

INTER-FAITH CHAPEL WORSHIP SERVICE

January 7, 2024

Epiphany of the Lord
With
Holy Communion

SILENT MEDITATION

An ancient star sheds its light, shining bright both day and night.

Heralding the wondrous birth, of God's descent to the earth.

The star proclaims an epiphany, of God's love and grace for you and me.

—Peter Hayes

PRELUDE

Prelude on "Morning Star"

Balcombe

Dr. Holly Oberle, Director of Music

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dr. Woodie Rea

LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE

INTROIT

Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New

Farah Kidwai

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The Magi came from many places, following a star.

**PEOPLE: We come to worship from various backgrounds,
And the star sheds light on our lives.**

Leader: The Magi waited and watched, knowing something wondrous was happening.

**PEOPLE: Today, we wait for the Spirit and watch for the signs of God,
Knowing that something wondrous is happening.**

Leader: The Magi brought gifts to offer the Child.

PEOPLE: We too bring gifts – our voices, our spirits, our hopes, ourselves.

ALL: God's light comes to all.

Lord, make us ready to journey to this Light.

Prepare our hearts to receive this Light.

Open us to this Light, now, as we worship. Amen.

INVOCATION

✠ OPENING HYMN

We Three Kings of Orient Are

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

UNISON

God of light and darkness, we have seen your guiding star beckoning to us, yet we have often turned away and followed our own paths. We have experienced the brightness of your light, but often our pride and ego lead us in another direction. Forgive us, O God, our darkness of selfishness, our darkness of prejudice, our darkness of apathy. Restore in us, and in our world, the light of hope. Strengthen our faltering steps and guide us by the star of wonder to thy perfect light. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

✠ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, creator of light and giver of life, love, and peace.

We believe in Jesus the Christ, the bearer of light and the Prince of Peace,
Who lived and died, was resurrected, and lives with us now.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the continuing presence of light in the world
And the power that is at work within us.

We believe in the Gospel, the light unto our path, the Good News,
God's message of love and grace.

We believe in the love of God made available to us through Heaven's Child.

We affirm our faithfulness to go into God's world, bearing the light of joy and hope
that has been made known to us. Amen.

✠ GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

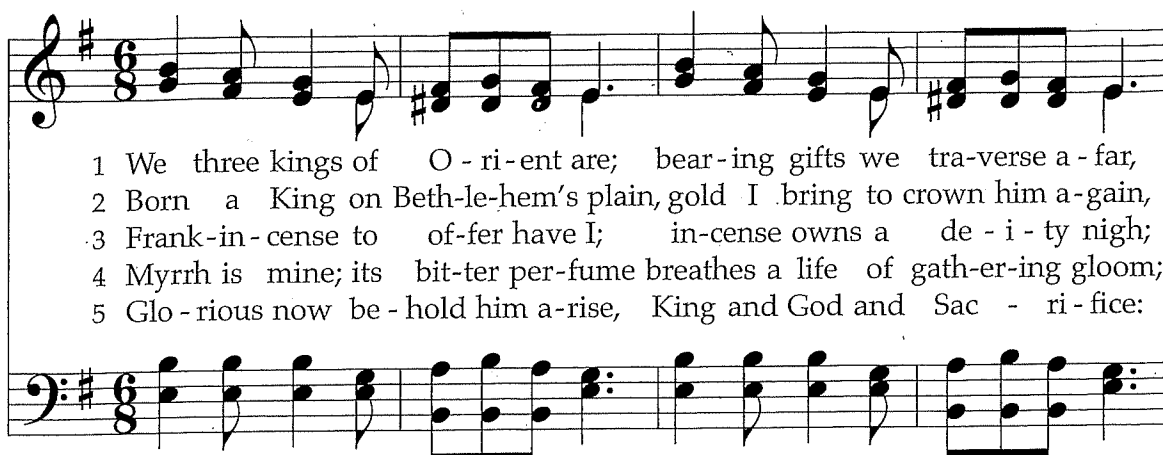
SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2: 1-12

