

**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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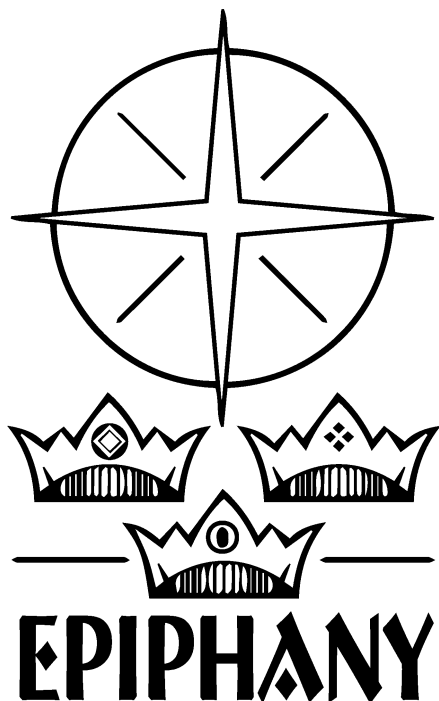
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Sunday, January 5, 2025
Second Sunday after Christmas/Epiphany
Worship Leader: Pastor Randy Koppenhaver
Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune to 101.3 FM

***= Please rise in body or spirit**

CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

Lord, when I walk in darkness :: lead me towards your Light

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #107 vs 1

"Joy to the World"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Arise, shine: for your light has come!

The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

Lift up your eyes and look around!

We shall see and be radiant; our hearts shall rejoice.

For the Lord will be our everlasting light and our glory!

And so we worship God in humble expectation.

***OPENING PRAYER**

**God of power and might, God of grace and mercy,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**You chose to become one of us in Jesus Christ,
sharing our joys and sorrows,
displaying your greatness in the child of the manger.**

**We praise you for your amazing love,
great enough to embrace the expanding universe,
yet close enough to enter our humble hearts.**

**During this time worship, surprise us with your grace once again,
that we, with the whole Church and your precious creation,
may praise and honor your holy name,**

O God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN #148 all**

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

PRAYER OF NEW LIFE AND TRANSFORMATION

**God of goodness and guidance,
In Christ you sent us light to live by,
yet we seek shadows in which to hide.**

**In him, you promise new life,
but we prefer with old habits,
nursing grievances and clinging to familiar opinions.**

**You are generous with your love,
but we reject neighbors and fear strangers who differ from us.**

**Remake us in the image of your Son with your mercy,
and teach us how to follow him in the year ahead. (moment of silent reflection)**

WORDS OF GRACE

Here is the good news of the Gospel! Jesus Christ is God's elect, chosen for our salvation. In him we find God's acceptance.

Let us give thanks to God for this gift and be at peace with ourselves and with one another. Amen

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

“Gloria in Excelsis Deo”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14

**¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.**

² May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

⁶ **May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷ In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.**

¹¹ May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.

¹² **For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.**

¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴ **From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Matthew 2:1-12 - The Visit of the Wise Men

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it

stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

SERMON

*HYMN #155

“Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies”

THE LORD’S SUPPER

(God’s table is open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. Please hold the elements until all have been served and we will partake together. All bread is gluten free. The inner circles are grape juice, the outer rings are wine.)

INVITATION

PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER OF THANKGIVING

We give thanks, loving God, that you have refreshed us at your table.

Strengthen our faith; increase our love for one another.

As we have been fed by the seed that became grain, and then became bread, may we go out into the world to plant seeds of justice, transformation, and hope. Amen.

COMMUNION RESPONSE #82 v. 1

“O Come let us Adore Him”

PRAYER CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER #403 “Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;

Lord, listen to your children praying, Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

PASTORAL PRAYER... THE LORD’S PRAYER

Petitions end with:

Our hearts kneel before you, O God; **Receive our humble prayers.**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

POST PRAYER RESPONSE #403 "Lord, Listen to your Children Praying"

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE Doxology to tune of "The First Noel"**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye, heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of majesty and mystery, we bring our gifts to you, grateful that you are with us in good times and hard times. We do not know what the year ahead will hold but your love shines like a star to guide us. Bless these gifts that they may keep the light of Christ shining through the church to offer the world truth and wisdom, healing and hope in Jesus' name. Amen.

***CLOSING SONG "Go Now in Peace"**

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.
Know he will guide you, in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.***

COMMISSIONING (Lavon Baylor)

God sends us on our way, a bold and confident people. Look up and be guided by the star of joy.

We will open our eyes to the presence of God. We will look around for God's activity all around us.

God's purposes in Christ are to be lived out by us. We are called to invite others to share in God's grace.

We will witness to all we have seen and heard. By God's power, we will minister to others.

The glory of God has risen among us. We are blessed beyond all deserving.

What we have received, we will pass on with joy. We offer to all the unsearchable riches of Christ.

POSTLUDE

**This morning's prayers and liturgies are used with permission from: ucc.org and <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Dear Members of Bethlehem: Thank you so much for the Christmas bonus and for the support of UCCI church camps in my name. As you may know if you read my ordination paper, church summer camp plays a major role in my spiritual "upbringing." Your support of our camps means a lot to me. Serving Bethlehem as your pastor is a tremendous privilege. May God bless you all in 2025! – -Pastor Randy

- Packets of 10 tickets for the 2025 Chili Supper are available in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign out for packets which you can sell. Payment is due by February 5, 2025.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Wednesday, Jan 15th @ 1:00pm. Guest speaker at St. Peters UCC to speak about missionary work in Kenya. See flyer.



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Those Grieving:

Mark Beitzel
Gary Steinhardt

Those struggling with health issues:

Gary Rabe	Julie and Addison
Will Mathes	Heidi Konen
Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets	Emily (Melissa's cousin)
Brad Westphalen	Kurt (Randy's cousin)
Jessica Horneck	Darlene Horneck
Marie Rietbrock	Mary Beth Molitor
Tom Lefeber	Dawson Horneck

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Nimmer Helen Henning

2025 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Volland (920)286-0162 or svolland44@gmail.com

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or trabefamily5@gmail.com

Elder - Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 rossw@forhealthycows.com

Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 LandKBowe@outlook.com

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 srumpff@tm.net

Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531_ randynmel5@gmail.com

Pastor Randy's Ecclesiastical Council

When: Saturday, January 11, 2025 at 1:00pm

Where: Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Following a short worship service, guests are able to ask Randy questions about his ordination paper, theology, etc. Those gathered, including Bethlehem members and clergy of ALL Northeast Association churches, will then vote on recommending Pastor Randy for ordination.

Treats and fellowship to follow!

Please mark this important day on your calendar to show Pastor Randy and his family our love and support for his caring and devotion to Bethlehem as well as the wider community.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 1/5: 8:00 Sunday School and Confirmation class; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion; Annual reports due to Traci by 5pm; *Happy Birthday Garrett Schultz!*

Monday 1/6:

Tuesday 1/7: *Happy Birthday Ty Sheets!*

Wednesday 1/8:

Thursday 1/9: 10:30am BUCC @ Field of Dreams; *Happy Birthday Jane Umland, Pat Hoban, and Mary-Beth Molitor!!*

Friday 1/10: *Happy Birthday Harrison Zorn, Rich Schmitt, and Arlyn Retlich!!*

Saturday 1/11: 1pm Randy's Ecclesiastical Council @ Bethlehem

Sunday 1/12: 8:00 Sunday School; 9:30am Worship *Happy Birthday Kamlyn Rumpff!*

**January Pantry Items:
Can of Soup**