

SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE
First Methodist Church, Houston | Downtown Campus Traditional Service
January 7, 2024 | 11:00 am

PRELUDE	We Three Kings	<i>arr. Ware and Raney</i>
*CALL TO WORSHIP	The First Noel	UMH 245
<p>The first Noel 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.</p> <p><i>Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.</i></p> <p>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. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>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. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>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. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>Then entered in those Wise Men three, full reverently upon the knee, and offered there, in his presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p>		
*WELCOME		Rev. Ann Spears
*CAROL OF WELCOME	We Three Kings	UMH 254
<p>We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.</p> <p><i>Refrain: O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.</i></p> <p>Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again, King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh; prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom; sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p> <p>Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice: Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies. <i>(sing refrain)</i></p>		
LIFE OF THE CHURCH	2024 Multiply Stewardship Campaign	Rev. Lance Richards
OFFERING PRAYER		Rev. Ann Spears
OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD		Congregation

We rode all night thro' fields of darkness,
our guiding light, the eastern stars;
we came to Bethlehem, we all were weary:
we'd travelled far that night,
We heard that here we'd find Messiah
foretold by seers from days of old;
We looked for palaces: and found a stable.
Could it be here, so bare and cold?
We entered in and there we saw him;
it seemed we'd known him from long before.
A child like any child, yet somehow different:
The face of every child in him we saw the face of every child we saw.
We brought him gifts and now we offered them,
we knelt down low in silent prayer.
With eyes that seem to know both joy and sadness;
the child looked down as we knelt there.
So long ago, yet I remember, that child who lay at Mary's knee.
How strange that every child seemed so much like him;
his is the face I seem to see.

*OFFERING RESPONSE

In the Bleak Midwinter (v. 4)

UMH 221

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

*INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Rev. Lance Richards

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Lance Richards

People: **Merciful God, we confess that we have not always loved you with our whole hearts. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will; we have broken your law; we have rebelled against your love; we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Rev. Lance Richards

Leader: Hear the good news... ..in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**
Leader and People: **Glory to God. Amen.**

*GLORIA

Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain)

UMH 238

Gloria, in excelsis deo. Gloria, in excelsis deo.

TIME FOR CHILDREN

Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh

*CAROL OF JOY

There's a Song in the Air (vs. 1, 2, and 4)

UMH 249

**There's a song in the air! There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer and a baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!**
**There's a tumult of joy o'er the wonderful birth,
for the virgin's sweet boy is the Lord of the earth.
Ay! the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!**

*STEP FORWARD IN FAITH Rev. Ann Spears

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Lance Richards

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Go, Tell it on the Mountain (refrain)

UMH 251

Refrain: **Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;**

Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

POSTLUDE

Postlude in B Major

Marcel Dupre

*Please stand as you are able.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers on the altar today are given
in loving memory of Carolyn Severs by Glen Severs.

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:

ORGANIST

Paul Butt

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Ann Spears

DIRECTOR OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Dr. Terry Morris

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP PASTOR & DIRECTOR OF STUDENTS DISCIPLESHIP, DOWNTOWN

Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh

SENIOR PASTOR

Rev. Lance Richards

PIANIST

Jeremy Wood