

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 4th, 2026**

Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
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"Arise, Shine ... A New Year Has Come!"

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God,
We bring these gifts, just as the Magi brought theirs.
Use them, and use us, to shine your light
in this community and in the world. Amen.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

VIDEO: Winter Star – Johnny Reid

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Arise, shine! Your light has come!

All: The glory of the Lord has risen upon us!

One: Like the Magi, we come seeking Christ.

All: We bring the gifts of our hearts to worship.

One: In this new year, God calls us forward.

All: With hope, joy, and light, we worship together!

OPENING HYMN: "We Three Kings"

1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

2

Refrain:

**O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!**

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never
over us all to reign. **[Refrain]**

3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising gladly raising,
worshipping God Most High. **[Refrain]**

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. **[Refrain]**

5 Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
sounds through the earth and skies. **[Refrain]**

OPENING PRAYER

God of Light and New Beginnings, You led the Magi with a star,
guiding them to the Christ child. Lead us, too, as we enter this new year,
guide us with your light, fill us with your love, and open our eyes to
your presence in our everyday lives. We bring our joys, our burdens, our
hopes and we place them in your hands. Shine in our worship today.
Shine in our lives every day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ANTHEM

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDREN'S VIDEO

LITANY FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE NEW YEAR

Leader: A new year dawns, bright with possibility, wrapped in grace!

People: We step into it with hope, humour, and hearts wide open!

Leader: Last year had its bumps and blessings alike.

People: We thank God for carrying us through every twist and turn!

Leader: Some resolutions may already be wobbling...

People: But God's mercy is stronger than our willpower!

Leader: We greet this day with gratitude ... for laughter, for love, for coffee strong and faith stronger.

People: For community, for courage, for the Spirit that makes all things new!

Leader: When plans change, may we bend without breaking.

People: When joy comes, may we share it freely!

Leader: This year, may our prayers be bold, our kindness contagious, our hope unshakable.

People: Together, we walk into the new year, beloved, blessed, and full of joy.

All: Amen, and Happy New Year!

CHORUS: #285 Surely The Presence Of The Lord Is In This Place

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place,

I can feel His mighty power and His grace.

I can hear the brush of angel's wings, I see glory on each face;

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place. **2x**

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Isaiah 60:1-3

The Glory of Zion

60 "Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

² See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,

but the LORD rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.

³ Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi Visit the Messiah

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^[a] from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.'^[b]"

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

MESSAGE: "A New Beginning ... Following the Star"

New Years always come wrapped in words like fresh start, resolutions, plans, dreams. We write lists, set goals, clear calendars, and tell ourselves: "This year will be different."

And then ... somewhere between mid-January and reality, life happens. Habits creep back. Plans shift. Resolutions fade.

But Scripture shows us that God's new beginnings don't depend on our perfection, they depend on our willingness to follow.

And so, we meet the Magi. They weren't part of Israel. They weren't prophets or priests. They were scientists, scholars, travelers, seekers.

They saw a light in the sky...and they chose to move.
They did not know exactly where God was leading. They did not have a map. They had only a star, and a sense that God was doing something new.

A new king. A new story. A new hope entering the world. They were intrigued, and they followed...

Put it this way, new beginnings often start with a nudge, not a blueprint. The Magi were not told, "Go to Bethlehem, third house on the left, ask for Mary."

They were simply guided:

"Look toward the light. Keep going."

Sometimes we hesitate to begin new things because we want certainty first:

- "What if I fail?"
- "What if I don't know enough?"
- "What if I'm not ready?"

But God's invitations often sound more like:

"Take one step. Trust Me for the next one."

New beginnings rarely arrive all wrapped and labeled. They unfold as we move toward God.

And when the Magi finally arrived, they didn't just admire the baby, they opened their treasures.

Each gift tells us something about Jesus...

and about what *we* might offer as this new year begins.

Gold honored Jesus as King.

