



Our Mission...

to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.

We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.

The Sunday before the Epiphany
January 3rd, 2021

Bold print indicates a congregational response.

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

WELCOME and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Metis nation. We are thankful for these first inhabitants and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.

CALL TO WORSHIP

*O come, let us worship the Lord
and consider what wondrous things God has done:*

The Magi who study the heavens follow a guiding star!

*O come, let us worship the Lord
and consider what wondrous things God has done:*

The peoples who live in the shadows see a glorious light!

*O come, let us worship the Lord
and consider what wondrous things God has done:*

**The Christ who embodies the Word unveils the hidden plan,
making us joint heirs of the promise of salvation through the gospel!**

**O come, let us worship the Lord,
for God has done wondrous things!**

PRELUDE by Luke & Kara McMillan "***Christmas Medley***"

PRAYER OF THE DAY

*God, you have made yourself known, but in a most amazing way,
coming in weakness, in a tiny baby; you covered your glory and hid your greatness.*

God of mystery and surprise, we praise you.

*God, you have made yourself known, but in a most amazing way,
in a poor stable no one else wanted; you hid your wealth and infinite riches.*

God of mystery and surprise, we praise you.

*God, you have made yourself known, but in a most amazing way,
born to humble working people, hidden in a simple life,
and yet announced in the stars of heaven and visited by kings.*

God of mystery and surprise, we praise you. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS: *Teresa Miller*

Hebrew Scripture

Isaiah 60: 1-6

*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.*

*Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,*

and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

*Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.*

*A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.*

They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The Epistle

Ephesians 3: 1-12

*This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you
Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that
was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by
revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to
perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this
mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his
holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-
heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus
through the gospel.*

*Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was
given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the
saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the
boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the
mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church
the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and
authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose
that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in
boldness and confidence through faith in him.*

RESPONSE: *This is the word of God.*

Thanks be to God

The Gospel

Matthew 2: 1-12

~Rev. Don Johnson

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.

GOSPEL RESPONSE:

The Gospel of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON: *"The New Year"*

~Rev. Don Johnson (see the attached sermon)

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

AN INTERCESSION FOR CHRISTMASTIDE

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**whose parents found no room in the inn;
we pray for all who are homeless.**

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**born in a stable;
we pray for all who are living in poverty.**

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**rejected stranger;
we pray for all who are lost, alone,**

all who cry for loved ones.

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

whom Herod sought to kill;

we pray for all in danger, all who are persecuted.

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

a refugee in Egypt;

we pray for all who are far from home.

Holy Child of Bethlehem,

in you the Eternal was pleased to dwell;

help us, we pray, to see the divine image

in people everywhere. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS

THE 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 trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil:

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

~ William Temple 1881-1944

O Lord, as the years change,

may we find rest in your eternal changelessness.

Help us to meet this new year bravely,

in the faith that, while life changes all around us,

you are always the same,

guiding us with your wisdom and protecting us with your love;

through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE BLESSING

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ

shine in our hearts, transform our lives, and brighten the world.

And the blessing of God the Holy Trinity rest upon you always. Amen

POSTLUDE Solo by Diane McDonald – #95 VU **"Born in the Night, Mary's Child"**

~Accompaniment by the late Joan Shaw

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