

First United Methodist Church

Welcome! We are a Congregation devoted to loving the whole city and loving the city whole!
January 4, 2026 - 10:00am - Epiphany

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Video Prelude: “We Three Kings”

Nathan Bieber, Maggie Kasinger, Catherine McMichael

Organ Prelude: “Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow”

Afro-American Spiritual; arr. Jack Jones

Welcome and Announcements – Please sign in on the Attendance pads,
or use your phone and the QR Code to the right to sign in electronically
or use this link: <https://form.jotform.com/211785166356159>.

Please fill out yellow prayer card to share joys/concerns.

* Please stand if you are able.



***Opening Hymn UMH #245:** “The First Noel”

1) The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay;
In fields where they
lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.*

2) They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
[Refrain]

3) And by the light of that same star
Three wisemen came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star
wherever it went. *[Refrain]*

4) This star drew nigh to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
And there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.
[Refrain]

5) Then entered in those Wise Men three,
full reverently upon the knee,
And offered there, in his presence,
their gold and myrrh
and frankincense. *[Refrain]*

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

***The Prayer of Confession and Pardon**

One: As we begin a new year and prepare to share together the sacrament of Holy Communion, let us confess our sins and receive the assurance of God's Pardon:

All: Gracious God, we would like to be among those who saw the coming of the Christ Child, those who dropped all that they were doing and traveled to worship the coming of God's love into this world, those who cared for God in infant vulnerability. And yet, merciful God, we must recognize all the times we are more like Herod. Whenever we, in our actions or inactions, find our own need for control more compelling than the needs of others for health and safety;

whenever we cling to the security of our privilege, rather than standing up for the rights of the oppressed; whenever we are complicit in the harming of innocents for the sake of profit, or power, or because we fear to know, and to change, the injustices of this world. Forgive us, O Lord, and free us for joyful obedience to your light.

One: Hear the good news: God's light is present in this world, for as Christ was born to lead us out of darkness, so still today, your star guides us to light and love. For light has come into the world, and the darkness could not overcome it! By the grace of the One born to save us, we are loved and forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Time of Prayer – *During the prayer chorus, ushers will collect your yellow prayer cards to deliver to the pastor.*

***Prayer Chorus UMH #204:** “*Emmanuel*”

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us; revealed in us; his name is called Emmanuel.*

Silent Meditation

Lifting our Celebrations and Concerns In Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer – 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Living Our Gratitude

♪ *You can support your church family by giving in person or online.
Enjoy the musical selection as a time to give thanks to God
for all with which you have been blessed. Thank you!
Use the QR code to the right or give online here:
<https://www.firstumcsaginaw.org/give/>*



The Offertory: “*Star Medley*” (*Twinkle Twinkle / Star Carol / We Three Kings*)

arr. Marilyn Ham

The Doxology: **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;** **UMH #94**
 Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
 Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving: Gracious Lord, whose light guides our steps, we bring these gifts in humble adoration. May they be used to spread your truth and love to all nations. As we journey into this new year, let our hearts remain focused on your presence and our hands open to your service. In the name of Christ, our guiding star, we pray. Amen.

Hymn – FWS #2094: “Carol of the Epiphany”

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| 1) I sought him dressed in finest clothes,
Where money talks and status grows;
But power and wealth he never chose:
It seemed he lived in poverty. | but no one knew his presence there:
It seemed he lived in obscurity. |
| 2) I sought him in the safest place,
Remote from crime or cheap disgrace;
But safety never knew his face:
It seemed he lived in jeopardy. | 4) Then, in the streets we heard the word
That seemed, for all the world, absurd:
That those who could no gifts afford
Were entertaining Christ the Lord. |
| 3) I sought him where the spotlights glare,
Where crowds collect and critics stare; | 5) And so, distinct from all we'd planned,
Among the poorest of the land,
We did what few might understand:
We touched God in a baby's hand. |

Children's Message – A special moment just for kids

Chorus UMH #191: “Jesus Loves Me”

Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Scripture Lesson:

Matthew 2:1-12

Pew Bible N.T. pg. 1-2

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² 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.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘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.’” ⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go; search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Response to the Word

One: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

A STAR AT ITS RISING

Pastor Amy Terhune

Special Music: *“Bethlehem Morning”*

by Morris Chapman

Kathy Jimenez, Soloist

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

One: The Lord be with you,

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise!

