

**BETHESDA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**8:30 a.m. Sunday 1 January 2023**

**First Sunday after Christmas Day/Epiphany of the Lord**

(2)

**ENTRANCE**

*(To help us connect, please sign the attendance pad in your pew)*

Lighting of candles and prelude

Praise choruses: Praise choruses *(see insert)*  
“Another Year Is Dawning”  
“God of the Ages”

Opening prayer: Help us protect our children.  
**It is our first order of business.**  
Yet we are to become as little children.  
**Does that mean we are first to listen?**  
Yes.  
**Then, teach us how.**  
Yes, Lord. Teach us how.

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

Prayer for listening ears: Help us do one thing, not another.  
**How so?**  
Help us follow Joseph, not Herod.  
**But Herod was in charge.**  
That’s not what the Wise Men thought.  
**That’s confusing.**  
Not according to the story of Jesus.  
Listen.  
**Help us.**  
Yes, Lord. Teach us.  
**We promise to listen.**

First lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

Psalter: UMH 861 Psalm 148

Second lesson: Ephesians 3:1-12

Song: 256 “We Would See Jesus”

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

Sermon: “*Listening*”

Joys, concerns, prayers

John Wesley’s Covenant Service\*:

Collect: **God, you have appointed our Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator of a new covenant; give us grace to draw near with fullness of faith and to join ourselves in a perpetual covenant with you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Covenant:

**Our Lord Jesus Christ, by his death and resurrection has made a new covenant with all who trust in him.**

On the one side, God promises in this covenant to bring us new life in Christ.

**On the other side, we are pledged to live not for ourselves but for God.**

From time to time we renew our covenant with God, **especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord’s table.**

Today, therefore, we meet, as the generations before us have met, to renew the covenant that binds us to God.

The invitation: Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.  
Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.  
**Christ has many services to be done.**  
**Some are more easy and honorable,**  
**others are more difficult and disgraceful.**  
Some are suitable to our inclinations and interest,  
others are contrary to both.

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**In some we may please Christ and please ourselves.  
But then there are other works  
where we cannot please Christ  
except by denying ourselves.**  
Be satisfied that Christ shall give you  
your place and work.

607 “A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition” (*Unison*)

**THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION(Page 15ff)**

**Everyone welcome**

**SENDING FORTH**

Song: 117 “O God, Our Help, in Ages Past”

Closing prayer: 255 “Epiphany”

Postlude and extinguishing of candles/Going forth

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