

January 5, 2025

"What Contributes to Our Radiance?"

Epiphany

Welcome!

We encourage wearing name tags. Restrooms: main level (exit front left), lower level (at foot of entry stair/elevator)

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

We gently settle into sacred time and space

Ringing the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting "Brightest and Best"

American Folk Hymn, arr Mark Hayes

We acknowledge the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome and Announcements

Opening Words from a Neighbor

SPP = Sing! Prayer and Praise * = Sitting or standing NCH = New Century Hymnal

*Call to Worship (responsive)

As Mary and Joseph opened their hearts to the child in their arms... As the magi opened their hearts to a journey of unknown proportions...

May we throw open the doors of our hearts – to welcome the struggles and joys of living in the mysteries of faith.

May our worship guide us, like the brightest star – closer to God, to ourselves, and to one another. Amen.

*Opening Carol (NCH #159) "As with Gladness Those of Old" verses 1 & 2

Acknowledging Our Need for God's Grace

Centering Ourselves ...as the singing bowl invites us into stillness

Prayer of Confession and Longing (unison)

God of perfect light, we confess that we sometimes turn our backs to the light of your love, hurting ourselves and others. Forgive us and grant us new opportunities. Help us to be more like the magi, following the light you offer. Illuminate our minds with your truth. Help us to bring our full selves forward. Guide us on the journey. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Musical Interlude ...to accompany our quiet prayers

Assurance of Grace

A Time With Children and Youth

Sung Invitation

...as young people come forward

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine...

Tibetan singing bowls took form in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE. In some Buddhist traditions, singing bowls accompany meditation and chanting. Since the 1970s, singing bowls have also contributed to spiritual practices in the United States.

Singing "Happy Birthday"

Diane Legato (1/5), Cindy Siegel (1/5), Avery Albright (1/7, 4 yrs), Dennis Albright (1/10)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another

Young Ones: God be with you

...with arms wide open

All: And also with you

Sung Affirmation

... as young people depart or return to families

Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine...

Children's Activity | Children (age 3 - gr. 4) go downstairs with Claire & Kim *Youth Group* | Youth (gr. 5-12) go with Telae to their main-level meeting space *Nursery* | Families with infants & toddlers are welcome to utilize the downstairs nursery (the worship service can be heard in the nursery)

We welcome the sounds and movements of children who stay in worship!

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from Hebrew Scriptures | NRSV (Old Testament, p. 690) Isaiah 60:1-6 A Reading from the Gospels | NRSV (New Testament, p. 2) Matthew 2:1-12

Here ends the readings. May God speak to us through these sacred words.

Morning Message "What Contributes to Our Radiance?"

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn (NCH #584)

"I Am the Light of the World" verses 1-3

As reparations for use of "This Little Light of Mine" and other Black spirituals, we support Walk West (St. Paul): a music learning community rooted in the African-American cultural experience, where people of all ages and backgrounds can gather, explore, and grow through music.

Prayers of the People

We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world Please tell Pastor Clare if you prefer yours not be added to our printed Prayer Corner

...God, in your love Hear our prayer

Prayer of Jesus (unison)

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: the hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on Earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

We give by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code) Blue electronic giving cards represent gifts made electronically. Offertory "Brightest and Best of the Stars" Harding *Offertory Response (NCH #128) "In the Bleak Midwinter" What can I offer, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but what can I offer: all my heart.

Sharing in Holy Communion

Holy Communion is open to members and friends of all ages as we seek to follow Jesus in the way of radically inclusive love

*The Invitation and Prayer

God be with you.And also with you.Lift up your hearts.We lift them to God.Let us give thanks to the God of all.

Loving God, you are Creator of energy and matter, the heavens and the Earth. We celebrate you – joining our voices with the wind and streams, animals and flowers, the living and the dead (*pause*), the stars, planets, and all members of creation – forever proclaiming your expansive love. Amen.

Words of Remembrance and Blessing

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Take a piece of (gluten-free) bread and a cup of juice, receiving words of blessing Place your empty cup in a basket on a front pew, returning by a side aisle

Communion Song (SPP #112)

"Come to the Table of Grace" all verses

Come to the table of grace (peace, love, joy) Come to the table of *(grace)* This is Christ's table, not just yours or mine Come to the table of *(grace)*

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

The bread of life and cup of blessing for everyone! **Thanks be to God!**

God of all, thank you for sending a star to guide the magi to Christ. We praise you for signs and witnesses in every generation that lead us to your presence. Thank you for inviting, blessing and renewing us at your table today. May we move forward as your partners in ministry, bearing your light and honoring it in all others. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God's Love

*Closing Hymn (NCH #164)

"Arise, Your Light Is Come" all verses

*Benediction

*Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you! And also with you!

...to those online and onsite: smiles, peace signs, handshakes

*Postlude

...as we pass the peace

Today Following Worship:

10:30am | All are welcome downstairs for refreshments and good company!



Annual Meeting

Sunday, Feb. 2nd 11 am (after brunch)

*Elections (Leadership Council) *2025 budget

Annual reports due Jan. 19th.

Per our bylaws: Electronic and hard copies of our Annual report and 2025 budget will be available beginning Jan. 26th.

PRAYER CORNER

*With Mary Binger, prayers for friend **Kathleen and her daughters** as they grieve the recent death of their husband and father Gregory.

*Traveling mercies for all who are enjoying holiday gatherings.

*Thankful hearts for the presence of **Frank Cole and other nonagenarians** in worship!

*Gratitude for two leaders who recently died: **Dr. John Cobb** (process theologian) and **Rev. Dr. Ruth Duck** (whose prayers we often use).

