

Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass

Wednesday, December 24th, 2025 ~ 11:00 PM



*"And He shall be called:
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace."*



**PORT
EDWARDS
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH**

The Rev. Caleb McGregor, Pastor

**50% of tonight's offering
will go to support The Family Center
in Wisconsin Rapids.**

THOUGHTS FOR THE EVENING

"Let there be Christmas lights: light in the soul, light for others, and no hostilities.

This is the beautiful light of Jesus." – *The Late Pope Francis*

"A Christmas candle is a lovely thing: it makes no noise at all, but softly and slowly gives itself away that others may shine, too." – *Eva Logue*

"Christmas is a necessity; there has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves." – *Eric Sevareid*

P – People / M – Minister / * – stand in body or spirit

Please silence your mobile devices. Thank you!

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

WORDS OF WELCOME

(Galatians 4:4-5)

*M: "When the appointed time had come,
God sent forth the Christ – birthed by a human
and confined under the law of humanity,*

**P: to liberate us, who were held captive by the law,
that we might receive our status as God's children."**

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

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

**Vs. 1: Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for His bed;
Mary, loving mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little Child.**

**Vs. 2: He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall.
With the poor, the scorned, the lowly
lived on earth our Savior Holy.**

GATHERING PRAYER

THE STORY BEGINS: *An Introduction*

First Gift: *Sin Enters the World* Zechariah 9:9-10

First Carol: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

Vs. 1:

**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.**

Vs. 2:

**Born Thy people to deliver,
born a Child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by Thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to Thy glorious throne!**

Second Gift:

Mary & Joseph

Luke 1:26-35, 38

Matthew 1:19-24

*Second Carol:

Gesù Bambino

Vs. 1:

**Like blossoms flow'ring 'midst the snow
upon a winter night,
was born the Child, the Christmas Rose,
the King of Love and Light.
The angels sang, the shepherds came,
the grateful earth rejoiced;
and at His blessed birth the stars
their exultation voiced.**

Vs. 2:

**Again, the heart with rapture glows
to greet the holy night,
that gave the world its Christmas Rose,
its King of Love and Light.
Let ev'ry voice proclaim His name,
the grateful chorus swell.
From paradise to earth He came
that we with Him might dwell.**

Chorus:

**O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord.**

Third Gift:

Incarnation of God

Luke 2:1-7

†*Third Carol:

What a Wonderful Child

Jesus! Jesus!
Oh – what a wonderful Child!
Jesus! Jesus!
So lowly – meek and mild!
New life! New hope! New joy He brings!
Won't you listen – to the angels sing?
Glory! Glory! Glo-o-ry!
To the new-born King!

Fourth Gift:

Angels Tell the Lowly Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20

†Fourth Carol:

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

UMH 240

Vs. 1:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise!
Join the triumph of the skies!
With angelic hosts proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Vs. 2:

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored;
Christ, the Everlasting Lord;
late in time behold Him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see.**

**Hail th' Incarnate Deity,
pleased with us **on earth* to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing,
*"Glory to the newborn King!"***

**or "in flesh"*

Vs. 3:

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

**Light and life to all He brings,
risen with healing in His wings.**

**Mild he lays His glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing,
*"Glory to the newborn King!"***

Confession

ALL: Lord of Christmas Peace, we have done wrong.

**We have tarnished the gifts You give freely,
burying so deeply the divine within us,
that the world doesn't see You.**

**We have not followed Christ,
we have ignored Your teachings,
we have lived lives 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!

*Sharing 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!

†*Fifth Gift: *The Hope of Eternal Life* Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-8

†*Fifth Carol: *Silent Night*

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

Vs. 1:

Silent night, holy night,

all is calm, all is bright

round yon virgin

mother and Child.

Holy Infant, so tender and mild,

sleep in heavenly peace,

sleep in heavenly peace.

Vs. 2:

**Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from Thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

Vs. 3:

**Silent night, holy night,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
“Alleluia to our King!”
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!**

†*Sixth Gift: Vision of Eternal Life on Earth Revelation 21 & 22
*(switch your candles OFF following this reading
and before the next hymn)*

†*Eighth Carol: O Come, All Ye Faithful

Vs. 1:

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!**

Chorus:

**O come let us adore Him (3x)
Christ the Lord!**

Vs. 2:

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
(chorus)**

Vs. 3:

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy evening,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
(chorus)**

*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 28th

First Sunday of Christmastide

Newborn Saints Sunday

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

January 11th

Wesley's Covenant Renewal

Packing of the Greens &

Packers -n- Potatoes

after the service

January 4th

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Holy Communion Sunday

Reaffirm Our Baptismal Vows

Blessing of Our Homes

January 18th

Guest speaker

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 worshipper 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.