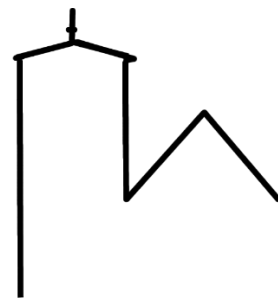


# WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1420 West Moss Avenue  
Peoria, Illinois 61606



## CHRISTMAS DAY

25 December 2022

Ten O'clock

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**ALMIGHTY GOD** you gave your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and be born of the Virgin Mary. Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*... The Book of Common Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA)*

## GATHERING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE RISEN CHRIST

**THE PREPARATION**

**Puer Natus Est**

*Everett Titcomb*

**WELCOME AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY**

**Rev. Denise Clark-Jones**

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

**One:** *Christ is born!*

**All:** **Alleluia!**

**One:** *Jesus is among us!*

**All:** **Alleluia**

**One:** *Shout with joy, give thanks, and sing!*

**All:** **Christ is born!**

### \*HYMN 31

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

*Mendelssohn*

1. Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

2. Christ by highest heaven adored,  
Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail the Incarnate Deity,  
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

### 3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Risen with healing in His wings,  
Mild He lays his glory by,  
Born that we no more may die.  
Born to raise us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739  
Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

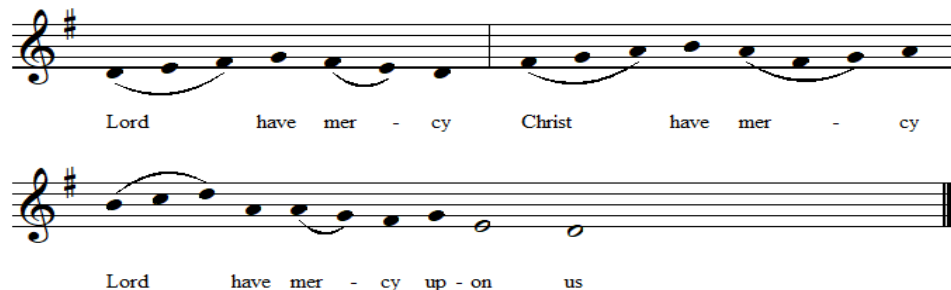
#### \*CALL TO CONFESSION

#### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(praying together)*

GOD OUR SAVIOR, we confess that we fail to live in your light. You have searched for us, and yet we hide from You. You have lavished us with blessing, and yet we treasure earthly things. Forgive us, God of grace. Let the mystery of Your saving love be revealed, even in our lives, according to Your eternal purpose.

#### \*TIME OF SILENCE AND PERSONAL CONFESSION

#### \*KYRIE



Lord have mer - cy Christ have mer - cy

Lord have mer - cy up - on us

#### \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

#### \*GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

*Gloria Carol*

### HEARING THE WORD

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### **OLD TESTAMENT:** Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news,  
who announces salvation,  
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

<sup>8</sup> Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices;  
together they shout for joy,  
for in plain sight they see  
the return of the Lord to Zion.

<sup>9</sup> Break forth; shout together for joy,  
you ruins of Jerusalem,  
for the Lord has comforted his people;  
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord has bared his holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

... *The Word of the Lord.* ... Thanks be to God.

### **THE PSALTER** (Hymnal # 219)

### Psalm 98

*Keddy*

1. To God compose a song of joy;  
To God make melody,  
Whose arm of strength does wondrous things,  
Whose hand brings victory!

3. In every corner of the earth,  
God comes to save and free;  
Break forth with shouts of holy joy,  
All lands, make melody.

5. Let seas in all their fullness roar,  
And people of all lands,  
Let mountains join and shout for joy,  
Let rivers clap their hands.

2. Before the nations God reveals,  
A just and righteous will,  
Remembering in faithful love,  
The house of Israel.

4. With trumpet, with sound of horns,  
With strings, yes, with the lyre,  
With voices praise the sovereign God  
A lusty, joyous choir.

