

1. This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,  
 2. Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm gon-na let it shine,  
 3. Je - sus gave it to me, I'm gon-na let it shine,

Oh,

This lit - tle light of mine  
 Ev - 'ry - where I go,  
 Je - sus gave it to me,

Oh,

I'm gon-na let it shine; This lit - tle light of mine  
 I'm gon-na let it shine; Ev - 'ry - where I go,  
 I'm gon-na let it shine; Je - sus gave it to me,

I'm gon-na let it shine, Let it shine,  
 I'm gon-na let it shine, Let it shine,  
 I'm gon-na let it shine, Let it shine,

Oh,

let it shine, let it shine.  
 let it shine, let it shine.  
 let it shine, let it shine.

January 5, 2025  
 Epiphany Sunday  
 Baptism & Reception of New Members

**PREWORSHIP MUSIC**

**Mr. Kevin Crone**

**GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

*The First Noel*

**Chimes Choir**

*(Please stand in body and/or spirit)*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Pastor: When extraordinary things happen in the sky, we stop and notice. We look for comets, shooting stars, full moons. We watch for rocket launches, satellites drifting in space, and the space station circling our orbit. The Magi were paying close attention to the sky when they saw something different—a star that shone so brightly, they were compelled to follow it. Just as the Christmas star once shined for all people to see, the light of Christ still shines for all people. May we use our star words as reminders of the Christmas star we invite into our lives so that we might be led toward Jesus Christ.

Pastor: We are seekers—just like the Magi.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: We are looking for hope, peace, joy, love and so much more that Christ brings.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: We long for the abundant life God promises.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: May this star word be one of encouragement.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: May this word guide our intentions in the days to come.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: May we pay attention to where God is present.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you.*

Pastor: May God use these words to show us how to live and love in the world.

**All people:** *Light our paths and lead us closer to you. Amen.*

**HYMN**

*We Three Kings*

**Blue Hymnal, #172**

**JESUS SAID, “LET THE CHILDREN COME”**

HYMN

*This Little Light of Mine*

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HEBREW READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:1-12

SERMON

Rev. Laura C. Baker

**BAPTISM & RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

Pastor: They were bringing children to Jesus that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant and said to them.

*All people: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the realm of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the realm of God like a child shall not enter it."*

Pastor: At this time, I invite Mason and Connie to come forward to be baptized. Mason and Connie, the Sacrament of Baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. Baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark of your acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of your participation in God's forgiveness, and the beginning of your growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

*All people: This is the water of baptism. Out of this water we rise with new life, forgiven of sin and are made one in Christ, members of Christ's body.*

Pastor: Mason, by what full name are you known?

*Candidate: Mason Lee Zercher.*

Pastor: Mason, do you desire to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

*Candidate: I do.*

Pastor: Tanya Merchant, as Mason's chosen sponsor, do you seek to lead Mason in faithfulness and are you ready with God's help to guide and encourage him, with counsel and by example, in prayer and with love, to follow the way of Jesus Christ?

*Sponsor: I am.*

Pastor: Mason, by the grace of God, do you promise to be Jesus' disciple, to follow him in resisting evil, practicing love and justice, and witnessing to the work and word of Jesus, the best you can, and do you promise to be a faithful member of Jesus' church?

*Candidate: I do and promise with God's help.*

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

*Candidate: I do.*

**OFFERING INVITATION**

Liturgist: What a time of worship this has been! We have experienced the abundant blessings of God in the Sacrament of Baptism, a Reception of New Members, and in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We are indeed witnesses to the Light of the World! Like the Magi, we have been called to follow the Star of Promise, so let us bring our gifts to honor the Babe of Bethlehem and bring the light to all the dark places in our community and our world, dedicating our offerings with a prayer.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

*All people: Lord, align our hearts with yours as we dedicate these gifts. May our motives be holy, and our intentions be in harmony with your plans. Let this act of dedicating our financial offerings be but one step in many more, as we rededicate our entire lives to you and as we say "Here I am, Lord," use me according to your will. Amen.*

HYMN

*Here I Am, Lord*

Blue Hymnal, #452

**BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Go out into the world to share the many gifts that have been given to you. Do not let them go to waste; share them through the power of the Spirit. And as you do so, may the grace and peace of God abide with you along the way.

*All people: Amen.*

**CANDLE EXTINGUISHING**

Acolyte

**POSTLUDE**

Mr. Kevin Crone

as Jews and Samaritans did not even share things like water buckets. Jesus tells her that if she knew who she was talking to, she would be asking him for a drink of living water. They get into a long conversation that shows the woman that Jesus is a pretty amazing guy, and she goes back to tell others in the village about him. They are curious about her story, and they go to see Jesus at the well for themselves. They invite him to stay with them and unclear or not, he accepts their hospitality, staying for two days.

Liturgist: Since his birth, with the visit of the wise ones, strangers from the East, Jesus was not content to limit his welcome and message to his own people. Jesus was one who reached across human borders and boundaries, seeing in everyone a common heritage as a child of God. Whether it was magi from the East, or a woman from Samaria, or a leper from a nearby leper colony, Jesus welcomed them all.

Pastor: This morning's communion bread is in the shape of a star, reminding us of the star that led the foreign dignitaries to find a warm welcome with Mary and Joseph and Jesus. So remembering Jesus and his open-hearted welcome, let us pray.

*All people: We give you thanks, O God, for the mighty sweep of your love, that embraces all people and all nations. We thank you that you sent Jesus who showed us the way to new life – a new life of love that gathers all of our diversity together in the one body in Christ. Bless this meal that we will share together today. As this flour used in this broken bread was once scattered grain on a hillside, and then when gathered, became one element, so may we be brought together to make something wonderful. As this cup of the new covenant was poured out so that all might share in the signs of new life, so may our lives be poured out in compassion for our brothers and sisters everywhere. For this is the way of Jesus. Amen.*

Pastor: Through the broken bread, we ourselves are broken open so that we might be open to God's spirit made manifest among us.

