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## Scripture Reading

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### Isaiah 60:1-6 (NRSV)

- <sup>1</sup> Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
- <sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
- <sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- <sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
- <sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
- <sup>6</sup> A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

### Matthew 2:1-12

- <sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah<sup>[c]</sup> was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:  
<sup>6</sup> '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 my people Israel.'" <sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> 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." <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped

over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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## Education

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**Adult Ed:** Jan. 3: Our artist in residence, Lynda Toews, will walk us through the artistic process in creating faith works, focusing on the Trees of the Bible. *Via Zoom.*

Jan. 10: Beginning a four-part series using Sara Wenger Shenk's presentations at the MC Canada study Conference "*Table Talk: Does the Church Still Have Legs?*" We will listen to part of her presentation each week, and then enter into dialogue on the issues that she raises. *Part 1* "Character and identity of the church". *Part 2* "In order that you may proclaim". You can preview the presentations at:

<https://www.commonword.ca/ResourceView/82/23303>

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## Bethel Announcements

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**Bethel Website Update** | As some of you have become aware, the Bethel Members page has not been functioning properly since Dec. 24. Some security issues were brought forward to our web host, and in their actions to resolve those we lost some functionality on our website. We are actively working with our web hosts to resolve the issue and update our backend systems. All this to say, there will most likely be more hiccups as we get our web host security up to date - this will include getting unsafe certificate notices until the job is complete. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these technical issues during this holiday season.

**Bethel's Live-Stream Link** now resides on the Home (main) page of our website. You do not have to enter a password. You will find the link on that page below "Loving God, each other and our neighbours". You may choose from the Previous Service or the most recent one. The Upcoming Service is there, too, and will become live on the date shown. If you have questions, please call the office.

**Coming in the New Year**, a pilot project for a *Faith Community Nurse* (Parish Nurse) at Bethel. We have a proposal - we have finances from the Legacy Fund - we have Council approval, we have a nurse and a supporting committee! *Watch for more details coming in January.* - *From the Advisory Team*

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## **Partners in Ministry**

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**Mennonite Church Canada**

**[mennonitechurch.ca](http://mennonitechurch.ca)**

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**Witness workers isolated from family back home** | As many of us in Canada celebrate Christmas distanced from family, pray for International Witness workers and their families as they celebrate, while also distanced. Several of the workers have given up scheduled trips back to Canada to see family in the last year in order to keep working in their country of ministry. Pray that we all experience God's promise of Emmanuel.

**Mennonite Church Manitoba**

**[mennochurch.mb.ca](http://mennochurch.mb.ca)**

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**The Mennonite Church Manitoba/Camps with Meaning staff** wish you a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year!

**Canadian Mennonite University**

**[cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca)**

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**Apply for Winter Term** | Full-time or part-time: [cmu.ca/apply](http://cmu.ca/apply). | Audit courses or extended education: [cmu.ca/extended](http://cmu.ca/extended). | Undergraduate courses: [cmu.ca/timetable](http://cmu.ca/timetable); Graduate courses: [cmu.ca/gradcourses](http://cmu.ca/gradcourses).

**Christmas at CMU Highlights!** Enjoy the music of the season and be drawn into the spirit of Advent with a curated selection from Christmas at CMU. Go to [www.cmu.ca/christmas](http://www.cmu.ca/christmas) for more.

**Through This Place** is a monthly e-newsletter 'inside, outside and all about CMU'. If you want to be inspired and connected more with stories from the CMU learning community, subscribe at [cmu.ca/newsletter](http://cmu.ca/newsletter).

**Westgate Mennonite Collegiate**

**[westgatemennonite.ca](http://westgatemennonite.ca)**

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**Remote Learning Classes** begin Jan. 4/21 and are scheduled to continue to Jan. 15.

**Mennonite Central Committee**

**[mccmb.ca](http://mccmb.ca)**

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**Apply for SALT** | Serve internationally in a wide variety of fields like education, agriculture, healthcare, information technology, peace and more. Serving and Learning Together (SALT) is a year-long, cross-cultural service experience for Christian young adults. Visit [mccmb.ca/SALT](http://mccmb.ca/SALT) to register and learn more.

*Solemn Stillness, Weary Streets (Voices Together #276)*

Verse 1

Solemn stillness weary streets strain to grasp the sound.  
In the quiet breathes an anthem over dark and thorny ground.  
Rocks and plains repeat the echo; splendor floods the starlit morn.  
We are wonders, blessed wonders, singing joy to the world.

Verse 2

We are shepherds in the fields, watching in the night.  
We are mortals, we are bearers, searching for a perfect light.  
Hurry, hurry! Sing the glory! Bring the gold and bitter myrrh  
of our carols: Hallelujah! Singing joy to the world.

Refrain:

Joy to the world! Joy to the world!  
Wonders, singing joy to the world.

Verse 3

Crushing fears are met with joy; sorrow's curse is torn.  
Hear the music, fling your load down, and unbend your tired form.  
These bright hours circle round us, let the gentle wings unfurl.  
Swift and sweetly down the roadside, singing joy to the world.

Refrain

Joy to the world! Joy to the world!  
Swift and sweetly joy to the world.