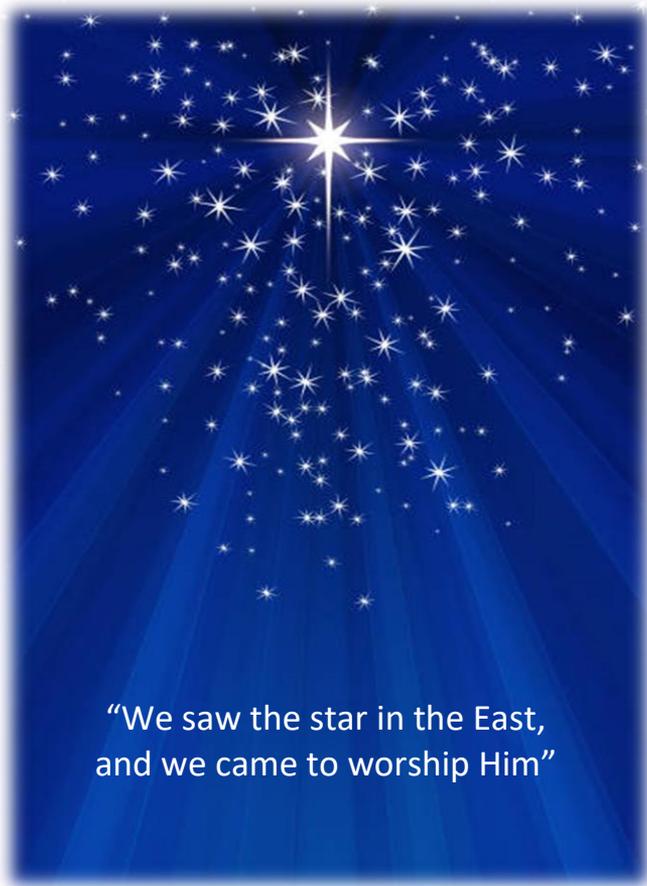


The Cathedral Church of All Saints

Halifax, Nova Scotia



*“We saw the star in the East,
and we came to worship Him”*

*The Week of Prayer
for Christian Unity*

January 17, 2022

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Order of Service ~ Day 1

“We observed his star in the East” (Mt 2:2)
Raise us up and draw us to your perfect light

Prelude Music

Welcome ~ Territorial Acknowledgement

Although we have come together in person and in digital space, we each stand on ground that is the ancestral territory of peoples who were here long before the European settlers crossed the ocean. We gather here in and from the Cathedral Church of All Saints in Halifax, Nova Scotia; located on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Call to Worship

L In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

L Brothers and sisters, we are united today with fellow believers in the four corners of the world as we gather to pray for the visible unity of the Church. We do this with worship resources prepared by the Middle East Council of Churches. Our texts are inspired by the visit of the Magi to the new-born King, as described in the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: “*We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him.*” Let us fix our eyes on the star that was seen in the East and allow it to lead us too.

Let us come into God’s presence with thanksgiving and joy, bringing all the sick, the suffering, the

marginalized, the refugees, and the uprooted before him, knowing that God can dispel our darkness with his light. As we pray today for the unity of the Church, may we and our communities also be lights that guide others to Jesus the Saviour.

- L Glory be to you, Father Almighty, for you have revealed yourself through your creation and invited all people to stand in your presence. We have seen the star of Jesus in our lives and have come to worship him just as the Magi did. We offer him ourselves today and we ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit among us.
- C Unite us with one another as we come from the North and from the South, from the East and from the West, old and young, men and women to bow down before you and offer you homage, our heavenly King. Amen.**

Hymn: *O Worship the King*

O worship the King all-glorious above,
O gratefully sing his power and his love:
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

O tell of his might and sing of his grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.

Your bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in you do we trust, nor find you to fail.

Your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!

O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,
whom angels delight to worship above!
Your ransomed creation, with glory ablaze,
in true adoration shall sing to your praise!

Prayer of Praise and Confession

L We glorify you, O Lord, creator of heaven and earth,
for you have set the lights in the vault of the sky. You
separated light from darkness and arranged signs to
mark sacred times, and days and years. You studded
the firmament with stars. How majestic are your
works, the heavens declare your glory and the skies
proclaim the work of your hands!

C We glorify you, O Lord.

L We praise you for you did not abandon us despite our
rebellion but sent your Son to brighten our darkness
and be our light and our salvation. In him was life, and
that life was the light of all humanity. And the light
shines in the darkness.

C We praise you, O Lord.

L We worship you, O Lord, for you accompany us in the
chaos of our life through the power of your Holy
Spirit. You light up our paths and give us wisdom and
faith in a world of untruth and doubt.

C We worship you, O Lord.

L We thank you, O Lord, for you send us into the world
to reflect this light around us, in our various churches
and diverse cultures, and to witness to Jesus, the one
true King, offering ourselves to him.

C We thank you, O Lord.

L May all the peoples bow before you and worship you. We have often preferred darkness, but you have given us light. Therefore, we come to you confessing our sins and saying:

C We confess before you that we have turned away from your ways and disobeyed your ordinances. We have disfigured your good creation and squandered its resources through our consumerist practices. We have polluted your rivers and seas and poisoned your air and soil and contributed to the extinction of many species.

