



**Trinitarian Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Concord, Massachusetts
January 7, 2018**

Celebrating Community

In the dead of winter, the church gives us God-sightings, gives them as if to persuade us that our world only appears solid, still, dark, and cold, but is in fact stirring all the time, ardent, vivid, and porous. As if to say that this stretch of predictability we call our daily life is really, as Barbara Brown Taylor puts it, a startling game of hide-and-seek with the divine. As if to say that heaven's flame burns hot here too, not just on the other side of Peter's gate.

– Rev. Mary Luti

SILENT PRAYER

Today I am open wide to discovering a new light, new wisdom, and a new hope that overwhelms my doubts, vanquishes my fears, and fills me to overflowing with the glory of God.

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME; OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Isaiah 60:1)

One: We have seen a great light and beheld his glory

Many: Arise, shine for our light has come!

One: We stand in the threshold,
leaving one path behind and beginning another.

Many: We will not be afraid, for the glory of God has risen upon us.

One: Now is the time to walk in the Light.

Many: We are ready to see what God can do!

One: Let us rejoice in God's glory!

Many: Together we will shine!

***HYMN #411**

Arise, Your Light is Come!
 *Hymns, Psalms & Spiritual Songs*

***INVOCATION**

PROCESSION OF THE MAGI (Congregation sings the refrain)

We Three Kings

O – star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light.

MESSAGE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastoral Prayer, Silent Prayers, and The Prayer of Our Savior

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. Amen.

***HYMN #63**

As With Gladness Men of Old
 *Hymns, Psalms & Spiritual Songs*

READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES Matthew 2:1-12 (p. 2 in the pew Bible)

SERMON

Epiphany: A New Way Forward

Robert Brown

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Offertory OCCASIONAL MULTI-GENERATIONAL CHOIR (OMG Choir)

***Hymn of Praise** *Greensleeves*

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone Him.
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary.

***Prayer of Dedication**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Communion Prayer

Communion by Intinction

All are welcome to come forward down the center aisle to receive a piece of bread to dip it in the chalice. Please return by the side aisle after receiving your star word. If you wish to receive communion in your seat, raise your hand and you will be served in place. Gluten free bread with a separate chalice is available.

A Blessing For The Way Forward

***HYMN** Jesus the Light of the World
(Congregation sings the refrain)

We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Shine all around us by day and by night.
Jesus, the light of the world.

***BENEDICTION**

RECESSIONAL

*The congregation is invited to stand.

† **Go Forth and Serve** †

Leading Worship: Rev. Robert Brown, Acting Senior Minister; Rev. Dr. Jean Vandergrift, Interim Minister for Spiritual Development and Congregational Life; Victoria Wagner, Music Director; Jane Turner Michael – Member of the Ministerial Search Committee, Liturgist.

STAR-GIVING

by Ann Weems

What I'd really like to give you for Christmas
is a star...

Brilliance in a package,
something you could keep in the pocket of your jeans
or in the pocket of your being.
Something to take out in times of darkness,
something that would never snuff out or tarnish,
something you could hold in your hand,
something for wonderment,
something for pondering,
something that would remind you of
what Christmas has always meant:
God's Advent Light into the darkness of this world.
But stars are only God's for giving,
and I must be content to give you words
and wishes and packages without stars.
But I can wish you life
as radiant as the Star
that announced the Christ Child's coming,
and as filled with awe as the shepherds who stood
beneath its light.
And I can pass on to you the love
that has been given me,
ignited countless times by others
who have knelt in Bethlehem's light.
Perhaps, if you ask, God will give you a star.

