

Full Text of the Service at White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church
Sunday, December 13, 2020

PRELUDE MUSIC

Come Into This Place of Peace

Come into this place of peace, and let its silence heal your spirit
Come into this place of memory, and let its history warm your soul
Come into this place of power, and let its vision change your heart.

Interlude III (Chip Davis) Carol Caouette, piano

GIVING VOICE TO THE SPIRIT

Dona Nobis Pacem

Oh We Give Thanks

Oh we give thanks for this precious day
For those gathered here, and those far away
For this time we share, with love and care
Oh we give thanks for this precious day.

WELCOME

Good morning, and welcome everyone, to White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church. I am Jim Van Ostrand, serving on your Board of Directors.

We are a congregation in the free faith tradition, a community of youth, adults and children, dedicated to pluralism in the spiritual search and ethics grounded in action.

Service participants today include Carol Couette, Amy Peterson Derrick, Rev. Jack Gaede, Kate Christopher and Phil Williams, Victoria Safford, supported by Anna Gehres and Erin Scott. Music today is from Carol Caouette, Craig Hansen, and the Choir, directed by Thaxter Cunio.

We're hearing that some folks who log into our Zoom services using an IPAD have had trouble viewing and hearing shared videos (such as chalice lightings and special music). If this is the case for you, look for a button in the upper left corner of your zoom screen that says "Switch to Screen Share." There's also an update to Zoom Cloud Meetings, the preferred and recommended Zoom app for iPad. As always, let us know, by email or in the chat, if we can help.

On the Winter Solstice and Christmas Eve, we hope you'll join us for special holiday services, featuring the voices of many members and friends, as well as your staff team. In the ENews this week, you'll find a link to orders of service with all the song lyrics and participant names, and also wonderful COLORING PAGES, based on our beloved "12 Days of Christmas" placards!

Today, after the service at 11:15, please join us for Cyber Social Hour. It's a fun way to meet others, see old friends, and share a little conversation in small facilitated groups. We'll put the Zoom link and easy instructions in the chat box.

Welcome to our church. Together, we grow our souls and serve the world in love.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Rev. Rebecca Edmiston Lange, adapted)

Come in

Come into this space which we make holy by our presence.

Come in with all your vulnerabilities and strengths,

fears and anxieties, loves and hopes,

for here you need not hide, nor pretend,

nor be anything other than who you are

and who you are called to be.

Come into this space where we can heal and be healed, forgive and be forgiven.

Come into this space where the ordinary is sanctified,

the human is celebrated, the compassionate is expected.

Come into this space –

Together we make it a holy space.

Phil Williams and Kate Christotpher will light the chalice.

LIGHTING THE CHALICE Kate Christopher and Phil Williams

OPENING WORDS (in unison)

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law. This is our great covenant:
to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another

HYMN Dark of Winter #55 Singing the Living Tradition

Dark of winter, soft and still, your quiet calm surrounds me

Let my thoughts go where they will, ease my mind profoundly.

And then my soul will hear a sing, a blessed song of love eternal.

Gentle darkness, soft and still bring your quiet to me.

Darkness soothe my weary eyes, that I may see more clearly.

When my heart with sorrow cries, comfort and caress me.

And then my soul may hear a voice, a still, small voice of love eternal.

Darkness, when my fears arise, let your peace flow through me.

STORY - Amy

I want to share a story with you this morning, a true story about curiosity and wonder and imagination--it's a true story based on a telling by Gail Forsyth-Vail about one of our Unitarian

faith ancestors named Charles Darwin. I invite you this morning to take a breath and try to imagine yourself into the story, exploring, wondering, and imagining right along with Charles.

From the time he was a young child, Charles Darwin was an explorer. He left to roam the fields and hills near his home in England. He was fascinated by the movement of small animals and insects and knew each wildflower by name. He was curious about everything he saw and heard and touched, wondering at the lives of ants and butterflies, examining and collecting rocks, delighting in the grasses, trees, leaves, and flowers that provided homes for his very favorite creature-- the beetle.

Curiosity about the world and the place of humans in it was a gift given to Charles by both his grandfathers. They were both Unitarians and believed that human beings did not yet know all the answers to life's great questions. The clues, they thought, were to be found by observing the world around them, by asking questions, by listening, and by wondering and imagining. And so, Charles practiced observing. His observing led to more questions, more wondering and imagining about the whole wide world of things yet to be known.

When Charles was eight, his father sent him away to school, wanting him to learn Greek, Latin, and ancient history.