Silence

C We have acted selfishly towards our brothers and sisters. We have allowed our own needs and desires to prevail over our commitment to justice. We have built walls between us and planted the seeds of distrust towards the other.

Silence

C We have separated people based on ethnicity, religion and gender and we have claimed Jesus on our side in any war we waged. Forgive all these thoughts and deeds, O Lord, as we come before you in repentance.

Silence

L Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you have sent in the fullness of time to redeem all the people, we ask you to have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and transform us into his glorious image so we can shine as a beacon of hope in our troubled world.

Silence

- L Almighty God hears our prayers, has mercy on us and forgives our sins.
- C Thanks be to God, whom we praise with all our voices.**

Chant *Trisagion*

Holy God!

Holy Mighty!

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!

Psalm 139: 1-10 (*responsively*)

- L O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
- C You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.**
- L You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
- C Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.**
- L You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
- C Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.**
- L Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
- C If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**
- L If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
- C even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.**

First Reading Zechariah 4:1-7

Second Reading *2 Timothy 1: 7-10*

Gospel Reading *John 16:7-14*

Sermon *The Rt. Rev. Sandra Fyfe*

Moment of silence

Nicene Creed

(according to the tradition of the Eastern Churches)

C **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit
the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and
the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father,**

who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sharing Christ's Light

A piece of dark blue cloth is hung to evoke the night sky, on which a large star is placed.

L A star led the Magi to Christ. Today this star points to the presence of Christ, who has been revealed to us and whose light shines on us. As the Magi followed the star to Bethlehem, we gather under this star today, adding our own stars to the sky, uniting our own gifts and prayers for the visible unity of Church. As we journey towards that goal, may our lives together give a luminous witness that leads others to know Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

L With faith and confidence, we come in prayer, before God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

R The Magi came from the East to pay homage and offer special gifts from their cultures and countries. We pray today for all Christian communities around the world in all of their diversity of worship and tradition:

Lord, we ask you to preserve these treasures, particularly in areas of the world where the presence and survival of Christians is threatened by violence and oppression.

C O Lord, hear our prayer

R The early years of the Lord's life were marked by violence and massacres at the orders of the despot Herod.

We pray for children living in places in the world where violence continues and where its results are tangible: Strengthen, O Lord, the bonds of unity and mutual love among our churches and help us to cooperate and witness to your holy Name. Inspire us to work without ceasing in order to defend the oppressed and include the marginalized. Encourage us to stand together in the face of tyranny and oppressive regimes as we seek your Kingdom among us.

O, Lord, hear our prayer

R After the visit of the Magi, the Holy Family experienced migration through the wilderness and became refugees in the land of Egypt.

We pray for all the refugees and uprooted people in this world:

Equip us, Lord, to show hospitality to those driven from their homes, and grant us the spirit of welcome to those looking for a safe haven.

C O, Lord, hear our prayer

R The birth of Jesus was good news for all, gathering people from different nations and religions in worship of the holy child.

We pray for our efforts to seek harmony and dialogue with other religions:

Lord, give us humility and patience to walk with others with respect on their journey.

C O, Lord, hear our prayer

R The Magi returned to their home by a different way.

We pray for our churches in this changing world:

Lord, help us to find new and creative ways to follow you and to witness to you so that the world may believe.

C O, Lord, hear our prayer

R When the Magi saw the holy child, they rejoiced with great joy.
Heavenly Father, fix our eyes on him so we do not lose our way. Unite us in the Lord Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and who has taught us to pray, saying:

**C Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn *God, Your Almighty Word*

God, your almighty word
Chaos and darkness heard,
And took their flight:
Hear us, we humbly pray,
And where the gospel-day
Sheds not its glorious ray,
Let there be light!

Savior, you came to give
Those who in darkness live
Healing and sight,
Health to the troubled mind,
Sight to the inward blind:
Now to all humankind

Let there be light!

Spirit of truth and love,
Life giving, holy dove,
Speed on your flight!
Move on the water's face
Bearing the lamp of grace
And, in earth's darkest place,
Let there be light!

Holy and blessed Three,
Glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might!
Boundless as ocean's tide,
Rolling in fullest pride,
Through the world, far and wide,
Let there be light!

Sending and Blessing

L Go now and live as children of light.

C For the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

L Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness.

C Let us wake from sleep and Christ will shine upon us.

L Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen. Thanks be to God.

Postlude Music

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Background of This Years Service

The international group appointed jointly by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches to prepare the texts for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was unable to meet face-to-face this year due to the current pandemic, and therefore had to work on these texts remotely.

The PCPCU had entrusted the Middle East Council of Churches based in Beirut, Lebanon, with the task of choosing the theme and preparing draft texts for the Week of Prayer 2022. They chose the theme, “We have seen his star in the East and have come to pay homage to him” (Mt 2:2). More than ever, in these difficult times, we need a light that shines in the darkness and that light, Christians proclaim, has been manifested in Jesus Christ.

In a region of the world where human rights are habitually trampled underfoot by unjust political and economic interests, in the face of an unprecedented international health crisis and bearing the human and material consequences of the serious explosion that devastated Beirut on August 4, 2020, the local ecumenical group nevertheless made every effort to present the results of its work by participating in the online meetings. We thank them wholeheartedly and pray that greater unity among Christians in the Middle East and around the world may contribute to a more dignified, just and peaceful life for all men and women in our time and in the times to come.

