



# Worship Celebration

Epiphany of the Lord Sunday

January 3, 2021 + 11 AM

## **Welcome to The United Methodist Church of Berea!**

*As followers of Jesus Christ, who reveals a God whose love knows no boundaries, we are committed to welcoming and affirming every person as a beloved child of God. Every person—of every sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, economic status, health, ability, or any other identifying label—is welcome to participate fully in our ministries and life together as church. We hope The UMC of Berea will become a home for you, your family, and your friends as together, we make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

**Join us in worship, this week and every week:**

Sunday at 11 AM online ([www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos](http://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos))

Monday—Friday at 9 am (Morning Prayer) via Zoom (meeting id: 518 014 483)

Wednesday at 7 pm (Evening Prayer) via Zoom (meeting id: 848 4741 1964; passcode: 195510)

*In preparation for worship, you are encouraged to light a candle as a reminder of God's presence.*

## **We Gather as God's Children**

**Prelude**

*Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella*

French Carol  
arr. A Fedak, C. Uehlein

**Choral Introit**

*Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow*

TFWS 2096

***There's a star in the East on Christmas morn; rise up, shepherd, and follow;  
it will lead to the place where the Christ was born; rise up, shepherd, and follow.***

***Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,  
follow the star of Bethlehem. Rise up, shepherd, and follow.***

***If you take good heed to the angel's words; rise up, shepherd, and follow;  
you'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds; rise up, shepherd, and follow.***

***Follow, follow, rise up, shepherd, and follow,  
follow the star of Bethlehem. Rise up, shepherd, and follow.***

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**Words of Welcome**

## Opening Prayer

*God of promise and light, open our lives this morning,  
that we may perceive your light in the darkness.  
Open our hearts, that we may receive your promises  
of justice and righteousness fulfilled in the child of Bethlehem.  
May we, like the magi before us,  
follow your light as we seek the One who truly sets us free.  
May this time of worship draw us closer to you and to one another,  
that the good news of the birth of your light and love will transform our lives.  
Amen.*

## Hymn

*The First Noel*

UMH 245

*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.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

*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.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

*And by the light of that same star three Wise Men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

*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.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

*Then entered in those Wise Men three, full reverently upon the knee,  
and offered there, in his presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

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## Giving Thanks at the Birth of a Child

*Archie Gregory Rochford, born on December 27 to Kevin and April Rochford*

Sisters and brothers in Christ:

The birth of a child is a joyous and holy occasion in the life of a family.

It also is an occasion for rejoicing in the church family.

I bid you, therefore, to join with Kevin and April Rochford

in giving thanks to God, whose children we all are,

for the gift of Archie Gregory Rochford to be their son.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, we give you thanks for health and well-being for parents and child.

Grant in your mercy that by your help

they may live faithfully according to your will in this life

and share in the glory of the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# We Grow in God's Word

Leader: With disciples of every time and place, let us listen for the word of God among us.

**People:** *Our ears and hearts are open.*

## First Lesson—Isaiah 60.1-6 (CEB)

<sup>1</sup> Arise! Shine! Your light has come; the LORD's glory has shone upon you.

<sup>2</sup> Though darkness covers the earth and gloom the nations,  
the LORD will shine upon you; God's glory will appear over you.

<sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light and kings to your dawning radiance.

<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look all around: they are all gathered; they have come to you.

Your sons will come from far away, and your daughters on caregivers' hips.

<sup>5</sup> Then you will see and be radiant; your heart will tremble and open wide,  
because the sea's abundance will be turned over to you; the nations' wealth will come to you.

<sup>6</sup> Countless camels will cover your land, young camels from Midian and Ephah.

They will all come from Sheba, carrying gold and incense, proclaiming the LORD's praises.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Gospel Lesson—Matthew 2.1-12 (CEB)

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> 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."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. <sup>4</sup> He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

<sup>6</sup> *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.*"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. <sup>8</sup> 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." <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Children's Message

## Sermon

## Prayers of the People

## **Opportunities for Ministry and Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings**

*Some of us may be experiencing financial hardship or uncertainty during this season, but our generosity through the life of the church remains crucial as an expression of our discipleship and to ensuring that we can maintain our commitments to mission and ministry during this uncertain time. If you already give financially online ([www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate)) or by mailing a check to the church office, thank you! If you do not do so already, please consider giving through one of these methods now as we continue to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

## **Doxology**

*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* (v. 5)

UMH 240

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"***

***Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"***

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"***

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## **The Great Thanksgiving**

*In these extraordinary circumstances, you are invited this morning to have prepared Communion elements or a simple piece of bread ready to receive as we participate together in the holy mystery of Communion, even while we remain physically apart. We will receive the elements at the same time, though not in the same place, trusting that through the presence of the Holy Spirit, our sharing is sacramental as our spirits interact with God's and with one another's. If the risen Christ really is present in all times and places, then surely Christ really is present among us even now. There is no substitute for gathering together in person; however, through God's grace, we trust that we still are held in communion with God and with one another.*

The Lord be with you.

