

**December 13, 2020 9am
The Bright Star of Bethlehem
Advent 3: The Star of Unity**

Gather

P. In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit. **C. Amen.**

Call To Worship – Shawn Wilt assistant

A. Jesus, bright star of Bethlehem, light of creation. **C. Shine now and enlighten the whole world!**

A. Jesus, Bright Star of Bethlehem, light of hope, **C. Shine now and heal hopeless hearts!**

A. Jesus, Bright Star of Bethlehem, light of unity, **C. Shine now and gather us all as one!**

A. Jesus, Bright Star of Bethlehem, light of joy **C. Shine now and bring your gladness!**

A. shine now, Bright Star of Bethlehem, and bring your light and your life to us!
C. Amen.

Opening Song “A Hallelujah Christmas” v. 1 & 2

*I've heard about this baby boy
Who's come to earth to bring us joy
And I just want to sing this song to you
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
With every breath I'm singing Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

*A couple came to Bethlehem
Expecting child, they searched the inn
To find a place for You were coming soon
There was no room for them to stay
So in a manger filled with hay
God's only Son was born, oh Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

Confession and Forgiveness

P. Advent Lord,

C. Your prayer is that your people would be united as one, but our sin brings division. It brings division between us and you. It brings division between us and others. We confess our disastrous disunity before you today. By your grace, heal our divisions. Make us one with you. Make us one in you, the with united heart and voice we may proclaim your peace to our divided world. Amen.

P. Hear the Good News: Jesus Christ is the light of the world. He is the Bright Star of Bethlehem. When he was born among us, he brought peace and unity to our divided world. In Christ you are forgiven. In him you are reunited with God in a covenant of peace. **C. Amen. Alleluia!**

Song of Praise “We three kings” tune

*Come, we, now to worship the Lord, Heavenly King by all adored,
Humble offspring of a virgin, star of the ancient skies.*

*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

Praise we now our glorious King. Alleluias let us sing,
To our Savior, reigning ever, born for us all to save.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath (Hermillers)

Family: Today we light the third candle of our Advent wreath. As we light this candle, we pray for peace and unity in our deeply divided world
(the first candle of the wreath is lit.)

Family: At the dawn of creation, God said, “Let there be light!”

C. Advent Lord, shine your light on us! Alleluia!

(The second candle of wreath is lit.)

Family: When Jesus came, hope was born!

C. Advent Lord, shine your light on us! Alleluia!

(the third candle of wreath is lit.)

Family: The light of Christ bring unity to our world.

C. Advent Lord, shine your light on us! Alleluia!

Prayer of the day

A. Jesus, Bright Star of Bethlehem, as we gather in worship this day, we pray for the deeply divided world in which we live. Shine your light on us and lead us to actively work for the unity you came to bring, for you are our One Lord and in your name we pray. **C. Amen.**

Word

Readings (John McKay)

R. Psalm 133:1-3

How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along! It's like costly anointing oil flowing down head and beard, flowing down Aaron's beard, flowing down the collar of his priestly robes. It's like the dew on Mount Hermon flowing down the slopes of Zion. Yes, that's where God commands the blessing, ordains eternal life.

R. Ephesians 4:1-6

In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.

C. Gospel Acclamation: Song: Little Town of Bethlehem spoken

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting Light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

R. Gospel: John 17:20-26

I'm praying not only for them but also for those who will believe in me because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, so they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, so they'll be as unified and together as we are— I in them and you in me. Then they'll be mature in this oneness, and give the godless world evidence that you've sent me and loved them in the same way you've loved me.

Father, I want those you gave me to be with me, right where I am, so they can see my glory, the splendor you gave me, having loved me long before there ever was a world. Righteous Father, the world has never known you, but I have known you, and these disciples know that you sent me on this mission. I have made your very being known to them— Who you are and what you do— and continue to make it known, so that your love for me might be in them exactly as I am in them.

Children's Message - 9am Leslie Rhegness

Hello boys and girls. I'm glad you are here to celebrate advent, as we prepare our hearts for Jesus' birthday—Christmas! Each week we have a special action that teaches us about Jesus and God the Father.

We learned that God created the world (creation hands) to point to Jesus.

God gives us hope (hope hands) in the promised Messiah.

Our special action this week is Unity Hands (put your hands together and interlock your fingers, like you're holding hands with someone). Let's hold hands with the person in your family. Imagine that you are all holding hands in a circle. Unity is a big word, but it means we are all connected. When we hold hands, each one of us is connected. We form one big circle, like one big family.

The Bible tells us in John 1 that people who believe in Jesus are children of God. When we believe in Jesus, we're a part of God's big family. We're in unity with one another. If all God's children held hands, that would be a very big circle! It's such a big family because God's children held hands, that would be a very big circle! It's such a big family because God talks to us in His word, the Bible and helps keep our family circle strong. And as more people believe in Jesus, our circle gets bigger! That's exciting.

Let's let go of each other's hands and do our special advent actions together

God created the world to point to Jesus (creation hands)

God gives us hope in the promised messiah (hope hands)

And today we learned that God unifies the people (unity hands) hold like praying

This week when you pray together at meals or at bedtime, hold hands and remember that all who believe in Jesus are a part of God's family too.

Let's have everyone in church hold hands with their family. Let's pray: Dear father God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, the Staff of Unity so that we can be a part of your family. Thank you for giving us the gifts of your Word and Holy Spirit to keep us strong. We love you. Amen.

Drama - 9am Lauren Wilt

Scene: living room of the home of a woman. A bare artificial tree is set up. A couple of boxes containing ornaments, and such are strewn on the floor.

