



© Mike Moyers, 2019

"Wisemen" by Mike Moyers.

Christ Church UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, Pastor
Organist , Matt Lawrenz
Song Leaders, Nancy Charles and Pam Kothrade

www.uccmke.org
www.facebook.com/groups/christchurchucc

Today marks the Second Sunday after Christmas and our remembrance of the Epiphany. On Epiphany Sunday, we celebrate how God's love transverses barriers to become good news for all people. We marvel at the persistence of God to shine the way for the Magi so that they might bear witness to Jesus' divinity. We honor that the Magi trusted their dreams and returned home by another way. As we journey forward into this season of light and hope, may we carry the dreams of our ancestors in faith. *Those who dream...persevere.*

**Please recite the purple words aloud.*

Prelude

Cradle Song

Archer

Words of Welcome

Opening Song

Shine, Jesus, Shine

Refrain: Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory; blaze, Spirit, blaze set our hearts on fire. Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy; send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.

1. Lord, the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness shining; Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth you now bring us, shine on me, shine on me. Refrain.

2. As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness; ever changing from glory to glory, mirrored here may our lives tell your story, shine on me, shine on me. Refrain.

Opening Litany

One: The Magi had a dream.

All: They dreamed of a Messiah.

They dreamed of just rulers.

They dreamed of a new day for all people.

One: The Magi had a dream, and this dream led them to action.

All: They journeyed to unknown places.

They followed a star.

They walked for days to get to Jesus.

One: So may we be like the Magi,

All: May our dreams inspire action.

May we worship the one true God. Amen.

Candle Lighting Song

Lead Us To Your Light

Carol Browning

Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Jesus, come. (repeat)

Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Jesus, come.

Opening Prayer

God of the Milky Way,

We, like the Magi, are walking toward you.

One foot in front of the other, we are walking toward you.

It is our very prayer to move your way.

So if you can, leave the light on and the front door unlocked.

Leave a fire in the hearth and food on the stove.

And when we start to get lost or doubt our dreams,

Give us the will to persevere.

We are walking toward you, O God.

So like the parent that throws open the door,

Open the door to us through this text.

Amen.

The Gloria

Glory be to the Christ-Child,

God's strength made weak, has come to light our way.

As the Firstborn of Creation, the Alpha and Omega, wonderful birth,

God has come to earth.

Lyrics. Jacqueline A. Burnette

Old Testament

[Isaiah 60:1-6 \(ICB\)](#)

Isaiah is the longest and arguably the most important of all the prophetic books in the Hebrew Scriptures. Isaiah runs the gamut of God's emotions and capabilities – from mighty creator to gentle comforter. In this scripture, as the exiles returned to Israel from Babylon, the prophet imagines a hopeful, light-filled dream. God's dream for Jerusalem's restoration is a complete overturning of what had been the norm in Israel's checkered history under the reign of human kings. All nations would come to Jerusalem, bearing gifts, and Israel would become the naval of the known universe.

"Jerusalem, get up and shine. Your light has come.

The glory of the Lord shines on you.

Darkness now covers the earth.

Deep darkness covers her people.

But the Lord shines on you,

and people see his glory around you.

Nations will come to your light.

Kings will come to the brightness of your sunrise.

"Look around you.

People are gathering and coming to you.

They are your sons coming from far away.

And your daughters are coming with them.

When you see them, you will shine with happiness.

*You will be excited and full of joy.
The wealth of the nations across the seas will be given to you.
The riches of the nations will come to you.
Herds of camels will cover your land.
Young camels will come from Midian and Ephah.
People will come from Sheba
bringing gold and incense.
And they will sing praises to the Lord.*

New Testament

[Matthew 2:1-12 \(ICB\)](#)

In this Gospel lesson, the danger of Herod's rule hangs thick in the air. Regardless, God's determination to be discovered in the Christ-Child is put on full display. The magi in this story were astrologers from a foreign land. The irony of Matthew's story is that the non-Jews who practiced magical arts were beholden to the Christ-Child, while the people in Jesus' immediate orbit were completely unaware of his divinity. The wise men follow a star to and from Jesus. King Herod looms in the backdrop as an ever-present threat to the holy family.

