

## Living Table United Church of Christ

January 9, 2022 • Epiphany

### ***Gathering Song***

"Arise, Your Light Is Come"

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.

### ***Gathering Words***

based on Isaiah 60:1-6

One: Arise! Shine! Your light has come!

**All: God's glory has risen upon us!**

One: Lift up your eyes and look around.

**All: We have come, gathered from near and far, to experience the radiance of God.**

One: Let us rejoice as we gather in God's presence.

**All: We give God thanks and gladly offer all that we have and all that we are to One who loves us always.**

### ***Gathering Prayer***

God of wonder and mystery, we remember how you continue to break into the world in every age. Into the gloom of fear and want, you bring the light of hope. Into the cold and emptiness, you bring warm abundance. Into the hardness of the world, you bring the greatest power we have known in the seemingly powerless form of an infant. Enter now, Holy One, among us and within us, and move us to joyful adoration of your mystery and wonder. Amen.

### ***Welcome and Announcements***

#### ***Acknowledging Our Need for God***

One: We remember the Magi, who set out with singular focus on the promise of the heavens.

**All: And we remember the ways we have lost sight of you, Holy One, as the bright guide for our lives.**

One: We remember that they stayed determined on their journey, not even swayed by Herod's power and promises.

**All: And we remember that often we have started out well, and then strayed from your path, detoured by our fleeting fears and desires.**

One: We remember the wise ones who adored the child: position and wealth falling to their knees before a poor infant.

**All: And we remember that too often we have given our adoration to wealth or position, not seeing the Christ in our midst.**

*Moment of Silent Reflection*

***Words of Promise***

One: To each of us who knows we have lost sight of the promise, or lost the way of our God, or lost hope, God has a promise: "I am with you."

**All: God offers a holy presence, forgiveness, and new hope, not just at the manger but always. We are loved. We are forgiven. We belong to God. Amen!**

***We Share the Peace***

***Song of Centering***

"From a Distant Home"

1. From a distant home the Savior we come seeking,  
using as our guide the star so brightly beaming.

*Refrain:* Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's morning,  
heaven's wondrous light, O never cease thy 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 new-born babe so holy,  
token of his power to reign above in glory.

*Refrain*

3. Frankincense I bring the child of God's own choosing,  
token of our prayers to heaven ever rising.

*Refrain*

4 Bitter myrrh have I to give the infant Jesus,  
token of the pain that he will bear to save us.

*Refrain*

***Time for Children***

***Thoughts of the People***

"For Those Who Have Far to Travel: A Blessing for Epiphany,"  
Jan Richardson

If you could see  
the journey whole,  
you might never  
undertake it,  
might never dare  
the first step  
that propels you  
from the place

you have known  
toward the place  
you know not.

Call it  
one of the mercies  
of the road:  
that we see it  
only by stages  
as it opens  
before us,  
as it comes into  
our keeping,  
step by  
single step.

There is nothing  
for it  
but to go,  
and by our going  
take the vows  
the pilgrim takes:  
to be faithful to  
the next step;  
to rely on more  
than the map;  
to heed the signposts  
of intuition and dream;  
to follow the star  
that only you  
will recognize;  
to keep an open eye  
for the wonders that  
attend the path;  
to press on  
beyond distractions,  
beyond fatigue,  
beyond what would  
tempt you  
from the way.

There are vows

that only you  
will know:  
the secret promises  
for your particular path  
and the new ones  
you will need to make  
when the road  
is revealed  
by turns  
you could not  
have foreseen.  
Keep them, break them,  
make them again;  
each promise becomes  
part of the path,  
each choice creates  
the road  
that will take you  
to the place  
where at last  
you will kneel  
to offer the gift  
most needed—  
the gift that only you  
can give—  
before turning to go  
home by  
another way.

***Sacred Reading***

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the East came to Jerusalem, 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.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"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."

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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.' 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**Message**

"Traveling by Another Road" Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe

**Song of Reflection**

"Song of the Magi," Hanna C Brown

Magi, full of wisdom we are  
Searching humbly after a star  
O'er the earth, proclaiming birth:  
Beckoning from afar.

*Refrain:* O, star of wonder, star of night  
Star with holy beauty bright  
Blessing Shepherds, sign of God's Word  
Guide us to your perfect light.

