



**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Sunday, January 7, 2024

Epiphany

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Polly Jeanty

If listening from your car, please tune your car radio to 101.3 FM

**= Please rise in body or spirit*

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP: #107 (first verse) "Joy to the World"

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP:

Arise, shine: for your light has come!

The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

Lift up your eyes and look around!

We shall see and be radiant; our hearts shall rejoice.

For the Lord will be our everlasting light and our glory!

And so we worship God in humble expectation.

*OPENING PRAYER:

God of light and life, we praise you for the amazing depth of your creation and the mysteries of the galaxies. We praise you for the wonders of the earth around us and for the Word made flesh in the child born in

Bethlehem. Open our hearts and minds in this time of worship. Just as you led the magi by the star, lead us by your Spirit beyond the limits of this world's expectations, to the life where you make all things new through Christ, our Morning Star. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #148 all

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of mercy and loving-kindness, you sent Christ among us to be the light of the world and reveal your love to all people. Yet our sins hide the brightness of your light that should shine through us. Forgive us for wasting our gifts, ignoring cries for justice, and harming the earth you love. In your mercy, cleanse us and make us new. *(Time for silent reflection)*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Be assured of God's love and forgiveness that shine for us in Christ Jesus.

As a new year unfolds, we will make a new beginning with God and with one another.

May the peace of Christ be with us all. **Glory be to God. Amen.**

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 121 (refrain) “Gloria”

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift 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.
Then 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.
A 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.

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

*HYMN

Arise, Your Light Is Come! 231

1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey; show
2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door; pro -
3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born, bind
4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song! Rise

forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
claim the cap-tive's lib - er - ty, good ti - dings to the poor.
up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
up like ca - gles on the wing, God's power will make us strong.

WORDS: Ruth Duck (1947-)
MUSIC: William H. Walter (1825-1893)

FESTAL SONG
S.M.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

(God's table is open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. Please hold the elements until all have been served and we will partake together. All bread is gluten free. The inner circles are grape juice, the outer rings are wine.)

INVITATION

PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER OF THANKGIVING

We give thanks, loving God, that you have refreshed us at your table. Strengthen our faith; increase our love for one another. As we have been fed by the seed that became grain, and then became bread, may we go out into the world to plant seeds of justice, transformation, and hope. Amen.

COMMUNION RESPONSE #82 v. 1

“O Come let us Adore Him”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with:

“Our hearts kneel before you, O God; **Receive our humble prayers.**”

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. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY (Jingle change will go to the Mission Fund which supports Loads of Love, Mission Fest, and other outreach opportunities)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Doxology to tune of “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.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of majesty and mystery, we bring our gifts to you, grateful that you are always with us. We do not know what the year ahead will hold, but your love shines like a star to guide us. Bless these gifts that they may keep the

light of Christ shining through the church to embrace the world you love.
Amen.

*CLOSING SONG “Go Now in Peace”

*Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.
Know he will guide you, in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.*

COMMISSIONING

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Packets of 10 tickets for the 2024 Chili Supper are available in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign out for packets which you can sell. Payment is due by February 7, 2024.
- The Bethlehem Ladies are looking for help from the congregation with the washing of the communion glasses. We wash communion glasses the 1st Sunday of the month and also a couple extra throughout the year for Easter, Christmas, Lent and Confirmation. There will be one Bethlehem Ladies member scheduled for each washing and we are looking for 1 or 2 more from the congregation to help. A signup sheet with all the dates for the upcoming year is in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider helping us out. Thank you!!
- For some time, the Merry Christians have been collecting cash register receipts only from the Kiel Piggly Wiggly store. No other area store receipts are of any use to us. We receive a monetary rebate for every dollar that is spent on groceries. Please help us help others by placing your used store receipts in the box under the mailboxes in the fellowship hall. Thank you! Bethlehem Merry Christians

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

InCourage Domestic Abuse Shelter of Manitowoc is hosting a charity event on Sat. Feb 24 – info on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

2024 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Voland (920)286-0162 or svoland44@gmail.com

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or trabefamily5@gmail.com

Elder - Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 rossw@forhealthycows.com

Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 LandKBowe@outlook.com

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 srumpff@tm.net

Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 randynmel5@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR LITURGISTS!

Pastor Randy is looking for persons interested in leading worship services as liturgists. Lead the Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession, and Read a portion of the scriptures. A sign-up sheet is on the door to the pastor's office. Let Randy know if you have any questions.



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Those struggling with health issues:

Mason Kannell

Sarah Arnold

Heidi Konen

Brenda Voland

Darlene Horneck

Helen Henning

Tom Lefeber

Jessica Horneck

Dawson Horneck

Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Gmother)

Jaxxen Kane

Tom Brickbauer

Marie Rietbrock

Daisy Sippel

Gene Radder

Dana (Melissa K's sister)

Mary Beth Molitor

Crystal

Gary Steinhardt

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Other Concerns:

Those affected by war in Israel.

Those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 1/7: 8am Sunday School; 8:30 Book Study; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion; ANNUAL REPORTS DUE by 5pm;

Monday 1/8:

Tuesday 1/9: 6:30pm Consistory; *~Happy Birthday Pat Hoban, Jane Umland, Mary-Beth Molitor!!*

Wednesday 1/10: *~Happy Birthday Harrison Zorn, Rich Schmitt, Arlyn Retlich!!*

Thursday 1/11:

Friday 1/12: *~Happy Birthday Kamlyn Rumpff!*

Saturday 1/13:

Sunday 1/14: 8am Sunday School; 8:30 Book Study; 9:30am Worship; *~Happy Birthday Shirley Henschel and Mekenzie Biwan!*

**January Pantry Items:
Can of Soup**