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea during the time when Herod was king. After Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the baby who was born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east. We came to worship him."

When King Herod heard about this new king of the Jews, he was troubled. And all the people in Jerusalem were worried too. Herod called a meeting of all the leading priests and teachers of the law. He asked them where the Christ would be born. They answered, "In the town of Bethlehem in Judea. The prophet wrote about this in the Scriptures:

*'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are important among the rulers of Judah.
A ruler will come from you.*

He will be like a shepherd for my people, the Israelites.'"

Then Herod had a secret meeting with the wise men from the east. He learned from them the exact time they first saw the star. Then Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem. He said to them, "Go and look carefully to find the child. When you find him, come tell me. Then I can go worship him too."

The wise men heard the king and then left. They saw the same star they had seen in the east. It went before them until it stopped above the place where the child was. When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. They went to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary. They bowed down and worshiped the child. They opened the gifts they brought for him. They gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home to their own country by a different way.

Poem

I imagine they packed bags –
Water and food, blankets and clothes.
I imagine they packed tools –
Maps and telescopes that could bring
the stars closer,
As if the sky was a comforter they
could pull near.
I imagine they hugged loved ones and
said,
“We’ll be back soon.”
And when loved ones said,
“Don’t leave,”
“It’s risky,”
“You don’t even know what you’re
chasing,”
I imagine they put lips to foreheads
and said,
“There is a light in the darkness. I
must chase that.”
And then I imagine they walked.
I imagine they walked until legs were
tired and knees gave out.
Maybe they told stories on the road
and laughed into open sky,
Or maybe they sat in silence and
prayed for more light.
However, the road unfolded, I imagine
it was not easy.

Sarah Are

I imagine all of this, not because I’ve
chased stars,
But because I have dreamed.
And these dreams for justice make the
Magi’s story my own.
For every time we fight for justice,
We start in the dark.
We hug loved ones and say,
“There’s a light in the darkness, I must
chase that.”
We walk until we’re tired,
And then we keep walking.
We laugh at the open sky as a form of
resistance.
We pray in the night for signs of more
light.
And no matter how important the
journey is,
And no matter how much progress we
make,
The journey to justice is never easy.
And so, I pray,
That maybe one day,
We will be like the Magi,
And will walk ourselves into the light.
Until then, don’t forget –
There’s a light in the darkness. We must
chase that.

Sermon

Those Who Dream - Persevere

Pastor Dan Stark

Song of Response

As With Gladness

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 ever more your splendor see.
2. As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed, there to bend the knee before him whom heaven and earth adore, so, may we with willing feet ever seek the mercy seat.

3. As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare, so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy, all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

Prayers of the People

Hear Our Prayers, O God...

For health & healing: *God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Ps. 147:3*

We pray for:

~Kim O'Brien and her family as she has double mastectomy surgery in early January for stage 2 Breast cancer.

~A friend of Sonia Stark who lost her mother on Christmas Eve due to COVID.

Prayers for the Way family.

~Families and friends in our community for whom this time of year is challenging.

~Noelle Simons that her treatments go well.

~Bill Kroening as he receives a series of 5 radiation treatments for Prostate cancer.

He is blessed they caught it early.

~Bob Kroening who recently has had setbacks of breathing problems and recurring cancer. Prayers as he has begun a regimen of 6 chemo drug treatments that will be spread out over winter.

~Nick, nephew of Nancy & Brad Charles who is struggling with substance abuse.

Prayers for the whole family.

~Ian, Molly Pufall Brown's husband who has 2 upcoming appointments in the couple of weeks for something in his blood noticed in his annual physical blood work.

Praying for a good outcome. From Molly Pufall Brown.

~Jeanette, Dave and Nancy Wareham's 90-year-old aunt who has entered hospice comfort care. From Dave & Nancy Wareham.

