

First Baptist Church in Needham

Epiphany

Edition 42



Worship and Prayer Resource

Sunday, January 03, 2021

(or whenever you are so led to pause, reflect, and pray)

858 Great Plain Avenue

Needham, MA 02492

www.fbcneedham.org

We will be incorporating the Advent Devotional resources from sanctifiedart.org “Those Who Dream”, in our Worship at Home Resources through Epiphany.



Lighting the Candle of Life

You may wish to light a candle or use the photo above as a focus for this time.

ALL: We light the Candle of Life - a candle that represents community, spirit, and the fullness of all of life - birth and death and all the transitions in between and beyond.

A Call to Dream for Epiphany ...

One: The Magi had a dream.

All: They dreamed of a Messiah.

They dreamed of just rulers.

They dreamed of a new day for all people.

One: The Magi had a dream, and this dream led them to action.

All: They journeyed to unknown places.

They followed a star.

They walked for days to get to Jesus.

One: So may we be like the Magi,

All: May our dreams inspire action.

May we worship the one true God. Amen.

Epiphany
THOSE WHO DREAM... *persevere*

FOCAL SCRIPTURES Matthew 2:1-12 | Isaiah 60:1-6

THEME CONNECTIONS

On Epiphany, we celebrate how God’s love transverses cultural and geographical barriers to become good news for all people. We marvel at the persistence of God to shine the way for the Magi so that they might bear witness to the divine. We honor that the Magi trusted their dreams and returned home by another way. As we journey forward, we carry the dreams of our ancestors in faith. With courage and resilience, we dream on.

Song of Response

The First Noel

THE FIRST NOEL

Sing, read aloud, or listen to, "The First Noel", by Pentatonix, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u5UvnKlCTA>

(only the first two verses below are included in Pentatonix's version).

The First Noel (v 1)

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.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

The First Noel (v 2)

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.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

The First Noel (v 3)

And by the light of that same star
three wise ones came from country far ...

to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

The First Noel (v 4)

Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord, ...

... who hath made heaven and earth of naught,
and with his love mankind has sought.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

Meditative Word

what does this

Word ...



...spark for you?

THOSE WHO DREAM

POETRY PRAYERS

Written by Sarah Are

The Week of Epiphany

THOSE WHO DREAM... *persevere*

I Imagine / Matthew 2:1-12

I imagine they packed bags—
Water and food, blankets and clothes.

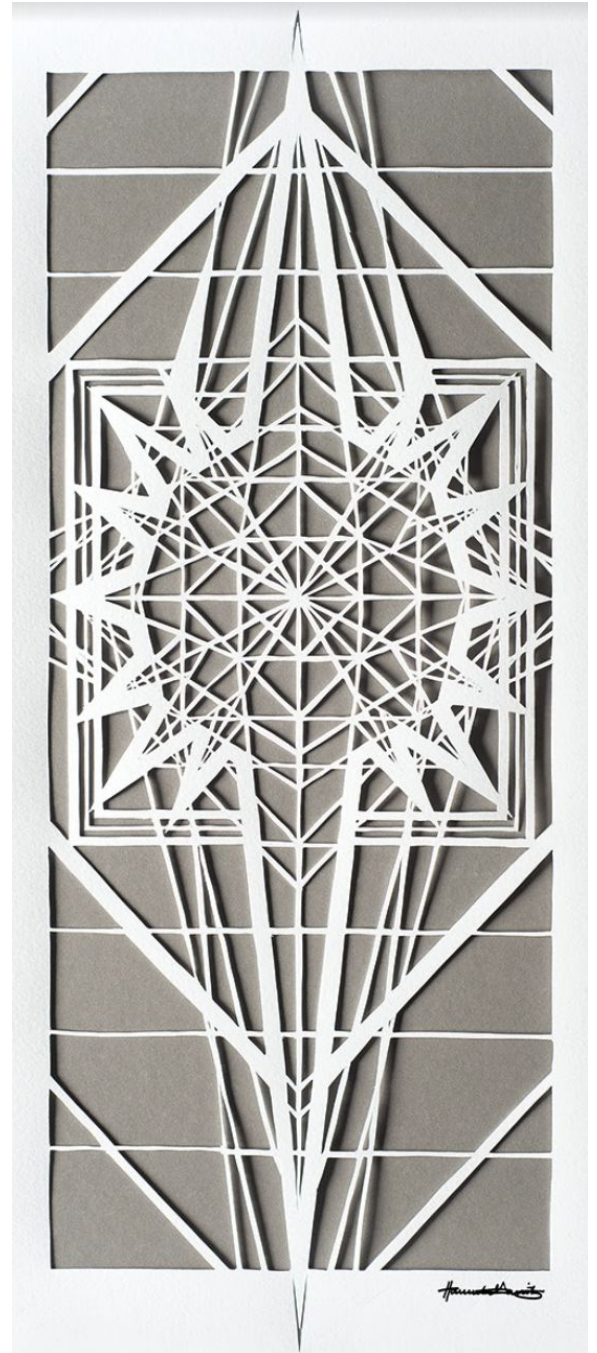
I imagine they packed tools—
Maps and telescopes that could bring the stars closer,
As if the sky was a comforter they could pull near.