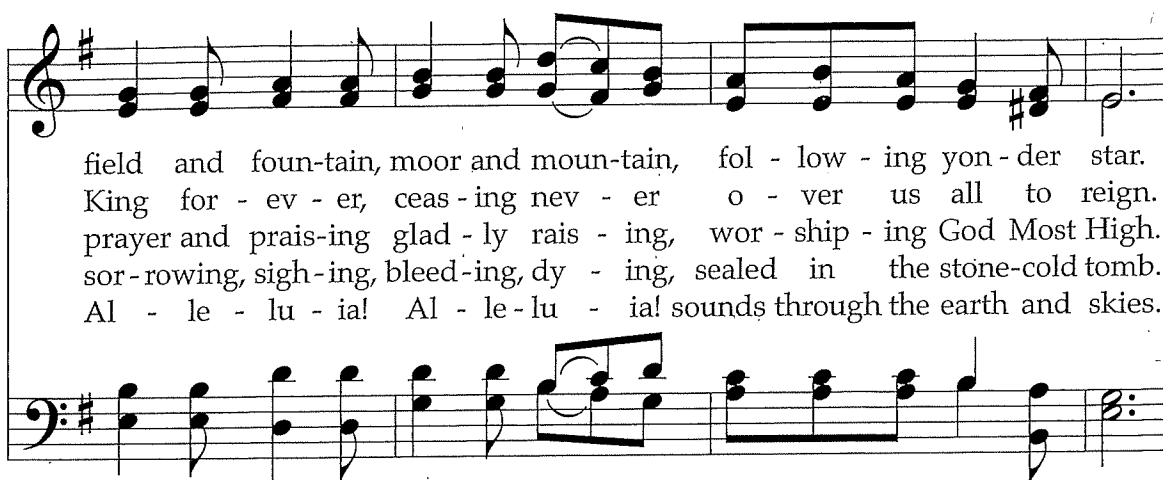
✠ You may stand in body or in spirit.

Music used by permission, CCLI #1683224

We Three Kings of Orient Are

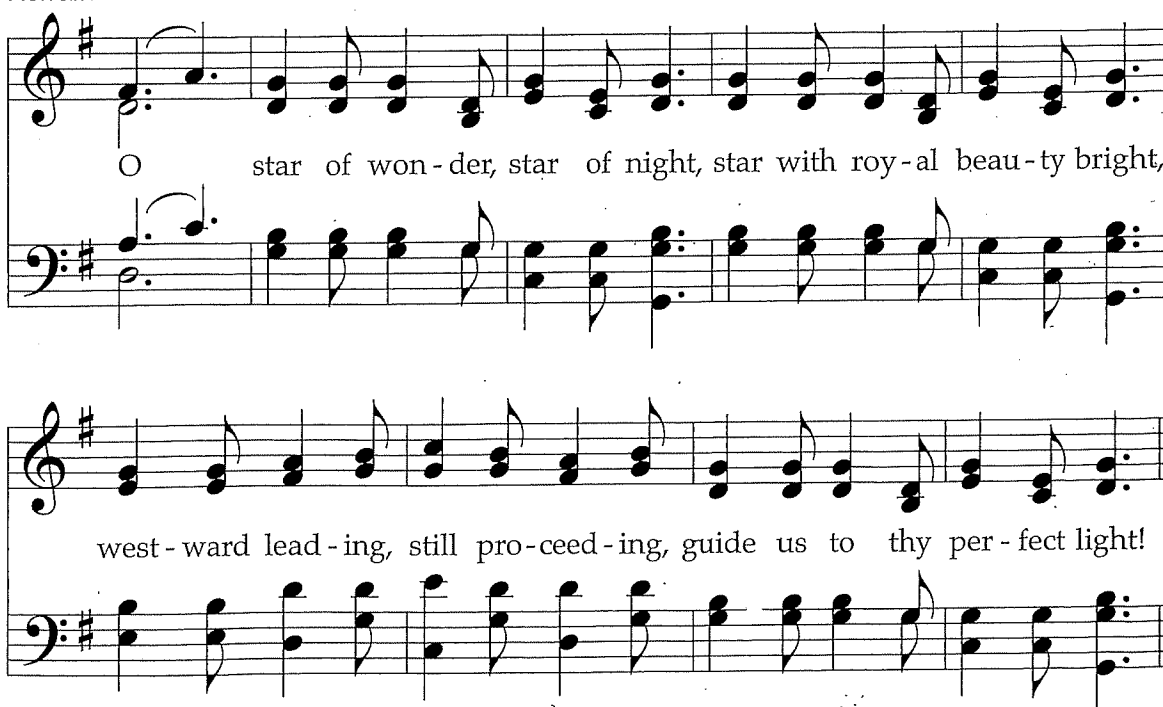


1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
 2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice:



field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais - ing glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain



O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,
 west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.

