



Epiphany Sunday

**January 4, 2026
9:00AM**

OUR INVITATION

Because we believe that every person is a beloved child of God, on a journey to God, with God, we welcome ALL people, *without exception*, to participate fully in the life of this church.

OUR MISSION

First United Methodist Church exists to build a community where all people are invited to know God's love and sent to join God in transforming the world.

OUR VALUES

Justice. Working to eradicate injustice for the excluded and marginalized. *Bridge-Building.* Nurturing multigenerational friendships and community partnerships. *Storytelling.* Sharing our stories of faith and of growth. *Active Learning.* Pursuing knowledge and understanding of God. *Service.* Seeking mutually empowering service opportunities. *Constructive Disruption.* Disrupting systems of power to create positive change.

OUR FAMILIES

We love children in worship. Activity clipboards and other materials for children are available at the back of the Sanctuary. Our Family Room in the balcony offers rockers, books, toys, and a diaper change station for parents with infants and toddlers. Childcare is available from 8:45AM-12:15PM for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in EDU Room 102.

GATHERING AS THE CHURCH

Asterisks () indicate an invitation to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING VOLUNTARY

GREETING

As you prepare for worship, please greet your neighbors and fill out a Connections Card. You can find the printed version in the pew in front of you or you can use the QR code on the front page of the FUMC Weekly. To let our pastors know about a prayer request for you or someone you love, you can use the printed Connections Card that will be placed in the offering basket when it is passed or you can use the QR code found on the front of the FUMC Weekly.

*Response: I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”*

Psalm 122:1

ENTERING THE HOLY

INTROIT

Brightest and Best

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Words: Reginald Heber

Music: *Star in the East*, from The Southern Harmony

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Herod's treachery could not stop hope!

**In the star,
God's light was poured out for all people.**

All the fears and fights of this world
cannot diminish God's light.

**That light is the life of Jesus Christ,
who breaks through the darkness.**

Thanks be to God,
for the most precious gift of light.

**Let us live as people
of new light and Hope.**

*** HYMN 254**

We Three Kings

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God,
by your Word and Holy Spirit,
that in your light we may see light,
in your truth find freedom,
and in your will discover peace;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12

SERMON

RESPONDING IN FAITH

INVITATION TO THE FAITH JOURNEY

Are you interested in what it means to be a member of First Church? First Steps is an informal gathering where you can meet the pastors and staff, learn about United Methodist beliefs, hear more about our many ministry opportunities, ask questions about this community of faith, and explore whether membership at First Church is your next step in faith. The next First Steps Class is Sunday, February 22, at 12:15PM in the FLC Garrison Chapel. Lunch is provided and childcare is available in EDU Room 102. To sign up, fill out a Connections Card and place it in the offering basket or go online at fumcaustin.org/first-steps.

OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY

What Star Is This

What star is this, with beams so bright,
more beauteous than the noonday light?

It shines to herald forth the King,
and Gentiles to his crib to bring.

True spake the prophet from afar
who told the rise of Jacob's star;
and eastern sages with amaze
upon the wondrous token gaze.

The guiding star above is bright;
within them shines a clearer light,
and leads them on with power benign
to seek the Giver of the sign.