I imagine they hugged loved ones and said,
"We'll be back soon."
And when loved ones said,
"Don't leave,"
"It's risky,"
"You don't even know what you're chasing,"
I imagine they put lips to foreheads and said,
"There is a light in the darkness. I must chase that."

And then I imagine they walked.
I imagine they walked until legs were tired and knees gave out.
Maybe they told stories on the road and laughed into open sky,
Or maybe they sat in silence and prayed for more light.
However the road unfolded, I imagine it was not easy.

I imagine all of this, not because I've chased stars,
But because I have dreamed.
And these dreams for justice make the Magi's story my own.
For every time we fight for justice,
We start in the dark.
We hug loved ones and say,
"There's a light in the darkness, I must chase that."
We walk until we're tired,
And then we keep walking.
We laugh at the open sky as a form of resistance.
We pray in the night for signs of more light.
And no matter how important the journey is,
And no matter how much progress we make,
The journey to justice is never easy.

And so I pray,
That maybe one day,
We will be like the Magi,
And will walk ourselves into the light.
Until then, don't forget—
There's a light in the darkness. We must chase that.



Prayers of the People

Enter into this time in song. If you don't know the tune, let the words be the doorway to your prayer.

Sung Prayer

Hear My Prayer, O Lord

BENZENHAFER
arr. Holly C. Benzenhafer

Hear my prayer, O Lord. Hear my prayer, O Lord.

I am asking, hear my prayer, O Lord.

Prayerful Meditation

“...prayer and meditation can be thought of as the creation of a mental space in which the energies of dreaming and the concerns of waking life are invited to meet each other and to have a mutual, open-ended conversation.”²

*Enter into prayer trusting that God who
walks beside you in your waking
also accompanies you through your dreaming - keeping vigil, ever present.*

We Hold in Prayer...

*Many of this week's prayers are requests from members of our congregation in the past week. **If you have general or specific prayer requests - joys as well as concerns - to share please contact Holly or Daryn to pass them along.***

As a community of faith gathered in Spirit when we cannot be in person as we are accustomed, we offer our hearts and voices in prayer where we are, entrusting the Spirit's moving among us and responding far beyond our individual reach and influence...

² Kelly Bulkeley, *Transforming Dreams: Learning Spiritual Lessons from the Dreams You Never Forget* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2000).

We celebrate this community that shares the love of Christ across barriers of technology, distance, time --- God, yours has always been a love that transcends --- **for that love we are truly thankful**, and we **celebrate our church community for exhibiting that so well** each and every day ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

With Ernie, we **celebrate our praying community**, and **give thanks for the prayers we have received** and offer **assurance that we are continuing to hold one another in prayer each week** ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

We offer **praises of thanksgiving and Christmas joy** that in a recent scan, it was revealed the tumors in **Ernie Steeves' body have shrunk to half their size!** We thank you, God, for this good news of great joy! ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

With Bev, we hold **Trevor** in our prayers and offer thanks that **he is in good spirits following some medical testing** and a change in his medications ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