ANTHEM / SOLO

In the Bleak Midwinter
Chancel Choir

Holst

SERMON

“A Personal Epiphany”

Dr. Woodie Rea

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

We Three Kings/Beautiful Star
Farah Kidwai

Fettke

✠ **OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

As with Gladness

**As they offered gifts most rare
At thy 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.**

✠ **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

COMMUNION HYMN

What Child Is This?

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Dr. Rea: Through Jesus, we know that God is present with us, loves us, and accepts us unconditionally. Through the Magi, we know that God's love and grace is available to all people, everywhere.

Let us then, come to this table that is open and welcoming to all.

Let us come, not because we must, but because we may.

Come, not because we are fulfilled, but because of our emptiness.

Dr. Lee: Let us come, not that we are strong, but that we have needs.

Come, not to express an opinion, but to seek a Presence.

Let us sit together in humility and thanksgiving, not with self-ego or in pride.

Dr. Rea: Come to this table, then, sisters and brothers, just as you are.

It is spread for you and me, that we might again know that God has come to us, and shed His light on us, through Jesus the Christ.

What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing,
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
 Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!



This Victorian text gains scope and power by having the original second halves of stanzas two and three restored. They give a stark forward glimpse of what lies ahead for this "babe, the son of Mary!" The tune is much older, dating from Tudor England.

COMMUNION PRAYER

UNISON

Lord of bright and abiding Light, through Christ Jesus, you have poured your light into the world and have asked us to follow the light, rather than run and hide in the darkness of doubt and despair. You promise to be our light all of our days and ask us to place our trust in you. May this meal that we now share help guide us to thy perfect light. Hear us now, as we continue our prayer ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SUNG BY ALL

Our Father which 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.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

(See Announcements section for details)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

UNISON

Lord God, we have received your word, have tasted your grace, have drank of the saving cup, have experienced your presence, and have seen your light. Grant now, that we may go away from here filled with our love for you and overflowing with your love for others. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

✠ CLOSING HYMN

As With Gladness

✠ BENEDICTION

✠ BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Tune: Ar Hyd Y Nos

“Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love’s baptismal river I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.”