This monologue is a continuation of script 2. In the monologue the woman speaks to her departed grandma as if we were present right there in the room with her. The woman is continuing to decorate her Christmas tree. The woman enters with a box of Charisma decorations, ready to decorate her tree. She stops and surveys the scene and the tree. As she looks at the tree the lights are on. She continues to rummage through the box she just brought in...

"Now let's see here (rummaging through box) What a mess!

Every year I tell myself that when I put all my decorations away after the new years, I am going to organize them and mark all the boxes. But what I end up doing is just throwing it all in a box and I figure that I can figure it all out in December. Grandma, you would not be happy (rummaging more pulls out an ornament) Here's a good one. I'll start with this one

(hangs the ornament)

Grandma. no you would not be happy with me. You were always such an organized person. You seemed to have everything together. Everything planned. Everything figured out. "A place for everything and everything in its place." That's what; you like to say (rummaging, frustrated)

I wish I was a little bit more like you. What a mess!

You went through a lot in your life, yet you kept it all together, somehow. Grandpa served in Korea...and had to leave you all alone with dad as an infant. Then dad went off to Viet ham...and you prayed and prayed and prayed...that God would keep him safe. Nd rother bobby, he went off to Iraq...I'm not sure he'll ever be the same. Great men. They served their country well. But its hard on families, all this war and hatred. A mixed-up world, that's what it is.

And there was other stuff too. Divorces in the family. The layoffs at the plant, Kacey and her problems. Yet your kept us all unified through it all. You kept us laughing and living and caring for one another. In spite of this mixed up, messed up and broken world, you did you best to keep us all together.

(an ornament breaks)

Shoot. It's a mixed-up and messed-up world...I'd better get something to clean this up...

Exit.

Sermon

Rev. A.N. Mary Adelsberger

Response

Song: Tune “What child is this” Mac or Abbey

*What star is this, which beam so bright,
More lovely than the noonday light?
It shines to herald forth the King,
Glad tidings of our God to bring.*

*O Splendor of God’s glory bright
Release us from the dark of night
O light of all, bring unity
That we are one the world may see.*

*O Lord, with each returning day
Your guiding light shows us the way.
Through gloom and darkness, you are there,
Your radiance beaming everywhere!*

Prayers of the people

A. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A. Lord Jesus, our Star of Unity, on the night you were betrayed you prayed that all who believe in you would be one, as you and the Father are one. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A. Lord Jesus, our Star of Unity, you died on the cross for us, that by your blood we might all be made one through faith in your name. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A, Holy God, rouse us to deep praise as we gather for worship. Enliven our worship with sincere and heartfelt song. Sustain the work of all church musicians and artists who lead us in praise and prayer. Inspire those in our Community of Faith: Bishop Beaudoin and staff, Bishop Eaton and staff, Memorial Church Staff, Student Katie Leslie, Intern Rebecca West-Estell, Monroe Corridor Parish, Hope Learning Academy teachers and families and all teachers and students in all schools. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A. Guard the lives of military personnel especially **those currently serving** Ryan Woods, Henry Kozak, Dustin Pawloski, and Reid Leslie; O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A: Spirit of comfort, Comfort our **Homebound:** Dotty Sauer, Claudia Sauer, Bob Rank, Kathy Schoembs, Sam Schlegel, Phyllis Ballas, Joanne Hummel, Doris Buchholz (hospice care), Pat Reiber. Soothe those who are in need of **healing: Dick Dick Zaborski**, Chris Witzel, Kathy Schaefer, Jess Weber (great grandson of Judy & Ken Schwieder), Ken Schwieder, John Vance (in hospice), Afaf Barakat, Brenda Facey, Cindy Bunch, Katie Maly, Sheila MacKay Davidson, Marcene Jackson, Leslie Bean, Don Gurwell, Diane Swartz, Dave Gilbert, Char Bachmayer, Diane Denhof, Fred Schaefer, Michael Curtis, and all suffering with Covid 19; O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A: Holy and Immortal One, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Comfort the family of Walt Carlson, Marie Wenzlick (Teresa Loga's aunt), and Mary Elwer (Teresa Loga's great aunt). Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A. Lord Jesus, our Star of Unity, by the power of your Spirit send us out as your witnesses so that we might bring peace and unity to a world fractured by sin. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light.**

A. Lord Jesus, our Star of Unity, we look forward to the bright day of your Second Advent, when we will live forever in your presence, at one with you and with all the saints in glory. O Star of Unity, **C. Bring your harmony to light. Amen.**

Meal

The Great Thanksgiving & Words of Institution

P. The Lord be with you. **C. And also with you.**

P. Lift up your hearts. **C. We lift them to the Lord.**

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C. It is right to give our thanks and praise**

Lord's Prayer

C: 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 and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Post communion prayer

P: God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sent

Announcements

Benediction

P. Go now to shine like stars in the sky, bringing the light of Christ to the world. And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the +Son, and Holy Spirit be with you all. **C. Amen.**

Song "A Hallelujah Christmas" v. 3 & 4 worship team

*The shepherds left their flocks by night
To see this baby wrapped in light
A host of angels led them all to You
It was just as the angels said
You'll find Him in a manger bed
Immanuel and Savior, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

*A star shown bright up in the east
To Bethlehem, the Wise Men three
Came many miles and journeyed long for You
And to the place at which You were
Their frankincense and gold and myrrh
They gave to You and cried out Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

Dismissal

A. Go in the Hope of our Shining Jesus. **C. Thanks be to God.**