

It means that we will have to be very serious about our service to you, giving you our best and offering hope and light to others. In this new year, we bring to you the names and situations of others for whom light seems to be a stranger. They struggle with ill health, economic hardship, broken and damaged relationships, loss of loved ones, and anxiety. We place them in your care. Let your light shine on them, bringing healing and hope. Help us to be bearers of that light in all that we do; for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

THANKS FOR YOUR FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

“My heart overflows with joy when I think of how you showed your love to me *by your financial support of my ministry*. For even though you have so little, you still continue to help me at every opportunity. Thank you for supporting me.” (Philippians 4:10) Love your church, 5th Ave. UMC!

***OFFERTORY PRAYERS FOR TITHES AND OFFERINGS:**

O Lord, we give you thanks with all we are for all you have done for us. In your divinity you have come to dwell with us in the muddy waters of humanity, and comingled your glory with our sin so that the ribbon of corrupting time is becoming a sparkling River of Life flowing through our days. Take all we are, Lord, and use it for your purpose. Bless the gifts we give this day that the church might stand as shining witnesses to your glory, planted by your living water to bring healing to all peoples. Use us as you will to the praise of Christ Jesus, we pray. Amen.

***HYMN** **“I've Got Peace Like a River”** **TFWS 2145**

***SENDING FORTH:**

Go forth into the world to live as those baptized into Christ's mission. And may the eternal light of God keep you rock-solidly immersed in the river of life in the peace and power of Holy Spirit now and forevermore.

BENEDICTION:

Pastor Clarissa

The Light of the Star, the light of God's love, shines before you as you leave this place. Go in peace, go in joy, go in love to meet God's people in the world and greet them with the good news of salvation. People of God, God has laid claim to your life. By your baptism you have been marked as God's own forever. In grace may God watch over you. We go in harmony to love and serve the Lord, in the name of Christ.

POSTLUDE:



5th Ave. UMC

EPIPHANY/BAPTISM OF THE LORD

January 10, 2021 @ 9:30 a.m.

PRELUDE:

WELCOME:

Welcome siblings of Christ! Come, our worship this Sunday is a celebration; this is the beginning of a new year. We survived 2020, and while there might still be lingering effects of the pandemic and other societal unrest, it is time to embrace a new possibility, a new hope. The heavens have been torn open. But this isn't a threat; it's a promise of something new, something better! Let us come this day, bearing our burdens and our joys. Come with the magi, following the star to worship the one born as Savior of the world. Let us come before the manger of the King. Let the waters of baptism renew us and cleanse us for our mission and ministry as followers of Jesus. We come, bringing what we have, to pay homage to the one who will change the world. Let us commit ourselves to a closer walk with Christ.

CENTERING MUSIC:

*CALL TO WORSHIP: (Responsively)

L: Darkness descended over the land.

P: The people lived in fear.

L: Then something so unexpected happened.

P: Something that filled the people with surprise.

L: A star burned brightly in the heavens!

P: A star beyond imagining!

TFWS 2005 - "Arise, Shine" x 2

L: Our darkness is gone!

P: Though the night be dark and times are difficult, a new light shines for us!

L: Fears are banished; failures are forgiven!

P: God has heard our cries and has given us hope!

TFWS 2005 - "Arise, Shine" x 2

L: Come, let us celebrate God's light given to us!

P: Let us praise the God of hope and promise! AMEN.

*MORNING PRAYER: (Unison)

Almighty God, parent of all who call upon your name, in the waters of baptism you have transformed us, marking us as your children, and recreating us through the work of your Son and the power of the Holy Spirit. Shower us once more with your grace that we might be renewed in your spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

As surely as the Light follows the Darkness, the light of God's love, given to the world so long ago, is given for you, for healing and hope. Let us open our hearts and be willing to risk receiving the gift of gracious Love that you have to offer us in the form of our Savior, Jesus Christ. You are beloved of God. In God's name, receive the Light. Amen.

HYMN: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" UMH 400

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Mark 1:4-11 (VOICE)

John the Baptizer was the messenger who appeared in an uninhabited region, preaching a baptism of repentance for the complete cancellation of sins. Steady stream of people came to be dipped in the Jordan River as they publicly confessed their sins. They came from all over southern Israel, including nearly all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. John wore a rough garment made from camel hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and honey of the wilderness. And this is the message he kept preaching: "There is a man coming after me who is greater and a lot more powerful than I am. I'm not even worthy to bend down and untie the strap of his sandals. I've baptized you into water, but he will baptize you into the Spirit of Holiness!" One day, Jesus came from the Galilean village of Nazareth and had John immerse him in the Jordan River. The moment Jesus rose up out of the water, John saw the heavenly realm split open, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove and rested upon him. At the same time, a voice spoke from heaven, saying: "You are my Son, my cherished one, and my greatest delight is in you!"

Liturgist: This is the Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "The Light of Epiphany & Water of Baptism"
Pastor Clarissa

PASTORAL PRAYER: Lord when I get discouraged by my troubles in life, Remind me of my Baptism. Lord when I am tempted to doubt your love for me; Remind me that I am yours. Lord when I sin against you and then seek your mercy; Remind me of my Baptism. Lord when I am tempted to go against your will; Remind me that I am yours. Lord as long as I live; Remind me of my Baptism. Remind me that I am yours.

Lord of bright and abiding Light, you have shown us, in the person of Jesus your Son, a new way to live. You have poured your light into the world and have asked us to live in the light rather than run and hide in the darkness of doubt and despair. You promise to be our light all of our days and ask us to place our trust in you. The journey in this light is risky.