



DOUGLAS UCC
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

Order of Service for Sunday, January 07, 2024

Epiphany Sunday

Thank you for joining us today.

For Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Prayer List, [visit this week's E-Pistle here](#), where you can also subscribe to receive it by email, if you like.

***- stand if you wish to, and are able.**

Congregational Responses in Bold

Prelude *Behold! Rise Up*

Peter Black

(Please use this time for quiet reflection and preparation for worship)

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting of Altar Candles & Ringing in the Hour

Let us recognize the light of the world within us and ring in the hour of worship.

Introit (please stand) *Arise! Shine!*

Arise, shine, for your light has come!

And the glory of our God has risen upon you like the sun.

Lift your eyes, look around, rejoice.

Lift your eyes, look around, rejoice.

Call to Worship

Isaiah 60 (adapted)

Reader: Julie Ridl

One: Arise! Shine! The light you have been waiting for is here!

ALL: Darkness has been banished!

One: God's light of hope floods the earth

ALL: God's light comes to us all.

One: Lift up your eyes and look around, we gather together

ALL: Prepare our hearts to receive the Light. AMEN.

Opening Hymn Go Tell It on the Mountain

(Black New Century Hymnal No.154)

See music at the end of this document

Unison Prayer

In wonder of your expansive embrace, we give you praise, O God. Through your radical welcome, you reveal the limitations of our own imaginations. You break down walls and boundaries we don't even realize we have erected. Like the magi guided by the light of a star through foreign territory, you call us all towards you and strengthen us as we journey together, learning and unlearning stories about one another. Gathered in your presence, we come to recognize the gifts of this beloved community.

Assurance of Grace and Peace

One: Peace be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Let us offer one another a sign of Peace.

***There is peace, there is hope, and it's not so far away.
There is peace, there is hope, and it's not so far away.***

Words of Integration & Guidance**Scott Erickson**

It's assumed that Mary rode on a donkey, but the Bible doesn't say she did. It's assumed there was an innkeeper, but it doesn't mention one anywhere. It's assumed there were three Magi, but it doesn't give a number of those who showed up. It's assumed there was a star overhead when Jesus was born, but it doesn't say that either. It's assumed that Jesus was born in a stable, but all it says is that He was laid in a manger - and that could've been any number of places. Christmas comes with many assumptions—some helpful, some not so much. Spirituality also comes with many assumptions, and the ones that fail us are the ones we make about what it's supposed to look like, who is worthy for it to happen to, and what kind of outcome it's supposed to have for us. Assumptions like... You should be more than you are now to be pleasing to God. Your weaknesses are in the way of God's plan for your life. Your lack of religious excitement disqualifies you from divine participation. You're probably not doing it right. Other spiritual people have something you don't have. Our assumptions hinder our spiritual journey in all kinds of ways, and the antidote to assumption is surprise. The surprise of Christ's incarnation is that it happened in Mary's day as it is happening every day in your lack of resources, your overcrowded lodging, your unlit night sky, your humble surroundings. It's a surprise that life can come through barren places. It's a surprise that meek nobodies partake in divine plans. It's a surprise that messengers are sent all along the hidden journey of life to let you know you are not alone. It's a surprise that you will be given everything you need to accomplish what you've been asked to do. It's a surprise that nothing can separate you from the love of God. Nothing can separate you from love. Your assumptions believe there must be something that can... But surprise! Nothing can. May you thank God with joyful surprise at how much you have assumed incorrectly.

The Journey of the Magi

The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from Ephesians 3:1-12

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Lesson

One: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 2:1-12

All: Glory to you, O Christ.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

"All Hands,"

Rev. Beth Stallinga

Offering & Offertory

Christmas Offering/When Love Was Born

Jeff Spangler, Peter Black

by Paul Baloche, Bernie Herms

Mark Schultz, and Stephanie Lewis

Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!

Many: *Alleluia!*

One: O God,

Many: *Hear our prayer.*

***Doxology** *Grateful*

*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 bread of heaven, Thankful for your Holy word,
Joyful in your mercy flowing, we will praise you.*

***Celebration of Holy Communion**

One: God be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: *We lift them up to God.*

One: Let us give thanks to God.

Many: *It is good to give God thanks & praise*

A Responsive Liturgy for Our Celebration of Holy Communion

One: On the night he was born, Jesus brought new hope into the world. And on the night before his betrayal, he promised that hope would be ours always. This is the table of God's community where all who seek are welcomed and embraced. Come, for all are invited, no matter who you are or where you are on your journey, you are welcome here.

ALL: *We are ready.*

One: Jesus said, I am the bread of life. All who come to me shall not hunger, and all who believe in me shall not thirst.

ALL: *We are hungry and thirsty, we come.*

One: We remember that on that night, Christ offered the bread, gave thanks, and said,

ALL: *"Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

One: In the same way, Jesus offered the cup in thanksgiving and said,

ALL: *Take, drink. This is my blood of the new covenant, the cup of blessing, which is poured out for you and for me. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.*

One: Come, Spirit Come. Open our eyes to the mystery of Christ's presence in these ordinary things, in our ordinary lives. May they be for us the very essence of the living Christ both within us and among us. Through the broken bread...

