

Millburn Congregational—United Church of Christ

19073 W. OLD TOWN COURT.

LAKE VILLA, IL 60046

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*Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we worship God
as a spiritually alive church,
welcoming all and reaching out with love as Christ's disciples.*

Rev. Miranda Moeller

Second Sunday After Christmas

January 5, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Building Empathy- Asking For Help

Announcements

Greetings and Words of Welcome

*Opening Hymn

There's a Song in the Air!

No. 159

1 There's a song in the air!

There's a star in the sky!

There's a mother's deep prayer

and a baby's low cry!

And the star rains its fire while the angel choirs sing,

for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king!

2 There's a tumult of joy

o'er the wonderful birth,

for the virgin's sweet boy

is the Lord of the earth.

See, the star rains its fire while the angel choirs sing,

for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king!

3 We rejoice in the light,
and we echo the song
that comes down through the night
from the heavenly throng,
and we welcome the glorious gospel they bring,
and we greet in the cradle our savior and king.

***Call to Worship**

One: Wisdom praises herself and tells of her glory in the midst of her people.

Many: She brings worlds into being and illuminates the night sky with stars in the heavens.

One: Wisdom declares herself and tells of her might in the midst of her people.

Many: She strengthens her children and grants peace to the peoples.

One: Wisdom praises herself and tells of her glory in the midst of her people.

Many: She bestows grace and redemption and makes mystery known. Praise Wisdom!

***Prayer of Confession**

Holy God, all things came into being through you. You enlighten our lives. Yet, we are drawn to shadows and veils. We distance ourselves from the conditions of oppression and despair of our neighbors, and we hide from your displeasure and disappointment at our limited allegiance to the kingdom. Ignite a hunger and thirst for righteousness, justice, and truth in us. Spark compassion in our hearts. Make us a righteous branch in the vineyard. In the name of Jesus and hope of restoration, we pray. Amen.

***Words of Assurance**

Beloved, trust that the grace of God has appeared, bringing new life to all. Receive the gifts of grace and mercy from the Compassionate One who recognizes your

repentance, comes to you in your weakness, offers strength for transformation, provides encouragement for repair, and grants forgiveness for sin.

Gloria Patri

**GLORY BE TO THE FATHER,
AND TO THE SON,
AND TO THE HOLY GHOST;
AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING,
IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE,
WORLD WITHOUT END.
AMEN. AMEN.**

Passing of the Peace

Celebration of Holy Communion

*All Believers are welcome at this Table.
You may commune as you are served*

Invitation

Leader: We rejoice in the God of life, who gives us bread: the fruit of the earth worked with human hands and who makes it into the bread of life.

People: We rejoice in the God of life who gives us wine: the fruit of the vine tended with daily care, and puts the flavor of the new world into it.

Leader: As the wheat and grapes are joined on this table in bread and wine – into a visual symbol for us –

People: May our church join together into a visual symbol for the entire world. (Germany)

Communion Prayer

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Breaking Bread and Pouring Cup

Sharing Elements

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: In peace let us pray:

ALL: O God, we give you thanks for uniting us as the Body of Christ and for filling us with joy at this table. Lead us toward the unity of your church and help us treasure signs of reconciliation. Now that we have tasted the banquet you have prepared for us, may we one day feast together in your heavenly city. Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

From VOICES TOGETHER, First Edition- Published by MennoMedia (2020) Harrisburg, Virginia.

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading (NRSV)

Matthew 2:1-12

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi^[a] from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east^[b] and have come to pay him homage.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah^[c] was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd^[d] my people Israel.’ ”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi^[e] and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that

I may also go and pay him homage.”⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east,^[f] until it stopped over the place where the child was.¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped,^[g] they were overwhelmed with joy.¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon

Wisdom Arrived

Rev. Miranda Moeller

We Respond to God's Word

*Hymn

As with Gladness

No. 173

1 As with gladness sages bold
 did the guiding star behold;
 as with joy they hailed its light,
 leading onward, beaming bright,
 so, true Morning Star, may we
 evermore your splendor see.

