



We Keep Seeking

Rev. Jesse Kearns, Pastor

January 1st, 2023—New Year's Day



**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH CHICO
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

AGREE TO DIFFER • RESOLVE TO LOVE • UNITE TO SERVE

Wi-Fi Network: FCCDOC Password: 5303433727

Ph. 530-343-3727 • chicodisciples@gmail.com • fccchico.com

[f fccchico](https://www.facebook.com/fccchico) [i fccchico](https://www.instagram.com/fccchico) [ChicoFCC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCChicoFCC) [You Tube FCCChico](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCChicoFCC)

Welcome Visitors! We are excited that you have chosen to worship with us today; all are welcome and beloved—all races, gender identities, sexual orientations, socio-economic statuses, *everyone*.

I. Prelude – (Joshua Hegg)

II. Welcome and Announcements/Recognition of New Leaders – ()

- Today – Fellowship following service.
- Monday – CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
- Tuesday – 11:00 a.m. Music jam in Room 4; 7:00 p.m. Board Meeting on Zoom.
- Wednesday – 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts in K-Hall and Fireside.
- Thursday – 7:00 p.m. Bible Study in Room 6 and on Zoom.
- Friday - Epiphany
- Saturday – 2:00 p.m. Journeys of the Heart Bereavement Group in Spiritual Care Center.
- Sunday – 8:30 a.m. Sacred Grounds; 10:00 a.m. Worship in sanctuary, Zoom, and FaceBook Live; Fellowship in K-Hall following the service.

III. Installation of New Officers and Elders

IV. Opening Hymn – CH #172 “We Three Kings” (Joshua Hegg)

We Three Kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again
King forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I,
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising,
worshiping God on high.

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom,
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold him arise,
Christ and God and sacrifice:
alleluia, alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies.

O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light

V. Call to Confession and Words of Forgiveness

– 0

One of my favorite things about the Magi is that they go looking for God. Actively and consistently, day by day, they follow the star until it guides them to Jesus. I wish I was more like that, but I admit, I tend to follow God with part of my heart. I tend to get distracted and lost, taking exit ramps off the road, following whatever new shiny sign is present. It's part of being human.

In the prayer of confession, we acknowledge that more often than we'd like to admit, we find ourselves following the wrong star. Fortunately for us, God is the map maker, and God's map is measured in grace, so we have nothing to fear. Let us pray together. Let us seek God together. Join me in the prayer of confession:

God of starlight, we know that faith isn't a vending machine. Good news can't be bought or manufactured. It does not arrive with a push of a button. Instead, in this noisy world, we have to look for you in our midst. We have to walk toward you, just as the Magi did. We have to believe that love really can change the world. We have to seek the stars beyond the city lights. Forgive us for forgetting that. Forgive us for seeking you with only part of our hearts. We long to be more like

**the Magi; may we walk your way every single day.
Amen.**

Friends, I have nothing but good news. Since the very first day, God has taken the pieces of our hearts that we have offered up and has said, “I can work with that.” Even in our failings, God has washed us with words of grace, belonging, and love. No matter what star you’ve followed, no matter how far you’ve walked, no matter how lost you got— you belong to God. God loves you. God forgives you. God claims you. End of story. Thanks be to God! Amen.

VI. Children Fourth Grade and Under Dismissed for Sunday School

VII. Matthew 2:1-22 NRSV – ()

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ Then Joseph got

up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.'

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

'A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee.

VIII. Sermon - "A Shepherd Among the People" (Jesse Kearns)

IX. Song of Invitation – CH #173 "As With Gladness" (Joshua Hegg)

As with gladness sages bold
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright,
so, true Morning Star, may we
evermore your splendor see.

As with joyful steps they sped
to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before
One whom heaven and earth adore,
so, may we with willing feet
ever seek your mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
at that manger plain and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to you from whom they spring.

X. An Affirmation of Faith

**We believe that faith is active, found on long walks,
and in long talks, in future days, and down memory lane.**

**We believe that those who seek will find,
although it may not be what they expected.
We believe that God finds us first.**

**We believe that God drops breadcrumbs along
our way in the shape of people, invitations,
and even starlight.**

**We believe that being a seeker of God, of
justice, and of community is a holy thing.
So we strive to live with an open spirit, with
soft hearts, and with room to grow. May it
be so.**

This we believe. Amen.