We continue to remember **all those in assisted living facilities**. We pray for the folks at **Wingate, for Barbara and Bruce and their families. Keep them safe and grant your peace and vigilant care** to all in that facility and others throughout our community. We continue to remember **Gloria and Jim Beal**, and **Marilyn Blake** who are also in assisted living. We pray **that folks continue to take precautions to keep residents and workers safe** ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

As a community we continue to remember **those in assisted living who are lonely and isolated**, and having a **difficult time finding peace** in their circumstances. Help them to know **it is okay to feel discouraged and frustrated**. Help them to know **you are a safe place to bring all of who we are and that your love is big enough to hold us**, however we find ourselves. Most importantly, **we pray that your presence be made known to them in a way that offers some reassurance of your love and abiding and steadfast, faithful presence**. For **Marilyn Blake, Meg Shannon, Gaby Young**, and others especially in need of this prayer ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We remember **Jack Fassett** who passed away a year ago this week, and hold **Marty** especially in our hearts as she remembers and celebrates the memory of her beloved, Jack ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*



We ask, God, that you would **accompany those who are struggling with depression, and all those for whom this season is especially difficult.** **Remind us that all are welcome in your love -** the good news of Christmas was for shepherds and wise ones alike - those curious and questioning; those unsure, afraid and trembling.

Your light shines for us when we are unable to bear it ourselves. You are with us, and your love will always be with us - no matter what. As we seek your light, give us the assurances we need of your constant provision and guidance, and help us - give us courage - as we strive to be and bear your light to others in our world ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We give thanks that **Clif's friend in Kansas City, Missouri** is finally finished with cancer treatments ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

Liz has requested prayer as she navigates a challenging time. **Give her strength, courage and the reassurance that she is not alone ... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

With Nancy, we continue to remember her friend, **Mary**, in prayer as she travels to Florida once again to be with her sister, **Carol** in the last stages of her illness. God, **grant them this time with one another as a blessing - may they bring comfort** to one another's hearts and **find moments of hope and peace** in the midst of this heartbreaking time ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We continue to remember **Nancy's sister in law, Kathy**, and **Kathy's mother, Mary Ann**, who is undergoing a procedure and tests related to cancer on her birthday this week. We ask **that God's peace would accompany Mary Ann and Kathy as they sit in the uncertainty** of this time ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We offer prayers for **Jim's sister, Cathy**. For **wisdom and strength** in a time of discernment ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

With Harry, we offer thanks **for so many in our community and in our circles of caring** that have offered gifts of kindness, food, assurance, prayers, and company during this year - for the **Senior Center, Community Council, and others** ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*



With Harry, Bev, Clif and others, we continue in thanksgiving **for Christmas celebrations with family that were different and creative**, yet kept the spirit of the holiday alive in our hearts --- for caroling on porches, for small family meals together, for porch gift drops and driveway greetings, for Zoom calls and Zoom games, and extraordinary light displays, and for all

those who tried in whatever way they could to convey love, hope, joy and goodness to others in this season ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

With Sue Sarafinas, we pray **for our community as we navigate the Creative Callings** process, and **look forward with interest and hope** to the future manifestations of First Baptist Church in Needham's ministry, **while celebrating the good work happening** even now ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

With Harry, we give thanks that his **hearing aids, that had been broken, are now repaired and in good working order** ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

With Bev, we remember **Evie Barkin** in prayer as she navigates a time of **medical and physical struggles**. God, **accompany her as she undergoes medical treatment following a recent fall**. Assure her heart of **your presence and provision** in this difficult and unsettling time ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We celebrate the **long awaited vaccines for COVID-19** that have begun to be administered in the United States! We give a **joyous shout of celebration for all those that worked so diligently to ensure its development, safety and efficacy**. We pray, along with Katie J., that these **vaccines will be distributed safely, efficiently and equitably**. We give thanks that so many **health workers and first responders have already received vaccinations**, including Anthony, and Pastor Daryn's Aunt Li' and neighbor nurses, Despina and Julianna, and brothers in law, Andrew and George M. ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

