

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Pastor and Leaders:

May the Holy Spirit strengthen you for the ministry of church leadership in Christ's church and equip you with everything good to do God's will. Receive authority to execute the office of Council Member in the name of Christ.

PRAYER

All people:

Eternal God, you have called these people to serve you here at Starview United Church of Christ and in the world, which you have entrusted to our care and keeping. Send your Holy Spirit on them, that they may serve among us with honor and faithfulness. Help them to be diligent in their duties, so your church may prosper in the mission you place before it. May their example prove worthy, for all of us to follow, so we are united in Christ's ministry, to the glory of your name. Amen.

DECLARATION

Pastor:

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of this church, I rejoice to announce: You are recognized and affirmed in your ministry as Council members.

Council Leader:

In accordance with the faith and order of this church, I extend to you the hand of Christian love.

All people:

Thanks be to God.

CAROL SING

Blue Chalice Hymnal, #142-173

BENEDICTION

Pastor:

May you go forth to follow the Star.
When and wherever you find Christ,
share the good news!
And may the God who gave us this year,
and the Savior who walked at our side each day,
and the Spirit who filled us with life abundant,
grace the coming year
with hope, peace, joy, and love.

All people:

Amen.

December 31, 2023
First Sunday of Christmas & Epiphany Sunday
Hymn Sing Sunday

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Mr. Kevin Crone

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Acolytes

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on the

Pastor:

At the dawn of a new year,

Congregation:

we come to welcome hope for a new world.

Pastor:

Let the darkness lift,
and a new year dawn of plenty,

Congregation:

**with enough for everyone
and people ready to share.**

Pastor:

Let the new year begin,
with renewed energy for the struggle

Congregation:

**to protect our children
and to care for the vulnerable.**

Pastor:

Arise and let the light shine,
to open a path to safety

Congregation:

**for all who are seeking "home"
and longing for new life.**

Pastor:

Let the Son shine and the Light rise
on new talks and new resolve

Congregation:

**to end the bombing and the terror
and to find solutions that will last.**

Pastor:

At the dawn of a new year

Congregation:

**we come to declare our hope
and to welcome new opportunities
to share the peace, joy, and love of Jesus Christ
over the next 52 weeks –**

Pastor:

over the next 365 days –

Congregation:

in the next 8,760 hours

Pastor:

or 526 thousand minutes -

Congregation:

31.5 million seconds!

All people:

Lord, what opportunities abound! Make us a blessing!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

All people: *Beloved Christ Child, we stand at the edge of a new year, which is to us, like an unknown country. We don't know what we will experience as we cross the border and navigate this new land of possibility. We don't know what obstacles will lie across our path, nor do we know what channels of potential will open up, for service to You and others. Grant us the faith and insight of the Magi, who, when faced with an ancient hope of a foreign people and the appearance of a remarkable star, grasped the opportunity, and went on their way, to follow that star. Lead us, like the Wise Ones, on a quest of faithfulness and worship, of hopefulness and giving. And may our expeditions always begin and end in You. Amen.*

(The congregation may be seated, as the children & youth come forward)

SERMON IN STORY & SONG **STEP BY STEP** **J.A.M. Choir**
Christmas Step-By-Step
When We Walk
Away in a Manger/Stars are Shining
Singing a Song of Praise
One Little Angel
Gotta Jump
Christmas Step-By-Step (Reprise)

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12

FOLLOWING OUR STARS

SPECIAL MUSIC *I Wonder as I Wander* **Chimes Choir**

(An Offering Collection Box is located on the table in the back of sanctuary, by the exit door)

OFFERING INVITATION

Pastor: The magi paid homage to the child, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. May we too bring the gifts of our lives and offer them in joy to Jesus Christ with new commitment, praise and a prayer.

(Please stand in body and/or spirit)

DOXOLOGY HYMN *We Three Kings* **Blue Chalice Hymnal, #172**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All people: *As long-ago travelers laid their gifts before the Christ; we too bring our gifts with great joy. Use our gifts for justice and righteousness, that oppression and violence may cease, and peace may flourish. May the*

light of your love shine through our giving and our living, that suffering may end, and all may rejoice in your gift of life. Amen.

INSTALLATION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pastor: Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry of each person in the life of the church or in various settings in the life of the world. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

Congregation: **There are different ways of serving, but the same God gives them.**

Pastor: The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

Congregation: **Christ is like a single body, which has many parts.**

Pastor: It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.

Congregation: **If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.**

All people: *All of us are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.*

Council Leader : These people have been called by God, in accordance with the faith and order of this church, to serve among us. They have accepted their call and are before us in witness to their willingness to serve.

Council Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility for particular service in the ministry of the church, whether gathered or scattered.

Pastor: Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry as Council members, are you prepared to serve with the help of God and for God's glory?

Individuals: *I am.*

Pastor: Do you promise to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully while showing for the love of Christ?

Individuals: *I do, relying on God's grace.*

Council Leader: Members of this household of faith, you have heard the promises of these church members, who have answered God's call to service. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with them. Let us rise in body and/or spirit, and witness to the commitment we now make?

All people: *We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ.*

J.A.M. Choir

(In alphabetical order)

Ella Hunt

KT (Karter Lee) Kinard

Alaunie Mebane

Evan Sechrist

Samantha Sechrist

Marques Shenk

Chimes Choir

Pastor Laura Baker

Gary Berger

Sue Brenner

June Davenport

Tammy Duke

Grace Gichner

Kim Jordan

Claire Moore

Cathy Rentzel

Heather Rickell

Carol Wagner

Chancel Choir

Andrew Boyer

Martha Boyer

Allan Dove

Gary Knisely

Vicki Knisely

JoAnn Kreeger

Kevin Crone

Gloria Moyer

Larry Moyer

Marta Dennis

Cathy Rentzel

Heather Rickell

Faye Schaeffer