

# Epiphany Sunday

January 4, 2026

9:30 a.m.

\* Congregation stands if able and comfortable.

Readings in **BOLD** are to be read in unison.

UMH – Red or Purple

TFWS - Black

W&S – Green

Please note that this service is being recorded and viewed on social media.

## WE GATHER

PRELUDE

*Variations on We Three Kings*

arr. Christiansen

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHT OF CHRIST ENTERS OUR MIDST

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel*

UMH 204

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.**

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

## \*INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Grace and peace from God the Creator and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

Come, let us worship the Lord who established a new covenant through the Son Jesus Christ.

**We come in spirit and in truth.**

## \*SONG OF ADORATION

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

UMH 220, vs. 1 & 3

WORDS OF JOHN WESLEY ABOUT THE COVENANT

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Come let us pray, let us worship our Creator, the God of love; God continually preserves and sustains us; we have been loved with an everlasting love; through Jesus Christ we have been given complete knowledge of God's glory.

**You are God; we praise you; we acknowledge you to be the Lord.**

Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor, he was tempted in all points as we are, but he was without sin; he went about doing good and preaching the gospel of the kingdom; he accepted death, death on the cross; he was dead and is alive forever; he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all who trust in him; he sits in glory at the right hand of God; he will come again to be our Judge.

**You, Christ, are the King of Glory.**

Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life. Through the Spirit we are born into the family of God and made members of the body of Christ; the witness of the Spirit will do far more for us than we ask or think.

**All praise to you, Holy Spirit. Amen.**

ANTHEM

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Chancel Choir

arr. Barnes & Lovelace

## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

GOSPEL LESSON

**Matthew 2:1-12**

Pew Bible NT 2

May God Bless Our Reading, Hearing, and Understanding.

**Thanks be to God.**

CAROL OF RESPONSE

*We Three Kings*

UMH 254, v. 1-4

EPIPHANY MESSAGE

*The Gift of Stars*

Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERFUL CONFESSION

*Let us humbly confess our sins to God....*

O God, you have shown us the way of life through your Son, Jesus Christ. We confess with shame our slowness to learn of him. Our failure to follow him, and our reluctance to bear the cross.

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.**

We confess the poverty of our worship, our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our evasion of responsibilities in our service, our imperfect stewardship of our gifts.

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.**

Let each of us in silence make confession to God.

*(A silent pause for personal prayer)*

Have mercy on us, Lord and forgive us.

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.**

**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit with me.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Now the message...God will forgive us all our wrongdoing.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

COVENANT

In the old covenant...

...trusting in God's promises and relying on God's grace.

**I give myself completely to you, God. Assign me to my place in your creation. Let me suffer for you. Give me the work you would have me do. Give me many tasks or have me step aside while you call others. Put me forward or humble me. Give me riches or let me live in poverty. I freely give all that I am and all that I have to you. And now, Holy God, Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. May this covenant made on earth continue for all eternity.**

*Let us pray...*

Creator God, you have appointed our Lord Jesus Christ as mediator of a new covenant; give us grace to draw near with fullness of faith and join ourselves in perpetual covenant with you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## \*HYMN OF COMMITMENT

*Take My Life, and Let It Be*

UMH 399 vs. 1&3

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

Christ invites to this table...God's grace for the future!

**This is a day of new beginnings,  
time to remember and move on,  
time to believe what love is bringing,  
laying to rest the pain that's gone...**

UMH 383, vs. 1

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also, with you.**

Lift up your hearts in this new day.

**We lift them up to God.**

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...  
...yet again what your steadfast love can do.

**In faith we'll gather round the table  
to taste and share what love can do.**

**This is a day of new beginnings;  
our God is making all things new...**

UMH 383, vs. 5

Holy are you, blessed is your Son Jesus Christ...  
he healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with those others  
considered unworthy. Through him, faith and hope were born  
again for so many.

**For by the life and death of Jesus,  
God's mighty Spirit, now as then,  
can make for us a world of difference,  
as faith and hope are born again...**

UMH 383, vs. 2

On the night in which he gave himself up for us...  
...as followers of Christ, we proclaim and live  
out this holy mystery of Christ's death, Christ's resurrection, and  
the promise of Christ's return.

**Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,  
step from the past and leave behind  
our disappointment, guilt, and grieving,  
seeking new paths, and sure to find...**

UMH 383, vs. 3

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here...now and forever!

**Christ is alive, and goes before us  
to show and share what love can do.  
This is a day of new beginnings;  
our God is making all things new.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** Lydia Smith, soloist

UMH 383, vs. 4

#### GIVING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Come and be filled with the body and blood of Christ, knowing you are beloved and rooted in that love as you go forth to love all God's children. We will serve by **intinction**. You are invited to come by the center aisle, receive a piece of the bread, dip it into the cup, and partake. Return to your seats by the side aisles. You are invited to reflect in song as all are being served. **There is gluten free bread and juice available.**

#### HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

*I Come with Joy* UMH 617  
*One Bread, One Body* UMH 620

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION OF 2026 LEADERSHIP

#### OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS TO THE MINISTRY OF GOD

Offering plates are available at each door as you depart.  
You may also give online or by mail to the church office.

**\*PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS** UMH 221, v. 4

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

**What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

#### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**God of new beginnings, we celebrate the richness of our lives and bring to you our offerings to enrich the lives of those who may be struggling, that they may find new opportunities this year. Bless that which we bring in the name of Bethlehem's Babe. Amen.**

**\*SONG OF DEDICATION** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* UMH 251, vs. 3

#### \*SENDING FORTH

May the God who established a covenant with those who seek to enter the kingdom be always present with you. **Amen.**  
May Jesus Christ who sealed the new covenant with his sacrifice on the cross bring you peace. **Amen.**  
May the Holy Spirit of God guide your life, now and forever. **Amen.**  
Go in peace to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

#### \*LIGHT OF CHRIST LEADS US INTO THE WORLD

*Love Has Come*

W&S 3059 v. 3

**Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us.  
Love is peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

#### \*POSTLUDE

*Please join us in Fellowship Hall for refreshments as we welcome our sisters and brothers from Old First UMC who will be worshiping in this sanctuary for the next several months.*

**Our Service Of Worship Has Ended  
Our Worship Through Service Begins**

#### ALTAR FLOWERS:

Given in loving memory of Scott Gill by his mother, Carol Whyte.

Given in loving memory of Russell Danielson by Ron, Randy, Aldo, Jeff, Scott, & Russel.

#### Words of Welcome

*Welcome to this service of worship. We pray this service offered an opportunity to engage with the Divine. If we can be of service to you in any way, please let us know. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining together with us, where we help each other grow in faith, love, and service.*

#### For Your Information

- There are **hearing devices** to assist you to experience the service more clearly with our streaming team, in the rear of the sanctuary. Feel free to pick one up.
- A **rocking chair** is available for the comfort of parent and baby, in Blair Chapel, behind the pews.
- To access the **restrooms**, please exit the side door to the right of the lectern/chancel area. In the hall, make a left into Fellowship Hall and follow the signs.
- There are **infant changing tables** available in the restrooms.
- There are **large print hymnals** available. Please ask the usher.

**Pastor:** Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith

**Director of Music:** Denise Furda

**Streaming Team:** Chip Stoll, Rob Crowther, Johnny Tocci

**Director of Wesley Nursery School:** Noel Worthington

**Director of Music Emeritus:** Gary Farquhar

**Secretary:** Joy More

**Sexton:** Lisa Costello



**The First United Methodist Church**

**103 Monmouth Road, Oakhurst, NJ 07755**

**732-531-1150**

**FUMCOakhurst@outlook.com**

**Oakhurst.umcchurches.org**

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FUMCOakhurst>

Follow us on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstUnitedMethodistChurchofOakhurst>

CCLI #1588788

**The First United Methodist Church of Oakhurst**  
**Is a community of faith committed to Christ,**  
**seeking to learn the needs of our members,**  
**friends, and neighbors, and responding with Christian love.**

#### Our Leadership Team Serving Us This Morning

**GREETER:** Randy Danielson

**USHER:** Greg Scott & Robert Scott

**ACOLYTE:** Sue McRae

**LAY READER:** Randy Danielson

**FELLOWSHIP HOSTS:** Scott & Russel Danielson

**COUNTERS:** Patty Aria, John Montgomery, Judy Gorra



## This Week We Hold in Prayer...

**Our Homebound:** Bev Itell, Jean Gill, Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens, Cary

Carlisle, Priscilla Smith, Elaine Gould

**At home:** Peg Kuchen, Avery Fallon

**Jersey Shore Care Center:** Dave Miller

**Sunnyside Manor:** Nancy Burtt

\*\*The church has a team of prayers, known as the Prayer Chain. If you have a prayer need, please contact the office.

\*\*If you know someone who is in need of pastoral care, please contact Jill Hubbard-Smith 732-209-4563 or [revjmhs@gmail.com](mailto:revjmhs@gmail.com).

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**DIAPER DRIVE**-The congregation is collecting diapers for Maker's Place, a GNJ mission site. This drive will support low-income families in the Trenton area. The pastor will match every diaper received by January 6<sup>th</sup>.

**2026 PLEDGE ENVELOPES** are now available. You will find them in the foyer. Please take yours and perhaps those of someone to whom you can deliver so we can save on the cost of postage.

**JAVA WITH JILL**-has a new date! The group will meet on January 20<sup>th</sup> this month. All are welcome to meet with Pastor Jill and friends at the Blue Swan Diner at 10:00 a.m. for coffee (or whatever) and a chat.

**FREE COMMUNITY SPAGHETTI DINNER**-January's dinner date is the 18<sup>th</sup>. You may eat in or take out a free dinner of bread, salad, spaghetti with meatballs or sausage or marinara, and dessert. Service starts at 5 p.m.

**FOLDING CHAIRS**-The church is giving away padded folding chairs that used to be used in Blair Capel. You may take as many as you'd like. They are currently being stored in Wesley Hall.

**MERCY CENTER'S FOOD PANTRY** is currently seeking beans, pasta, low-sodium soup, peanut butter, & canned meats.



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Ad Council Chairperson	Tim Haider
At Large: Scott Danielson, Barbara Gruezke, Walter Dietz	
Recording Secretary	Tim Haider
Lay Leader	OPEN
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Ronald Danielson
Reserve Lay Member	Cathy Stoprya
Blair Scholarship Committee	Ronald Danielson
Barbara MacPherson, Buster Stoll, Chip Stoll, Joy More, Scott Danielson, Steve Furda	
Church School Superintendent	Sue Johnson
Endowment Committee	Sandy Brown
Treasurer	Jeff Ragle
Steve Furda, Bob Crowther, Ron Puryear, Cathy Stoprya, Jeff Ragle, Garry Smith, Michele Haider, Diane Maher, Ruth Scheckler	
Finance Chairperson	Garry Smith
Treasurer	Nancy Tocci
Finance Secretary	John Montgomery
Income Records	Mary Bailey
Randy Danielson, Ron Danielson, Tim Haider	
Membership Secretary	Diane Maher
Memorial Committee	Diane Maher
Ron Danielson, Joy More, Randy Danielson	
Outreach Committee	Jeff Danielson
Diane Maher, Diane Plumser, Soon Hur, Joy More, Pam Saunders	
Prayer Garden Committee	Mary Bailey & Steven Skoulas
Cindy Tanta-Nanta, Jennifer Sisco, Sue Johnson, Barbara Gruezke	
Staff Parish Chairperson	OPEN
Peg Kuchen, Carol Steinat, Nancy O'Shea, John Tocci, Ruth Scheckler, Robin Whitney	
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United Women In Faith	Diane Maher
Wesley Nursery School	Barbara MacPherson
Sue Johnson, Pam Saunders, Carol Steinat, Joan Brown, Randy Danielson	
Worship Committee	Leonard Gruezke
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Knitting Ministry	Judy Gorra, Jane Gittines, Gail Plumeri, Diane Maher, Melody Ragle
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