With Dot and Louise, we **honor the resilience and the fortitude that accompany the intentional journey of day to day, moment to moment living**, particularly the discipline of noticing, honoring, and holding ourselves and our stories - our lived truths - as we move along that journey ... *praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...*

We continue to remember **the many lives that have been lost due to COVID-19**. We pause, and remember in this time of prayer that **they were each precious children of**



God. We hold **each family, and each individual** grieving the loss of a loved one in our hearts. We pray that our prayers might bring some comfort and some awareness that they are not alone, that they, and those departed, are remembered and loved ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We continue to hold Clif's friends, **Eileen and Tom League**, in our hearts and prayers, who were **recently diagnosed with COVID-19**. Eileen is home, but Tom remains in rehab. **Prayers for his continued recovery ... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

We continue to pray for **Eda Jackson** who is in her sixth week in COVID ICU - **God, make your presence known to her and her family, surround them with your compassionate love**, particularly as the complications surrounding her hospitalization continue to arise ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We give thanks that **Darren Dickens**, a pastor in Mississippi recently diagnosed with COVID-19, is home and recovering. His family is now quarantining in hopes that his **sister, Deedee**, who is particularly susceptible to complications from respiratory

illness, will not contract this virus. **For her protection we pray ... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

Our community continues to hold **Bruce Smith**, age 17, who is **at home with COVID-19**, in our prayers ... **Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

With **Marty**, we pray for her **great nephew** (Linda's son) who was **diagnosed with COVID-19**. After being home last weekend, his family members are quarantining and so far have tested negative ... **Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

With **Bev**, we continue to recognize that this virus is still affecting so many in our communities, and pray **for their healing and recovery ... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

We offer prayers for **Susanne Teachout** who was **recently diagnosed with COVID-19** and is in her final weeks of pregnancy. We give thanks that she is doing better and getting good rest. **God be with her and grant her and the baby healing and protection, as well as a swift recovery ... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...**

We celebrate the birth of **Pat Day's new grandbaby, Teddy**, born to **daughter, Carolyn** on November 3rd ... **praise God, from whom all blessings flow ...**



With **Liz**, we pray for all in **Nashville, TN** after an explosive device was detonated on Christmas Day. We offer prayers **for the folks in Nashville and for all in our world that live in the shadow of violence**, for their **comfort and protection**. We also ask for prayers for **those who choose to enact violence** - those who have never been taught what it is to choose love first - those who struggle to choose love over acts of terror. **God help them and us to make better decisions, to guide our lives according to love and mercy** in all that we do rather than

according to hatred, vengeance, or misplaced anger, hopelessness, desperation, or selfish ambition ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

God, we ask your **mercy upon us** when the mistakes and misgivings of our minds, hearts and bodies lead to irrevocable consequences that cause others, and our world, more pain. **Have mercy on us** when we abuse our power and privilege, when we misjudge, or when our biases and prejudices cloud our vision and corrupt our action. We pray for our divided communities, **unite us in your love and mark us with repentance and humility** so we can seek the change we need to heal. Again, help *all of us* seek and be ready for the **transformation** that needs to come for justice and peace to reign in the hearts and systems we create ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

We continue to offer prayers that **the stain of racism that exists on the fabric of our nation and the tendencies toward discrimination and dehumanization in our world would be eradicated**. Give us the **strength to overcome** these sins ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

With Barbara and Andrew, we offer prayers **for a safe, healthy and prosperous new year!** Blessings to everyone in our community for 2021! With Marty and others we pray, **“May 2021 offer more blessing than 2020 could”** ... *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer ...*

For the prayers of our hearts that you, Holy One, know even when words cannot hold them...*Hear my prayer, O Lord...*

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, 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 sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory forever.

Amen.

Offering

*During this time of offering, consider going right now to <https://www.fbcneedham.org> (Take Action) to complete your offering or continue to support the ongoing ministry of the church by writing your check to the church office and preparing it to mail to: **First Baptist Church in Needham, 858 Great Plain Avenue, Needham MA 02492**. Please indicate it is your offering or pledge on the check. Let this act be a spiritual practice woven in within your worship.*

**TO PICK UP 2021 Offering Envelopes ...*

... contact Robin in the church office to arrange a time for pick up.

