

**Order of Service at the United Reformed Church**  
**January 4, 2026 9:30 a.m.**

**APPROACHING GOD**

Prelude                      Away in a Manger                      Setting: Busarow  
*(A time of silence to prepare our hearts to worship; please silence your cell phone)*

Word for 2026: **Practice.**  
**People:** *May we practice becoming. (Pause. Breathe. Begin worship.)*

Salutation  
Grace and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

Call to Worship  
We are people who are waiting—  
waiting for answers,  
waiting for healing,  
waiting for change.  
**We come carrying hope and impatience,  
faith and fatigue.**  
God meets us not only in fulfillment,  
but in interruption.  
**Open our eyes to recognize your presence.**  
Come, Spirit of the Living God.  
**Interrupt our waiting.**

\*Opening Hymn (#100 Red LUYH Book)                      Jesus, the Light of the World

Call to Confession  
Waiting can make us weary. Waiting can make us distracted. Waiting can train us  
to settle for less than God. Trusting in God’s mercy, let us confess the ways we  
have waited without staying awake.

Prayer of Confession  
Faithful God, we confess that we often wait for you while filling our days with  
noise, distraction, and habits that dull our attention. We wait for change, but resist

transformation. We wait for clarity, but avoid discipline. We wait for you to act,  
while refusing to practice faithfulness. Forgive us for mistaking delay for devotion  
and comfort for trust. Interrupt what keeps us asleep. Train us to recognize your  
presence when you draw near. Amen.  
(a moment for silent confession)

Words of Assurance  
Hear the good news: God does not abandon us in our waiting. God meets us there.  
The same Spirit who stirred Simeon and Anna is still at work—awakening hearts,  
opening eyes, and forming faith. In Christ, we are forgiven. In Christ, we are being  
made ready. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Passing the Peace  
The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you.**

**HEARING GOD’S WORD**

Hymn of Preparation (#95 Red LUYH Book)                      What Child Is This (verses 1 and 3)  
*Please Remain Seated*

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading                      Luke 2:21-40  
The Word of God, for the People of God!  
**Thanks be to God!**

Sermon                      **Series: Revealed: When Jesus...When Jesus Interrupts Our Waiting**

**RESPONDING TO GOD**

Offertory                      As with Gladness Men of Old                      ”Dix”  
*(As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold, as they offered gifts most rare at the manger  
plain and bare, all our costliest treasure bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.)*

\*Doxology                      Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow  
\*Prayer of Dedication  
\*Affirmation of Faith

Communion Hymn (#565 Blue Book)                      A Hymn Of Joy We Sing  
Celebration of the Lord’s Supper  
Communion Prayer, Prayers of The People and The Lord’s Prayer

## Announcements

\*Closing Hymn (Projection)

Shine, Jesus, Shine

\*Benediction (Responsive)

Go now as people who are waiting—  
—**but waiting with attention.**

May God interrupt your assumptions,  
—**and sharpen your vision.**

May the Spirit train you to recognize grace—  
—**even when it arrives unexpectedly.**

Go in peace, practiced and awake.

**We go, ready to see what God is doing. Amen.**

Postlude

Every Year the Christ Child Comes to Earth

setting: Beck

## Our Invitation

Welcome to United Reformed Church! As we join together in prayer, song, and praise to God, we pray that the blessings and fellowship you find here will enrich your life. *If you are physically able, an asterisk (\*) indicates an invitation to stand.*

Bold text signifies opportunities for the congregation to read and respond responsively.

**Pastor Office Hours: Wednesday 5-7 PM; Sunday 10:30 AM-12:30 PM**

**Church Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Thurs 9AM-2PM; Wed 3-7 PM**

### Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Lillian Hines

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Director of Music: Jeffrey Kunick

Office Administrator: Kimberly Rembis

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Church Phone: 973/365-1666

Pastor's Cell Phone: 609/248-0494

Website: [www.unitedreformedchurchofclifton.org](http://www.unitedreformedchurchofclifton.org)



## STAR Word Liturgy for Epiphany Sunday (2026)

Beloved of God, on this Epiphany Sunday we remember the star  
that rose in the East—  
a light that guided seekers who dared to follow.

**We, too, come as seekers.**

**Hungry for direction. Open to revelation.**

Today we receive STAR Words—  
not as magic,  
not as predictions,  
but as invitations.

Gifts of grace that tune our hearts  
to God's quiet work in us.

**Holy Spirit, illuminate our path.**

**Guide our steps.**

**Speak through this word.**

As you draw a word, trust that the Spirit is near.

You are not choosing alone.

Let your word follow you—  
through Epiphany,  
through the ordinary days,  
through every place God sends you.

**May these words become flesh in us**

**as we follow the Light of the World.**

**Amen.**