Instead, Charles spent his time outdoors observing, wondering, imagining: he would spend hours watching workings of an anthill, then hours more as he considered the fascinating mysteries found in rock piles. At every opportunity, he took long walks outdoors, watching, listening, and collecting. He delighted in figuring out how creatures behaved and how the natural world worked.

When Charles was 15, his father sent him to medical school to become a doctor like his father and his grandfather before him. But Charles found that he yearned to be back outside. Charles wasn't alone--he found friends who also felt at home in nature and would teach him all about different kinds of plants. Charles began to draw these plants in great detail, labeling the parts, learning to tell one variety from another.

Two years later, Charles left medical school; it was clear that he didn't want to be a doctor. Instead, his father sent him to University to become a minister.

In those days, it was not unusual to study to be a minister and study science. Charles planned to find a small Church in the countryside so he could spend most of his time observing animals, rocks, and insects, and drying plants,.

But Charles soon discovered that while he loved learning all kinds of things, his life's work would be as a naturalist. When he was 19 he was invited to spend 5 years traveling around the world on the HMS Beagle, serving as its naturalist. His job was to draw and make notes on plants, animals, and rock formations everywhere the ship went.

On that trip, Charles began to piece together Clues to the great puzzle then called "The Mystery of mysteries," how all of the different forms of life on Earth came to be.

As he traveled, Charles filled notebooks with drawings and notes. He wondered and asked questions; he listened, he observed; he imagined and stayed open to the curiosities of the natural world as they presented themselves: frogs, salamanders, armadillos, insects, and lots of fossils. When he returned to England five years later, he understood how plants and animals evolved from one form to another over the course of many, many thousands and millions of years.

It wasn't until 22 years later that Charles published the Origin of Species. Scientists, teachers, and teachers took notice, and so did the press. The collector with the gift of wonder, a spirit of adventure, and openness to new ideas had become the scientist whose theory responded to the mystery of mysteries.

But the story doesn't end there; just as Charles' work was inspired by the wondering and imagining of others, Charles' work then went on to inspire others to observe, ask questions, and listen, and wonder. And these new observations led to more questions, more wondering and imagining about the whole wide world of things yet to be known.

MEDITATION - Rev. Jack Gaede

Please join me in a spirit of revolutionary prayer and expansive meditation. Take a moment for deep breath, noticing your groundedness. Let your shoulders fall away from your ears. Find your center and rest for a moment in that balance.

We've been here before. We know this combination of short and bracingly cold days, followed by chilly clear nights. We know the rhythm--waking up to varied amounts of frost, covering the lawns and sidewalks. A frozen crust that will slowly melt away from the rising of the sun--closer now than in the summer but for shorter windows of time.

We are facing the cusp of winter solstice and a new revolution toward the returning light, and in this darkness we honor the light. The light within each human heart, the twinkling lights of the holiday season, the light in the eyes of a child. We notice and cherish the moonlight reflecting off a frozen pond, we soak up the scarce sunlight, and we get lost in the star-filled sky. We praise the light that enables our scientists to research viruses and vaccines, the light that guides our surgeons in operating rooms, and the light that reflects from our faces into our cameras as we communicate virtually to loved ones both near and far. We celebrate the light that exposes injustice, the light that illuminates our past, and the light from our backyard fires keeping us warm and safely connected with neighbors and friends.

And we also celebrate the darkness and the possibility that lies within. We celebrate the rest and spaciousness that accompany the darkness--the opportunity to reflect, to unwind and just to be still. In this moment, we acknowledge the benefit that comes from honoring the rhythm of this

time, knowing that seeds grow in the darkness of the earth just as babies grow in the darkness of the womb.

In just a short moment, we will be silent together, honoring the light and the darkness--the sorrows and the joy that interweave together to form this web of life. Consider the people in your web, contemplating all the ways in which you are connected. Grab hold of the thread that connects you to them. And in the silence of this moment, feel free to name them out loud and name your blessing for them. (pause)

Knowing that all of us do better when all of us do better, we send these blessings around and between and among us. Stronger together, may we be blessed and may we be a blessing. May it be so. Make it so. Amen.

Dick Ottman will share a bit about today's offering recipient.

OFFERING - Dick Ottman: Special Collection for the UU Service Committee

My wife, Judy, and I have been supporting the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee or the UUSC for over 40 years. The UUSC started during World War II when a Unitarian minister and his wife risked their lives, and went to Nazi controlled Europe to rescue people being persecuted. I am not going to ask you to risk your life. Instead, I am asking you to write a check to WBUUC with UUSC in the memo line. You can also text your donation. Donations of \$125 or more are matched by a Foundation. Donations to the UUSC are part of the Guest at Your Table program.

