



Carlisle/Kilbride United Church

Sunday January 2, 2022

Service on Zoom at 10 am

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Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Radiant God, light for all people and all places,
by the guidance of a star you led the Magi
to worship the Christ Child.

By the light of faith
lead us to worship you in peace and love,
and guide us in your way.

We pray in the name of Christ, light of the world.
The light of Christ shines anywhere and everywhere.
(light the candle)

We welcome the light.

Acknowledgement of Land

Opening Hymn: VU 82 A Light Is Gleaming

I invite you to sing along with musicians of Golden Ears United Church (Maple Ridge, BC) as they perform this 1992 hymn by Linnea Good.

[VU 82 A Light is Gleaming - YouTube](#)

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.

- 1 When light comes pouring into the darkest place,
it hurts our eyes to see the glow.
Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,
our memories and tears.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.

2 When night is round us and every shadow grows,
a star is there to light our way.

It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:
'God's light will ever stay.'

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.

3 And Jesus showed us a brighter path to walk.
He showed us things we hadn't seen.

Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign:

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.

4 So let us live in the brightness God has giv'n,
and let us rise to see the dawn.

We trust that God is here a-sparkle and ablaze,
– warming all our days.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.

Call to Worship:

One: The Star shines and lights the way

All: Shall we follow to see the wonder?

One: The light shines into places we find hard to see

All: We see the cares and troubles of this world

One: If we but rise and follow we will also see God's answer

All: Following the Star of Bethlehem

is just the beginning of our walk to peace and justice.

One: The way is often difficult and dangerous

All: Yet we will follow in the footsteps of our Lord. Amen!

Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance

Prayer of Illumination: Let us hear and ponder – and wonder – and take it in – the mystery and the promise; the challenge and the hope that all lie here within the words of our Faith Stories. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-2

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “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.”

Young at Heart Time: A Story

[The Visit of the Magi Crossword | Sermons4Kids](#)

Hymn: VU 89 From a Distant Home

I think this might be a new hymn for us: a traditional Puerto Rican carol translated from the Spanish and arranged in 1963. What wonderful rhythms! I invite you to join in singing with the choir and orchestra ensemble of Snowmass Chapel, a faith community located in a resort village in the mountains of Colorado.

[From A Distant Home by Hal H. Hopson - YouTube](#)

- 1 From a distant home the Saviour we come seeking,
using as our guide the star so brightly beaming.
Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's morning,
heaven's wondrous light,
O never cease your shining!
Glory in the highest to the Son of Heaven,
and upon the earth be peace and love to all.
- 2 Glowing gold I bring the newborn babe so holy,
token of his power to reign above in glory.
Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's morning,
heaven's wondrous light,
O never cease your shining!
Glory in the highest to the Son of Heaven,
and upon the earth be peace and love to all.
- 3 Frankincense I bring the child of God's own choosing,
token of our prayers to heaven ever rising.
Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's morning,
heaven's wondrous light,
O never cease your shining!
Glory in the highest to the Son of Heaven,

and upon the earth be peace and love to all.

4 Bitter myrrh have I to give the infant Jesus,
token of the pain that he will bear to save us.
Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's morning,
heaven's wondrous light,
O never cease your shining!
Glory in the highest to the Son of Heaven,
and upon the earth be peace and love to all.

Scripture: Matthew 2:3-23

³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶And 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."

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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."

⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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.

¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. ¹³Now 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." ¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶When 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. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: ¹⁸"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."

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰"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." ²¹Then Joseph got up, took the

child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But 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. ²³There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

Reflection

Hymn: VU 96 Will You Come and See the Light

This recording uses a different melody than our hymn books – you will be used to the Kelvingrove melody, which is also used for the hymn "Will You Come and Follow Me." Instead, Marty Haugen has set Brian Wren's lyrics to a new haunting melody, here performed by Steve Johnson. You may find Johnson's voice familiar: he arranged the version of "A Candle Is Gleaming" used throughout Advent.

[Will You Come And See The Light - YouTube](#)

- 1 Will you come and see the light from the stable door?
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.
It will be your guiding star,
it will show you who you are;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 2 Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed
there's a longing to be freed;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 3 Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised,
and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 4 Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?
When the lowest and the least
are the foremost at the feast,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 5 Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about

is too dim to put it out:
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Prayer of Dedication/Offering:

Let God's grace and gifts flow freely: from God to us, from us to others.
All gifts are gifts of the one Spirit. Your job is to find the best way to use what you have been given.