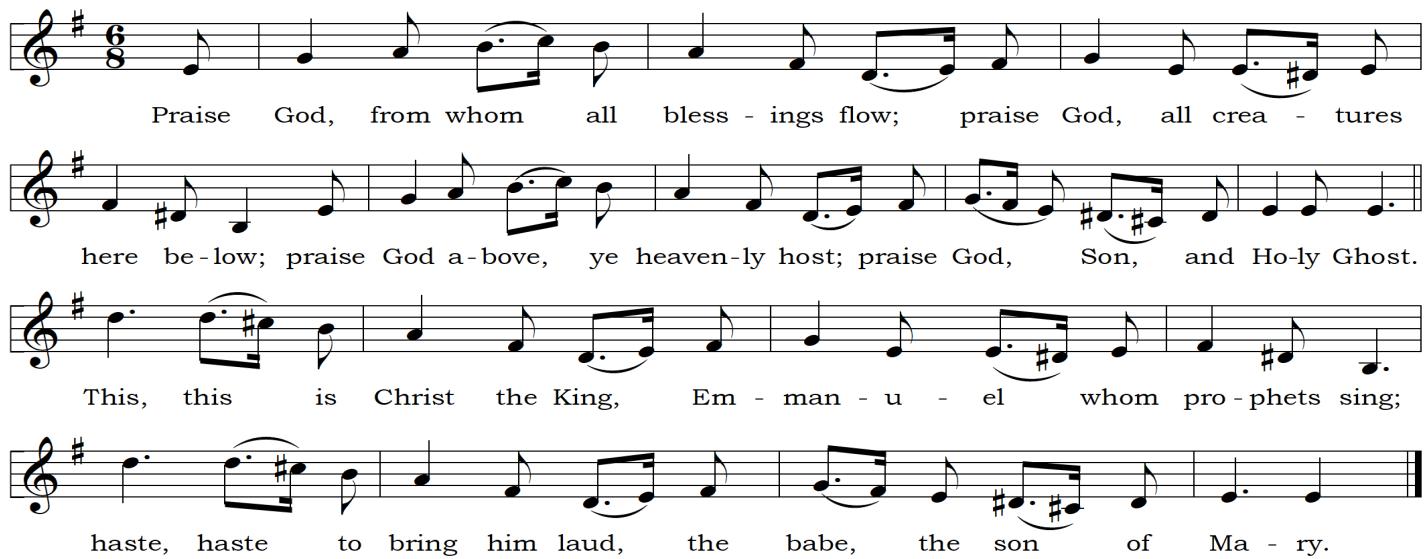
O Jesus, while the star of grace
impels us on to seek thy face,
let not our sluggish hearts refuse
the guidance of thy light to use.

To God, Creator, heavenly Light,
to Christ, revealed in earthly night,
to God the Holy Ghost we raise
our equal and unceasing praise.

Words: Charles Coffin; Trans. Hymns Ancient and Modern after John Chandler, alt.

Music: *Puer nobis*, adapt. Michael Praetorius; Harm. Cowley Carol Book

*PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING



Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures
here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye heaven-ly host; praise God, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost.
This, this is Christ the King, Em - man - u - el whom pro - phets sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

Words: Thomas Ken and William C. Dix, alt.

Music: *Greensleeves*, 16th Cent. English Melody

FEASTING AT THE TABLE OF GRACE

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor gives thanks, recalling God's story of abundance.

...And so,

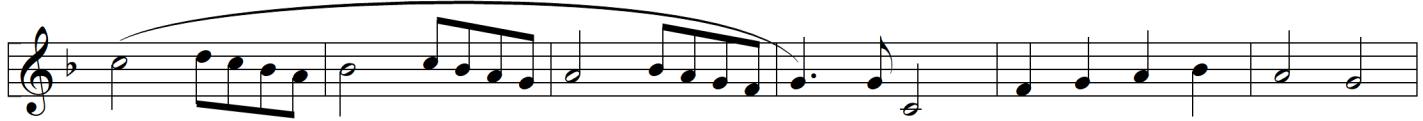
with your creatures on earth
and all the heavenly chorus,
we praise your name
and join their unending hymn:

Intro (first time only)

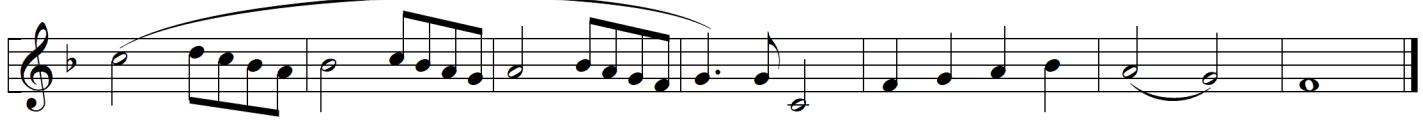
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of hosts, all praise be given!
Bles - sed is the one who came, bring - ing love and light di - vine.



All your glo - ry fills the earth; all your pow - er fills the heavens.
Bles - sed is the King who comes in the bread and fills in the wine.



