

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

*Response: “Shalom”

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
Kami no mi megumi.**

*(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, may we be blessed
with grace from God.)*

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
yuta kani, yuta kani, yuta kani.**

*(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, abundantly, abundantly,
abundantly.)*

Postlude

Haruko Sakakibara

“Variation on an Aria by Lully” by Dietrich Buxtehude

*We invite you to remain seated during the Postlude as we enjoy the music
and God’s presence together. If you need to go, please feel free to do so.*

Go with God’s blessings.

In Appreciation:

Greeters:	Bill Grissom, Herning Grissom
Ushers:	Terri Bowman, Julie Chew
Parking:	Gary Younglove
Parking Barriers (Sat):	Titus Toyama
Sound System:	Titus Toyama
Zoom Moderator/Greeter:	Lois Van Beers
Altar Flowers:	William & Judy Yee



The Celebration of Worship

January 7, 2024 • Epiphany Sunday

Pastor:	Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave
Worship Leader:	Betsy Eskridge
Pianist:	Haruko Sakakibara
Choir Conductor:	Ben Pryor
Japanese Reader:	Haruko Sakakibara
Communion Elders	Carla Hart, Pattie Hashimoto
YES:	Kishwer Vikaas

Centering Prayer for Advent

*Thank You, Revealing God,
For giving Yourself to the world, not in the powerful and extraordinary,
but in weakness and the familiar:
In a baby; in bread and wine.
Thank You for offering, at journey’s end, a new beginning;
For setting, in the poverty of a stable, the richest jewel of Your love; For
revealing, in a particular place, Your light for all nations.
Thank You for bringing us to Bethlehem, House of Bread,
Where the empty are filled, and the filled are emptied;
Where the poor find riches and the rich recognize their poverty;
Where all who kneel and hold out their hands are fed.*

- Kate Compston in *Bread for Tomorrow*

Prelude

Haruko Sakakibara

** Those who can, please stand*

***Introit**

All: Make us one, Lord, make us one. Holy Spirit make us one. Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one in You.

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Call to Worship

Betsy Eskridge

Leader: Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

People: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; On those living in the shadow of death, a light has dawned.

All: Let's join with people of all nations to worship Christ the Lord!

***Opening Hymn: As With Gladness Men of Old (#63)**

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed, there
to bend the knee before Him whom heaven and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy, all our
costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way; And, when
earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last where
they need no star to guide, where no clouds Thy glory hide.

Invitation to Confession

Betsy Eskridge

Leader: As the wise ones came from afar to bring their gifts to worship the Christ Child, let's bring the truth of our lives to God, and ask God for the gift of forgiveness.

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

All: Our Parent Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your 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 Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***Sending Hymn: The First Nowell (#56)**

Sing verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

The first Nowell 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.

Refrain. Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of
Israel.

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.

Refrain.

And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from
country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the
star wherever it went.

Refrain.

This star drew nigh to the northwest; O'er Bethlehem it took
its rest; And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place
where Jesus lay.

Refrain.

Then entered in those wise men three, fell reverently upon their
knee, and offered there in His presence, their gold, and myrrh,
and frankincense.

Refrain.

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

- from the Iona Community

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 God our thanks and praise.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution

Receiving the Elements

Opportunity To Present Offerings

All: Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (Repeat) And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat) Give thanks. Give thanks.

*Doxology

All: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Betsy Eskridge

Joys & Concerns

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Prayer of Confession

Betsy Eskridge

Leader: Gracious God, our Guide, Who once used a star to lead people to Christ, we confess our poor sense of direction.

People: We are easily distracted, confused, and lose our way in life. We fail to follow the guidance You provide for us. We wander around searching for meaning and making a mess of our relationships. Forgive us.

Leader: Sometimes our anxiety about others' beliefs and cultures convinces us that we don't need to share Your grace with them.

All: God of glory, You sent Jesus as the Light of the world to reveal Your love for everyone. Help us to follow as You lead us to others who need Your love and help.

Time for silent reflection and confession to God

Assurance of God's Grace

Betsy Eskridge

Leader: By a bright star God led the wise ones to worship Jesus, the Light of the world. Believe the good news of the gospel: In Jesus, God's grace has come to the world with healing for all creation.

All: Guiding Star of Holy Light, thank You for forgiving us and setting us free to proclaim Your goodness and glory to all.

*Response to God's Forgiveness: Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me (#582 GtG)

All Sing: Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

*Passing of the Peace

Betsy Eskridge

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Children's Message

A Visit from the Wise Ones

*Hymn of Reflection: What Child Is This (#53)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch
are keeping? This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard
and angels sing; haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe,
the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is
pleading. This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard
and angels sing; haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the
Son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, one and all, to
own Him. The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts
enthroned Him. This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds
guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe,
the Son of Mary!

Unison Prayer of Guidance

**All: Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations
of our hearts, the interpretation of our minds, and the
response of our hands be acceptable to You, our Lord and
our Redeemer. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

Japanese Reading: Isaiah 60:1-3

Haruko Sakakibara

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

1st Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-6

Betsy Eskridge

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem
of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking,
“Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? We
saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”
When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all
Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests
and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was
to be born. “In Bethlehem of Judea,” they replied, for this is
what the prophet has written:

“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means
least among the rulers of Judah; for from you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Sarah Nave

Epiphany sermon: “The Curiosity of the Wise”

Matthew 2:7-12

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them
the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them
to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the Child, as
soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and
worship Him.” After hearing the king, they went their way, and
the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them
until it came and stood over the place where the Child was.
When they saw the star they were overwhelmed with joy.

After coming into the house, they saw the Child with Mary his
mother; and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then,
opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold,
frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned by God in a
dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country
by another way.

Musical Interlude

Haruko Sakakibara

“La Familia” by Toshiaki Matsumoto