

January 5, 2025  
Liturgical Color – White

Second Sunday of Christmas

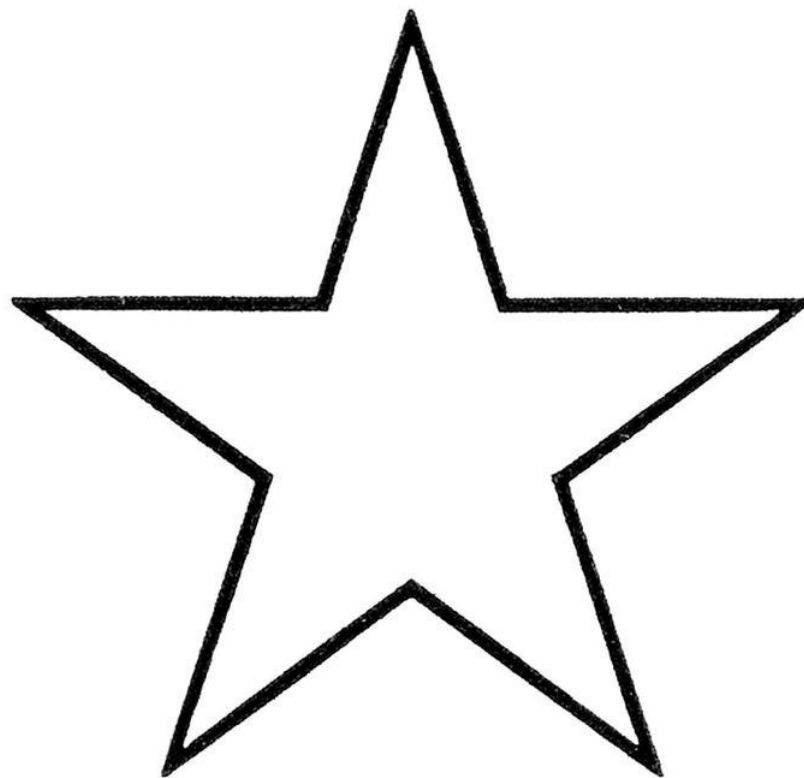
Matthew 2:1-12

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

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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.” 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Slackwood Presbyterian Church  
2020 Brunswick Avenue  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Embracing God. Extending Welcome. Celebrating All.



Sunday, January 5, 2025

10:30 a.m.

## GATHER TO WORSHIP

*As a consideration to all who seek to worship this morning, please turn off or mute cell phones and other electronic devices.*

Bell of Invitation

Welcome & Announcements

The Lighting of the Peace Candle and Centering Prayer

## OUR APPROACH TO GOD

Call to Worship

Leader: We gather wondering,  
where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?

**People: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children,  
in the wisdom of grandparents.**

Leader: We gather asking,  
where will we find the Child of Christmas?

**People: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted  
with hope, where the oppressed are set free.**

Leader: We gather wanting to know,  
where will we find the Christ who has come for us?

**People: We will find our hope where fear is overwhelmed  
by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love.**

\*Hymn #151 "We Three Kings of Orient Are" KINGS OF ORIENT

\*Call to Confession

\*Prayer of Confession (*In Unison*)

**Eternal God, wondrous star, light no darkness can  
overcome, drive out the sin in our hearts.**

**Forgive us for turning from your way, for denying your  
truth, for resisting the life you would have us live.**

**Refresh us and restore us. Focus us on the brilliant light  
of Jesus Christ that we may see him more clearly  
and follow him more nearly, this day and every day.**

*((Time for silent prayer) Amen.*

\*Words of Assurance

\*Gloria Patri (#581)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, amen.

*(Following the time of confession, young people ages 3 to 10  
may leave for Sunday School.)*

## HEARING OF THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading – Isaiah 60:1-6

The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God.**

Anthem "A Stable Lamp Is Lighted" Wilbur & Hurd

Gospel Reading -- Matthew 2:1-12

The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon "Guided By a Star" The Rev. David Bowman

\*Affirmation of Faith (*The Apostles' Creed*)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven  
and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only 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 hell. 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 living and the  
dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic  
Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

\*Hymn #152

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

"What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright"

## RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

Call for Offering & Offertory

\*Doxology (#606)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God, all creatures here below;  
praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