Our family gives to the UUSC because

1. They follow the 7 principles of our faith.
 2. They believe strongly in human rights for all people, and in empowering women.
 3. They believe in self-determination. UUSC is not a charity, but a respectful partner to people working in their own countries and communities to build a just and self-sustaining livelihood.
- More information is at uus.org and on our church's website. My wife and I were married 52 years ago. Judy is now in Memory Care, which is why I am doing the talking.

OFFERTORY

O Come, O Come Emmanuel [Wintry Mix - Hansen]

READINGS

First Reading – JACK

from Alan Lightman, a physicist, recalling a summer night on the coast of Maine

It was a moonless night, and quiet. The only sound I could hear was the soft churning of the engine of my boat. Far from the distracting lights of the mainland, the sky vibrated with stars. Taking a chance, I turned off my running lights, and it got even darker. Then I turned off my engine. I lay down in the boat and looked up. A very dark night sky seen from the ocean is a mystical experience. After a few minutes, my world had dissolved into that star-littered sky. The

boat disappeared. My body disappeared. And I found myself falling into infinity. I felt an overwhelming connection to the stars, as if I were part of them. And the vast expanse of time – extending from the far-distant past long before I was born and then into the far distant future long after I will die – seemed compressed to a dot. I felt connected not only to the stars but to all of nature, and to the entire cosmos. I felt a merging with something far larger than myself, a grand and eternal unity, a hint of something absolute. After a time, I sat up and started the engine again. I had no idea how long I'd been lying there looking up.

SECOND READING- VICTORIA

from Zia Hyder, a poet from Bangladesh, living in New York

Under This Sky

There's an enormous comfort knowing
we all live under this same sky,
whether in New York or Dhaka,
we see the same sun and same moon.

When it is night in New York,
the sun shines in Dhaka,
but that doesn't matter.
Flowers that blossom here in spring
are unknown in meadows of distant Bengal—
that too doesn't matter.
There's no rainy season here—
the peasant in Bengal welcomes the new crop
with homemade sweets
while here, winter brings mountains of snow.

No one here knows Grandmother's hand-sewn quilt—
even that doesn't matter.
There's an enormous comfort knowing
we all live under this same sky.

The Hudson River freezes,
automobiles can't move.
Slowly city workers will remove the snow.
The old lady next door won't go to work—
it's too cold.
Maybe my old mother far away
will also enter her kitchen late.
Naked trees in Central Park and Ramna Park
quiver with dreams of new life and love.

Fog hangs on the horizon—
suddenly New York, Broadway, Times Square
look dimly like Dhaka, Buriganga, and Laxmi Bazaar.

We all live under this same sky.

(translated by Bhabani Sengupta with Naomi Shihab Nye)

THIRD READING – JACK
from Chet Raymo, an astrophysicist

I lie on my back and the light of 10,000 stars enters my eyes. Ten thousand subtle but distinct wavelets of energy enter my eyes at slightly different angles from out of the depths of space, and by some miracle my eyes and brain sort it all out, put each star in its proper place, recognize the familiar patterns of the constellations, and open my soul to a universe whose length and breadth exceed my wildest imagining. Starlight falls upon me like a gentle rain. It blows across me like a furious wind. I am soaked and shaken.

I have a friend who speaks of knowledge as an island in a sea of mystery. Let this then, be the ground of my faith: All that we know, now and forever, all scientific knowledge that we have of this world, or ever will have, is as an island in the sea. And still the mystery surrounds us.

MUSIC Beautiful Star (traditional) **Carol Caouette**
Beautiful star Beautiful star, bright morning star
Beautiful star, my Lord Star in the East
Although you see me going on
Oh watch the stars, see how they run
I have my trials here below, see how they run
Oh watch the stars, see how they run (2x)
The stars come down at the setting of the sun
Oh watch the stars, see how they run...