XI. Prayers of the People (Mary Kearns)

XII. Communion Song CH #143 “Joy to the World” (Joshua Hegg)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;

let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

XIII. Institution of Communion (Max Erwin and Barbara Georgia Nelson, elders)

XIV. Partaking Communion Together

XV. Blessing/Benediction

XVI. Postlude – (Joshua Hegg)

Taking Down Christmas Decorations

We need help with taking down the Christmas Decorations. If you can help, please show up TODAY Sunday, January 1st, at 3:00 p.m.!



ANNUAL REPORT

Annual Reports

It's getting to be that time of year again. All Annual Reports are due January 15th. Who needs to turn in a report? The Ministry Circle Coordinators, Moderator, Treasurer, and Fun Timers. Please turn in your one-page summary report on paper

or by email (chicodisciples@gmail.com) to the church office. Call Briony at 343-3727 if you have any questions. Don't forget to turn in your keys if appropriate (if you are no longer a church leader, for example)!

Upper Room Devotionals for January-February 2023 are on top of the bookshelves in the sanctuary entrance.

Christmas Cards Received After Dec. 25th

Bulletin printing: Mary Louise and Darrel Hunter

Credits

- Advent Resources from sanctifiedart.org
- Bulletin graphic: "Flight to Egypt" by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org
- "We Three Kings" words and music by John H. Hopkins, Jr. 1857 Public domain Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #38002
- "As With Gladness" Words by William C. Dix, 1861, alt. Music Conrad Kocher, 1838; arr. William Henry Monk, 1861 Alt. © 1993 The Pilgrim Press Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #67619
- "Joy to the World" Words: Isaac Watts, 1719 Music: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1741; arr. Lowell Mason, 1848 Words: Public Domain. Music: Public Domain. CCLI # 5663860
- Hymns Used by Permission CCLI Copyright License # 37151

January 1st-8th, 2022

CALENDAR

This Sunday—New Year's Day

- 8:30 a.m. Sacred Grounds Adult Faith Formation Christian Education, Room 6 and on [Zoom](#)
- 10:00 a.m. Indoor Worship in Sanctuary and Worship Streamed Live on [Zoom](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Fellowship, Koinonia Hall

Monday—Church Office Closed

Tuesday

- 11:00 a.m. Music Jam, Room 4
- 7:00 p.m. Church Board meeting on [Zoom](#)

Wednesday

- 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts Troop 2 Koinonia Hall, Fireside

Thursday

- 7:00 p.m. Bible Study, Room 6 and on [Zoom](#)

Friday—Epiphany

Saturday

- 2:00 p.m. Journeys of the Heart Grief Group, Spiritual Care Center

Next Sunday

- 8:30 a.m. Sacred Grounds Adult Faith Formation Christian Education, Room 6 and on [Zoom](#)
- 10:00 a.m. Indoor Worship in Sanctuary and Worship Streamed Live on [Zoom](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Fellowship, Koinonia Hall

Some FAQs for Visitors

- **What is Communion?** Communion is a part of each Sunday morning where we remember the last meal that Jesus ate with the disciples by eating bread and drinking grape juice.
- **May I receive Communion?** Yes! Everyone is invited to receive -- we have no barrier to participating in communion.
- **What's a "Doxology"?** Some Sundays we will sing a "doxology" (literally "saying of glory") after we receive the offering. It is a prayer written in 1674 and is popular in Protestant Churches -- plus, we love the words.
- **Do we say the Lord's Prayer together?** We do pray the Lord's Prayer together occasionally on Sunday mornings during the prayer time.
- **What else should I know?** We'd love to share more of our loving and inclusive community with you. At FCC, you'll find all generations worshipping together and participating in church activities. We have activities for kids and youth, and we love to share in community together.
- **Visit our website to donate online, subscribe to our mailing lists, and learn more about us!** www.fccchico.com
- **Masks:** Masks are recommended but not required. Adult and child size masks are available in the Sanctuary as well as hand sanitizer.