

**SUNDAY JANUARY 08, 2023
EPIPHANY AND COMMUNION
ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH, MIDLAND**



The Reverend Karen Ptolemy-Stam

Music Director: Victoria Warwick

Readers: Sharon Penrose

Tech Team: Glenn Erwin, Gabriela & Rick Dell, Bruce Wilcox

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO THE GATHERED:

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE LAND

OPENING HYMN: VU#81 As with Gladness

1. As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore your splendour see.
2. As with joyful steps they sped, to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before Christ, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with eager pace ever seek your throne of grace.
3. As they offered gifts most rare at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.
4. Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glory hide.
5. In the heavenly country bright none shall need created light;
you its light, its joy, its crown, you its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing hallelujah to our King.

OPENING PRAYER: VU#88 Written by Jan Berry, 1990 read by Sharon Penrose

Gold of gold, we seek your glory.
the richness that transforms drabness into colour,
and brightens our dullness with vibrant light;
your wonder and joy at the heart of life.

God of incenses, we offer you our prayer:
our spoken and unspeakable longings,
our questioning the truth,
our searching for your mystery deep within.

God of myrrh, we cry out to you in suffering:
the pain of all our rejections and bereavements,
our baffled despair at undeserved suffering,

our rage at continuing injustice.

In our wealth, in our yearning, in our anger and loss,
We embrace you, God-with-us. Amen

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE FROM THE ADVENT CANDLES:

One: As we light this Christ candle may it remind us that Christ is in us and in our world.

Sung response: VU#82 A Light is Gleaming, Refrain and Verse 1

Refrain: A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

1. When light comes pouring into the darkest place, it hurts our eyes to see the glow.
Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears, our memories and tears.

Refrain:

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

COMMUNION HYMN: VU#457 As We Gather at Your Table

1. As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's victory known.
2. Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.
3. Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS VU# 932(SUNG)

**Holy, holy, holy are you,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth
are filled with your glory,
Hosanna in the Highest!
Blessed is the one
who comes in your name.
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna in the highest.**

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION MV#207 2x

**Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

SHARING THE BREAD AND WINE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy One, you who are the light of the world and the light of our lives, continue to spark us to be your people in the midst of chaos and darkness. May the bread and wine we have tasted this day remind us always that even in suffering, you give hope and courage to work for the kingdom of God wherever we are in the world. Amen.

(Discovery Kids continues upstairs)

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 60:1-6, Matt. 2:1-12, read by Sharon Penrose

SERMON: "Searching the Unknown"

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS AND OFFERTORY ANTHEM: "In the Bleak Midwinter"

OFFERTORY SUNG RESPONSE MV#182:

**Grateful for the life you give us, thankful for your Holy Son,
Joyful in your Spirit flowing over all, O God of love.
Grateful for the birth of Jesus, Thankful for Emmanuel,
Jesus born in Bethlehem and in our hearts as well.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

HYMN: VU#87 I am the Light of the World

Refrain:

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.

1. 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:

Refrain:

2. 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!

Refrain:

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

Refrain:

4. 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!

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

SUNG BENEDICTION: VU#974

Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen

POSTLUDE