6. The God of justice comes to save,  
Let earth make melody!  
For God will judge with righteousness  
And rule with equity.

Text: Ruth C. Duck, 1986  
Music: Edwin R. Taylor, 1986

**EPISTLE:** Hebrews 1:1-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.<sup>3</sup> He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,<sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did God ever say,  
"You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you"?

Or again,  
"I will be his Father,  
and he will be my Son"?

<sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,  
"Let all God's angels worship him."

<sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says,  
"He makes his angels winds  
and his servants flames of fire."

<sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says,  
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,  
and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

<sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;  
therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

<sup>10</sup> And,  
"In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands;

<sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain;  
they will all wear out like clothing;

<sup>12</sup> like a cloak you will roll them up,  
and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same,  
and your years will never end."

**THE CHOIR**

**A Maiden Most Gentle  
The Choir**

*Andrew Carter*

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing: Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King. *Ave, ave, ave Maria, Ave, ave, ave Maria.* How blest is the birth of her heavenly child, Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild. *Ave, ave ...* The archangel Gabriel foretold by his call, the Lord of creation, and Saviour of all, *Ave, ave ...* Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray, Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless Ave. *Ave, ave, ave Maria. Ave, ave, ave Maria!*

## **GOSPEL:** John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

SERMON

Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

\*HYMN 38

It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

*Carol*

1. It came upon a midnight clear  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold;  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
From heaven's all-gracious King  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
To hear the angels sing

3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow  
Look now! For glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing;  
O rest beside the weary road  
And hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come  
With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world.  
Above the sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing.  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

4. For lo, the days are hastening on,  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years,  
Comes round the age of gold,  
When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*Affirming together*)

*The Apostles' Creed*

**I BELIEVE IN GOD, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**THE GIFT OF MUSIC**

**Christmas Day**

*Gustav Holst*

Good Christian men, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice; Give ye heed to what we say: News! News! Jesus Christ is born today: Ox and ass before him bow, And he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! [*repeat*] God rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay, Remember Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas day, To save us all from woe and sin, When we were gone astray. O tidings of comfort and joy. In Bethlehem, in Jewry, This blessed babe was born, And laid within a manger, Upon that holy morn; The which His Mother, Mary, Did nothing take in scorn. O tidings of comfort and joy. Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart, and soul, and voice; Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this. He hath oped the heav'nly door, And man is blessed evermore. Christ was born for this. Come ye lofty, come ye lowly, Let your songs of gladness ring; In a stable lies the Holy, In a manger rests the King: See in Mary's arms reposing, Christ by highest heav'n adored: The first Nowell, the angels did say, Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay, Keeping their sheep, On a cold winter's night that was so deep. Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel. Come, your circle round him closing, Pious hearts that love the Lord. Come, ye poor, no pomp of station Robes the Child your hearts adore. He, the Lord of all salvation, Shares your want, is weak and poor. Oxen, round about behold them; Rafters naked, cold and bare, See the shepherds, God has told them That the Prince of Life lies there. Come ye children, blithe and merry, This one Child your model make; Christmas holly, leaf, and berry, All be prized for His dear sake; Come, ye gentle hearts, and tender, come, ye spirits, keen and bold; All in all your homage render, Weak and mighty, young and old. High above a star is shining, And the wisemen haste from far: Come glad hearts and spirits pining: For you all has ris'n the star. Let us bring our poor oblations, Thanks and love and faith and praise: Come, ye people, come ye nations, all in all draw nigh to gaze. Good Christian men, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice; give ye heed to what we say: News! News! Jesus Christ is born today: Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart, and soul, and voice; Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this. He hath oped the heav'nly door, And man is blessed evermore. Christ was born for this. Now to the Lord sing praises, All Israel, Now to the Lord sing praises, All you within this place, And with true love and brotherhood Each other now embrace; This holy tide of Christmas All others doth deface. O tidings of comfort and joy. Good Christian men rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice; Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all, To gain his everlasting hall. Christ was born to save.