If you are unable to pick up yourself, we will try to arrange their delivery in the new year.

Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Benediction

(Speak these words of benediction knowing that you are part of a loving community of faith. If you lit a candle at the beginning, you may wish to blow it out now.)

One: Our blessing to one another is that we are here for one another, that we are with one another, that we celebrate and remember one another along the journey.

ALL: We extinguish the Candle of Life, but the Light continues to shine within us. As we pass the peace we carry the Light of the Candle of Life from this hour into this world and beyond, offering peace, hope and light wherever the journey leads.

Passing of the Peace

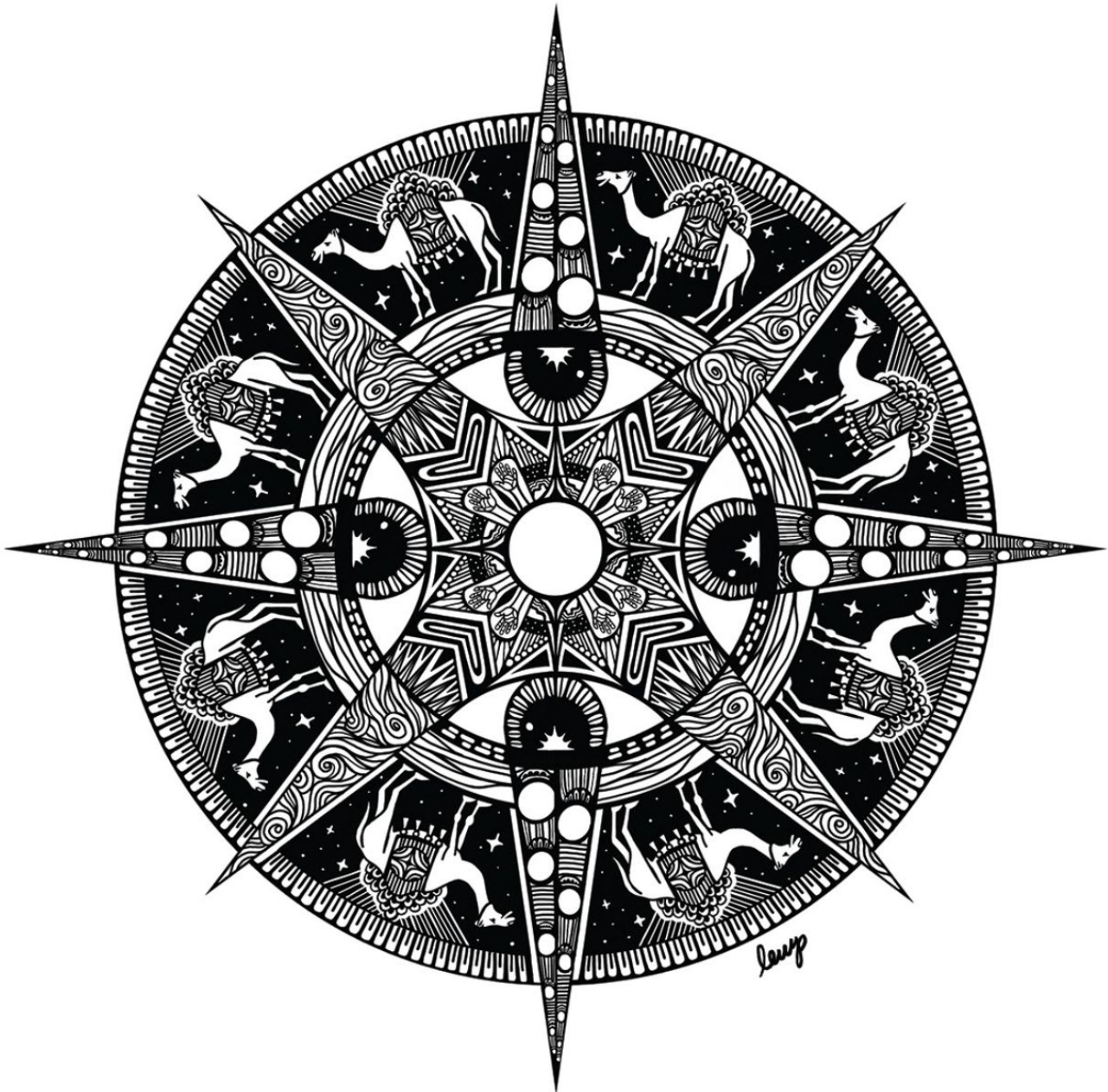
One: The peace of Christ be with you.

