

## Epiphany Sunday

January 8, 2023

United Church of Christ, Neillsville

Pastor James Mohr

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### PRELUDE *Chorale Fantasia on*

*'Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern'*

Dietrich Buxtehude

Karen Mohr

### RINGING OF THE CARILLION

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Jesus said: I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but have the light of life.

People: We have seen the light of Christ like a star shining in the sky; and like the Magi, we have come to worship.

*All: Glory be to God, and to Jesus Christ, the Word of Light, in whom God is made known in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

#### HYMN

*"As with Gladness Those of Old"*

#159 NCH

Wm. C. Dix

1 As with gladness men of old  
did the guiding star behold,  
as with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright,  
so, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led by thee.

2 As with joyful steps they sped,  
Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
there to bend the knee before  
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore,  
so may we with willing feet  
ever seek thy mercy seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare  
at thy cradle, rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.

4 Holy Jesus, ev'ry day  
keep us in the narrow way;  
and, when earthly things are past,  
bring our ransomed souls at last  
where they need no star to guide,  
where no clouds thy glory hide.

#### INVOCATION (ALL)

We thank you, God, that you have spoken to people of faith at many times and in various ways, and that in Jesus, your living Word, you have revealed yourself among us. We come longing once more to know your presence and to hear your word. We come eager to follow Jesus. We rejoice that you are with us always when we gather in Christ's name. Amen.

#### CALL TO CONFESSION (PASTOR)

God has come to us in Christ, but we often live as if it made no difference. Let us confess our sin.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (All)

Loving God, you have come to us in Jesus; yet we confess that we often refuse to receive you. We live in the world as if we did not know you. Showing your love for all peoples, you guided sages from distant lands to worship Jesus, your child. Although we know of this love, we limit our love with safe boundaries, building walls rather than bridges, denying our connection with all those you love. Forgive us, God, and give us new hearts to love and serve you.

**Write your Word within us. Make yourself known to us as we live today. For we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, in whom you most fully have revealed yourself. Amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Pastor)**

Be of good courage, for God sent the Word into the world not to judge but to save. I say to you in the name of Jesus Christ: Your sin is forgiven. Through the power of the Spirit, let us live as children of God. Amen.

**PRAISE RESPONSE (sung twice)**

**Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.  
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia.**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

**Matthew 2:1-12**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>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." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>'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.'" <sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>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."

<sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**SERMON** *"Wise Guys (And Dolls)"*

Pastor Mohr



**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

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 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

**INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**

**HYMN** "Go Tell it On the Mountain"  
#154 NCH Arr. John W. Work II

**Refrain:**

Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hill and everywhere.  
Go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!

**1** While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. [Refrain]

**2** The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo! above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

**3** Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
And God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** Karen Mohr

**JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**WELCOME**

We welcome you to our service of worship!  
We are glad that you have joined us  
in-person, through the internet or on the radio.  
We pray that you will hear God's call,  
seek to follow Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RADIO BROADCAST**

11 AM Sunday radio broadcast on WCCN  
98.5FM and 1370AM

Youtube for January 8, 2023  
<https://youtu.be/91Dv7ZOuC3I>

This week's radio broadcast  
is sponsored by  
"a faithful listener".

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Tuesday, January 10th** –  
1PM – Bible Study – 510 W 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
\*every week at Marge Goetsch's home  
4 PM – Deacon's Meeting  
**Thursday, January 12th** –  
1:30 PM – Circle of Friends Meeting

January 15, 2023  
Curbside Pick-Up  
11:00-11:15 a.m.

**Meal  
Give-Away**

