



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

*Windows of Hope Series*

July 7, 2024 10:30 a.m.

### **GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

RINGING THE BELL

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PRELUDE "Will You Come and Follow Me" John Bell; Arr. Jeremy J. Bankson  
(\* *Indicates that all are invited to stand*)

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (1)

One: Light, light and more light! Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of God has risen upon you.

**All: Nations shall come to your light, for the sun of righteousness has risen!**

One: When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men came from the East, saying:  
Where is he who is born king of the Jews?

**All: For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him.**

One: Let us praise God this day for the wondrous light of Jesus Christ!

\*GATHERING HYMN “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” #119 *Glory to God Hymnal vv.1-2*

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

***Refrain:*** Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time, behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th’incarnate deity,  
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel. *Refrain***

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (1)

God of light, it is not easy for us to admit we are not a blameless people.  
**Sometimes we find ourselves captive to emotions which narrow our vision,  
And doubt your welcome to all people.**

We prefer the shadowy streets of the world, rather than walking in your Light.  
**Forgive us, Faithful One. May the light of Christ show us your way, and  
may the love of Christ overflow from our lives to others. (*silent confession*)**

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE (1)

Do you feel it? God's grace rests upon us and transforms us.  
Do you see it? God's Light breaks into our lives and shows us the way.  
**Thanks be to God!**

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” v.3

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die;  
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

\*PASSING THE PEACE

CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

### LISTENING

*God speaks to us in the Word proclaimed.*

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Malachi 4: 2

Pew Bible p.779

Luke 2:1-7

Pew Bible pp.832-833

A Word of God that is still speaking,

**Thanks be to God!**

## SERMON

## SILENT MEDITATION

HYMN OF REFLECTION “Away in a Manger” #115 *Glory to God Hymnal*

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.**

**The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.**

**I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.**

**Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.**

## RESPONDING

*We respond to God’s Word through our prayers and our gifts.*

## NAMING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## THE LORD’S PRAYER

**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 “Just a Closer Walk with Thee” Improvisation by June Nixon

*(A QR code at the end of the bulletin is available for online giving.)*

\* RESPONSE OF PRAISE “Amen, We Praise Your Name” #598 *Glory to God Hymnal*

**Amen, we praise your name, O God!**

**Amen, we praise your name, O God!**

**Amen, amen, amen, amen! Amen, we praise your name, O God!**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

### INVITATION

#### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

We come to this table thankful, God, that you give enough food and forgiveness to go around.

**We come, thankful that you show us in the stories of Jesus the way of compassion and hope, light and life.**

We come thankful that your Spirit is alive in our gathering, our eating, and our drinking.

**We eat from one loaf and drink from one cup in hope that we become more like one community in you.**

With all the saints and prophets everywhere who help us stand firm in our witness, we glorify you:

**Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!**

### PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

#### SHARING THE ELEMENTS

*(All are welcome to participate! Elements will be served by ushers. Wine trays contain white grape juice and red wine cups. A tray of gluten-free wafers is available from usher in center aisle.)*

#### \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**God, we give you thanks because around this table our strength is revived in the struggle for your justice, grace, and peace. May our meals on an earth divided one day be shared in an earth re-united. Through Christ we pray. Amen.**

\*COMMISSIONING HYMN: “Arise, Your Light Has Come” #164 *New Century Hymnal*  
*(For full music, the New Century Hymnal is located in each pew rack)*

**Arise, your light is come! The Spirit’s call obey;  
Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today!**

**Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;  
Proclaim the captive’s liberty, good tidings to the poor.**

**Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,  
Bind up the broken-hearted ones and comfort those who mourn.**

**Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God’s power will make us strong.**

\*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Prelude in C"

Dietrich Buxtehude

**SENDING**

*With God's blessing, we are sent forth to follow Christ in the world.*

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Worship Endnotes

(1) Adapted from [www.re-worship.blogspot.com](http://www.re-worship.blogspot.com)

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***Worship Leaders July 1, 2024***

Pastor: Sarah Fredriksen McCann

Organist: Jim Threlkeld

Liturgist: Diane Yanczer

Ushers: Members of Hope choirs

YouTube: Andy Karcher

Tech team: Jim Richmann, Ron Geisel,

Kristine Wentzien, Kathleen Mees

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