2 As with joyful steps they sped
 to that lowly manger bed,
 there to bend the knee before
 One whom heaven and earth adore,
 so, may we with willing feet
 ever seek your mercy seat.

3 As they offered gifts most rare
 at that manger plain and bare,
 so may we with holy joy,
 pure and free from sin's alloy,

all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to you from whom they spring.

Prayers of the People
Pastoral Prayer, Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Call to Offering

*Doxology

Old One Hundredth

**PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW;
PRAISE GOD, ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW;
PRAISE GOD FOR ALL THAT LOVE HAS DONE;
CREATOR, CHRIST, AND SPIRIT ONE.**

*Prayer of Dedication

Giving God, may these gifts reveal your greatness, generosity, and glory. We give thanks for the privilege of being in communal and covenantal care with our neighbors as manifested by the sharing of resources. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Brightest and Best

No. 174

1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our pathway, and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

2 Shall we give Jesus our costly devotion,
 fragrance of Edom, and offerings divine,
 gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
 myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

3 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
 vainly with gifts Jesus' favor secure.
 Richer by far is the heart's adoration.
 Dearer to God are the gifts of the poor.

4 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
 dawn on our pathway, and lend us your aid.
 Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
 guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

***Commission and Blessing**

As you go, remember that you are a righteous branch
 Charged to keep watch for the vulnerable and the marginalized
 Embodying compassion for those humbled and in despair
 May a new life of love be born as we share the warmth of God's love and peace in
 the world.

***Congregational Response**

No. 312

AMEN. AMEN. AMEN.

Today's Liturgy: *Enlightened: Service Prayers for Christmas 2C/Epiphany* was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

Today's Ushers: Thank you, Char Myers and Nancy Tschannen for serving as ushers this morning.

Celebrating Birthdays: Paige Force 1/7, Ola Chomicz-Domanska 1/11

CIRCLE OF PRAYER: We are holding prayer for the following persons (new in italics): All those dealing with mental health crisis; all those struggling with addiction; those impacted by mass shootings and gun violence, those experiencing loss from climate crisis disasters; our LGBTQIA+ youth and children, as they remember they are loved; all caregivers who need support and rest; Deb Grandos niece, Susie, as she battles metastatic breast cancer; Doug, a friend of Toot's daughter-in-law, is in stage 4 cancer; Tim Chichester for his diabetes struggle; Lorel Chichester for her knee problems; Donna Geary's great nephew, Teddy, a one year-old navigating cancer; Donna Geiger's niece, Fay Anne, who underwent breast cancer surgery; Roberta Young, navigating seizures; Judy Kozak, who is recovering after a fall and hip surgery; Susan Lee's sister-in-law, Kim, who continues to be hospitalized; Carol Rossi's sister-in-law, Pat, and niece, Eileen, both of whom are navigating cancer; Eddie Young, Ruth's husband, who continues to recover at home; and prayers for Bob Tschannen's journey with Alzheimer's; *and the family and friends of Char Myers' friend, Judy Clossey, as they grieve her death.*

Church Office Hours:

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 8:30-2:00

Wednesday: 8:30-2:00

Thursday: 8:30-2:00

Friday: Closed

*If you need something in the bulletin, please send the information to Susan by **Tuesday**. You can call the office or email Susan at secretary@millburnchurch.org. Thank you for your help.

Pastor Miranda's Office Hours:

Pastor Miranda's ministry often takes her out of the office. While she maintains an office presence Mon, Tues, and Thursday, her hours vary. In order to best meet your needs, feel free to call or email at pastor@millburnchurch.org to schedule a meeting. Do not hesitate to contact her at 860-751-4452, especially in the event of an emergency. She looks forward to supporting you and serving the community at Millburn and beyond.

Coffee Hour Sign-up - We need your help. Please consider providing items for our Sunday Coffee Hours following the 10 a.m. worship service.

Messenger Deadline — 3rd Friday of the month

UPCOMING EVENTS AT MILLBURN CHURCH:

Council Meeting - 3rd Thursday of the month (December 2nd Thursday)