One: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere,
to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.
You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
In the fullness of time, you gave your only son Jesus Christ to be our Savior.
At his birth the angles sang glory to you in the highest heaven,
and peace to your people on earth.
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 He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!**

One: Holy are you, and blessed is your son, Jesus Christ,
in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation
You sent a star to guide wise men to where the Christ was born;
and in your signs and witnesses, in every age and through all the world,
You have led your people from far places to his light.
As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago,
so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said
“Take; eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”
Likewise, when the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you,
gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you drink of this, remember me.
And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Christ Jesus,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died; Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

One: Holy God, pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here.
 and on each person within reach of my voice.
 Bless our offerings of bread and juice,
 that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ;
 that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.
 By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and
 one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory,
 and we feast together at his heavenly banquet.
 Through your son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
 all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

*Those who worship with us in person this morning are invited to come forward via the center aisle,
 take a piece of bread and a dip it into the chalice and partake.
 Gluten free wafers are available for those who need them. Then return to your seats via the side aisles.
 If you're unable to come forward, please raise your hand and communion will be brought to you.
 Those who worship online from home this morning are invited to use what you have in your home (bread,
 crackers, juice, etc.) to participate in the sacrament along with the congregation.*

Special Music for Communion: “*The Blessing of Christmas*”
Peg Wilken, Terry Moon, Bryan Latimer – Trio

by Marty Parks

WE GO AS WITNESSES FOR CHRIST IN THE WORLD

***Closing Hymn UMH #237:** “*Sing We Now of Christmas*” (vs 1, 4, & 5)

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| 1) Sing we now of Christmas,
Noel, sing we here!
Hear our grateful praises
To the babe so dear. | 4) From the eastern country
Came the kings afar,
Bearing gifts to Bethlehem,
Guided by a star. <i>[Refrain]</i> |
| <i>Refrain: Sing we Noel,
 The King is born, Noel!
 Sing we now of Christmas,
 Sing we now Noel!</i> | 5) Gold and myrrh they took there,
Gifts of greatest price;
There was ne'er a stable
So like paradise. <i>[Refrain]</i> |

***Benediction:** *(adapted from Dr. Lisa Hancock, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning>)*

One: Beloved, go from this place carrying the blessing of the Light who has come
 among so that the love of the Christ child may shine within you, casting rays of good
 news wherever you go.

**All: We go in peace to love and serve the Lord and all God's creation. Thanks be
 to God. Amen.**

*** Postlude:** “*We Three Kings*”

by John H. Hopkins; arr. Robert Lind

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS: Thank you for your service!! Liturgist: Ethan Hagerl / Greeters: Bonnie Dole, Bill Johnson / Ushers: Bill Cowdry, Bill Johnson Jr, Dave O'Dell, Angie Smith / Welcome Desk: Jill Spaulding / Coffee Hour: The Johnson Family / Nursery: Karissa Schultz / Sound System: Izzy Terhune

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS: Marilyn Ashmall, Ed Babinski, Tom Brubaker, Bernie Buggia, Myrna Cammin, Sue Cooper, Bonnie Dole, Esther Cavendish Fisher, Wayne & Phyllis Henney, Marion Hoffman, Bill Johnson, Erlene Kimber, ZoAnn Kraynak, Barb Kropp, Mark Leffler, Jane MacQueen, Bonnie Markley, Kay Mertz, Trinity & Audri Miller, Merlyn Mondol, Bob & Sharon Mueller, Madge Richmond, Eugenia Shek, Noreen Southgate, Rita Taylor, & Dorothy Woods. Also, please pray for UMCOR, and for peace in Ukraine/Russia and Israel/Gaza.

OUR SYMPATHY is extended to the family of Mark Abbe, who passed away November 25. A Memorial Service will be held here on Saturday, January 10 at 2:00pm, with visitation for an hour beforehand. **Help Needed** for a catered meal to be held here after the service to a) make coffee, b) help the caterer find everything they need, and c) serve food in the buffet line during the meal.

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, continuing January 13. On the menu for January: Lasagna. Sign up to donate food and/or help with clean-up at the Welcome Desk

THE TAIZÉ WORSHIP SERVICE of prayer, song, and meditative silence will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, January 7, 2026 at 7:00pm.

HELP NEEDED – the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan will deliver our next pallets of food for children's weekend backpacks on Wednesday, Jan. 14th. Sign up online to help out with:

- a) People to meet the truck between 10am-11am every other Wednesday, help organize the food, and then pack up the food bags.
- b) People to deliver 22 food bags to Westdale Elementary and 31 food bags to Arrowwood Elementary school EVERY Thursday morning.
- c) Sign up to help out online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-44603782-backpack>.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Nurture Committee – Monday 01/12 at 6pm
Reach/Prepare/Send – Monday 01/12 at 7pm

Memorials Committee – Monday 01/12 at 1pm.
Finance Committee – Tuesday 01/20 at 7:15pm
Trustees Committee Tuesday 01/27 at 7:15pm

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Be sure to check in on Facebook! The more of us that do, the more people learn about who we are!

YouTube: **Saginaw First UMC**

Bluesky: **FirstUMCSaginaw.bsky.social**

Facebook: **@firstumcofsaginaw**

Instagram: **saginawfume**

First United Methodist Church

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Custodian Tina Castle
Organist.....Bryan Latimer
Director of Music & Chancel ChoirRod Bieber
Bell Choir Director Catherine McMichael
Nursery Supervisors..... Karissa Schultz
Audio Visual Technicians.....Brian Hatch, Andy Sharrow, Angie Smith, Izzy Terhune

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