**ST. ANDREW’S UNITED CHURCH**

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**website : www.standrewsunitedchurch.com**

**Ministers: The people of St. Andrew’s**

**Pastor: Rev.Cheryl Bolton**

**Ministry of Music: Brian and Lynn Sloan/Merna Edison**

**January 8th, 2023**

**WE GATHER**

**Welcome**

Welcome Friends! Let’s go on a journey together! Let’s Follow the star!
The light of Jesus Christ will be our light in this new year.
We will study faithfully and listen patiently.
We will proclaim Jesus joyfully and care compassionately.
We will play our part in the faith community fully
and pursue justice with daring.
You will go with God,
and God will go with us.
Thanks be to God! Let us worship!

**Announcements**

**Acknowledging Our Kinship -** As we begin today, we acknowledge the history, spirituality, culture, and stewardship of the land of the Indigenous People of this region. We seek to live in respect, peace, and right relations as we live, work, and worship upon Traditional Territory. We are mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.

**Candle Lighting -** We light this candle as a symbol of the light of Christ, which cannot be held back by distance, which shines in each one of us, no matter where we are.

**Gathering Hymn - Arise, Your Light is Come - 79 VU**

**Call To Worship**

One: Arise! Shine!
**All: For our Light has come!**
One: The glory of the Lord is in this place.
**All: The glory of the Lord is in you, in me.**One: See! Be radiant!
**All: Our hearts thrill and rejoice!**One: Let us worship in gratitude, in joy, together.

**Young at Heart - A Royal Visit**

**Hymn - As with Gladness Men of Old - 81 VU**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Holy One, on this day of Epiphany, we hear a story of travellers who bring extravagant gifts to Jesus, which sometimes causes us to think that our gifts are not good enough. We hold ourselves to the world’s standards of what gifts should be, and fail to see that what we offer is like those early gifts—what we offer is the best that we have. So, forgive us when we compare ourselves with others. Forgive us when our fear stops us from rising up to shine. Inspire us to look at what we have in gratitude, so that we might then share these parts of ourselves for your glory and for the transformation of the world that you love so much. We long to be reflections of your Light, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance**

One:Throughout scripture, we are reminded that grace is God’s greatest gift to us. Let us draw nearer to that gift, soaking in its light so that we might indeed Arise and Shine!

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD**

**Scripture Reading - Isaiah 60: 1-6, Matthew 2: 1-12**

**Meditation - *Courageous Enough to Shine***

**Hymn - A Light is Gleaming - 82 VU**

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

**Invitation to Offering**

We are indeed recipients of God’s grace and generosity. But in receiving, we are also called to give, to share, and to live lives of gratitude, for this is the backbone of discipleship. Like the Magi, we give what we have, not knowing how our giving will shape lives and transform us and the world. All offerings of time, talent, and treasure will gratefully be received. Now is the opportunity to courageously share your gifts to further the church’s work and the Spirit’s mission.

**Offering Prayer -**

We offer our gifts to nurture the faithful journey of this community.
We offer our money to sustain its teaching and worship.
We offer our time for compassionate care.
We offer our talents to support its work for justice.
As these gifts are used in this fellowship,
and worldwide through Mission and Service,
Loving God, you will bless them,
and you will bless us, the givers.
In the name of Jesus, who could not have given more, we pray,
Amen.

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern -**

Gracious God, you are the one who separated Light and Darkness at creation, the one who declares all of creation to be good. You are the one who reminds us of the vastness of that creation each time we look at the stars or attempt to count grains of sand. You are the one who gave the Magi the star to follow and the courage to journey together, leading them to a child who would change how they would see themselves and others and how they would respond with their own gifts, a child who would give them a glimpse at what it is like to listen to a voice other than the one that seems to be in control. In this time of prayer, we ask for similar courage: courage for our world, our communities, our families, and ourselves.

Wondrous God, as we look out into the world, we see many places, many situations where courage is needed, where differences are clashing, where gifts are being hoarded and squandered, not shared as they are meant to be and used in ways that tear down rather than build up (*name situations that are weighing on your heart*). May your Spirit rest in all of these situations and places. May gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that bring people peace and you glory.

Mysterious God, as we look around in our communities, we see people hurting, people working hard, people pushed to the edges, endangered because of who they are, because of who they love, because of the colour of their skin, because of what they believe. Again, we see gifts hoarded and squandered because of the unwillingness to share, unwillingness to change, and unwillingness to truly love our neighbours. Like the Magi, we must change our paths (*name local situations that need to change, local gifts that need to be shared*). May gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that change minds, open hearts, and bring you glory.

Compassionate God, we turn our focus now to ourselves and those we love, for we, too, need your transformation, grace, and love. As we look inward, we see situations that have caused hurt, pain, and sighs too deep for words. Even in our midst, we see gifts that are hoarded and squandered, people who are afraid to share their gifts because of fear. We see gifts that aren’t shared until it’s too late. May our own gifts be redistributed and shared in ways that mend relationships, help broken hearts to heal, and help us to see ourselves as worthy and able to truly love you and our world.

God who weaves all of our prayers together, may you gather all of these prayers, both spoken and held in our hearts, and weave your courage into them, so that new paths and new gifts are both revealed and shared for the transformation of this world and the coming of your reign. In the name of Jesus, the courageous one, we pray. Amen.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Closing Hymn - I am the Light of the World - 87 VU**

**Commissioning and Benediction -**

May God’s love and grace shine upon you.

May the Light of Jesus shine from within you.

May the joy of the Spirit shine all around you.

And may you and those you love, wherever they might be, remember to

share your gifts for all the world to see.

Amen

**Announcements**

**UPCOMING**

**January 10-UCW -11am**

**January 12-Board Meeting-10am**

**February 12-Annual Meeting**

**Reports are due for the Annual Report, please email or submit to the office by January 22nd.**