

## Sermon Starter – Be the Sign

*Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12*

“To discover how to be truthful now  
Is the reason I follow this star ...  
To discover how to be living now  
Is the reason I follow this star ...  
To discover how to be loving now  
Is the reason I follow this star.”

—W. H. Auden (1907-1973; *For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio*)

The three Wise Men in Auden’s lengthy poetic rendition of the Christmas story each have their particular reason for following the star, and in that reason lies a rule of life, a way of being in the world. For the wise man seeking truth there is the implicit call to speak truth. For the wise man seeking to live now there is the implicit call to embrace death. For the wise man seeking to discover love there is the implicit call to serve humanity. Like them, perhaps the sign we are called to be in the world will arise from what motivates our own quest for the star.

In today’s epistle reading, Paul alludes to his own epiphany: the invitation to grace and reconciliation revealed to him on the road to Damascus. In taking up his commission from Jesus, the former Saul became a sign of “the mystery that was not [previously] made known to humankind” — that the Gentiles have become fellow heirs and sharers in the promise of Christ. Paul went on to spend his life proclaiming and living reconciliation between Jew and Gentile.

What draws us toward the Star, the Christ child? As you think about what motivates your own particular journey, what kind of sign might God be calling you to be in the world?

From Leader, Fall 2010. ©2010 MennoMedia.