Glo - - - - - ri-a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!



Glo - - - - - ri-a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Please be seated. Pastor continues leading the prayer, recalling the acts of Christ.

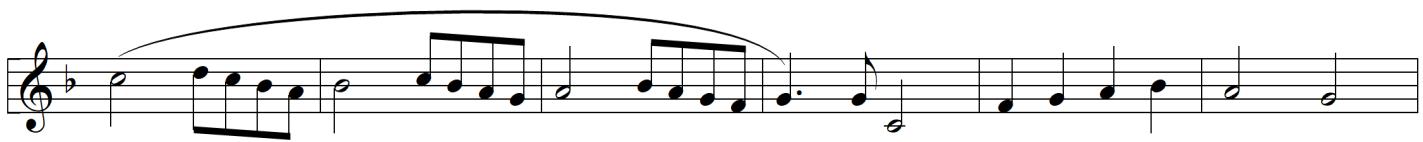
...With thanks and praise
we offer ourselves to you,
sharing this holy meal,
remembering Christ's dying and rising,
and proclaiming the mystery of faith:

Intro

Christ has died, Christ is ris - en Christ will come to earth a - gain.



Great the myst - 'ry of God's grace; great the myst - 'ry of our faith.



Glo - - - - - ri-a in ex - cel - sis De - o.



Glo - - - - - ri-a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Pastor continues leading the prayer, asking God to pour out God's Holy Spirit on us and this meal.

...In this banquet restore us in your image,
surround us with your company,
and prepare us for your freedom;
that we may come to resemble your Son,
through whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory are yours,
now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our God 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.
Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory, forever.
Amen.

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

HYMNS DURING RECEIVING

229 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

237 Sing We Now of Christmas

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

In gratitude, in deep gratitude
for this moment,
this meal,
these people,
we give ourselves to you.

Send us out to live as changed people
because we have shared the Living Bread
and cannot remain the same.

Ask much of us,
expect much from us,
enable much by us,
encourage many through us.

So, Lord, may we live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of earth
and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.

Amen.

GOING OUT TO SERVE

*** BENEDICTION**

*** HYMN 248**

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

Stanzas 1, 3, and 4

VOLUNTARY

+

+

+

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The flowers are placed on the chancel by Mack Hicks in honor of Julie Nelson, who celebrates her birthday today.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Preacher: Reverend Taylor Fuerst

Liturgist: Reverend John Hathaway

Music: Scott Davis

GREAT THANKSGIVING MUSICAL SETTING

Words: Unknown origin, revised Daniel Benedict and Dean McIntyre

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Music: *Gloria*, French Carol Melody; Arr. Edward Shippen Barnes; Harm. Austin C. Lovelace

Harm. © 1964 Abingdon Press

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EPIPHANY PARTY

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4 | 10:00-10:45AM | FLC GREAT HALL

Jesus' birth is just the beginning. Celebrate all 12 days of Christmas with an Epiphany Party. We will have fun activities for children and youth including cupcake decorating and hot chocolate bar. This is the faith formation event for children and youth this week and will take the place of Sunday School. Start your new year with joy by bringing the whole family to the party!



SIGN UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

Honor someone you love and appreciate, remember a departed loved one, or celebrate special days or events in your life or the life of the church. The cost is \$65 and we are taking requests for next year. The available dates for the first few months of 2026 are: January 11 and 25; February 8, 15, and 22; March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; and April 12, 19, and 26. You may sign up by contacting Tami Kellberg at tami@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 226).

CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church office will be closed from 1:00PM on Wednesday, December 24, through Thursday, January 1, for the Christmas and New Year's holidays. We will reopen on Monday, January 5, at 9:00AM. Our pastors are on call at 512-478-5684, press 213, and leave a message for a return call.

END-OF-YEAR GIVING SCHEDULE

In order for any end-of-year financial gifts to be tax deductible and/or applied to the Ministry Plan for 2025, gifts must be made by December 31, 2025. During our office closure, gifts can be made in person on Sunday, December 28. Gifts made online (time stamped) and by mail (postmarked) must be dated no later than December 31.