



January 7th, 2024 9:30 a.m.

Epiphany
Jesus, Hope in Bewilderment

Prelude Annie Schulz

Gathering Thoughts Judy Willems

Lighting the Christ Candle

Call to Worship & Prayer

Leader: Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

**People: Lift up your eyes and look around,
they gather and come to you.**

Leader: You shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice
and proclaim the praise of the Lord.
The mystery of Christ has been revealed by the Spirit.
We have become fellow heirs,
members of the same body,
and sharers in the promise of Christ
through the gospel.

**People: We know this through faith in Christ.
May our lights shine!**

All: Together we carry the light.

Hymn See *Whose Glory Fills the Skies* Insert

Passing of the Peace

Offertory Prayer

Musical Reflection

Prayers of the People Judy Willems

Grace Singers *Arise, your light is come!*

Scripture Reading Isaiah 60:1-6 (OT p.690)

Hymn *Christ, whose glory fills the skies* HWB #216

Scripture Reading Ephesians 3:1-12 (NT p.193)

Meditation "Expanding the Table" Darrell Winger

Hymn of Response *Sing a New World into Being* Insert
Benediction Darrell Winger
Sending Hymn *Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace* Insert
Postlude

It is good to be together in worship this morning!
The ushers are pleased to help any who need assistance.

[Offering plate is available on table at back of sanctuary]

GRACE NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

We extend our sympathies and prayers to Harry Nickerson & family as Deborah passed away on January 1st, 2024.

Sunday December 31st, 2023 ~ Attendance – 45

Sunday, January 14th, 2024

Speaker: Doug Schulz

Scripture Texts (Focus texts highlighted): 1 Samuel 3:1-10(11-20);

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

Coffee Time after the service

Sunday, January 21st Speaker: Arli Klassen, Mennonite World Conference coordinator, Regional Representative

Coffee Time after the service

♪ **Women's Chorus** ~ January 11th at 9:30 a.m.

January 25th at 9:30 a.m.

Church Council meets January 10th, 1:30 p.m.

Coffee Time Donation Basket: A number of you have asked if and when a donation basket would be put out during our coffee times. Starting this year we will have a basket out so that you may put in whatever donation you wish for coffee time expenses. Our first coffee time this year is Sunday, January 14th. Thank you for helping out! A message from the Finance and Hospitality Committees

Annual Reports ~ Please submit annual reports for the Grace Annual Report Book, via email, to the church office (Ester Funk) by **Thursday January 25th**. Contact the office for assistance if necessary, or if you wish to hand in a hard copy.

Annual Meeting ~ After the Worship Service on **Sunday, February 25th** in the Church Hall

Community Engagement (Chaplain's Corner) ~ Over the next few weeks I hope to highlight various local missions that Grace Mennonite Church supports – including Bridge of Hope, Westview Centre for Women, the St. Catharines Soup Kitchen, and Bears and Blankets.

Bears and Blankets Update! We have placed just over 200 Bears and Blankets Care Kits in 13 Long Term Homes. Only 13 more LTC Homes to get on board! And the offering is ongoing. I continue to welcome all donations of next-to-new teddy bears and homey small blankets. The kit also includes a beary sweet card and a bear-paw cookie.

In the next few months I hope to meet with our local MPPs – Jennie Stevens and Wayne Gates – to see what can be done to ensure our Elders are treasured and LTC staff are valued. If you would like to join me, let me know. Love always, Jan Steven.

"Its always a blessing to learn the wisdom from elderly people." - Lailah Gifty Akita

Erika I at Albright Manor, and **Marleen W** at United Mennonite Home send a warm Hello! They welcome cards and visits!

Dear Friends concerned about Peace in Palestine-Israel, In December 2023, our Peace Group from Grace Mennonite Church met with our local federal MP representatives. We were expressing our concern for the people of Gaza and Israel and our desperation for a ceasefire. There is a write up and pictures on the bulletin board. As you will see from the photos and read in the description, we came in peace - desiring peace. Love always! / jan

"Jesus, Hope in Bewilderment."

From January 7th through February 11th, beginning with Epiphany until just before the Lenten Season, the theme for our Sunday morning worship services will be *Jesus, Hope in Bewilderment*.

Epiphany gives us opportunity to celebrate and focus on God manifesting or revealing himself in Jesus Christ. As the wise men or magi from the East were drawn to worship Christ through a unique star or guiding light, so the light of Christ continues to shine even now so that all might believe and find hope in him.

Yet, we find ourselves in dark, confusing, and bewildering times. Inflation, economic uncertainties, war, and increasing division in our own communities contribute to this sense of darkness and bewilderment. However, as followers of Jesus, in this time of Epiphany, we are reminded that God's light and love are present! Jesus truly is the hope of the world and invites us to follow his guiding light just as the magi did so many centuries ago.

Our hope in Christ emerges in us *in* the wilds. As we journey through life we never really get fully beyond times of bewilderment, but our hope in Christ and the company of the Spirit enables us to live meaningfully, takes steps of faith, and to be witnesses of Christ's hope to others. Christ calls us, his church, to be a community of light, life, and hope.

ACROSS THE STREET AND AROUND THE WORLD

A Moment for MCC: Thanks to your generosity, MCC was able to work for relief, development, and peace in 45 countries.

Because of you and other congregations...

- 32,285 relief kits helped families facing conflict or disaster
- 208,149 people received emergency food assistance
- 19,685 students participated in education programs
- 55,568 people gained an improved water source
- 30,246 people honed skills in peacebuilding
- 574,560 pounds of canned meat provided protein
- 59,277 comforters helped keep families warm
- 52,280 hygiene kits offered needed supplies

Thank you. Want to make a donation? Ask Lorraine or Jan how to easily do this.

MCC – Relief, development, and peace in the name of Christ

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 trespasses,

as we forgive those that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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

For ever and ever. Amen.

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Office Hours: 8:30-2:30 ~ Wednesday, Thursday

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
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Sing a New World into Being

*Sing a new world into being.
Sound a bold and hopeful theme.
Find a tune for silent yearnings.
Lend your voice and dare to dream:
dream a church where all who worship
find their lives and loves belong.
Sing a new world into being.
Sing as Christ inspires your song!*

*Sing a new world into being
where the homeless find a home;
where no children ever hunger
but are filled with God's shalom;
where all people work for justice,
where all hate and vengeance cease.
Sing a new world into being;
raise the harmonies of peace.*

*Sing a new world into being.
Join the ancient prophets' cry
for a time of health and plenty
when all tears have been wiped dry;
when compassion flows like waters,
pouring balm for all who grieve.
Sing a new world into being;
live the promise you believe!*

Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace

*Lord, bid your servant go in peace; your word is now fulfilled.
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn, this child so long foretold.*

*This is the Savior of the world, the Gentiles' promised light,
God's glory dwelling in our midst, the joy of Israel.*



See Whose Glory Fills the Skies

*See whose glory fills the skies:
Jesus, the light of the world!
Sun of righteousness, arise:
Jesus, the light of the world!*

*Refrain: We'll walk in the light! Beautiful light!
Shine where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Oh, shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus, the light of the world.*

*Pierce the gloom of sin and grief,
Jesus, the light of the world!
Scatter all my unbelief,
Jesus, the light of the world!*

Refrain

*More and more thyself display,
Jesus, the light of the world!
Shining to the perfect day,
Jesus, the light of the world!*

Refrain

*Visit, then, this soul of mine,
Jesus, the light of the world!
Fill me, Radiancy divine!
Jesus, the light of the world!*

Refrain