Let us lift up our hearts as one, giving thanks to God who is with us  
now and always, here and everywhere:

In wonder of your expansive embrace, we praise you, O God,  
who welcomes the stranger, who reaches across every border.  
Through your radical welcome, you reveal the limitations of our own imaginations.  
You break down walls and boundaries we do not even realize we have erected.

Like the magi, guided by the light of a star, you call us all toward you.  
You lead your people across borders of fear and into lands of curiosity and compassion.  
You strengthen us as we journey, learning and unlearning stories about one another.  
Gathered in your presence, we come to recognize the gifts of community,  
abundant in difference and diversity.

Therefore, we join our voices with your people on earth and all the communion of your saints,  
singing praise to you:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.***

You move in mysterious ways, O God.

Our journey with you is filled with more questions than answers, yet all of it is gift.  
Each time we think we have you figured out, you surprise us again,  
revealing yourself in new and unexpected ways.

In Jesus, we perceive your radical welcome of strangers extending in challenging ways:  
ways that disrupt our traditions and unsettle our comfort zones.

Jesus broke religious rules in order to include all people.  
He lifted up the sacredness of every person and in places considered “unclean.”  
He cared more about the well-being of the oppressed than his own reputation.  
And he taught us to reconsider your presence among us.

But we resisted, and we sent your Word made flesh to the cross.  
On the night of Jesus’ arrest, he shared a meal with his companions,  
taking bread, blessing it, breaking it, and giving it to the disciples, saying:  
“This is my body, given for you. Receive. Eat. Do this to remember me.”

After the meal, Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and shared it, saying:  
“This cup that is poured out is the new covenant. Share this to remember me.”

And so, in remembrance of all you have done to save us and make us whole,  
we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

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

May the same Spirit that lifted Christ from the grave  
now be poured out on these gifts and on us.  
Make this bread and cup to be your body and blood for us,  
an extension of your welcome that knows no bounds.  
Fill us with the courage and faith, then, to join you in the work of tearing down walls that exclude,  
and point our lives and our attention toward your presence in the margins,  
through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, and in the unity of your Holy Spirit,  
to whom all honor and glory belong, now and forever. ***Amen.***

In collective longing for a taste of your beloved community here among us,  
let us join now together in echoing the prayer Jesus taught us:

## **The Lord’s Prayer**

### **Sharing the Bread and Cup**

**Hymn**

*Carol of the Epiphany*

TFWS 2094

***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.***

***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.***

***I sought him where the spotlights glare, where crowds collect and critics stare;  
but no one knew his presence there: It seemed he lived in obscurity.***

***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.***

***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.***

*Carol of the Epiphany / John Bell / 5<sup>33</sup> 6 WGRG The Iona Community, admin. by GIA Publications, Inc.  
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### **Prayer following Communion**

***Lord, now let your servants go in peace; your word has been fulfilled:  
we have tasted and seen the salvation which you prepared  
in the presence of all people,  
a light to reveal your presence to the nations and the glory of all your creation.  
Amen.***

# We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

Hymn

*We Three Kings*

UMH 254

*We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.*

*O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high.  
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.*

*O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies.*

*O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

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## Benediction

Let us go from this time of worship, shining with God's love for all to receive.  
Let us go to spread the good news of God's righteousness and justice.  
Let us go and follow the star that will guide us this week, this year, and always.  
May the blessing of the God of light rest upon us and fill us with love.  
*Thanks be to God. Amen.*

## Postlude

*Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

Spiritual, arr. Emma Lou Diemer

***Our service of worship is ended.  
Our worship through service now begins.***

## ***Morning Prayer***

Loving God,  
do not let my good intentions become a means of harm.  
Do not let my trust become cooperation with sin.  
Do not let my naivete become an opportunity for hurt.  
Make me prudent in acts of mercy,  
firm in resistance to evil,  
and wise in discerning wrong,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, Amen.

## ***Evening Prayer***

Loving God,  
in the journey of life  
guide me by the star that leads to Jesus,  
that I may return to you transformed  
by your love. Amen.

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## **Additional Worship Opportunities:**

### **Morning Prayer**

***Mondays through Fridays at 9:00 AM  
via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/518014483>)***

### **Evening Prayer via Zoom**

***Wednesdays at 7:00 PM  
via Zoom (Meeting id: 848 4741 1964, Passcode: 195510)***

All are welcome to join us Wednesday evenings for brief worship services to re-center and re-focus together around scripture and prayer in the middle of the week.

For more information, contact **Pastor Nathan** at  
[nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) or 440-234-3525 x101.