## SEALING THE WORD

At the time of the **DISTRIBUTION OF THE EUCHARIST**, you may come forward and receive the Sacrament by dipping the bread in the wine, or you may use the pre-packaged elements available at the tables in the Narthex. Those worshipers at home are encouraged to use whatever bread and wine are at hand as the food of the Supper. Jesus himself used the left over bread and wine from the Passover Feast to institute the first Eucharist. So we, too, may use those things closest at hand for this celebration.

*Christians of any age or church affiliation are welcome at Christ's table.*

### INVITATION

**One:** *The Lord be with you.*

**All:** **And also with you.**

**One:** *Lift up your hearts.*

**All:** **We lift them to the Lord.**

**One:** *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

**All:** **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

### COMMUNION PRAYER

#### SANCTUS

Tom Clark-Jones



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of hosts: Hea-ven and earth are—  
full, full of thy glo - ry. Ho - san-na in the high - est, Ho -  
san-na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who comes, comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est, Ho - san-na in the high - est.

#### COMMUNION PRAYER and MEMORIAL ACCLAMATIONS



Dy-ing you de - stroyed our— death, Ris-ing you re - stored our life,  
Lord Je - sus come a - gain— in— glo - ry!

### THE CONSECRATION

## THE LORD'S PRAYER *[praying together]*

**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.**

*These are holy things, to keep us holy. Gifts of God for the people of God.*

**Let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

### COMMUNION MUSIC

### **A Babe Is Born In Bethlehem**

*Craig Phillips*

*This anthem was commissioned in honor of the ministry of the Rev. Denise Clark-Jones at Westminster Church, Peoria for Christmas 2022.*

A child is born in Bethlehem. Alleluia. Therefore rejoice Jerusalem. Alleluia. Come, join the angel throng in one accord Adoring Christ the Lord. The babe within a manger poor, Alleluia. Will rule the world forevermore. Alleluia. Come join the angel throng in songs of joy In one accord, adoring Christ the Lord. Upon this joyful Holy night. Alleluia. We bless your name, O Lord of Light. Alleluia We praise you Holy Trinity adoring you eternally. Come join the angel throng in songs of joy In one accord, adoring Christ the Lord.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

## BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

### \*HYMN 23

### **Angels We Have Heard on High**

*Gloria*

**Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.**

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

**Shepherds why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?**

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

**Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.**

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo*

**Text and Music: French Carol.**

## \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

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## LEADING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Denise Clark-Jones, *Pastor*  
Thomas Clark-Jones, *Organist-Choirmaster*  
The Choir of Westminster Church  
Elder Larry Hicks, *Video Production*

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**WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER** on this blessed Christmas Morning. Only once every seven years does Christmas Day fall on a Sunday and gives us a chance to worship on Christmas Morn. We pray that this service will be a great blessing to you and yours as you celebrate the joyous tide of Christmas with us here on Moss Avenue.

**THIS MORNING'S SERVICE** is live-streamed over the world-wide web through the technology of You Tube. Permission to both perform and broadcast the music in this service is licensed by One License #A 726060, Chicago, Illinois.

The Westminster Choir is funded, in part, by a generous grant from the Gretchen R. Iben endowment for the arts and music of Westminster Church.

**NEXT SUNDAY** will be the First Sunday in Christmas. Rev. and Mr. Clark-Jones will be in North Carolina visiting family for the New Year. Elder Alan Willadsen will be our guest preacher for the morning. We always look forward to having Alan share the Word with us. He is an ordained Lay Preacher in the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the Presbytery of the Great Rivers. Dr. Chee Hyeon Choi is filling in at the organ this morning. Chee Hyeon is a well known musician around Westminster Church, having played in many of our Iben events in the past ten years. We thank her for brushing up on her organ playing to help out today. She is a professor of music at Bradley University and active in the musical community of Central Illinois.