Oh God, we give you thanks for our community of faith and we give in gratitude for your watchful presence with us throughout the years. Amen.

Hymn: VU 70 There's a Star in the East

Enjoy the slow, smooth, rich vocals of Jamaican-American singer Harry Belafonte in the first recording, which is the opening track on his 1958 album *To Wish You a Merry Christmas*. If you are looking for something a little more up tempo to sing along to, try out the second link to an exuberant performance by the Swinger family and friends at the Fox Hill Bruderhof.

[A Star In The East - YouTube](#)

[There's a Star In the East - YouTube](#)

- 1 There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,
 rise up, shepherd, and follow;
 it will lead to the place where the Christ was born;
 rise up, shepherd, and follow.
 Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,
 follow the Star of Bethlehem,
 rise up, shepherd, and follow.

- 2 If you take good heed to the angel's words,
 rise up, shepherd, and follow,
 you'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds;
 rise up, shepherd, and follow.
 Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,
 follow the Star of Bethlehem,
 rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Prayers of the People:

Gracious God,
you are the one who separated Light and Darkness at creation, the one who declares all of creation to be good. You are the one who reminds us of the vastness of that creation each time we look at the stars, or attempt to count grains of sand. You are the one who gave the Magi the star to follow and the courage to journey together, leading them to a child who would change how they would see themselves and others and how they

would respond with their own gifts, a child who would give them a glimpse at what it is like to listen to a voice other than the one that seems to be in control. In this time of prayer, we ask for similar courage: courage for our world, our communities, our families, and ourselves.

Wondrous God, as we look out into the world, we see many places, many situations where courage is needed, where differences are clashing, where gifts are being hoarded and squandered, not shared as they are meant to be and used in ways that tear down rather than build up. May your Spirit rest in all of these situations and places. May gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that bring people peace and you glory.

Mysterious God, as we look around in our communities, we see people hurting, people working hard, people pushed to the edges, endangered because of who they are, because of who they love, because of the colour of their skin, because of what they believe. Again, we see gifts hoarded and squandered because of the unwillingness to share, unwillingness to change, and unwillingness to truly love our neighbours. Like the Magi, we must change our paths (*name local situations that need to change, local gifts that need to be shared*). May gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that change minds, open hearts, and bring you glory.

Compassionate God, we turn our focus now to ourselves and those we love, for we, too, need your transformation, grace, and love. As we look inward, we see situations that have caused hurt, pain, and sighs too deep for words. Even in our midst, we see gifts that are hoarded and squandered, people who are afraid to share their gifts because of fear. We see gifts that aren't shared until it's too late. May our own gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that mend relationships, help broken hearts to heal, and help us to see ourselves as worthy and able to truly love you and our world.

God who weaves all of our prayers together, may you gather all of these prayers, both spoken and held in our hearts, and weave your courage into them, so that new paths and new gifts are both revealed and shared for the transformation of this world and the coming of your reign. In the name of Jesus, the courageous one, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: VU 79 Arise Your Light Is Come

Join with the strong voices of Grosse Pointe Memorial's Virtual Choir accompanied by organist James Biery. The hymn was composed by hymnist, scholar, and ordained United Church of Christ minister Ruth C. Duck, who is known for her promotion of inclusive language for worship; this is demonstrated in her use of non-gendered and diverse language for God, both in her own hymns and her adaptations of older texts. [Arise, Your Light Is Come! - YouTube](#)

1 Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;

show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.

- 2 Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.
- 3 Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken-hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.
- 4 Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

Benediction: VU 86

Radiant God, light for all people and all places,
by the guidance of a star you led the Magi
to worship the Christ Child.

By the light of faith
lead us to worship you in peace and love,
and guide us in your way.

We pray in the name of Christ,
light of the world. Amen.

Online Postlude: Lux Aurumque

This glorious piece is the title track from American choral composer Eric Whitacre's 2000 album *Light & Gold*. As Whitacre remarks on his website, he was struck by the elegance and simplicity of a poem by Edward Esch: "Light, / warm and heavy as pure gold / and angels sing softly / to the new-born babe." After having the text translated into Latin, he "waited patiently for the tight harmonies to shimmer and glow."

[Light and Gold: Lux Aurumque - Eric Whitacre - YouTube](#)

Announcements

Sunday Zoom Coffee Time – Every Sunday at 11 am, following our Zoom service at 10, join our Zoom coffee time.

Devotional group – We are moving to Zoom for our meetings on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month.