

Kincardine United Church

Epiphany Sunday & Covenant Renewal

January 7th, 2024 11:00 a.m.

Bold print in the bulletin invites you to say the words.

Kincardine United Church
721 Princes Street, Kincardine, ON N2Z 2X5
Phone: 519-396-2391
Gord Dunbar: gord.kuc@bmts.com Gord's Phone: 519-386-6346

PRELUDE How Brightly Shines the Morning Star Johann Pachelbel

WELCOME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

For thousands of years,

First Nations people have lived on this land and by these waters;
this relationship is at the centre of their lives and spirituality.

**We are gathered as a non-Indigenous community of faith
on the traditional territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation,
and acknowledge their stewardship through the ages.**

We seek to live together in respect, friendship and peace.

Jesus calls us into the world to love one another as we are loved by God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May the peace of Christ be with you all
And also with you

GOD GATHERS US

INTROIT How Brightly Shines the Morning Star Dietrich Buxtehude

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

What a past year this has been!

So much has happened; some wonderful and some very challenging.

In all of this, God journeyed with us, guiding, healing, comforting, and rejoicing.

We are filled with gratitude for God's presence with us.

Today we have barely entered into a new year.

In all that is to come, we commit to trusting in God's love.

Together, we walk into this future as a faithful community of generosity, compassion, and joyfulness.

OPENING PRAYER

God of past, present, and future, we give thanks for the gift of gathering to worship,

singing, praying, and hearing how you lead us toward a faith-filled future.

At the end of each year, we reflect on all that has been experienced in our lives, **moments of joy and wonder, times of anxiety and confusion.**

Throughout it all we are grateful for your covenantal love and guidance.

In this new year upon us we ask your continued presence as we strive to live out the Good News of Jesus Christ,

to comfort the lonely, attend to the suffering, welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, and speak for those whose voices are being ignored.

In a spirit of togetherness and oneness we pray. Amen.

VOICES UNITED #79 Arise, Your Light Is Come

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Friends, sisters, brothers: hear this Good News and live into the promise that you are forgiven. We are now free to create something new! Let us commit ourselves to being open, generous, inviting, and always seeking the faithful path before us.

Thanks be to God!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us pray together:

Artist of all Creation, we know that we have a blank canvas of a new year before us, filled with promise and possibility. We also know that the blank canvas of a new year is an illusion. Time ticks on, moment after moment, day after day, month after month. There are times that we are remarkable and generous, yet far too often we can succumb to selfishness and individualism.

Forgive us, restore us, and guide us. Be a reminder to us when we seek only to look after our treasured abundance while others are left with so little. In the Spirit of your generosity, allow us the courage to share all that we have, all that we do, and all that we are in your name. Amen.

SHARING TIME

THE LORD'S PRAYER Sung (*Voices United* #960):

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 who 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.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

BIBLE READING: Matthew 2: 1–12 from *The Message*

2 ¹⁻² After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory—this was during Herod's kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, "Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him."

³⁻⁴ When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well. Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

⁵⁻⁶ They told him, “Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly: It’s you, Bethlehem, in Judah’s land, no longer bringing up the rear. From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel.”

⁷⁻⁸ Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared. Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, “Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I’ll join you at once in your worship.”

⁹⁻¹⁰ Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

¹¹ They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

¹² In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.

VOICES UNITED #96 Will You Come and See the Light

BIBLE READING: Luke 21: 1–4 from The Message

21 ¹⁻⁴ Just then he looked up and saw the rich people dropping offerings in the collection plate. Then he saw a poor widow put in two pennies. He said, “The plain truth is that this widow has given by far the largest offering today. All these others made offerings that they’ll never miss; she gave extravagantly what she couldn’t afford—she gave her all!”

DOXOLOGY 321 (*verse 4 only*) “Maker in Whom We Live”

**Eternal, Triune God, let all the hosts above,
let all on earth below record and dwell upon your love.
When heaven and earth have fled before your glorious face,
may all the saints your love has made sing everlasting praise.**

PRAYER BEFORE REFLECTION

REFLECTION

GOD INVITES US TO RESPOND

ANTHEM We Three Kings of Orient Are J.H. Hopkins

RENEWAL OF STEWARDSHIP COVENANT

As we begin a new year, let us pause and commit ourselves to the spiritual practice of generosity and stewardship. Stand as you are able and say together:

We are not alone,

We live in God's world.

We believe in God:

Who has created and is creating,

Who has come in Jesus,

The word made flesh,

To reconcile and make new,

Who works in us and others,

By the Spirit.

We trust in God.

A covenant is a promise we make with God and others to live God's way.

I ask you now, do you renew the covenant with God and with each other to walk in the Way of Jesus?

In the presence of God and one another, we renew our covenant as we give thanks for the example and lasting love of Jesus Christ, who shows us how to generously offer our gifts as an expression of our gratitude and faithfulness.

We remember today promises made at baptism to support one another and all of God's people as we grow in faith. We commit again to honour and fulfill these promises.

Do you promise to participate in the ministry of the church and to use your resources to support others in need locally and through the Mission and Service of the United Church of Canada?

We share in the life and ministry of the church. We commit ourselves to share our resources so that we may joyfully live out the ministry that Jesus calls us to follow.

Let us pray. In your image, O God, we are created. Be with us as we reflect on that image in our work and play, as we sing and pray, laugh and cry, give generously and serve others. Help us to accept our responsibility as members and adherents of this congregation and as followers of the Way of Jesus Christ.

We ask for the encouragement of your Spirit and the energy of your love, as we live out this covenant together. Amen

VOICES UNITED #87 I Am The Light of the World

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

OFFERING INVITATION

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious and loving God, bless now these gifts and those offered through PAR or online, that through them we transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and build a better world. Remind us that in giving freely as you do, O God, we embody your own self-giving nature. Thanks be to you. Amen

VOICES UNITED #575 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

BENEDICTION

SONG OF COMMITMENT Gloria # 37 *Voices United*

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE How Brightly Shines the Morning Star J.S. Bach