn't straight. Can you see your next bend?

—Hannah Garrity



This Week at FPC

| Sun, Jan 5 | 9am Casual Service ~ 11am Traditional Worship Service | | |
|---------------|---|------|--|
| Mon, Jan 06 | 5:30 | p.m. | Youth Group/Parlor |
| | 10:00 | a.m. | Chair Yoga/Narthex |
| | 11:00 | a.m. | Lectio Divina/Room D |
| Tues, Jan 07 | 12:00 | p.m. | Big Fish Chapel/Sanctuary |
| | 5:30 | p.m. | Outreach Committee/Library |
| Wed, Jan 08 | 6:30 | p.m. | Early-Onset Dementia Caregivers/Room A |
| | 7:00 | p.m. | Boy Scouts #444/FH, Room A, Narthex |
| | 10:00 | a.m. | PW Circle #3/Library |
| | 12:00 | p.m. | Big Fish Chapel/Sanctuary |
| | 12:00 | p.m. | Room D/Parlor Reserved |
| Thurs, Jan 09 | 6:00 | p.m. | Casual Worship Music Practice/Room A |
| | 8:00 | a.m. | Men's Bible Study/Narthex |
| | 6:30 | p.m. | Cub Scouts/Fellowship Hall |
| Fri, Jan 10 | 10:00 | a.m. | Chair Yoga/Narthex |
| Sat, Jan 11 | 9:00 | a.m. | Session Strategic Planning/Library |
| | 1:00 | p.m. | HOA Meeting/Room A |

Sunday School ~ 10:00 a.m.

- **KidZone** is for children ages 3-9 who meet in Fellowship Hall at 9am to learn about the love of God, through Bible verses, songs, videos and fun activities.
- **Adult Bible Study** meets in Room D to discuss the weekly Lectionary text. Everyone is welcome. Contact Elizabeth Wilson with questions.
- **Pastor Matt's Class** is studying our Advent theme, "Words for the Beginning." Join us in the library at 10:00.
- **FPC Youth Class** meets at 10am in the Café (parlor) each week during the school year to "Dive In" to the Old Testament. Contact Mason Warren for more information.



Farragut Presbyterian Church

209 Jamestowne Blvd. ~ Farragut, TN 37934
865/966-9547 ~ www.fpctn.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9am-3pm; Friday 9am-1pm



<http://tinyurl.com/FPCE-giving>



*"To praise God, welcome all, serve others,
grow in faith, be disciples of Jesus Christ and share the Good News."*