

PRELUDE *Chorale Improvisation on "Neumark"* Paul Manz
Two Settings of "Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern"
 ("How Brightly Shines the Morning Star")
 J. C. Bach and Georg Philip Telemann

WELCOME

†CALL TO WORSHIP Glen MacLeod
 One: Today we celebrate the spirit of the Magi – the spirit of discovery.
All: Their story is our story – a story of wondering and wandering.
 One: In the midst of darkness, they followed the light that leads to love.
All: Their story is our story – a story of seeking and finding.
 One: God still hangs guiding lights in the sky for us to follow.
All: Oh, the places we'll surely go!

†HYMN 176 [Sing of God Made Manifest](#) SALZBURG

†OPENING PRAYER
 Gracious God, we come into your presence with gladness and praise. We come together with grateful hearts for the gift of love – the Christ child whom you sent to save us. As we celebrate your generosity during this hour of worship, fill our hearts with Christmas joy. Satisfy our souls with the blessing of your Holy Spirit. With overwhelming joy, we pray. Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE READING [Matthew 2:1-12](#) (NT p. 2)

†RESPONSE (HYMN 261) *Sweet, Sweet Spirit* SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT
There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord; there are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

SERMON *The Spirituality of Seuss (1 of 2): Oh, The Places You'll Go!* Rev. Fredd

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy 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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN 105 [O Morning Star](#) WIE SCHON LEUCHTET

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY *There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth* Felix Mendelssohn
 The First Church Choir

†DOXOLOGY
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
 Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
 Amen.**

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION
Generous God, as the wise ones once brought gifts to the newborn king, we bring our gifts trusting that they might shine a light. Thank you for the gift of Jesus. Thank you for the many and varied gifts of Christmas. Bless the gifts we bring, that they may become symbols of love in the world. Amen.

†HYMN 161 [I Wonder as I Wander](#) I WONDER AS I WANDER

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* DENNIS
 The First Church Choir

POSTLUDE *Fanfare for a New Day* Lani Smith



Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
Second Sunday after Christmas

January 5, 2025
10 o'clock

First Church of Christ Congregational
12 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107
(860) 233-9605
www.whfirstchurch.org

To Give Online: <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/giving/give>
Or Give by Text: Text *GIVE* to (860) 222-7870.

Rev. Fredd Ward, Senior Pastor
Jim Boratko, Director of Worship Arts
Amanda Bethune, Director of Faith Formation

† *Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.*

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments following the service!