On we travel, weary and worn  
Seeking hope for people forlorn  
Gifts we bring, and praises sing;  
Among us now Love is born.

*Refrain*

Come with us on Bethlehem's way  
Through the night and into the day  
'Til at last our journey's past  
Our hearts now with Christ to stay.

*Refrain*

Glorious now behold God arise,  
As a child, both loving and wise  
Alleluia, Alleluia!  
Sounds through the earth and skies.

*Refrain*

**Prayers of the People**

**Pastoral Prayer**

*Prayer of Jesus for Epiphany*

Author Unknown

God, our holy and ever-present Light of Love,

With your Light our spirits are fed with daily joy and purpose.

Forgive us when we contribute to the darkness of anger, hatred, and despair.

Help us to call out those who also contribute to the same darkness.

Lead us always into the Light of Love.

In the darkness of anger, hatred, and despair – the fears that cover the world today, illumine our paths with grace and mercy.

For yours is the Light of Love - your glory, power and honor - forever and ever. Amen.

*Offering*

*Offertory*

*Presentation of Gifts*

“That We May Be Filled”

Not as we ought but as we are able, we offer our thanks as we come to your table.

Through Word and Spirit bless us; through bread and wine refresh us that we may be filled, that we may be filled with love.

*Prayer of Dedication*

*The Great Thanksgiving*

One: People of Advent: God be with you!

**All: And also with you!**

One: People of Christmas, lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift our hearts overwhelmed with grace to the One who was born for us.**

One: People of the Star, offer your songs of joy and thanksgiving to God.

**All: We will sing our praises to the One who has revealed glory and hope in the Babe of Bethlehem.**

One: In that first moment, (...) who forever sing of your grace:

*Song of Praise*

“Love Has Come”

*Refrain:* Word of God enthroned, dwell in us forever more;

Love has come to show the way.

Hallelujah, peace be with us. Love has come to show the way.

*We Remember*

One: In the light of the Epiphany star, (...) “This is my body, broken for you.”

**All: We eat this bread, remembering that in brokenness we find healing and we promise to reach out to others in love.**

One: After they had eaten, Jesus held out a cup saying, “Take and drink. This is the cup of the New Covenant poured out for you, for forgiveness. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, do so in remembrance of me.”

**All: We drink this cup, remembering that forgiveness is meant for all and we promise to reach out to others with mercy and compassion.**

One: Let us pray:

**All: Holy One of stars and sinners, send down your Spirit of hope on those gathered around this table and on these gifts of bread and cup. Feed us with the bread of hope so when we leave, we will travel another road – to defend the vulnerable, speak for those without voice, and welcome those on the margins. Refresh us with the cup of grace so that we will serve you with gladness – opening our doors to strangers, accompanying the lonely, and sharing your love with all our neighbors. Amen.**

### *Sharing of the Elements*

#### *Prayer of Thanksgiving*

One: Let us give thanks for all we have received.

**All: We thank you, O God, for the sharing of bread and cup. As we eat and drink together, we remember your radical embrace of the outcast and oppressed. May our shared eating and drinking strengthen us as we open our minds and hearts to new ways of recognizing your presence among us. Amen.**

#### *Communion Song*

“All Belong Here”

1. When you're not sure who you really are  
When all you feel is the shape of your scars  
And you have more wounds than you can count  
Open your eyes, look all around  
You aren't alone, this is your home

*Refrain:* Come and remember who you are here  
Do this to remember who I am  
Come and remember you belong here  
All belong here.

2. When you don't know how to forgive  
When locked doors seem like the only way to live  
And you've got more questions than you can count  
Open your eyes, look all around  
You aren't alone, this is your home

#### *Refrain*

Bridge: At this table come as you are  
Broken and bleeding's okay  
At this table eat and be filled  
Come and drink in this grace.

#### *Refrain*

### ***Words of Sending Forth***

One: Now, God sends us out by a different road.

**All: So we may find those who have been left by the side of the world.**

One: Now, Jesus travels with us down a different road.

**All: So we may comfort those who are lonely and frightened.**

One: Now, the Spirit illumines a different road.

**All: So we may take our friends and neighbors by the hand to live in wonder and grace.**

### ***Song of Sending***

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

*Refrain:* Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Maker's glory;

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with love and mercy;

Send forth your Word, God, and let there be light!

1. God, 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 regal 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*

### ***Benediction***

#### **Contact Us**

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