SERMON **Imagine** **(Victoria)**

In half the world it's dark right now, and scientists are sleeping, their lab coats hanging up on plastic hooks, the lenses of their tired microscopes peering down at nothing in the dark. At least I hope that they're asleep – rest is what I wish for them, rest for their brilliant minds, restoration for their dedicated bodies. In other places they are waking up, or maybe they've been up for hours, even though it's Sunday. In libraries, laboratories, research centers, cubicles, they are on the case, as they have been all year, all of 2020, all around the world, people working day

and night to make vaccines for us, to test vaccines for us, for everyone, for every single person on the planet. Scientists are up already, or maybe they were up all night, or maybe they just finally dropped exhausted into bed, after working round the clock, around the world, to make it safe, to make it work, to develop the special Antarctic cooling units some vaccines will need, and all the little kits (syringes, patches, vials); while others elsewhere are trying to develop better, cheaper, more effective ppe for those who need it most, while others are working also, not on drugs that can prevent disease but medicines to heal us if we do get sick, to save thousands and thousands of lives, beloved lives of people with Covid 19. Others still are mapping in their minds production on a massive scale, transportation, distribution, packaging and timing. For some of these people, I'm sure, it's just a job, just what they do for a living, a really hard, important job; and others, maybe, have some sense that the work they're doing now is part of something extraordinary, meaningful, magnificent, like the building of the great cathedrals, the work of thousands of hands – only that took centuries. This work is something that would look from outer space, if you had that big perspective, like the work of honey bees – which to me seems so miraculous, the way they work together, constructing geometrically perfect hives filled with honey made from flowers and clover and ragweed, or a colony of ants (the orchestrated complexity of common cause and mutual aid in their micro-civilizations). The magnificent, decentralized but synchronized work of our scientists right now is like a V of geese or swans, slicing through the winter sky, dedicated to moving in the same direction, trumpeting, their bodies and their whole being attuned to music larger than themselves, larger, older and more beautiful than any single one. When I think of these scientists all around the world right now, I think humans maybe could be almost as amazing as all the rest of nature, all the other brilliant animals. And I'm thinking this morning about gratitude, as the promise of a vaccine here seems every day more feasible. I think of gratitude, and think, again, as I have many times this year, that the very least, that I can do, to signal my respect and awe and thanks, is wear a mask. It's not political for me, my layperson's devotion to science; it's religious.

Unitarian Universalism comes from a long tradition of people who called the quest for truth a sacrament. We come from ancestors persecuted, martyred, tortured for fomenting revolutions – not loudly, necessarily, sometimes not even very publicly, but revolutions of imagination, invention, possibility: quietly, steadily, studiously, rigorously overthrowing entire empires of calcified belief; people faithful not to faith alone, but evidence. We come from a tradition that holds wonder to be a revolutionary spiritual discipline and scientific method sacred practice. I think of Darwin, for so many years reluctant to publish what he'd written, what he knew, what he worked so hard to disprove once he'd glimpsed it (which is the essence of the scientific method, that commitment to shredding your own beloved theory when new and sounder truth comes clear). Darwin kept quiet for a long time, put his manuscript in a drawer, pondered in his heart, because he knew the implications of what he'd dared imagine and then proven, and he wasn't quite ready to topple two thousand years of church doctrine, wasn't quite ready to blow up the whole world, start a revolution. And then he did, because he couldn't not.

Maria Papova is a writer and curator, and a biographer of scientists and artists particularly women scientists and artists, many of whom were early Unitarians.

She writes: “At watershed moments of upheaval and transformation, we anticipate with terror the absence of the familiar parts of life and of ourselves that are being washed away by the current of change. But we fail to envision the unfamiliar gladness and gratifications the new tide would bring, the unfathomed presences, for our imaginations are bounded by our experience. The unknown awakens in us a reptilian dread that plays out with the same ferocity on scales personal, societal, and civilizational, whether triggered by a new life-chapter or a new political regime or a new world order. It is the same dread to which the Inquisition gave shape and sinew in punishing all who dared to consider that the universe might be far vaster and more mysterious than the consolations of mythology had preached for millennia. To be a revolutionary is to be in possession of an imagination capable of leaping across the frontier of the familiar to envision a new order in which what is gained eclipses the ill-serving comforts of what is lost.”