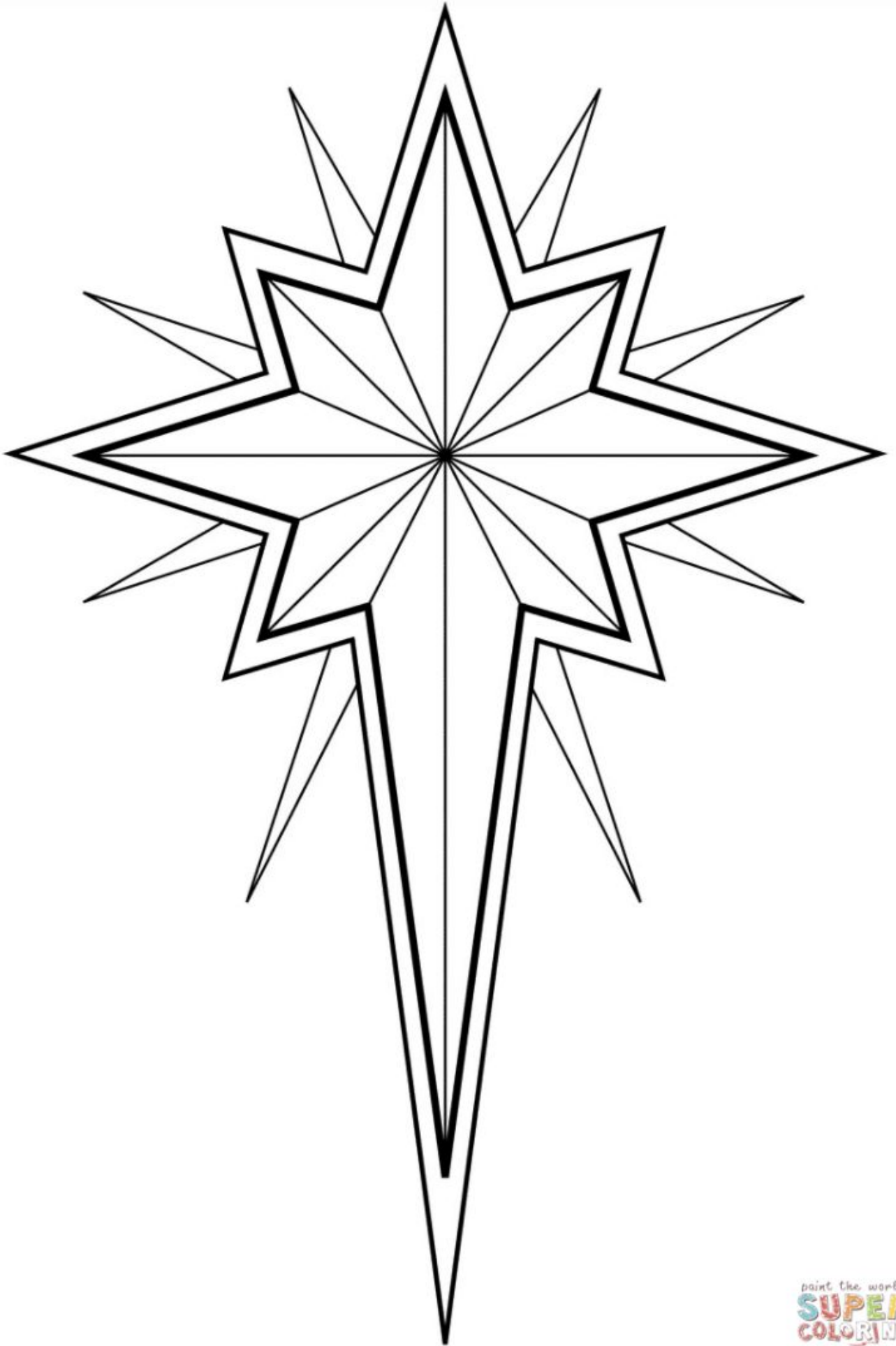
ALL: And also with you.

