January 7, 2024 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

Epiphany of the Lord Observed

Slackwood Presbyterian Church

2020 Brunswick Avenue, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

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

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)

We search for your light, Creator God, but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation. Our motives for seeking to find Christ are not always pure, for we expect him to fulfill our desires, rather than your hopes for us. We want the gifts of wealth, health, success, fulfillment, rather than those of servanthood, of compassion, of peace. Forgive us, Merciful God, that we are so foolish to put our needs ahead of your grace. Help us to be like those wise people of so long ago, who found hope, instead of a destination; who found grace, instead of acclaim; who found salvation, instead of a sign. As we journey with your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, fill us with the light of your joy and love. ((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 to meet with the Director of Family Ministries for a time of lesson and activity.)

HEARING OF THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading – Isaiah 60:1-6

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Anthem "Benedictus" Brian Lewis

Gospel Reading -- Matthew 2:1-12

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Star Gazing" 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 #154 "Jesus Entered Egypt" KING'S WESTON

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 the elements till all are served and 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.

Announcements

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

Interim Pastor: The Rev. David Bowman

Director of Music: Dr. Shelley Sanders Zuckerman

Director of Family Ministries: Starr Alleyne

Liturgist: Penny Baumann

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

Welcome to all who are worshiping this morning. If you are visiting, we hope you feel very welcome and that you will stay following the service for refreshments and conversation.

Pastor Bowman's contact information:

Email: dfbsbv@gmail.com or Telephone: 732.547.3480

The **Adult Forum** meets weekly at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. The link is sent in the Saturday announcements email.

The **Youth** meet at 9:15 a.m.

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

The **Membership & Outreach Committee** will meet on Wednesday, January 10 at 7:00 p.m.

The **Truth & Reconciliation Zoom Group** will meet on Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 p.m.

The deadline to submit reports for the annual written report to the congregation is January 12. Please make sure your report is to Carol Belles on or before that date.

A **Service of Witness to the Resurrection** in memory of Arlene Filson will be held on Saturday, January 13 at 11:00 a.m. in the church sanctuary. A reception will follow.

Confirmands will meet on Sunday, January 14 at 9:00 a.m.

The **Scripture Reading** for next Sunday is Mark 1:4-11.

This year's **Martin Luther King Day of Service** will be on Monday, January 15 beginning at 10:00 a.m. in fellowship hall. Participants will be making meal bags for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. Plan to come out and work together to help those in need.

The **annual meeting of the congregation** to elect elders, deacons and members of the officer nominating committee, as well as any other business as set by the session, will be on Sunday, January 28 immediately following the morning service of worship.

Thank you to each person who loaned a nativity to be displayed in the sanctuary windows during the Advent/Christmas season. Feel free to take your nativity with you after today's service.