\*Prayer of Dedication

\*Hymn #127

WE'LL WALK IN THE LIGHT

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise....**

*(Prayer continues)*

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

Communion of the People

*(Please hold till all partake together at the instruction of the officiant.)*

Prayer after the Meal

Sharing of Star Gifts

\*Hymn #141 "On This Day Earth Shall Ring" PERSONENT HODIE

\*Charge and Benediction

### DEPART TO SERVE

*\*Those who are able may stand.*

**Christ's Ministers in the World:** All members of the church

**Pastor:** The Rev. David Bowman

**Director of Music:** Dr. Shelley Sanders Zuckerman

**Liturgist:** Tara Perigny

**The Peace Candle in the Chancel is lit to remind us of the gift of Christ's peace and our call to be peacemakers.**

### Announcements

**Welcome** to all who are worshiping this morning. If you are visiting, we hope you will feel welcome and that you will stay for refreshments and conversation in Fellowship Hall.

**Pastor Bowman's contact information:**

Email: dfbsbv@gmail.com or Telephone: 732.547.3480

The **Adult Forum** meets Sundays at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

**Sunday School for Middle & High School Youth** is held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

The **choir** rehearses each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.

The **Membership & Outreach Committee** will meet on Wednesday, January 8 at 7:00 p.m.

The **Christian Education Committee** will meet on Wednesday, January 8 at 8:00 p.m.

The **Truth & Reconciliation Group** will meet on Thursday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m.

The **Property & Finance Committee** will meet following worship next Sunday, January 12.

**Calling Church School Volunteers!** -- We need volunteers to teach our church school class for a Sunday or two this winter and spring. All materials will be provided. The children leave after the Prayer of Confession during the worship service. Sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your support!

People are needed to provide **refreshments for fellowship hour** after worship each Sunday. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in fellowship hall where you can volunteer for one or more Sundays in the winter/spring.

## **Coming Events**

Friday, January 10 – Deadline to submit reports to be included in the annual written report to the congregation.

Monday January 20 – 10:00 a.m.

Martin Luther King Day of Service in Fellowship Hall.  
Participants will make snack and lunch bags for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen

Sunday, January 26 following the 10:30 a.m. service of worship  
Annual Meeting of the congregation to elect elders, deacons, members of the officer nominating committee and to approve the terms of call of the pastor.

## **Slackwood's Mission Statement**

Slackwood Presbyterian Church is a diverse, caring Christian community: guided by scripture, committed to loving God, loving our neighbors as we love ourselves and sharing Christ's love with all people.

## **Slackwood's Vision Statement**

We envision glorifying and serving God by being an example to each other, the community, and the world through:

vibrant worship,  
faithful prayer,  
relevant study,  
joyful fellowship,  
compassionate service.

We strive to build a safe community that embraces:

all ages,  
people of color,  
the LGBTQIA+ community,  
people with disabilities,  
other marginalized people.

## HOW TO USE YOUR STAR WORD

- If your chosen word carries significant scriptural weight, such as "light," "peace," "faith," or "healing," consider doing a bit of Scripture research on it. Even if your word is not frequently found in the Bible, you can still explore how it relates to Biblical narratives. For instance, while "integrity" or "awareness" may not appear often in Scripture, you can observe how Biblical characters exemplified integrity and showed awareness of others or of God.
- Why not conduct a word study? Find quotes that feature your word from historical sources, look up its definition, and discover synonyms and antonyms. Explore the root words it may be derived from as well.
- Display your word on the bathroom mirror or in another prominent place so you see it often. Say it out loud several times. Pay attention to how it makes you feel.
- Reflect on what it might mean that God has given you this word for the year. What areas of your life might you need to focus on seriously? For example, if your word is "understanding," you might strive to understand the people in your life better. It could also indicate a need to deepen your understanding of Scripture or God. You might need to explore your own self-understanding, or perhaps you feel misunderstood and are seeking understanding from

others. There are numerous directions you can take with this theme, and it may take time to see its connection to your life.

- Share your word with others and invite them to engage in discussion. Ask them what they think this word means for you. For instance, if you share that you're focusing on "fellowship," "discipline," or "rest" for the year, ask for their insights on what you should consider. You could even meet regularly with a group throughout the year to check in on how they are "following the star" with their own chosen words.

This practice is not magical; rather, it's an opportunity to have some fun at the start of the year while adopting a devotional practice, similar to how many people make resolutions. Although it can be easy to forget your selected word or to neglect acting on it, there is also the possibility to explore it more deeply and see where God may lead you.