*For Frank's daughter, **Tara Christou**, who deals with chronic foot pain.

*For healing and release for all who cope with **chronic pain or illness** of body, mind, and spirit.

*For those of us who struggle with **addiction** and toward recovery.

*For **those without homes** as the bitter cold looms, we pray for adequate temporary housing and long-term housing.

*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's brother, **Allen**, facing the return of prostate cancer. *May **President Jimmy Carter** rest in deep peace, light and love beyond our imagining.



A reminder that our 2 free pantries offer food 365 days a year.



Please be sure to bring items in cardboard or plastic packaging as the temperatures drop. No cans or glass!

We really appreciate your support and we wish you peace and joy now and in the upcoming year.



Crutches4Africa (We're hosting a barrel for a few weeks)

Millions of people in Africa desperately need mobility devices, but cannot afford them. Donate your used crutches, walkers, canes, walking boots, prosthetic legs, wheelchairs, knee scooters, leg/knee braces, arm slings, baby joggers (not strollers), or bicycle trailers.

Place them in or near the barrel in the Narthex. Stillwater Noon Rotary Club will collect and ship items to where they are needed in Africa.



Week at a Glance:

Finance Committee | Jan. 8, 5 pm | @ Church & Zoom Leadership Council | Jan. 8, 6:30 pm | @ Church & Zoom Choir Rehearsal | Jan. 8, 6:30 pm | @ Church Garden Gathering | Jan. 9, 9:30 am | @ Church Pastor Clare Out of Office | Jan. 12 – 15th

Thank you to today's partners: Telae (Youth and Outreach Director), Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Lori Mildon (flute), Carol Dusbabek & Cindy Baker (greeters & communion servers), Jonah Gromoll (youth greeter), Sam Gromoll (acolyte), Kathleen Dennison (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir, Arly Fuhr & Kathy Iverson (fellowship), Jane Hanson & Sue Favilla (communion preparers), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie, Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Andi Favilla & Sharri Kinkead (altar decor)

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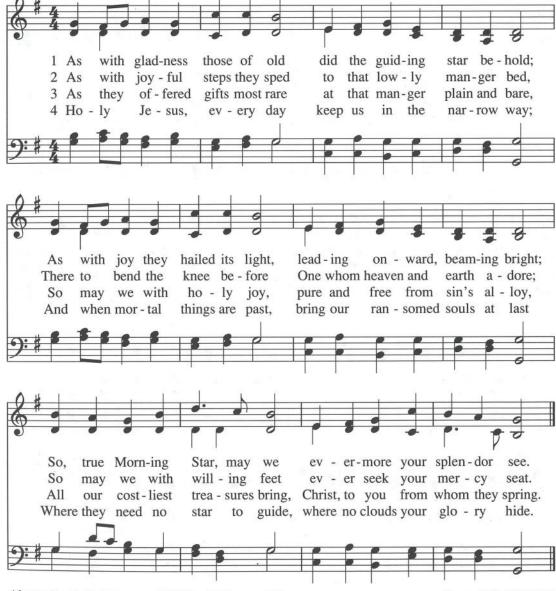
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St. Croix United Church

ith roots in People's Congrega & St. Peter's UCC

As with Gladness Those of Old

William C. Dix, 1861; alt.



After reading the Epiphany gospel, William C. Dix penned this hymn. Dix, the manager of a marine insurance company, was also a gifted hymnwriter. Among his many fine contributions is "What Child Is This." Tune: DIX 7.7.7.7.7. Conrad Kocher, 1838 Adapt. William H. Monk, 1861

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Matt. 2:1-12

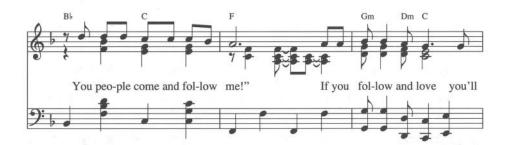
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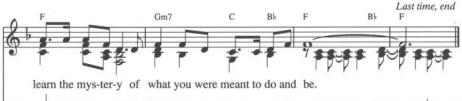
I Am the Light of the World

John 8:12

Jim Strathdee, 1969; rev. 1981 In response to a Christmas poem by Howard Thurman











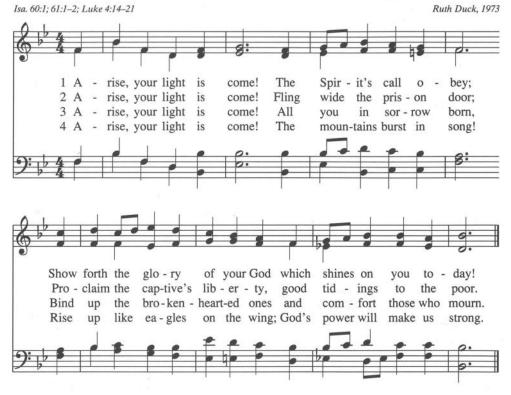
This text is based on a Christmas poem by Howard Thurman, a prolific twentieth-century writer, theologian, and teacher. The song grew out of Jim Strathdee's music ministry at an intercultural, bilingual congregation in Los Angeles. Tune: LIGHT OF THE WORLD Irr. Jim Strathdee, 1969



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Arise, Your Light Is Come



This hymn was first published by the Ecumenical Women's Center of Chicago in the 1974 collection of hymn adaptations, Because We Are One People. Ruth Duck later included it in her own collection, Dancing in the Universe. Tune: FESTAL SONG S.M. William Walter, 1872

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