

*Welcome
to Aurora United Church
...uniting hearts and hands on the journey.*



*Epiphany Sunday
January 2, 2022*

*Blessed are you now that the New Year has begun. Blessed with the light that
overwhelms the darkness. Blessed with the life breath of God's Spirit.
Blessed in order to bless all those you meet on the path of your life.
(Albert Klok)*

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE Joy to the World (*arr. by Valerie Stephenson*) AUC Handbells

WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP *Lighting of the Christ Candle*

Acknowledgment of Territory/Candle of Remembrance-Every Child Matters

As we come into worship today, we acknowledge that we reside and worship on the traditional lands of the people of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation... and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.



CALL TO WORSHIP

The wise men saw the star in the east
and followed it, trusting they would find God.

**We gather in our own spaces today, made holy
by the gathering, with the same trust that we too
will find God.**

Moving past fear and doubt, they followed the
star until it stopped right over the place where
the Christ child was.

**We come hoping to move past our fear and push
beyond our doubts so that we, too, might find the
Christ child among us.**

Upon finding him, the Magi offered their finest gifts
Of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**We bring the gifts of our lives, knowing that in God's
presence we will be transformed.**

Let us worship!

HYMN The First Nowell (English Traditional Carol) VU 91

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east,
beyond them far; and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

And by the light of that same star three wise men came
from country far; to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Bethlehem
it took its rest, and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently
upon their knee, and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our
heavenly Lord, that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel*

PRAYER FOR RENEWAL

Magi, wise men with the wisdom to know that light comes by searching, by following; and a touch of magical other-worldly majesty in a simple manger. All people, lacking wisdom stumble around in the dark, in and out of the abyss, hoping for light, searching for angels, for revelation, looking everywhere but in the manger. And you, O God, weep grace over the world, leading the magi in discovery, and offering all manner of persons, new possibilities. You pour out grace, weak and despised, but beautiful; grace and glory in the manger. We struggle to be wise, but we get in the way, and find ourselves in the dark with everyone. Illumine our paths, O God of Epiphany, so that we may find our way to you. Amen.

(Adapted from 'Magi' Wildgoose Publications: Iona, Scotland)

WORDS OF GRACE

May the light of peace and hope
fill our lives this day and always.

Thanks be to God!

THEME STORY Epiphany/The Wise Men YouTube
 Learning Adventures With Mrs. T.

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 60:1-6 (Arise, shine, for your light has come.) NRSV

60Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift 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. ⁵Then 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. ⁶A 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.

GIFT OF MUSIC Lord, I Stretch My Hands to You (*J. Althouse*) AUC Chancel Choir

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12 (The visit of the Magi.) NRSV

2In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "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." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'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.'" ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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.”

⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Come to the quiet...a time for reflection

SERMON Yonder Star

HYMN We Three Kings (*J.H. Hopkins*)

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 plain, gold I bring to crown him again.
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.
*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh,
prayer and praising, all men raising, worship him, God most high.
*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a sigh of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in a stone-cold tomb.
*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

A Statement about the gifts we bring in worship for the life of the church....

OFFERTORY PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN I Am the Light of the World (J.Strathdee) VU 87

*'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!'
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.*

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and the shepherds
have found their way home,
the work of Christmas is begun:

*'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!'
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.*

To find the lost and lonely one,
to heal the broken soul with love,
to feed the hungry children
with warmth and good food,
to feel the earth below, the sky above!

*'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!'
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.*

To free the prisoner from all chains,
to make the powerful care,
to rebuild the nations with strength and good will,
to see God's children everywhere!

*'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!'
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.*

To bring hope to every task you do,
to dance at a baby's new birth,
to make music in an old person's heart,
and sing to the colours of the earth!

*'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!'
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.*

COMMISSIONING

Arise, shine, for your light has come!
May we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world.

SUNG BLESSING Hope Shines as the Solitary Star (*MacLean/Tissandier*) MV 220
Love shines as the solitary star. Faith is the inner light.
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.

POSTLUDE Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (C.Wesley/F.Mendelssohn/arr.Nate Fanning)
Laurier Trombone Choir



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are on traditional Territories of Indigenous Peoples.

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Participating in Worship today...Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar, EmBellished Handbell Ensemble, AUC Chancel Choir, the Laurier Trombone Choir: Cole Blais, Nick Djurdjevic, Gareth Frolander, Elizabeth Kyriakides, Gabriel Maahs, Simon Malone, Rebecca Myette, Katie Procter, Brooklyn St. John

With thanks to... Noah Comar, videographer, and to Bob Kyriakides, video editor...and to all who are filming at home in order to participate in worship in some way! ☺

Images used in worship video...

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I am the Light of the World – Greg Rakozzy – Unsplash
Hope Shines As A Solitary Star - Markus-Spitske - Unsplash

The hymn recordings today are from...

Sing Hallelujah! Volumes 1 (produced by Ralph Milton, the United Church of Canada, 2015), and YouTube

The First Nowell – Public Domain. Peninsula United Church, Surrey BC. December 24, 2020.

We Three Kings – Public Domain. The Robert Shaw Chorale. December 22, 2013.

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