

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
January 5, 2025 **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



RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

PRELUDE

GATHERING **Words of welcome and announcements**

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)**

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)

OPENING PRAYER (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.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of praise.

SILENT PRAYER

Let us share our doubts with God.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (all)

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)

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. We would like to be those who cared for God in infant vulnerability; who tickled and cuddled and comforted the growing child, that he might know love and safety. And yet, merciful God, we must recognize all the times we are more like Herod. Whenever we, in our actions or in our 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.

Loving God, we confess our sins against you and one another, and pray that you will fill us with your light, that we may live our lives as true disciples in your name, without counting the cost. In the name of Christ, the one who showed us the way, we pray. Amen.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

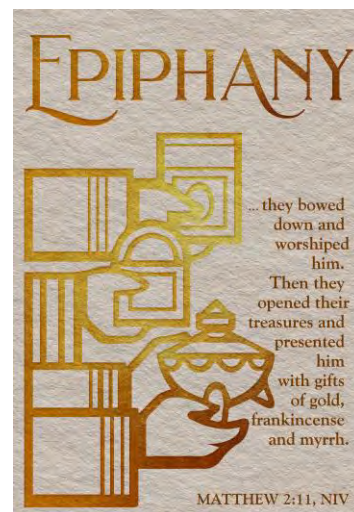
Matthew 2:1-12 (CEB)

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.



MESSAGE

“Have You Had Your Epiphany Yet”

Rev. Terry McDorman

HYMN

“Sing We Now of Christmas”

(UMH # 237)

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)**

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.

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 Christ who comes in your name. 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.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Using those elements you have to symbolize the blood and body of Christ, let us now partake together. Please come forward, taking a piece of bread and dip it into the cup. If you need assistance, please advise the usher. The bread is gluten free.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION:

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION:

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**

“The First Noel”

(UMH # 245)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

(Please be seated and silent during the Postlude)

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 32

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

12/24: 32

12/22: 38

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

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.

DE-DECORATING

After the worship service this morning, please join us in the taking down of the Christmas Decorations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun. Jan.12 9:00 am Sunday School

Sun. Jan.12 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service

Sun. Jan.19 7:00 am Men's Breakfast—Fellowship Hall

Sun. Jan.19 9:00 am Sunday School

Sun. Jan.19 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 05 Darlene Huggins

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of cereal, cereal bars and/or oatmeal, canned fruit, canned soup, canned pasta, shampoo, bar soap and dish liquid. Cash donations are always welcome.

Macaroni and cheese; and toilet paper are needed ASAP.

Macon's month to volunteer is January. Volunteer schedule:

Jan 11--Chad and Sheila Rappe, Christine and Garry Cutler

Jan 18--Lori Nixon, Russell Hedges, Marsha Baker, Donna Hayes

Jan 25--Brad, Denise, Isaac, and Nicholas Hunt

Please arrive at 8am