

Christmas Eve - Gifts & Carols

Wednesday, December 24th, 2025 ~ 7:00 PM



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



The Rev. Caleb McGregor, Pastor
Jean & Jack M., Greeters

Rose W., Usher

Judy M., Musician

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*

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

(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* UMH 250

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

GATHERING PRAYER

THE STORY BEGINS: An *Introduction*

Season of Advent:

First Gift: Genesis 12:1-3 Candy P-T.

†First Carol: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* UMH 196

Second Gift: Isaiah 42 Karen V.

†Second Carol: *Hail to the Lord's Anointed* UMH 203
(verses 1 & 2)

Third Gift:	Zechariah 9:9-10	Jef D.
†Third Carol:	<i>Make Way, Make Way</i>	screen
Fourth Gift:	Luke 1:26-35, 38 Matthew 1:19-24	Helmut W.
†Fourth Carol:	<i>Gesù Bambino</i>	screen
<i>Christmastide:</i>		
Fifth Gift:	Luke 2:1-7	Diane S.
<i>Lighting the Christ Candle</i>		
†*Fifth Carol:	<i>What a Wonderful Child</i>	screen
Sixth Gift:	Luke 2:8-20	LuAnn S.
†Sixth Carol:	<i>Hark! the Herald Angels Sing</i> (verses 1 & 2)	UMH 240
†Seventh Gift:	Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-8	Pastor Caleb
†*Seventh Carol:	<i>Silent Night</i>	(see insert)
<i>(switch your electric candles <u>ON</u> during this hymn; keep them lit through the Revelation reading)</i>		
†*Eighth Gift:	Revelation 21 & 22	Korbin B.
<i>(switch your candles <u>OFF</u> following this reading and before the next hymn)</i>		
†*Eighth Carol:	<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i> (verses 1, 3, and 6)	UMH 234

*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 4th

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

*Holy Communion Sunday
Reaffirm Our Baptismal Vows
Blessing of Our Homes*

January 11th

Wesley's Covenant Renewal

*Packing of the Greens &
Packers -n- Potatoes*
after the service

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.