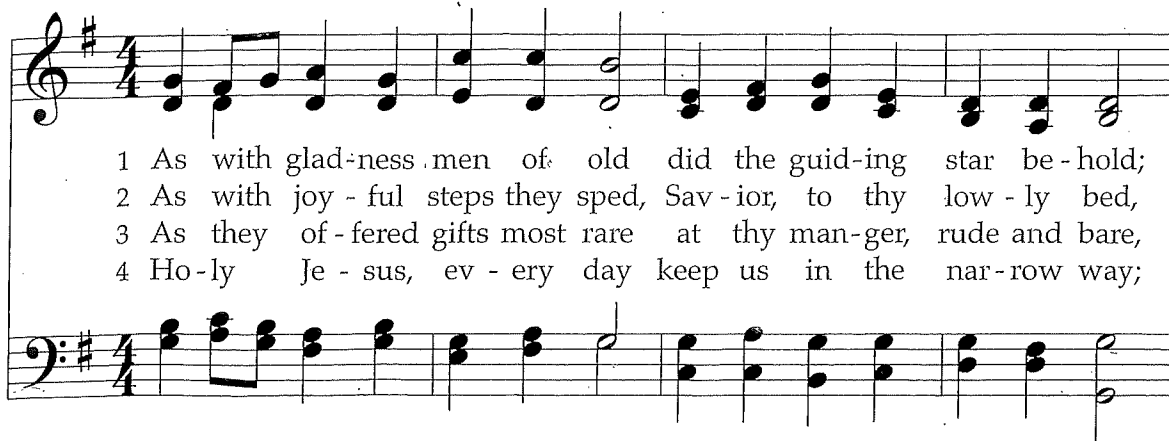
✠ POSTLUDE

Brightest and Best

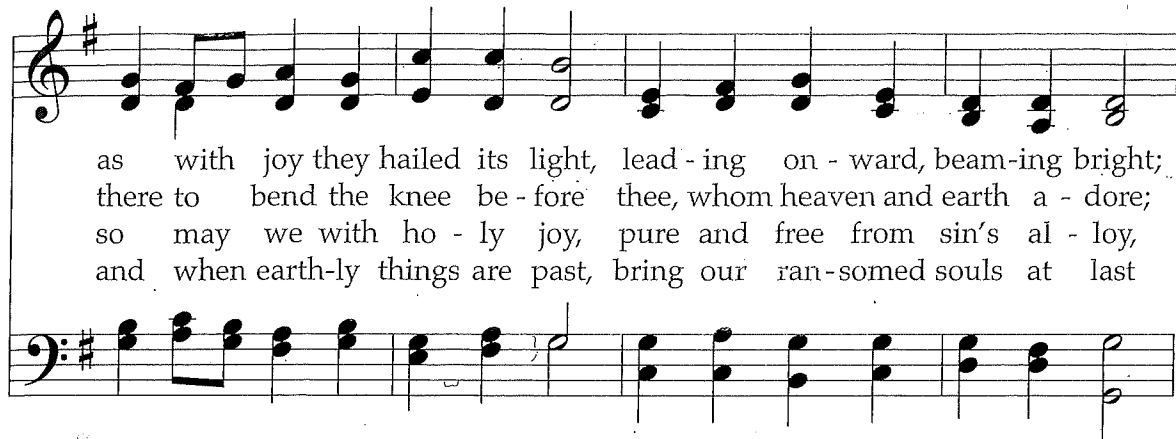
Hobby

Dr. Holly Oberle, Director of Music

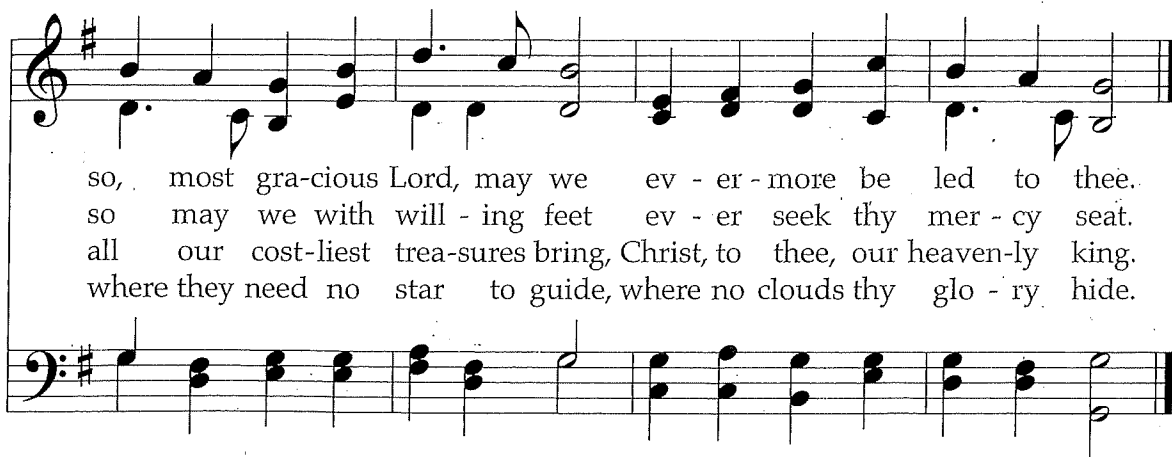
As with Gladness Men of Old



1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to thy low-ly bed,
 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at thy man-ger, rude and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-ery day keep us in the nar-row way;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
 there to bend the knee be-fore thee, whom heaven and earth a-dore;
 so may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
 and when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last



so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev-er-more be led to thee.
 so may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek thy mer-cy seat.
 all our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heaven-ly king.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo-ry hide.

The first three stanzas here use an as/so structure to draw parallels between the coming of the Magi and the spiritual lives of the singers, summed up in the prayer of the fourth stanza. Even though this adapted German tune was named for him, the author did not care for it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME

We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us today! The Inter-Faith Chapel is committed to providing “*A House of Prayer for All People*.” We are seeking to share the love of God through caring, outreach, study, and worship. We extend a special welcome to our visitors and invite you to sign our *Visitor Register* and pick up an IFC coffee mug as our welcome gift to you. We hope that you will return to be with us again soon.

NEW MEMBER / AFFILIATE REGISTER

If you are interested in joining The Inter-Faith Chapel, or would like more information about this vibrant faith community, please let us know by signing the *Member / Affiliate Register* (located in the Narthex on the desk next to the coat room).

We are planning to receive new members during our worship service on January 21st. Immediately following the service, there will be a reception with these new members, and all new members who have joined since the pandemic, as our honored guests. Come join the fellowship and refreshments!

COMMUNION SERVICE

The Inter-Faith Chapel celebrates Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month, and on other special occasions. Communion is provided two different ways and you are invited to participate in the form most familiar and comfortable to you.