~Tom, brother-in-law of Doris and Paul Mayeshiba who is suffering from ALS and as a result has become a paraplegic. Extra prayers needed as they navigate the holidays.

~Matt, brother of Doris Mayeshiba for a speedy recovery from a recent spinal surgery on his neck.

~Dawn, daughter in-law of Laurel and wife of Brad Dayton, for continued healing from her heart attack and manages diabetes and dialysis 4 times per week.

~Tracy, daughter of Nancy Kaye, who is at home with Nancy awaiting liver and kidney transplants. She is doing well.

~Maureen, friend of Susie Klockow, who has breast cancer.

~Kathy, Ken Klockow's sister who is in Nursing home hospice.

~Jeanie, good friend of Sue Klockow whose father is at the VA hospital suffering from Congestive heart failure.

~Dan, friend of Molly Pufall Brown, who is very sick with an undiagnosed illness.

Prayers also for his wife and 2 young children.

~Kelley, friend of Nancy Charles as she receives radiation treatment for breast cancer.

~Bernee, friend of Nancy Kaye who has end-stage lung cancer and is in a nursing home in hospice.

~Joe and Laurie, son in law and daughter of Jackie Struck. Prayers for continued healing for wounds as he goes to wound care weekly. A ramp has now been installed at their home which makes it easier for both of them.

~Continued prayers for Julene Flanagan's nephew, who is struggling with mental health issues.

~Continued prayers for Julene Flanagan's family member who is struggling with health issues related to kidney disease.

Prayer Song **O Little Town of Bethlehem verse 4**

**1. O Holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.**

The Offering

Prayer of Dedication

Doxology

Tune: The First Noel

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Noel. noel, noel, noel, Born is the King of Israel.**

Closing Song

We Are Singing, for the Lord Is Our Light

REFRAIN:

**We are singing, for the Lord is our light,
we are singing, for the Lord is our light.
We are singing, for the Lord is our light,
we are singing, for the Lord is our light.
We are singing, singing, we are singing, singing,
we are singing for the Lord is our light.
We are singing, singing, we are singing, singing,
we are singing for the Lord is our light.**

Verse 1:

**The Lord is the strength of our lives; of whom shall we be afraid?
Though foes may be near to destroy, the Lord will be our light.**

REFRAIN

Verse 2:

**We walk in the strength of the Lord, God's love is ever sure
We shout that the world may hear, we sing a joyful song.**

REFRAIN

Sending Blessing

Postlude

Festive Scherzo

Archer

Some Prayers and Liturgies written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Music used with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-737161

--

Happy Birthday to these wonderful people!

Bill Scheske January 3

Elly Bingheim January 6

Announcements

2021 GIVING ENVELOPES

The 2021 Giving Envelopes are available to be picked up during church office hours. They are located outside of Pastor Dan's office. Even if you normally give electronically the box of envelopes also has other special giving opportunities to assist the church with utilities, building, mailing etc. costs and missions.

NEED: BVCC FOOD & INFANT FORMULA PANTRY

You can still donate to the pantry as the Food pantry at the BVCC remains open. The community center is requesting the following donations:

CANNED: Fruits, Jam/Jellies, Peanut Butter and Vegetables.

SINGLE SERVING SNACKS, SUCH AS: Applesauce, Fruit cups, Granola Bars, Crackers/Chips, and Fruit Snacks.

PACKAGED: Mac 'n Cheese and Cereal.

Monetary donations are always appreciated as well.

Donations can be dropped off at the BVCC @ 1320 E. Oklahoma Ave.:

Holiday hours: Open-Tuesday 12/29, and Wednesday 12/30 9:30am-12:30pm.

Closed- Thursday12/31, Friday 1/1/2021 & Saturday 1/2/2021.

Regular hours: Tuesdays thru Saturdays 9:30am-12:30pm.

If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email pastor@uccmke.org.

Christ Church UCC, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

We are currently worshiping online-only. Learn more here.

<https://www.uccmke.org/covid-advent>

You can make your offering to Christ Church at www.uccmke.org/donate or by mailing a check to Christ Church, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

