

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Acting Pastor
Mr. Denny Daugherty, Adult Choir Director & Tech Director
Mr. Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Church
Administrator
Ms. Donna Gross, Custodian

January 7, 2024

8:00 & 10:30 AM

***Theophanies of Light: Dazzled by God's Presence
In Awe of a Star***

Thank you for worshiping with us today. If you are a guest, we invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it is passed. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary.

We welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back narthex where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We have children's books and activity bags for them to enjoy! Additionally, after the children's message during the 10:30 AM service, children from 3 years old—6th grade are invited to participate in Sunday school in our classroom downstairs. They can choose to attend Sunday school or return to their seats to sit with their parents. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS
JOYS AND CONCERNS**

PRELUDE

We Three Kings with Fure Elise

arr. Labenske

CALL TO WORSHIP²

L: We are seekers—just like the Magi.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: We are looking for hope, peace, joy, love and so much more that Christ brings.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: We long for the abundant life God promises.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: May this star word be one of encouragement.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: May this word guide our intentions in the days to come.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: May we pay attention to where God is present.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

L: May we embrace the gifts of God's presence with thoughtfulness and praise.

C: Light our paths and lead us closer to you. Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO EPIPHANY THEME

***OPENING HYMN** (see below)

We Three Kings

We Three Kings

John Hopkins, Jr. 1857

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Piano 

1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume, breathes a
5. Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise; King and

6 

gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain, moor and
bring to crown him a - gain, King for - ev - er, ceas - ing
owns a De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing, voic - es
life of gath - er - ing gloom sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing,
God and sac - ri - fice: Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le -

12 

moun tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star. O star of
nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God on high.
dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
- lu - ia, sounds through the earth and skies.

20 

won - der, star of light, star with roy - al beau - ty bright, west - ward

28 

lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

***TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION⁴

PRAYER OF CONFESSION⁵

L: Ever-present God of light,

C: We come to you now to confess our sins. We confess to you that sometimes we feel lost in the shadows of this world. We confess that sometimes we even feel like the shadows might consume us. In spite of your promise that the darkness will never overcome the light, we give in to despair. When we live in the shadows, we dim the value and worth of others. We dim the value and worth of ourselves. Forgive us God. Forgive us for taking our eyes from you and from your light. Bring our focus to you. Warm us and guide us by your light, showing us a well lit path to wholeness and forgiveness. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 159 NCH (black hymnal, vs. 1 & 4, see below)

As With Gladness Those of Old

ALL SING: As with gladness those of old did the guiding star behold. As with joy they hailed its light, leading on ward, beaming bright. So, true Morning Star may we, evermore your splendor see.

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.

(10:30 AM) **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 60:1-6 (CEB)
Matthew 2:1-12 (CEB)*

MESSAGE

HYMN NO. 160 NCH (black hymnal, see next page)

Jesus the Light of the World

Jesus, the Light of the World

Evelyn Simpson-Curenton

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$



1. Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, Je-sus, the light of the
2. Joy-ful, all you saints a-rise, Je-sus, the light of the
3. Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored, Je-sus, the light of the
4. Hail the Bear-er of God's peace! Je-sus, the light of the

7



world; Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring, Je-sus, the
world; Join the triumph of the skies, Je-sus, the
world; Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Word, Je-sus, the
world; Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the

14 *Refrain*



light of the world. We will fol-low the light, beau-tiful light,
light of the world.
light of the world.
light of the world.

21



come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright, Shine all a-round us by

27



day and by night, Je-sus the light of the world.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A TIME FOR SHARING

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY

Beautiful Star of Bethlehem

by Fisher

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE 2237 FWS (see below, vs. 1 & 2)

As a Fire is Meant for Burning

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

ALL SING: As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame, so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name. Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care, we join hands across the nations finding neighbors everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way. We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay. By our gentle, loving actions we would show that Christ is light. In a humble, listening Spirit we would live to God's delight.

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning

Ruth Duck

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time with a tempo of 80 beats per minute. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The score ends with a double bar line.