ALL: *We become the body of Christ in the world.*

One: Through the cup of blessing,

ALL: *We participate together in the new life Christ gives.*

One: The bread of life and the cup of blessing. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

(please be seated.)

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

(grape juice only on both sides of the aisle)

Receive the Bread of Life. *Amen.*

The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. *Amen.*

***Song for Communion**

*Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which he sees, the feet with which he walks.
Yours are the hands with which he blesses the world. Yours are the hands.*

***The Lord's Prayer**

Our Mother/Father, always and everywhere, 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 who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

***Hymn of Sending** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus the Light of the World)*
(Black New Century Hymnal No. 160)
(Find Music at the end of this program)

***Benediction**

Postlude *We Three Kings*
Peter Black

Keep up with the Douglas UCC community and the work of our service groups here:

www.douglasucc.org

<https://www.youtube.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.facebook.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.instagram.com/douglasucc>

Go Tell It on the Mountain

154

African-American spiritual
 Arr. John W. Work II, 1907

Luke 2:8-20; Isa. 18:3; 52:7

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hill and ev - ery - where.

Go tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

Be - hold through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

to Refrain

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

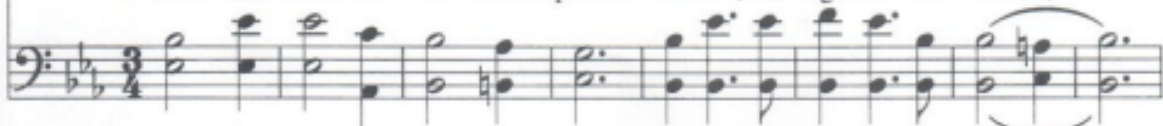
(Jesus, the Light of the World)

John 8:12; 9:5

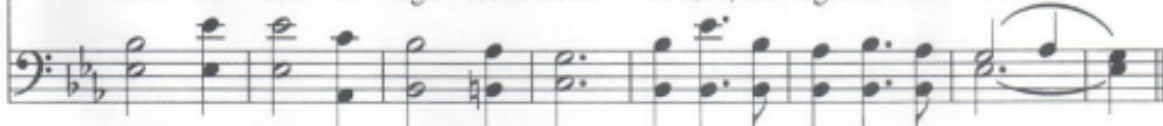
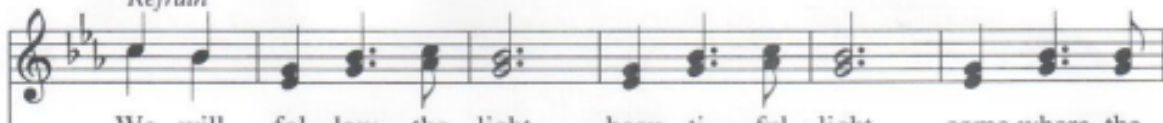
Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.; adapt. George D. Elderkin; alt.



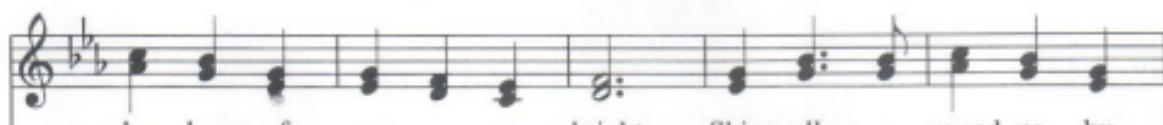
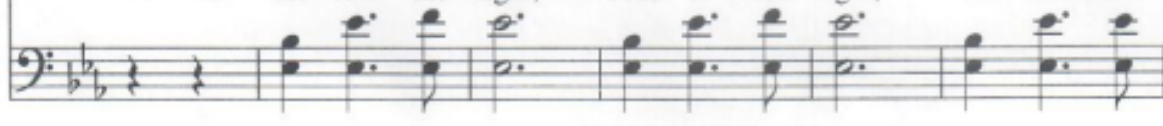
1 Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 2 Joy - ful, all you saints a - rise, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 3 Christ, by high-est heaven a - dored, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 4 Hail the Bear-er of God's peace! Je-sus, the light of the world;



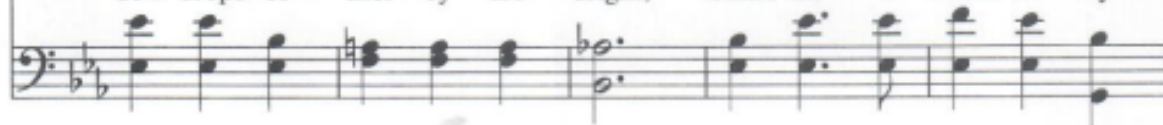
Glo - ry to the Christ-child bring, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Join the tri - umph of the skies, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Word, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Hail the Sun of righ - teous-ness! Je-sus, the light of the world.

*Refrain*

We will fol - low the light, beau - ti - ful light, come where the



dew-drops of mer - cy are bright, Shine all a - round us by



day and by night, Je - sus, the light of the world.