# Christmas Blessings

CHRISTMAS DAY

25 DECEMBER 2022

WESTMINSTER CHURCH OF PEORIA

**A Presbyterian Church, USA in the Presbytery of the Great Rivers**

**1420 West Moss Avenue + + + Peoria, Illinois 61606**

*[www.westminsterpeoria.org](http://www.westminsterpeoria.org)*

*Today's music ...*

The most interesting of the musical offerings this morning well may be THE NEW YEAR CAROL set to this charming music by Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976) in 1934. The carol is associated with Pembrokeshire, Wales. There, the song figured in a custom in which, on New Year's Day, children collect fresh water from a well, and go around with a sprig from an evergreen tree, which they use to sprinkle the faces of passers-by with the water while singing the carol and begging for gifts of food or money. Elsewhere in Wales, the custom is called *dwr newy*, "new water", and the water was also used to lustrate rooms and doors of houses.

This ceremony has a parallel in the Scottish Hogmanay tradition of *saining*; here water drawn from a "dead and living ford", a ford crossed by both the living and the dead, is sprinkled through the house, and then juniper branches are burnt for the smoke indoors. The purpose of the rite is to *sain*, or purify, the house for the new year.

According to musicologist, Trefor Owen, the song preserves "an early well-cult made acceptable to medieval Christianity by its association with the Virgin and perpetuated both by the desire to wish one's neighbor well at the beginning of a new year and by the small monetary payment involved." Similar speculations from the nineteenth century have sought to link the mysterious maidens of the song with the goddess Aurora, bearing the gold of the rising and setting sun on her head and feet.

The meaning of the words "levy-dew" in the original lyrics of the song is not certainly known. One line of speculation holds that the words represent the Welsh phrase *llef y Dduw*, "a cry to God". Others connect it to Middle English *levedy* ("lady"), or to the French phrase *levez à Dieu*, "raise to God", which may in turn refer to the elevation of the Host in Christian liturgy.

THE STAR CAROL, composed in 1999 by John Weaver for the Pine Street Presbyterian Church Choir in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania also draws from an ancient Welsh Epiphany Carol as found in the Oxford Book of Carols ... a collection of poetic literature from all over Great Britain. The author of the text is unknown. Dr. Weaver divides each verse of the text into major and minor modes ... changing in the middle of each verse. It makes a stunning effect of the light dawning on the ancient Magi as they draw near to worship the Lord.

THE FANTASIE on "How Lovely Shines the Morningstar" was composed by Dietrich Buxtehude (1637 - 1707) one of the most influential composers of the early Baroque whose music even the immortal J.S. Bach held in deep respect, having made a special trip to see and hear Buxtehude at work in Lubeck, Germany. The great "Morningstar" chorale is a well known carol in Germany and represents one of the finest hymns of the Lutheran tradition from this era. Buxtehude sets it twice here. The first iteration is dramatic and moves from a charming opening with two stops on the manual (8' and 2') against a pedal reed playing the tune. From there it bursts into a full organ section detailing the heart of the chorale tune. The second variation starts like the first and continues in that vein, although without the tune in the pedal, but on the manuals. Toward the end it again breaks into a joyous full organ iteration of the tune. It is one

of the most beautiful of chorale preludes of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and holds a place in the organ repertoire attained by only very few chorale based works.

**Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.  
Nations shall come to your light  
And rulers to the brightness of your rising.**