Some years ago, I was here at church at night, around this time of year. It was late November, and there had been that night a congregational meeting to vote on some big decision. I actually think it was two big things: the decision to build the sanctuary or to start fundraising, or hire an architect, some big step, and also that same night, a vote formally to oppose President Bush’s war against Iraq, a rare kind of vote here. Both votes passed, beautifully, and both were major milestones. Upheaval, I a good way- little local revolutions of imagination. People lingered to talk about it and then they left, and I was just leaving when someone called, one of you and said, “Go outside, right now, to the parking lot, face north and look up. Just do it. Turn out the lights when you go.” Strange counsel, but from a trusted person – so I did that, and that night, right here, for the first time in my life, I saw the northern lights. I had only barely even heard of the northern lights before moving here; I’m pretty sure I didn’t think they were real, but maybe some kind of Scandinavian legend – but *it was real*. I looked up and almost fell down in amazement. I lay down in the driveway – it was a dirt gravel driveway then, no lights in the parking lot. I briefly hoped no one would pull in and run me over, and then I fell into the sky. As Alan Lightman said in Jack’s reading:

“I fell into infinity. My body disappeared. I felt an overwhelming connection to the stars, as if I were part of them. And the vast expanse of time –from the far-distant past long before I was born to the far distant future long after I will die – compressed to a dot. I felt a merging with the cosmos, a grand and eternal unity, a hint of something absolute. I have no idea how long I’d been lying there looking up.”

The next day people sent emails joking that it must have been an omen: the Gods and Goddesses were pleased with our excellent votes on the building project and the war. God, at last, is smiling down a benediction on the Unitarian church.

And of course that was a joke, and of course I spent many hours looking up the aurora borealis and solar winds, magnetic fields, protons and electrons. It was still a mystical experience the more I learned, but not a superstitious one, and I wondered then, and always have, how strange it is that people living side by side in a country, in a town, on a planet, can believe such different things about the same thing – because there are surely people all around who do believe that God sends signs directly, sends rain and northern lights to reward us, and thunderbolts and

plagues to punish us, or just to prove God's terrifying power. What makes a person one way, not another, about how the world is wired? You'd think this question would have been settled centuries ago, as our hive mind advanced, our ant-colony of learning expanded – but it wasn't, and it's still not, obviously. It flares up in certain moments, like the one we're in, disturbingly. 42% of people in America, says Alan Lightman, "believe in the constancy of species, that humans were created in their present form in the first days of the planet."

How can that be? It's about education and environment. I think it's also maybe about fear in humans, ancient fear, of mystery: science loves certainty and facts far less than it loves questions. Knowledge, says Chet Raymo, astrophysicist, is an island in a sea of mystery. "All that we know, now and forever, all scientific knowledge that we have of this world, or ever will have, is as an island in the sea. And still the mystery surrounds us."

In May, already filled with gratitude and awe, I wrote a prayer. It was just after I'd read that lab technicians and public health workers in several states were receiving death threats as they tracked the spreading virus and begged us to wear masks:

For the global community of scientists:

In Sunday school we learned it all was made in seven days,
light from the luminous darkness, heaven and earth, the animals,
and not so long ago, they said - miracle on miracle.

But then on Monday morning,
Mrs. Warner took the whole first grade to the city on a school bus,
where in the Hall of Dinosaurs (pterodactyl flying, T Rex floor to ceiling),
I heard a different gospel
and looking up, so small,
I was converted there,
in that marble cathedral on Central Park West.

In second grade they took us to the Hayden Planetarium,
darkness, infinite, eternal,
and looking up,
I made my first communion,
drinking mystery and wonder.

Look up, look out, look all around, look deep into the data,
particle, planet, atoms and stars.
This is a practice of prayer, seeking and beseeching,
the catechism of questions, the echo of sermons in stones.
Inside the covers of my bible I taped the Periodic Table
beside the pastel painting of Moses with the tablets on Mt. Sinai-
a place for everything, and everything in place,

while the great earth spun me round.

In Sunday School I learned the language of lament and praise,
still useful, every day.

I learned we are a little lower than the angels.

I learned we are not God.

And from Mrs. Warner, Mrs. Hogan, Mr. Dutton, Mrs. Milrad,
the saints of George Washington School and Eastview Junior High,
in biology and chemistry, geology, geometry-

I received the sacraments of science,

the holy, unwavering commandments of experiment and proof.

A novice, I learned to place my faith in questions,

the evidence of things unseen.

This religion saves me still.

Maybe it's the same for you. In my case a public education anchored in good science never shook my faith in the magic of the world, but just the opposite. Science never eclipsed my capacity for humility and wonder – just the opposite.

