

Applewood United Church
an Affirming Congregation
Sunday, January 4, 2026
Epiphany with Communion
(*please stand in body or in spirit)
Bold words are for all to share

Music for Gathering

Territorial Acknowledgement and Announcements

We understand that the land on which we live, work and worship is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The territory is mutually covered by the "Dish with One Spoon" Wampum Belt agreement. In the spirit of reconciliation, we commit to building relationships with all created beings, those who were here before, those who have settled, and those who continue to settle on this land. We commit to partnering with our Indigenous neighbours in being stewards and caretakers of God's Creation. Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we seek to live as reconciled people through our respect for, and our learning and understanding of, our Indigenous siblings.

Centering Music: "Bathe Me in Your Light" MV 82 verse 1

* Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: (*responsive*)

One: The Light of God's love beckons to us -

All: it draws us together in this time and place.

One: The Light of God can be seen in the stars,

All: it can be followed to places of revelation and renewal.

One: The Light of God is here -

All: in hearts and minds and spirits that recognize it.

One: The Light us God call us to worship.

All: Let us follow the light, always.

One: We pray together:

**All: Eternal God, radiant with love,
throughout time you have given your people
the light of hope, the light of forgiveness,
the light of new and everlasting life.
Help us to shine with your Word,
hope for the world.
Help us to gleam within your community,
lead us to glimmer with peace and justice**

**for the sake of your world.
We pray in the name of your shining One,
Jesus Christ. Amen**

* Opening Hymn: "As with Gladness Men of Old" VU 81

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation:

"Fresh is the Morning" *by Roddy Hamilton, Spill the Beans*

Musical response: "God of the Bible" MV 28 Verse 1 and refrain

Scripture readings:

Isaiah 60:1-6 *The Inclusive Bible*

Matthew 2:1-12

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: "From a Distant Home"

Reflection: Following Stars

Hymn: "Will You Come and See the Light" VU 96

Invitation to the Offering

Offering of Music: "Guiding Star" (K. Lee Scott)

* **Hymn of Dedication:** "Behold, Behold" MV 115

* Offering Prayer (*together*)

**All: Loving God,
just as Magi approached the child Jesus,
we, too, follow a star of hope,
we, too, come with awe and wonder,
we, too, bring gifts -
ourselves, our time, and our commitment.
Send us home a different way,
changed by coming here.
Amen**

Sacrament of Communion

One: The Spirit of God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Turn to God, the source of life.

All: We lift our hearts in prayer.

One: Let us give thanks.

All: We offer joyful thanks to God.

One: Blessed are you, gracious God,
Creator of light, Giver of all life, Source of love.
At your word creation dawns.

Two: Under your rainbow the floods recede.
With a burning bush you hallow the earth.
By a pillar of fire you guide your people.
We praise you that you do not abandon us.

One: You place a child in Mary's womb
and a star in the eastern sky.
You send Jesus to be a light to all the nations.

Two: He brings sight to the blind and healing to the sick,
hope to the despairing and justice to the oppressed.
And yet we reject him, betray him, crucify him.

One: But you, O God, bring forth light
raising him from the grave,
the first born of your new creation.
Therefore we join with all creation,
and all the heavenly hosts
who dwell in light inaccessible, to sing:

All: (sung) MV 203

One: In his last hours among us, Jesus and his friends
gathered together in an upper room.

Two: During supper, he took some bread, saying:
"Blessed is the Holy One of Israel,

Sovereign of all that is,
who brings forth bread from the earth.”

One: After the blessing, he broke the bread
and gave it to the disciples and said:
“Take this and eat it,
this is my body.”

All: Blessed is the Holy One of Israel.

Two: At the end of the meal,
he took the cup, saying:
“Blessed is the Holy One of Israel,
Sovereign of all that is,
who creates the fruit of the vine.”

One: Having offered thanks, Jesus gave the cup to them and said, “Drink from it, all of you,
this is my blood of the new covenant,
shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

All: Blessed is the Holy One of Israel.

Two: Remembering your boundless love for us in Jesus Christ,
we offer you our praise,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: (sung) MV 204

One: Accept, we pray, these gifts of bread and wine.

**All: Accept both gifts and givers,
and all our longings for peace and safety.**

One: Let the bread we break
become nourishment and strength for our spirits,
the cup we share
become joy and peace for our souls
in this Feast of New Life.

Two: At this time, we also remember all those

with whom you would have us share your feast.
We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .
all who are ill or alone . . .
all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .
all whom the world counts as last and least . . .
We pray for your church and its varied ministries . . .
for the nations as they strive for peace and justice . . .
for the earth, and the fragile web of life we share . . .
for our families and friends . . .

The Lord's Prayer (*Sung*) VU 960

One: Praise be to God, the Source of love!

All: Praise be to Christ, Love incarnate!

Two: Praise be to the Spirit, Love's power!

All: Praise be to God!

Breaking the Bread and Filling the Cup

(please come forward to receive the elements – you may wish to respond to the words “Jesus Christ the True Vine” and “Jesus Christ the Bread of Life” with the words “amen” or “thanks be to God” If you are worshiping with us on ZOOM, now would be the time to consume your bread and juice.

Prayer after Communion

**All: Holy, wise and loving God,
you provide illumination to the world.
Light our hearts so that we, like the wise ones,
may be led to experience your presence.
May we leave this table so filled with your
radiance that we may become beacons of your
love and hope to the world.
Amen.**

* Closing Hymn: “I Am the Light of the World” VU 87

* Commissioning/Benediction

* Sung Amen: "Grand Amen" TLUS 15

Music for Scattering