1. As a fire is meant for bur - ning with a
2. We are learn - ers; we are teach - ers; we are
3. As a green bud in the spring - time is a

4
bright and warm-ing flame, so the church is meant for mis sion, giv - ing
pil-grims on the way. We are seek-ers; we are giv-ers; we are
sign of life re - newed, so may we be signs of one ness 'mid earth's

8
glo - ry to God's name. Not to preach our creeds or cus-toms, but to
ves-sels made of clay. By our gen - tle, lov - ing ac-tions we would
peo-ples, man-y hued. As a rain - bow lights the heav-ens when a

12
build a bridge of care, we join hands a-cross the na tions, find - ing
show that Christ is light. In a hum-ble, lis-tening Spir - it we would
storm is past and gone, may our lives re-lect the ra-diance of God's

16
neigh - bors ev - ery - where.
live to God's de - light.
new and glo-rious dawn.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION³

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

REMEMBERING THE STORY

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. 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 SHARE THE MEAL

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

At Mt. Zion all are welcome to share in Christ's meal. Today, Communion will be distributed by our Welcome Team members and passed down the pews for distribution —first bread, then the cup which is filled with grape juice. Gluten Free wafers are available as desired. We invite you to hold your bread and cup until the community is invited to eat together by the Pastor. Please dispose of your cup after worship.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: God of open horizons and open roads,

C: like the Magi so many years ago, we are here, seeking you. Step by step, we have wandered into this space with the hope of feeling you in our midst. Step by step, you have seen us, claimed us, and called us beloved. Today we have drawn star words. For some, these words are full of meaning, challenge, and invitation already. For others, these words are a blank canvas—inviting you into our lives. So as a new year dawns, we pray that just as you have spoken to the generations before us, you would speak to us again. Allow us to use these star words as a tool that might help us hear you more clearly. May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi. And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again, with mouths full of praise for the ways in which you have been present with us. Together we pray, with joy in our hearts. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN NO. 584 NCH** (black hymnal see next page)

I Am the Light of the World

***BENEDICTION⁶**

POSTLUDE

Men and Kings Seek Him

arr. Schram

I Am the Light of the World

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano 

"I am the light of the world! You peo-ple come and fol-low me!" If you

5



fol-low and love you'll learn the mys-ter-y of what you were meant to do and be.

9



1. When the song of the an-gels is stilled, when the
2. To find the lost and lone-ly one, to
3. To free the pris-oner from all chains, to
4. To bring hope to ev-ery task you do, to

12



star in the sky is gone, When the sag-es and the shep-herds have
heal the bro-ken soul with love, To feed the hun-gry chil-dren with
make the pow-er-ful care, To re-build the na-tions with
dance at a ba-by's new birth, To make mu-sic in... an

15



found their way home, the work of Christ-mas is be-gun:
warmth and good food, To feel the earth be-low, the sky a-bove!
strength of good will, to see all God's chil-dren ev-ery-where!
old per-son's heart, and sing to the col-ors of the earth!

References

¹The Call to Worship is by Courtney Mills Jones Willis, 2020 Permission is granted for home and congregational use.

²The Prayer of Confession was written by Mary Petrina Boyd and posted on the website, Ministry Matters at <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3475/worship-elements-epiphany-sunday-option-1> and accessed on January 3, 2023.

³Communion liturgy by Rev. Sara A. Speed/A Sanctified Art LLC/sanctifiedart.org, accessed on 1/2/24

Volunteers

Thank you to all serving in worship this morning:

8:00 AM Welcome Team Members & Communion Servers:

Rick & Cindy Hogentogler

8:00 AM Tech Team:

Denny Daugherty & John Kollasch

8:00 AM Liturgist:

Brenda Beyer

10:30 AM Welcome Team Members & Communion Servers:

Vanessa Bicher, Doris Loucks, Sarah Shaffer, & Barb Stebbins

10:30 AM Tech Team:

George DeMers, John Schriver, & Joe Vacante

10:30 AM Liturgist:

Brenda Beyer

10:30 AM Scripture Reader

Tobias Rhinehart