

First Sunday after Epiphany
January 7, 2024
United Church of Christ, Neillsville
Pastor James Mohr

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PRELUDE

Chorale Fantasia on "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"
Diedrich Buxtehude Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader One: Light Print

Leader Two: *Italics* **People: Bold**

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of God is shining on you!
Shadows shall cover the earth,
but the brightness of God's presence is upon us.
(sing) Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ the newborn king!

Nations will be drawn to your light,
and rulers to the dawning of your new day.
Look around and see what is happening:
people are gathering to come home!
(sing) Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn king!

You will see this and be filled with joy;
you will tremble with excitement.
Great caravans of camels will come,
bringing gold and incense.
Everyone will tell the goodness of what God has done!
(sing) Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ the newborn king!

HYMN "As With Gladness"

#159 NCH W. Chatterton Dix

1 As with gladness those of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, true Morning Star, may we
evermore your splendor see.

2 As with joyful steps they sped
to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before
One whom heav'n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek your mercy-seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare
at that 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.

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

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE
(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 by the name of Jesus the Christ,
In whom you most fully have revealed yourself.
Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE (PASTOR)

PASSING OF THE PEACE

All are invited to greet one another with such words as
"The peace of Christ be with you, and
the response: "And also with you."

PRAISE RESPONSE "Gloria Canon" sung twice

Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

CHILDREN'S TIME

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 60:1-6

60Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift 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. ⁵Then 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. ⁶A 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.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

2In 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." 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: ⁶'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.'" 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.

SERMON "Seeing is Believing – Believing is Seeing"

Pastor Jim

HYMN "Many Are the Lightbeams"

#163 NCH David Lewis

1Many are the lightbeams from one light.

Our one light Jesus.

**Many are the lightbeams from the one light;
we are one in Christ.**

2Many are the branches of the one tree.

Our one tree is Jesus.

**Many are the branches of the one tree;
we are one in Christ.**

3Many are the gifts giv'n, love is all one.

Love's the gift of Jesus.

**Many are the gifts giv'n, love is all one;
we are one in Christ.**

**4Many ways to serve God, the Spirit is one;
servant spirit of Jesus.**

**Many ways to serve God, the Spirit is one;
we are one in Christ.**

**5Many are the members, the body is one;
members all of Jesus.**

**Many are the members, the body is one;
we are one in Christ.**

MORNING PRAYERS

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory "O' Little Town of Bethlehem" Paul Manz

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done:

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

Prayer of Dedication

COMMUNION HYMN "Let All Mortal Flesh"

#345 NCH v. 1

Gerard Moultrie

**1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in the hand,
Christ our God to earth descending,
our full homage to demand.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The United Church of Christ practices open communion.

People of all ages who confess Christ as savior are welcome.

Today we will celebrate the sacrament at the altar.

Invitation to the Table (Pastor)

All: (sung)

**This is the joyful feast
of the people of God.**

Men and women,

Youth and children,

Come from the east and the west,

From the north and the south,

And gather about Christ's table.

Communion Prayer (Pastor)

The Sanctus – from Argentina_

(Santo, Santo, Santo – Holy, Holy, Holy)

#793 NCH

Santo, santo, santo.

¡Mi corazón te adora!

Mi corazón te sabe decir:

¡Santo eres Señor!

Holy, holy, holy.

My heart adores you!

My heart knows how to say to you:

Holy are you, Lord!

Remembrance and Consecration (Pastor)

We remember that on that night...Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, and bless us that as we receive them at this table, we may offer you our faith and praise, we may be united Christ and with one another, and we may continue faithful in all things and we may continue faithful in all things.

All: **In the strength Christ gives us,
We offer ourselves to you, eternal God,
And give thanks that you have called us to serve you.
Amen.**

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Prayer of Our Savior (all)

**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.**

Sharing the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving (all)

**Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our
Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this
holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's
body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the
good news of your love and that your universal church
may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.**

HYMN "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

#154 NCH

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]

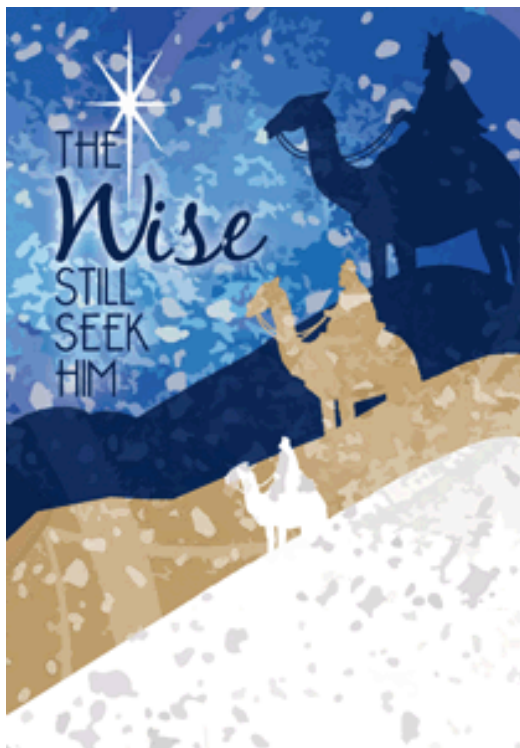
2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

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

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

JOYS AND CONCERNS



ANNOUNCEMENTS

RADIO BROADCAST

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

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

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.

YouTube link for Sunday, January 7, 2024

<https://youtube.com/live/kdPcLWRnF-4>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, January 7th – Worship

- 10 AM Deacon – Janice Miller
Greeter(s) – Tim & Cheryl Steinbach
Usher(s) – Jerry Quicker, Bob Petkovsek

Tuesday, January 9th –

- 1 PM – Marge Goetsch Bible Study –
*will meet in the lounge of church

Tuesday, January 10th –

- 5 PM – J.A.M. & confirmation at Calvary

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up now on the back bulletin board for
hosting future weeks.

Jan 7 – Carole Romens

Jan 14 – Nancy & Kirk Rodman

Jan 21 –

Jan 28 –

Feb 4 -