



Living by Faith, Known by Love, A Voice of Hope



First Church in Windsor, UCC
January 3, 10 a.m.

Epiphany Sunday

Prelude

I Believe

By Mark A. Miller, used by permission

Welcome

Introit

O Come Let Us Adore Him
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O Come Let us Adore Him x2
O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Call to Worship

One: Arise, shine, for your light has come!

Two: The glory of God has risen upon us!

One: For darkness shall cover the earth,

Two: But God will rise upon us, and God's glory will appear over us.

One: The light of God is with us;

Two: God's light now dwells with us;

One: **Come, worship God, and shine God's light to the world!**

Opening Hymn

We Three Kings
By John H. Hopkins
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We three kings of orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
king forever, ceasing never over us all to reign.
O star of wonder...

Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, all men raising, worship him, God on high.
O star of wonder...

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom:
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone cold tomb.
O star of wonder...

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
alleluia, alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder...

Prayer of Invocation

Creator of the Stars of Night, you have made all the light in the universe, all the light beyond what we can see. When our own light is dim, fill us with your light. God, you are Love, and your love resides in each of us. When we are feeling the pain and sorrow of this world, may we know your love more fully and deeply. When we notice others who are struggling, who are in the shadows and feeling unloved, may we be your light and love to them. Help us to shine bright, and help us to love deeply. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Children's Moment

Scripture

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, 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 wise men 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.

Sermon

Pastor Nicole

"Star Gifts"

"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."

-T.S. Eliot

God, we acknowledge that we are not always ready to receive your best gifts for us. You have given us an Epiphany word in order that our searching will bring us to you. It is often our habit to turn aside, stumble over, or even reject experiences and encounters that we later understand to have been precious gifts. Help us to be open to the gift that you offer us now through our star words. We acknowledge that we do not fully understand what this word might mean for our

faith, but we receive it from you with gratitude and pray that your Spirit will enable us to live into our word with intention and faithfulness. Amen.

Hymn

Jesus the Light of the World

Words by Charles Wesley

Music by George Elderkin

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**Hark! The herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world;
Glory to the Christ child bring, Jesus, the light of the world.**

**We will follow the light, beautiful light,
come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright,
shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus, the light of the world.**

**Joyful, all you saints arise, Jesus, the light of the world;
Join the triumph of the skies, Jesus, the light of the world.**

We will follow the light...

**Christ, by highest heaven adored, Jesus, the light of the world;
Christ, the everlasting Word, Jesus, the light of the world.**

We will follow the light...

**Hail the Bearer of God's peace! Jesus, the light of the world;
Hail the Sun of righteousness! Jesus, the light of the world.**

We will follow the light...

Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Elements

Communion Response

Love Came Down at Christmas

Words by Christina Rossetti

Music by Maurice Whitney

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

God, we give you thanks that you have come to us – in the child of Bethlehem, in this bread and cup, and in your answer to all of our hopes and your offer of peace, deeper than any truce, truer than the upheaval that surrounds us. You have comforted us with your promise and your presence so that we too may spread the welcome wings of your good tidings. Amen.

Announcements

Benediction

Postlude

What Child is This

English traditional

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Today's prayers were adapted and used by permission of *Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell*, <http://rev-revolution.org>. *The Prayer of Thanksgiving* was adapted from *Maren Tirabassi* www.giftsinopenhands.com.