

Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass

Tuesday, December 24th, 2024 ~ 11:00 PM



PORT
EDWARDS
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

The Rev. Caleb McGregor, *Pastor*

50% of tonight's offering
will go to support students with
school meal debt in the Rapids Area.

THOUGHTS FOR THE EVENING

"Never better than at Christmas to be like a child,
when its mighty Founder was also a Child." – *Charles Dickens*

"Christmas is our assurance that our loving God, Immanuel, is with us and is
continuously crashing through our darkness with light" – *Jennifer Slattery*

"For us a Child has been born; to us a Son is given.

All the earth's governments will rest upon His shoulders." – *Isaiah 9:6a*

L – Liturgist / P – People / M – Minister / † – words are on the TVs / * – stand in body or spirit

UMH – *The United Methodist Hymnal*

Please silence your mobile devices. Thank you!

(1) *The Body of Christ gathers to worship God!*

WORDS OF WELCOME

(Matthew 2:2-3)

*M: "Where is the Child who has been born to be the king
of the Jews? I saw His star that shows He was born.*

P: We saw it, too, rising in the east.

ALL: We have come to worship this Child!"

P.E.U.M.C. – *A Home for All of God's People*

*HYMN OF PRAISE: *Once in Royal David's City* UMH 250

(2) *We listen to what God is saying to us!*

GATHERING PRAYER

THE STORY BEGINS: *An Introduction*

First Gift:

Sin Enters the World

Genesis 3:8-19

First Carol:

Open Wide Your Heavens

**#1: Open wide Your heavens! Let Your name be known!
So the world will know, Lord, we are not alone.
You who once did awesome deeds –
show Your presence here!
Open wide Your heavens! Let us know You're near.**

**#2: Carried by our culture, we seek more & more;
as we long to prosper, we forget the poor.
As we yearn for earthly things, we forget Your name.
Open wide Your heavens! Make us whole again.**

**#3: Lord, You are the Potter; we are simply clay.
Take the lives we offer; mold us more each day.
At this holy Christmastime, show us all anew:
You reach out and bless us, when we wait for You.**

Second Gift: *God Covenants With Us* Genesis 22:15-18
Exodus 19:1-8
2 Samuel 7:11-16

Second Carol: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* UMH 211
(verses 1 & 7)

Third Gift: *God Promises to Take Care of Things* Isaiah 9:2-7
Third Carol: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* UMH 230
(verses 1 & 3)

Fourth Gift: *Mary & Joseph* Luke 1:26-35, 38
Matthew 1:18-24

*Fourth Carol: *A Christmas Hallelujah*

**#1: I heard about this Baby Boy,
who's come to earth to bring us joy.
And I just want to sing this song with You.
It goes like this: the fourth, the fifth,
the minor fall, and the major lift,
with ev'ry breath I'm singing 'Hallelujah!'**

Chorus: Hallelujah! (4x)

**#2: A couple came to Bethlehem,
expecting child, they searched the inn,
to find a place for You were coming soon.
There was no room for them to stay,
so in a manger filled with hay,
God's only Son was born, O Hallelujah!**

(chorus)

**#3: The shepherds left their flocks by night,
to see this Baby wrapped in light,
a host of angels led them all to You.
It was just as the angels said,
"You'll find Him in a manger bed;
*Immanuel & Savior, Hallelujah!"***

(chorus, repeat 2x)

Fifth Gift: *Incarnation of God* Luke 2:1-7

†*Fifth Carol: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!* UMH 224

(verses 1 & 2)

Sixth Gift: *Angels Tell the Lowly Shepherds* Luke 2:8-20

†Sixth Carol: *Angels We Have Heard on High* UMH 238

(verses 1 & 2)

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

Confession

**ALL: Lord of Christmas Peace, we have done wrong.
We have tarnished the gifts You give freely,
burying You so deeply, the world doesn't see You.
We have not followed Christ,
we have ignored Your teachings,
we have lived lives of apathy against Your love,
we have built fences to push people away,
and we have silenced the cries of those in need.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us from our sin, our captivity,
and unto a life lived in joy and justice
through Jesus Christ our Lord: AMEN!**

[pray & reflect in silence]

Assurance

M: In Christ,

*the Light, the Word, the Glory of God's love shines in our hearts,
and we are a forgiven people,*

given strength to go forward into a new future.

In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, you are forgiven!

**P: In the name of Jesus, God-With-Us,
you are forgiven!**

ALL: Glory to God! AMEN!

*The Peace of Christ

The Great Thanksgiving

M: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

M: Lift up Your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*(The pastor continues giving thanks
by remember the Story of God's good work with us in this world.)*

M: . . . And so,
with Your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

**ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

(The pastor continues giving thanks by recalling Salvation History.)

M: . . . And so,
In remembrance of these Your mighty acts . . .
. . . as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**ALL: Christ has died! Christ is risen!
Christ will come again!**

(The Last Supper is recalled.)