One: Let us greet one another in peace as we prepare for the journey ahead.

Blessings in the new year!
A happy and healthy 2021 to all.

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Announcements

Our ministry at FBC Needham continues!

Our church office has re-opened for our Office Manager, Robin Bevilacqua. We are encouraging limited visits to the church building, and all who visit are required to mask, sign-in, and socially distance. If you need to speak with Robin, please call ahead if you can. Pastoral and other church staff are working from home. Office voicemail and email are being checked regularly. If you have a pastoral concern, contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly by email, phone, or text.

Dec 27th and following

Worship Resources and Calls of Caring will be provided each week. You are encouraged to make use of the worship resources we provide, and to find other meaningful opportunities for worship and reflection, Zoom services, or other spiritually enriching means of communing with God and community during this time of social distancing. The Zoom links provided for FBC Newton and FBC Jamaica Plain remain the same as before and are posted on our website on our member page. Contact Pastor Daryn if you need links to join these services.

Worship Resource and Calls of Caring will continue!

We are aware how much the Worship Resource and Calls of Caring mean to our community, particularly to those of our community members unable to attend services in person or via Zoom. We will continue with the publication of these materials and with our calls each week, and will make an effort not to call during the time of Zoom services on Sunday mornings. Blessings, all!

Annual Meeting - January 24th @ 11:00am via Zoom

Zoom links will be made available via email and text message. Please make every effort to attend.

Join us Next Sunday, January 10th!



Boston University School of Theology
Center for Practical Theology

WE WILL PICK BACK UP ON ZOOM, JANUARY 10, 2021, with a congregational retreat to kick off year two of our Creative Callings process. The first community partner video of our 2021 process will be posted on that same day.

Reserve Thursdays at 6:30pm in 2021 for our congregational conversations for discernment via Zoom!

Thank you to all who have shown up curious, engaged the videos and video partners in meaningful dialogue, curated questions, and held possibility for our church in this process of discernment and dreaming. If you have questions about Creative Callings, or how you can best support First Baptist in our participation, please contact Pastor Daryn, pastordaryn@fbcneedham.org.

Newsletter

Check out our most recent issue of our Newsletter, *InSpire*. There you will find important information about worship, Creative Callings, stewardship and financial giving, as well as our upcoming capital campaign and building and organ restoration projects. There is a lot happening at FBC Needham this fall and I encourage you to actively participate in the life-giving ministry and discernment taking place in our community. To receive a copy, email churchoffice@fbcneedham.org.

Offering Envelopes TO PICK UP 2021 Offering Envelopes contact Robin in the church office to arrange a time for pick up. If you are unable to pick up yourself, we will try to arrange their delivery in the new year.

Do You Need Washable Masks? Be Kind Needham Masks for Seniors is a local organization making washable fabric masks available to local senior residents *for free*. Your health and safety in the weeks and months ahead is paramount, and having reusable, washable masks aids sanitation, is environmentally friendly, and is

cost-effective. If you or a senior you know need masks, please contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly.

Needham Community Council continues to provide necessary resources and food to individuals in need of their services. If you or someone you know are in need of reaching out to them or if you want to learn how you can best volunteer to help at this time, go to their website at: <http://needhamcommunitycouncil.org>.

Please note: They are accepting donations by appointment only at this time due to safety protocols. Financial donations are greatly appreciated and needed.

Security Adjustments

Changing Member Page Password: email or call Pastor Daryn for the NEW password for our church membership page. Our Creative Callings password is the same as before. The membership directory has been taken down from the website for now. Please let Pastor Daryn know if you need to be in touch with someone in the community pastordaryn@fbcneedham.org.

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