There is something moving to me, something tender, in the testimony of astronomers staring at the stars without their telescopes, lying on their backs, as we all have, on the grass, in the snow, in the bottom of a little boat at night, adrift in the ocean or on a northern lake, where sometimes it's so dark and it can be so still that stars are all around you, in the sky and also in the water, and you lose yourself like that, fall into infinity. There are people who can fill entire libraries with calculations and equations to parse the stars, their density and age, their composition and dimensions -but it is moving to me and maybe equally impressive when scientists speak in words as well as numbers, in poetry as well as formulae, about transcendence, mysticism, wonder. It reminds me that science is a language anyone can learn to speak. It's not a matter of belief, or destiny, but practice. The astronomer is not a shaman, but just a person who maybe as a little kid fell head over heels one night into the glimmering black bowl of sky, and they were quite never able to pull themselves out after that, but just paddled deeper and deeper into mysticism mixed with understanding.

It's moving to me to realize that everyone has probably done this, or if they're too little yet to go outside at night alone they will someday. Every human mind has traveled lightyears in imagination. There's an enormous comfort, says the poet Zia Hyder,

“... an enormous comfort in knowing
we all live under this same sky,
whether in New York or Dhaka,
we see the same sun and same moon.

When it is night in New York,

the sun shines in Dhaka,
but that doesn't matter.
There's an enormous comfort knowing
we all live under this same sky.
Fog hangs on the horizon—
suddenly New York, Broadway, Times Square
look dimly like Dhaka, Buriganga, and Laxmi Bazaar.
We all live under this same sky.”

Looking up, looking in, gazing into telescopes and microscopes, some brilliant ones among us dare to answer the silence of the stars with music and art and vaccines and medicine and cathedrals and bridges and Zoom technology to hold us together even when we're not.

Imagination is always revolutionary. You have to let go of what is in order to welcome what could possibly, potentially, come, and that's a fearsome upending. People won't always thank you for it, whether your claim is that the flat, reliable land is actually a spinning ball hurtling through space and time, or whether your claim is wilder still: that love is contagious and greater than fear; that hope is a muscle that builds when we flex it; that light will return in the dead of winter if we call it back with candles and stories and songs.

Imagine: on a winter night not long from now, you will have a flash of genius. You'll put down your phone, switch off the TV and the looping playlist of holiday anxiety, pandemic despair, and open a window, or may be step outside. It will be icy cold. You'll look up and greet your old friend, Orion, you'll take his hand and together recalculate: *What's saving your life now? What do you love? What brings you joy? What should you do? Who needs your help? And isn't it beautiful, this enfolding darkness in December in the north when we're waiting all together for the light? Out of nowhere, answers will come to you like comets, not many, but enough. Enough to give you light to go on, no matter what's ahead.*

In this darkening time,
the season of busyness and also of visible breath,
the season of jangling noise and also startling silences,
the season of the longest night and also of the light's return,
this moment of national trauma and global trouble,
may we keep open to wonder and to miracles of reason,
opening the windows of the mind, opening the spirit's door,
to all the truth and light and hope that wait for us out there.
May we keep open to each other
and to transformations, revolutions,
that we can't even yet imagine.

Amen

The hymn is People Look East, 226 in the grey hymnal.

HYMN People, Look East #226 Singing the Living Tradition
People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad: though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch, though light is dim; one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

CLOSING WORDS - JIM VAN OSTRAND

May peace dwell within our hearts, and understanding in our minds
May courage steel our will, and love of truth forever guide us.

FAREWELL

Friends, thank you for joining us. Watch for the Enews on Mondays and Thursdays for news about gatherings, programs and holiday services and be sure to download or print the beautiful packet of coloring pages and Orders of Service for Christmas Eve.

At 11:15 join us for Cyber Social Hour. It's actually just half an hour of easy conversation in small groups with friends old and new.

We're sending love to you today from Maple Street.
Farewell, and stay well, friends, from all of us. So be it. See to it. Amen.

POSTLUDE Noel Nouvelet (French Carol) Carol Caouette & Craig Hansen

Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons icy;
Dévotes gens, rendons à Dieu merci;
Chantons Noël pour le Roi nouvelet;
Noël nouvelet!
Noël chantons icy!

Sing we now of Christmas, Noel, sing we here!
Hear our grateful praises to the babe so dear.
Sing we Noel, the child is born, Noel!
Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!

Angels called to shepherds, "Leave your flocks at rest,
journey forth to Beth'hem, find the child so blest."

In the town they found him, Joseph, and Mary mild,
seated by the manger, watching the holy child.

Sing we Noel, the child is born, Noel!

Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!

From the eastern country came the kings afar,
bearing gifts to Bethl'hem, guided by a star.

Gold and myrrh they took there, gifts of greatest price.

There was ne'er a stable so like paradise.

Sing we Noel, the child is born, Noel!

Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!