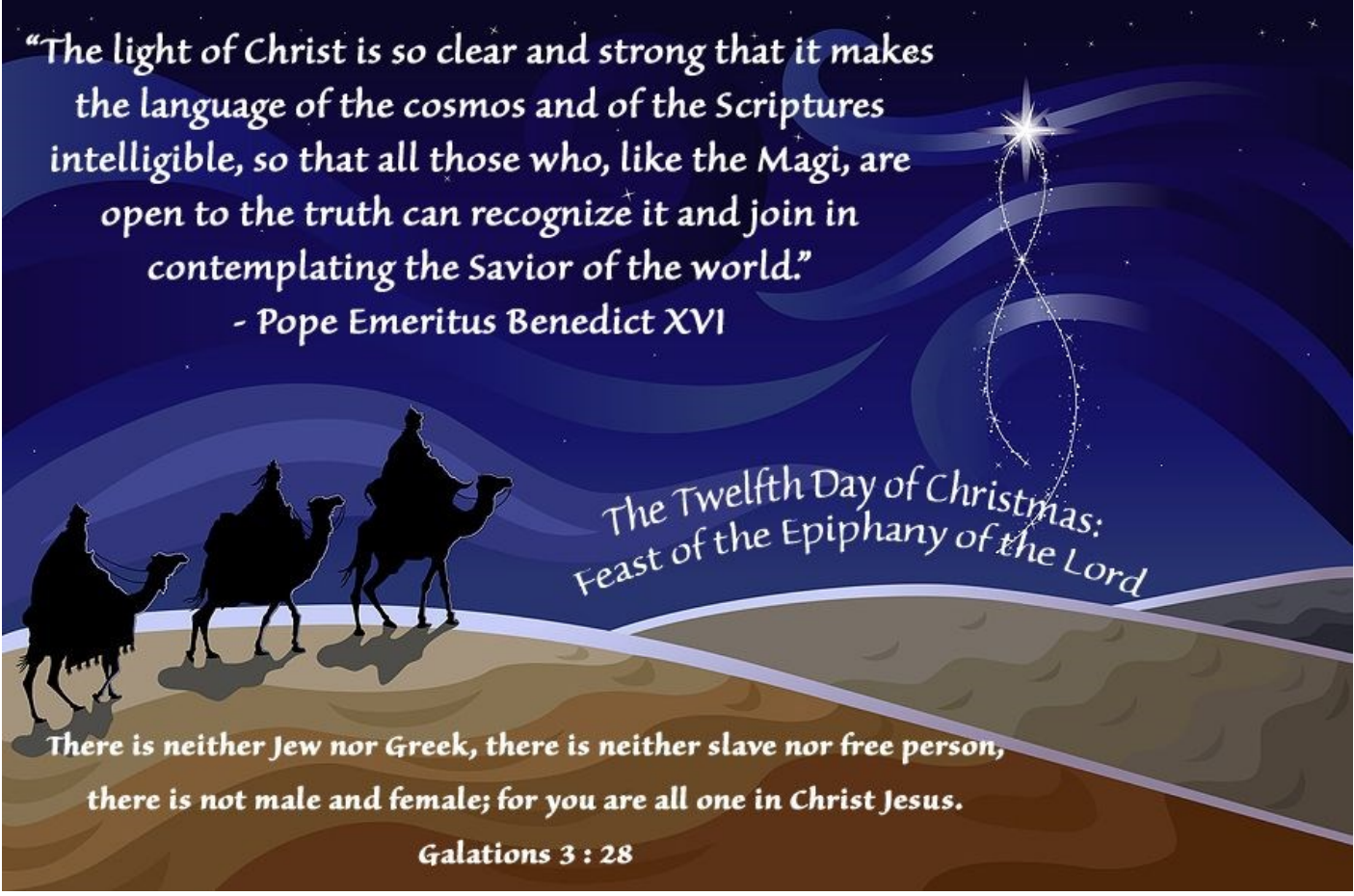
*... Isaiah 16:1,3*

**Lord God of the nations,  
we have seen the star of your glory  
rising in splendor.  
The radiance of your incarnate Word  
pierces the night that covers the earth  
and signals the dawn of justice and peace.  
May his brightness illumine our lives  
and beckon all nations to walk as one in your light.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendor of eternal light,  
God forever and ever. Amen.**

*... The Book of Common Worship  
Presbyterian Church, USA*

**Oh, star of wonder, star of light,  
Star with royal beauty bright.  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light!**

*... John Henry Hopkins  
1792 - 1868*



*"The light of Christ is so clear and strong that it makes the language of the cosmos and of the Scriptures intelligible, so that all those who, like the Magi, are open to the truth can recognize it and join in contemplating the Savior of the world."*

*- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI*

*The Twelfth Day of Christmas:  
Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord*

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person,  
there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

*Galatians 3 : 28*

OPEN HANDS, OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS