

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
January 7, 2024 **Epiphany of the Lord**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The whole life of Christ was a continual Passion; others die martyrs, but Christ was born a martyr. He found a Golgotha even in Bethlehem, where he was born; for to his tenderness then the straws were almost as sharp as the thorns after, and the manger as uneasy at first as his cross at last. His birth and his death were but one continual act, and his Christmas day and his Good Friday are but the evening and morning of one and the same day. And as even his birth is his death, so every action and passage that manifests Christ to us is his birth, for Epiphany is manifestation. John Donne



PRELUDE

GATHERING Words of welcome and announcements

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)**

Lord, this year, we will follow the Star of Bethlehem.

Too long we've gone the wrong way following the wrong stars!

We went south following movie stars, greed, and lust.

Star of Wonder...

We went east following stars of militarism, nationalism, and war.

Star of Light...

We even went north following our own visions, our own intuition, and our own way.

Star with Royal Beauty Bright...

Lord, this year, we will follow the Star of Bethlehem.

The Star of Hope.

The Star of Peace.

The Star of Joy.

The Star of Love.

The Star that is You.

***OPENING HYMN**

“We Three Kings”

(UMH # 254)

INVOCATION (unison)

Light of God, illumine the path that leads us to healing, hope and salvation. Glory of God, fill this sanctuary and expose the darkness that stalks our souls. Light of God, shine with such brightness that we marvel in awe. Glory of God, fill each temple of the Holy Spirit present today. Light of God, Glory of God, we welcome you in this place.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of Joy.

SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 72:10-14 (CEB)

Let the kings of Tarshish and the islands bring tribute; let the kings of Sheba and Seba present gifts. Let all the kings bow down before him; let all the nations serve him. Let it be so, because he delivers the needy who cry out, the poor, and those who have no helper. He has compassion on the weak and the needy; he saves the lives of those who are in need. He redeems their lives from oppression and violence; their blood is precious in his eyes.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

We are incredibly stubborn, O Lord. We have entered the season in which Your Light has been given to the world, your blessings have been poured out on the world, and yet all we can think about is our own problems, our own needs, our own desires. Help us to desire you, Lord. Help us to yearn for your presence. Pour your baptismal waters over us again, cleansing us from our self-pity and arrogance. Nourish and heal us so that we may joyfully serve you. Wash away our jealousy, greed, and all negative thoughts and behaviors that stand in the way of our truly being the people you have called us to be. Again, let us receive the blessings offered in creation, in the birth and baptism of Jesus, and in the ministry of the saints of light. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12 (CEB)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where

the Christ was to be born. They said, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

You, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you’ve found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him.” When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

A MOMENT WITH OUR CHILDREN

MESSAGE

“Have You Had Your Epiphany Yet?”

Rev. Terry McDorman

HYMN

“Go Tell It On the Mountain”

(UMH # 251)

INVITATION TO SHARE

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

(UMH # 94)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

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!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts..

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,

always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or you had formed the earth,
from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God.

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.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.

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

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.

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.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection

you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

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 which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

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.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
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.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them 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 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 (*God*), now and forever.
Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please come forward to receive the elements as indicated by the usher. If unable to do so, we shall bring the elements to you. Take a piece of bread and dip into the cup of juice, accepting the gifts of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION

A MUSICAL REFLECTION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR EPIPHANY (unison)

We believe in God, the creator of all things, the giver of life and breath. We believe in Jesus Christ, born Emmanuel, God with us, baptized and revealed the most beloved Son of God; he sought to heal humanity by taking our brokenness upon himself, suffering for us, dying for us and being raised from the dead for our sake and for the sake of all the world. We believe that he will come again. We believe in the Holy Spirit, continually poured out refreshing our lives, leading us into a new day, ever birthing the church, the body of Christ in the world. This Spirit is our soul companion and counselor of truth reminding us of the gift of faith, the ever presence of God and the promise of eternal life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *“One Holy Night in Bethlehem”* **(FWS #2097)**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *All are invited to sit and reflect during the Postlude*

**Please rise as you are able*

Our sincere appreciation to all those that contributed to this worship experience.

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 38

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

Be certain to check the church website, <https://maconilumc.net/> for updated information about the church, events and news. Please use webmaster.maconumc@gmail.com to submit updates or additions to the church website.

“GRIEF SHARE” WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024 AT 6:00PM

Loss, grief and all the collective emotions can be overwhelming for anyone. Whether your loss is recent or not, coping can be very difficult. This program is designed to help you. A new group is starting up at First Christian Church in Moweaqua on Wednesday evenings at 6pm. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Terry.

MACON UMM BREAKFAST

Sunday, January 21, 2023 at 7:00 AM in Fellowship Hall.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun Jan 14 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Jan 14 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun Jan 21 7:00 am UMM Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
Sun Jan 21 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Jan 21 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Wed. Jan 24 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting in Pastor's Office
Wed. Jan 24 7:00 pm Administrative Council Meeting in Pastor's Office
Sun Jan 28 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Jan 28 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. Jan 28 2:00 pm Cutler's 50th Anniversary Celebration, Community Center

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 12 Lindsey Mayer Jan 13 Christine Cutler
Jan 13 Tim Coperhaver

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of soup, any kind of cereal and/or oatmeal, canned fruit, macaroni and cheese; toilet paper and shampoo. Cash donations are always welcome.

CHURCH BENCH

We are still in need of **FIVE POUNDS** of plastic caps to purchase a bench for outside the church. This will be made of recycled plastic. Please donate caps whenever possible.