

**Offertory Hymn VU 542 We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be, all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

### **Offertory Prayer**

Father of life, Mother who sees all and knows all, we confess what you already know - that we do not have all the answers that we so desperately long for: how to free our world from poverty, pain and injustice.

**But we are spending ourselves on loving you, and serving the orphan, the widow, and the stranger. And so we ask, in your mercy, that you would fill us again for the work ahead. Build us up in love that we might pour ourselves out again and again; to build what counts and lasts forever – justice, peace, and freedom. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People**

**VU 326 O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing**

#### **To Depart in Faith**

#### **Commissioning and Benediction**

The season of Epiphany celebrates God's light breaking into the world in Christ Jesus, and so:

May the light of God lead you, the light of Christ embrace you, and the light of the Holy Spirit enliven you So that you know both hope and peace this day and each coming day  
**We go now as sharers of the light.**

**Closing VU 7 Hope is a star that shines in the night, leading us on till the morning is bright. When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid.**

Scripture readings for February 4, 2024

Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39

**Lenten Study Group:** Join us for a Lenten Study on zoom! We'll watch a cool video series called 'The Search' and have a little discussion and reflection after. First evening: Friday Feb 23 at 7:30 more info and zoom link to come

## **Meridian Pastoral Charge**

January 28, 2024 Epiphany 4

**Starbuck United Church, Domain MB**

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Welcome and Announcements

### **WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

#### **Acknowledging the Territory**

Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have lived on and cared for this land, Manitoba, a name from Cree meaning: 'The Place of the Great Spirit; in the country we call Canada—a name from Huron meaning 'Village.' **As a community of faith on Treaty 1 Territory, we seek right relations with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples, to learn from each other, to live on this land as brothers and sisters, with respect and gratitude for all creation and The Creator.**

**Introit** VU 886 Arise, be clothed in the light. Arise, be clothed in the light. Your light has come. Your light has come. Hallelujah.

#### **Call to Worship**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, what hopes do you bring to worship?  
**We bring hope for health and wholeness.**

What afflictions do you bring to worship?  
Physical pain? **From illness and injury.**  
Emotional pain? **From sad and scary life situations.**  
Mental pain? **From dis-ease of many kinds.**

With all of these afflictions, it's a miracle that any of us have made it to worship this morning!  
**But where else would we be? We yearn to know God's healing love and to know that wholeness is possible.**

In today's gospel, a person with an "*afflicting spirit*" \* interrupts Jesus **and Jesus frees him.**

And where does the miracle of his story and our stories begin?

**When we bring all of who we are—hopeful, afflicted, beloved—into relationship with Jesus.**

So come, let us enter this sanctuary with our whole selves  
**Come, let us worship!**

### **Christ Candle**

God of incredible radiance, the light of a lone candle casts its path a surprising distance. May this light remind us of the infinite ways that Jesus the Christ illumines our life. Let all we are reflect Christ's grace. In the name of the Holy One, we pray. Amen.

### **HYMN: VU 87 I am the Light of the World**

### **Prayer of Approach**

Christ of the East, Christ of the South,  
Christ of the West, Christ of the North:

We turn our hearts to you hoping and praying for  
peace and life to dispel the shadows of war and death.  
We turn our faces to you trusting and believing for  
love and grace to shine upon us and to radiate to all.  
We turn our lives to you even if we know only in part  
what we will one day know fully. And now may faith hope and love  
abide—love most of all—abide in us as we continue to journey  
together through this year. Amen.

### **Prayer of Confession:**

God, we thank you for this extraordinary world  
and its reminders of resilience, grace, hope and life:  
for when grass shoots break through concrete  
when the sun emerges after storms for when people offer laughter  
in deep sadness. In these moments we see glimpses of who you are.  
and we are grateful. Help us to see the signs of life and goodness  
all around us and help us always be grateful.

Response VU 324 Jesus, come to our hearts like falling rain, come  
to refresh, come to renew, wash all our sins away.

### **Words of assurance**

Speak with authority in our lives, Christ.

Speak to us, and to what is in us, so that we might be whole.

Speak to us, with love, with hope, and with strength, so that we might  
hear you, and know, deep inside, that we are your people, and that you  
are our God. **Let it be so.**

**Response VU 28 Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

### **Story Time**

**Hymn: VU 570 Jesus' Hands were Kind Hands**

Reading: **1 Corinthians 8:1-13**

This is the story of God's people. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 111 VU 833

**Reading: Mark 1:21-28**

This is the story of Jesus **All: Thanks be to God.**

### **To Respond to the Word of God**

### **Reflection**

**Hymn: VU 120 O Jesus I have Promised**

**Minute for Mission**

### **Offering Invitation**

We take a moment to reflect on what Epiphany means to each of  
us: how God has gifted each of us, and how we can share our  
gifts as a part of the human family and to honour our Creator.