It reminds us that faith is more than a Sunday activity, it shapes our choices, priorities, and relationships. A new year invites us to ask:

Where might Jesus need to be first again in my life?

Frankincense symbolized prayer and worship.

In a noisy world, God invites us to pause, breathe, and remember His presence in our ordinary days. Even small moments of prayer can re-center our hearts.

Myrrh pointed toward the suffering Jesus would one day face.

It tells us that God does not avoid our struggles, God enters them.

Whatever this year holds, we are not alone. Christ walks with us through both joy and sorrow.

And then the Magi went home "by another road"

After meeting Jesus, they could not return the same way.

Herod's darkness still lurked, but they had encountered Light.

When Christ becomes real, even familiar roads change.

Maybe this year God is nudging us to go by another road:

- another way of responding to conflict,
- another way of giving,
- another way of seeing those on the margins,
- another way of trusting instead of worrying.

New beginnings are rarely about adding more tasks.

They are often about learning to walk differently in life, more graciously, more courageously, more lovingly.

But what Jesus most desires is not wrapped in gold or paper.

He desires hearts that say: "Here I am, Lord, use me."

In a world hungry for hope, we become gifts when we:

- speak kindness,
- practice forgiveness,
- support the lonely,
- give generously,
- listen deeply,
- carry Christ's light into ordinary places.

The Magi did not just *see* the star ... they followed it.

They didn't just admire the child ... they worshipped Him.

And then they quietly returned to their lives, changed... lighter...

carriers of a story that would shape the world. As we step into this new year: May we look for God's star, even if it appears faint at first.

May we trust God enough to take the next step, even if we don't yet see the whole road. May we offer our own gifts. Our time, compassion, talents, prayers, generosity. And like the Magi, may we meet Christ in the unexpected place...and go forward, by another road, with renewed hope, ready for God's new beginning.

Amen.

HYMN: #91 The First Nowell

- 1 The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay akeeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

- 2 They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. R
- 3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. R
- 4 This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay. R
- 5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. R
- 6 Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. R

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Loving God, You have brought us through another year.
We thank you for the light you shine into our lives,
especially when the way is uncertain or hard.
We pray for those in need of hope today:
for those who are sick, grieving, lonely, or afraid.
We pray for peace in our world,
and for justice in places of suffering.
Like the Wise Ones, may we keep searching for You.
May we be bearers of your light in all we do.
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: #96 Will You Come and See the Light

- 1 Will you come and see the light from the stable door?
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.
It will be your guiding star,
it will show you who you are;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 2 Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed
there's a longing to be freed;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 3 Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised,
and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 4 Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?
When the lowest and the least
are the foremost at the feast,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 5 Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about
is too dim to put it out:
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

SENDING FORTH

One: As the Wise Ones returned home by a new road,

All: We too begin a new path with God.

One: Go with joy. Go with courage.

All: Go in the light of Christ!

One: God's light goes before you and within you —

All: And the journey begins.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Announcements

Tuesday, January 6th: Coffee time at Springvale beginning at 9:30am.
All are welcome!

Wednesday, January 14th: Hagersville Church Council meeting at 6:30pm

Friday, January 16th: Chili Lunch at Hagersville from 11am-12:30pm.
Variety of chili's available. \$10/person. Takeout only. For pre-order please call 905-768-3729 by Jan. 15th @ 6pm.

Sunday, January 25th: All committee reports due to the office for Annual Reports.

Sunday, February 15th: Peggy will be away, there will be someone filling in at each church.

Tuesday, February 17th: Pancake Supper at Hagersville from 4:30pm-6:30pm. More details to follow.

Sunday, February 22nd:
Hagersville Annual Meeting immediately following short worship service.

Sunday, March 1st: Springvale Annual Meeting immediately following worship service.
Someone will fill for the Hagersville service while Peggy attends the meeting at Springvale.

Please bring paper products for the Hagersville Food Bank