Liturgist: Through the poured-out cup, we are inspired to pour ourselves out in generosity to the world. The gifts of God for the people of God. All things are now ready.

### ELEMENTS SHARED

*All people: Generous God, we thank you that you have blessed our world with such diversity. Send us forth into the world that we might be a light to spread the good news of your love and care to all, Amen.*

SPECIAL MUSIC

*I Wonder as I Wander*

Chimes Choir

Pastor: Connie, by what full name are you known?

*Candidate: Connie Sue Schiding Little.*

Pastor: Connie, do you desire to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

*Candidate: I do.*

Pastor: Connie, by the grace of God, do you promise to be Jesus' disciple, to follow him in resisting evil, practicing love and justice, and witnessing to the work and word of Jesus, the best you can, and do you promise to be a faithful member of Jesus' church?

*Candidate: I do and promise with God's help.*

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

*Candidate: I do.*

Pastor: People of God, Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the ones about to be baptized, as Mason and Connie grow in Christ?

*All people: We promise our love, support, and care.*

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God. Do you believe in God?

*All people: I believe in God.*

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

*All people: I believe in Jesus Christ.*

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

*All people: I believe in the Holy Spirit.*

### PRAYER OF BAPTISM

Pastor: Bless by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water. By your Holy Spirit save those who confess the name of Jesus Christ that sin may have no power over them. Create new life in the one baptized this day, that he may rise in Christ. Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was, and is, and shall always be, world without end. Amen.

### ACT OF BAPTISM & PRAYER

Pastor: Mason, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*All people: Amen.*

Pastor: The Holy Spirit be upon you child of God, disciple of Christ, member of Christ's body.

Pastor: Connie, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All people:** *Amen.*

Pastor: The Holy Spirit be upon you child of God, disciple of Christ, member of Christ's body.

Pastor: Let us pray for those baptized today.

**All people:** *Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy by giving us the gift of Jesus. Bless Mason and Connie abundantly. May they be filled with joy and never be ashamed to confess a personal faith in you. Bless Tania, Mason's family, Connie's loved ones, and all of us, the faithful people at Starview United Church of Christ who promise to support and help them grow as your disciples. Amen.*

Pastor: At this time, I welcome to come forward, to gather beside Connie, those who have decided to join with us as members of Starview United Church of Christ: Katherine Fuhrman and Cheri Boughan. Dear friends, we are all created in God's image and in one another, we can see the face of Christ. In the church community, we are blessed by the Holy Spirit's wisdom and power. We come to the church then, not as strangers, but as friends in Christ and as equal members of the household of faith.

**All people:** *We have many identities, all formed by the same God. We come from many communities, all members of one body of faith. Today we rejoice in your journey of faith that has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home in the past, and the spiritual mentors who have guided you on your way. We celebrate your presence today in this household of faith, where we are all seekers and servants, growing in God's transforming love. We ask you now to join in mutual covenant with us, and with the church universal in all times and places, by affirming the following:*

Pastor: Do you seek to grow in God's transforming love, as you follow in the Way of Jesus?

**New Members:** *I do.*

Pastor: Are you open to the movement of the Spirit in your life?

**New Members:** *I am.*

Pastor: Will you join with us as a church, as we seek to follow God's direction in our midst? Will you welcome and respect each person's freedom to interpret God's Truth, as God gives them each light and wisdom?

**New Members:** *I will, with God's help.*

Council Representative: Will you participate in the life and mission of this diverse and inclusive community of God's people, praying and working with us in ministry together? Will you share regularly with us in the worship of God? Will

you offer your time and talents and financial resources to the ministries of this congregation, as the Spirit leads us to serve the community and the world?

**New Members:** *I will, with God's help.*

Pastor: Cheri, Kat, and Connie, we welcome you with joy!

**New Members:** *In the presence of God and this faith community, I give myself to God's service and join in covenant with you to build up the community of faith and practice at Starview United Church of Christ. We remember God's law to love our neighbors as ourselves and the work of Jesus to proclaim freedom to the oppressed. Empowered by the blessing of the Holy Spirit that binds us together, we seek to walk in faith together. We promise to support one another in prayer, to care for those among us in need, to honor the differences between us, and to grow together as a faithful community of Christians.*

**All members:** *As partners in the common life of this congregation, we pledge to you our friendship and prayers as we grow together in God's transforming love. We give thanks that you join us now as fellow seekers and servants of Christ.* (Welcome is given to the newly baptized and new members)

#### SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**Congregation:** **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

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

Pastor: Let us give God praise and thanks.

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

**All people:** *We remind one another: Jesus welcomes everyone at this table. No one is turned away. If you seek God's presence, come and eat. If you are hungry for this spiritual food, come and eat. If you have questions and doubts, come and eat. If you feel unworthy, come and eat. This table is spread for all of us that we each might experience God's abundant and unconditional love.*

Pastor: Jesus often ate with strangers. He ate with more than 5000 of them on a hillside at one point, even providing the food! But there is one story in particular that is told about Jesus with a stranger in the fourth chapter of the gospel of John. In the story, Jesus has left the Jewish region of Judea and has crossed over into Samaria. As we know from other stories in the gospels, good observant Jews did not associate with Samaritans because they were considered unclean. But in this story, Jesus stops to sit at a well, where a Samaritan woman comes to draw water. Jesus asks the woman for a drink, and she questions why he would ask her for a drink,