Communion is served in the PEWS on the LEFT SIDE of the sanctuary facing the cross. Wafers and individual grape juice cups will be passed in trays among the congregation.

Communion is served INDIVIDUALLY on the RIGHT SIDE of the sanctuary facing the cross. Communicants will come forward and receive a wafer to dip in the chalice of wine.

Gluten-Free Communion is available at the altar or in the pew upon request.

INTER-FAITH CHAPEL FILM FESTIVAL

We are hosting our annual Inter-Faith Film Festival, this year showcasing a selection of animated feature films by Pixar. Each film has a clear message teaching us something about ourselves, and how we connect with each other. Join us **Tomorrow, Monday January 8th at 1:00 PM** in the Fellowship Hall to watch the film, “*UP*” about septuagenarian Carl Fredricksen flying his house to beautiful Paradise Falls in South America. It is certain to be an “uplifting” time.” (A more full description of the film is in the January Courier).

DE-DECORATING

Is that even a word!? Volunteers are requested to help take down and pack up our Christmas decorations on **Tuesday, January 9th at 2:00 PM**. If you are available for about an hour or so, would you consider joining us? *"Many hands makes light work!"*

MLK CELEBRATION

The annual Leisure World Community Martin Luther King Celebration will be held on **Monday, January 15th at 10:00 AM** at The Chapel. The theme for this year's celebration is: *A New Dream for A New Day*. Music will be provided by The Inter-Faith Chapel Gospel Choir with drumming offered by the Ogboni Harambee Drumming Circle and Percussion Ensemble.

The speaker for this celebratory service will be Rev. William H. Lamar, IV, pastor of the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, DC. All are invited to join us as we recommit ourselves to the dream of justice and freedom.

CENTERING PRAYER

As we begin a new year, you are invited to take time to pause and reflect on the events of 2023 and contemplate the promises and hopes of 2024. Gather for a time of centering prayer with Spiritual Director Bertie Knisely and others in The IFC Fellowship Hall on **Wednesday, January 17th at 6:00 PM**. To register, please call The Chapel office at 301-598-5312 or email facilitator Bertie Knisely directly at bertiek@moravian.edu.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Your 2024 envelopes are available for pickup in the Meditation Chapel. There are various ways to give to The IFC (online credit card, direct deposit, bank check, etc.) but if you give by traditional check or cash, consider using the envelope system to help keep personal giving records more accurate. Please call Bonnie at 301-598-5312 for more information.

USHERS NEEDED

Our worship ministry is in need of more volunteers to help serve and usher during our weekly Sunday morning worship services. The primary duties and responsibilities include welcoming parishioners and handing out bulletins, collecting the offering, and serving or assisting with communion distribution. This is a meaningful way to be of service to The Chapel with a limited time commitment required.

There will be an Ushers meeting/training on **Wednesday, January 24th at 10:00 AM** in the Sanctuary for all new and seasoned ushers. Please contact Heidi Bender (Chair of Worship Committee) at 240-418-1518 or call The Chapel office at 301-598-5312 for more information.

THE INTER-FAITH CHAPEL
2024 COUNCIL

Council Chair..... Maureen Harris
Council Vice-Chair..... Elizabeth Brooks-Evans
Council Secretary..... Peggy Miles
Treasurer..... Roman Czujko
Building & Grounds..... Rick Kaiser
Christian Education & Spirituality..... Karen Robertson / Bertie Knisely
Finance..... Don Hill
Inter-Faith Women..... Ginger Samara
Membership..... Maggi Lindley
Missions..... Betty Hughes
Music..... Katherine Latterner
Outreach and Fellowship..... Tyra Thompson
Pastor Affiliate Relations..... Arlene Kaiser
Worship..... Heidi Bender

THE INTER-FAITH CHAPEL

3680 South Leisure World Blvd.

Silver Spring, MD 20906

301-598-5312

www.inter-faithchapel.org

CHAPEL OFFICE HOURS

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM ♦ Monday – Friday

Rev. Dr. Woodie Rea, Senior Minister

Rev. Dr. Ramonia Lee, Minister of Congregational Life

Rev. Dr. Robert Perry, Minister Emeritus

Dr. Holly Oberle, Director of Music

Bonnie Bonner, Chapel Administrator

Joy Dufour, Administrative Assistant

Steve Buck, Gary Carpenter, Video Technicians and Sextons