

## *The Advent of Our King*



We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Cover art: former member, Aiden Malecky (1996)

*Old Orchard Church*

*Fourth Sunday in Advent*

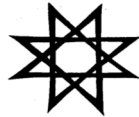
*December 20, 2009—10:15 to 11:45 a.m.*

## *Celebrating Messiah Jesus: the Bright Morning Star*

Blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ  
who came among us as a man,  
A Light from heaven itself:  
The promised Star, rising out of Jacob,  
To give us hope in the encircling darkness.

The Holy and Awesome One,  
The everlasting Ancient of Days,  
The Unfathomable One who cannot be seen  
In the unapproachable light he dwells in,  
In the thick darkness that surrounds him,  
Became one of us—a baby.

Sing his praise, the long-awaited Messiah,  
For he shows the Infinite God to be tenderness and love.  
Adore him, in joy, the Morning Star of the world!  
For the night of our lostness will soon be over.



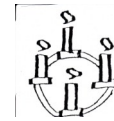
### *Special Children's Worship*

#### *Scripture Readings*

Gospel Lesson: Luke 1:67-69

New Testament Reading: Revelation 22:7, 12, 13, 16, 20

## *Light For Seeing What's Really There*



Today, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent, when we “peek” into Christmas for the sake of some of our children who will be away on Christmas Day when we break out our full joy in the singing of the old Christmas carols, we are celebrating Jesus Christ as the bright Morning Star, as Light—the spiritual light that fallen humanity needs in order to “see” rightly and comprehend what exists: God himself, ourselves, the world around us, the past, and especially the future. The fall into sin in Eden led to our being cast out of the light of God’s presence. Groping around in spiritual darkness, we were—and still are—inclined to distort and misinterpret everything. God kept coming to his people, shining on them for centuries the lesser light of laws and prophets and sages, knowing full well that when time was ripe, he would send his Son to us, the Great Light who alone could bring our race out of the night shadows into the clear morning light of Truth.

Today, we contemplate that the infinite, unspeakably lofty God is not knowable—except through the man Jesus, born in Palestine two millennia ago. Consider these words from the opening of John’s gospel:

**No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.** (John 1:18)

As modern people we tend to think of God as our Buddy-Bud, the Great Pal in the sky whose job it is to keep us happy. But God—if he is God—is incomprehensible, infinite, terrifying in his holiness, past comprehending in the nature of his Being and in the magnitude of his exaltedness above us. Yet, he comes to us as a crying baby, a frail human being, and subjects himself to the ravages of hunger, of pain, of rejection, even of death. And in that condescension a light is shined on this hidden God, this towering Majesty who has the power to destroy us. It is disclosed—made open and visible—that his heart beats for us. And in the revealing of that love, the bright future of the world is also made known: the Coming Day when everything wrong will be righted, everything grieved will be healed and made new, and death itself will die.

You cannot know God as he truly is unless you know his Son, the God-man, Jesus, born of Mary; and without him you cannot know the good future God has planned for the world. Jesus is the Sunshine that casts a revealing light upon your Creator whom you cannot see. Come to him, now, for light; come to him day after day; come as these precious children in front of us come—disarmingly unpretentious; come in your pain, come in your doubt, come in your loneliness, come in all the high successes of your life; come in your failures, your selfishness, in your poor judgments and confusions; come to him in the numbing sameness of your daily routines. Come to him in repentance and humility, just as you are, and by his light you will see the Face of God.

—Ron Lutjens