M: . . . Through Your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in Your holy Church,
all honor & glory is Yours, Almighty God, now and forever:

ALL: AMEN!

The Lord's Prayer (*Ecumenical Version, adapted*)

Our Abba, in heaven, holy is Your Name!

Your kin'dom come!

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Let us not fall into temptation

and deliver us from evil.

For Yours is the kin'dom, the power,

and the glory now and forever: AMEN!

Holy Communion: Giving the Bread & Cup

ALL are invited to partake! Christ invites you!

Prayer After Communion:

ALL: God of shepherds and kings,

angels and wise ones,

for us in the darkness, a Light now shines upon us!

We are filled with joy

for we have heard Good News of great joy!

We are filled with love

for we have tasted the goodness of God's love.

We are filled with hope

for the angels still sing in our world today

and there is a Star for us to follow.

In name of the Newborn King we pray: AMEN!

†*Seventh Gift: *God Is Love, So Love One Another* 1 John 1-3

†*Seventh Carol: *O Holy Night* (see insert)

*(switch your electric candles ON during this hymn;
keep them lit through the Revelation reading)*

#1:

**O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin & error pining,
'til He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new & glorious morn.**

**Fall – on your knees!
O hear – the angel voices!
O night – divine,
O night . . . when Christ was born!
O night! O holy night!
O night Divine!**

#2:

**Truly He taught us to love one another.
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break
for the slave is our brother;
and in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy
in grateful chorus raise we,
let all within us praise His holy name!**

**Christ – is the Lord!
O praise – His Name forever!
His pow'r – and glo—ry
e—vermore proclaim!
His pow'r – and glo—ry
e—vermore proclaim!**

†*Eighth Gift: Jesus Among Us John 1:1-14

*(switch your candles OFF following this reading
and before the next hymn)*

†*Eighth Carol: Joy to the World UMH 246

*A HOLIDAY BLESSING FOR YOU

*MARCH TO THE MANGER

*You are invited to make your way forward
and place your “gift” (financial or otherwise) in the manger.*

Please drop off your candles in the bin on your way out! Thank you!



Sunday Services – 10:00 AM

December 29th

First Sunday of Christmastide

Newborn Saints Sunday

*(a celebration of those born
in the past year)*

January 12th

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Reaffirm Our Baptismal Vows

Packing of the Greens
after the service

January 5th

Epiphany Sunday

Holy Communion Sunday

Blessing of Our Homes

January 19th

Ecumenical Sunday

January 26th

Wesley's Covenant Renewal

About Tonight's Service

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols started in 1918 at King's College in Cambridge, England. During World War I, Eric Milner-White, dean of the college, was concerned that the distress of the "Great War" had hardened attitudes against religion.

Since the beginning, "Once in Royal David's City" has opened the service, followed by a bidding prayer inviting worshippers to 'go unto Bethlehem' in their imaginations and holding in prayer the many who are far from glad in their personal and shared suffering. The prayer ends by mentioning those who have passed from this mortal life; when this was first written, Milner-White had in mind all who were bereaved by the violence of war and the recent deaths of thousands of loved ones. The scripture readings have largely remained the same. They are the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is interspersed with the singing of hymns. The order and selection of hymns do vary from year to year. The service always ends with Charles Wesley's "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

The service, and its message, have a beautiful simplicity. It is a beloved tradition rooted in healing, because it was forged in the fires of war, grief, and suffering. Rather than leading with the holly-jolly razzle-dazzle that can crush a bruised spirit, this service tenderly invites the congregant into a holy stillness.

Like the very candles flickering throughout our darkened sanctuary, the hope and joy that headline much of the Christmas season shine brighter against the acknowledgement of brokenness, pain, and wait.

MY GIFT TO BABY JESUS

(write a message/draw a picture in the space below)
**(you are invited to come forward at the end of the service
to place your “Gift” in the manger)**

CONNECT TO JESUS’ FAMILY

*Let us send you a “2025 Blessing”
by email, phone, or mail!*

My name is: _____

My email / address / phone # is *(choose preferred):*

#1:

**O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin & error pining,
'til He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new & glorious morn.**

Fall – on your knees!

O hear – the angel voic—es!

O night – divine,

O night . . . when Christ was born!

O night! O ho – ly night!

O night Divine!

#2:

**Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
with glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
here came the Wise Men from Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
in all our trials born to be our Friend.**

(reverse side)

**He – knows our need!
To our weak – ness is no stranger!
Behold – your King,
before – Him lowly bend!
Behold – your King,
before – Him lowly bend!**

#3:

**Truly He taught us to love one another.
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break
for the slave is our brother;
and in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy
in grateful chorus raise we,
let all within us praise His holy name!**

**Christ – is the Lord!
O praise – His Name forever!
His pow'r – and glo—ry
e—vermore proclaim!
His pow'r – and glo—ry
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