## **Blessing of Homes**

***Post-Epiphany (Beginning January 6, 2021)***

In some parts of the world, there is a Christian custom of inviting God's blessing on dwelling places, including both homes and workplaces, and upon all who live, work, or visit there. Along with prayers for God's blessing, the front or main entrance is marked with chalk as a sign and reminder that we have invited God's presence into our homes.

This tradition is rooted in the visit of the magi to the place where the Christ-child resided (Matthew 2.1-12), and so it is most appropriately practiced near or during the season after the Epiphany, on January 6.

If you would like to share in this brief and simple ritual of worship for your home at the beginning of 2021, please contact **Pastor Nathan** ([nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) or 440-234-3525 x101) with a day and time that would be convenient for you, beginning January 6, 2021.



## **Disciple Fast Track**

***Sundays - new members welcome!***

***9:45-11 AM, via Google Meet***

Have you ever wanted to learn about the WHOLE Bible and what it means to be a Disciple? Whether you are curious about faith, new to Christianity, or have been a Christian your whole life, this Bible study will give you the opportunity to get a big picture look at the Bible. Join us for deep discussion and spiritual care. This is an online Bible study using Google Meet, so it doesn't matter your location! Expect about 15-20 minutes a day of "homework". And yes, we will cover MOST of the Bible in the course of a year, but just the Old Testament this winter/spring.

Please contact **Pastor Carrie** at [cantczak@umcb.org](mailto:cantczak@umcb.org) or **440-234-3525 x105** to sign up ASAP, so we can get you a book. We began today, but anticipate new members joining throughout the month.



## **GriefShare Starting New Session**

***Beginning Tuesday, January 12, via Zoom***

We will be starting a new session of GriefShare on January 12, 2020. All are welcome.

For more information, please contact Mary Lynn Swartz at **440-409-5931** or [marylynn482@gmail.com](mailto:marylynn482@gmail.com).



## **Equal Exchange**

***Wednesday, January 6 and the first Wednesday of each month,  
6:30-7:15 PM, in the Church Vestibule***

*Need some coffee, hot cocoa, or tea for these cold winter days?*

*How about some chocolate to make life a little sweeter?*

Equal Exchange items will be available for purchase on the first Wednesday of each month in the church vestibule from 6:30-7:15 PM.



## **Food Collection for Local Food Pantries**

***Wednesdays, 4:00-7:00 PM, In Front of the Red Doors on Seminary Street***

Collections of food for local food banks will continue with some changes. When you drop off your donation pull up to the red doors, flash your lights and beep your horn. A masked church member will come out to accept your donation. If you are not planning already to make a trip to the grocery store, please feel free to participate with a monetary donation instead, either by mailing a check to the church office or online at [www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate). Please note "food pantry" on the description line. Thank you for supporting this effort.





## Loose Change Offering

Wow, would it be nice to hear our handfuls of loose change “clink clank” on the offering plate again! As a congregation committed to mission, our loose change offering gave a “boost” to the missions and programs that are strengthening our church and communities near and far. We would like to start back up the offering for 2021, even though we won’t have the joy of “noisy change”. Look for a highlighted mission each month in the Caller. You can support by either mailing in an offering, or doing so electronically at [www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate) using the “other” box to donate the mission or simply “loose change offering”.

January’s Loose Change Offering will support the Sager Brown Mission. Please share your **LOVE, JOY, & HOPE** on Sunday, January 10 through your gifts to Loose Change.



## UMW Sunday Program Sunday, January 10, 11 AM Worship Service ([www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos](https://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)) Followed by a Discussion Via Zoom

UMW Sunday will be January 10. Deaconess Sherri Buell will be joining us at the 11:00 AM service with a Zoom discussion session to follow at noon. Deaconess Buell offers this information about her sermon:

### From Served to Servant

*We all face our challenges in life and there are people who lift us up and strengthen us. God works in us during these times so that we may do the same for others. The UMC of Berea played an enormous role in molding me to be the Servant I am today as Deaconess and a pastor's wife. For this I am grateful.*

Please join us January 10, 2021 to celebrate the role of United Methodist Women in our Church and around the world.

## Pastoral Care, Prayer Requests, and Care Leaders

Please reach out to **Pastor Nathan** ([nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) or 440-234-3525 x101) if you would like to schedule an individual time to talk or if you have a specific prayer request. Likewise, if you find yourself needing food or other supplies and unable to get them, please contact me, and we will do our best to care for you. While we are apart from one another physically, we remain connected through our common mission and through our mutual concern and care. As an expression of our connection, we now have a team of “care leaders” who are making phone calls throughout the course of the week to check in, be in conversation, and share prayer requests.

If you have not heard from a “care leader” yet and would like to connect this way, or if you would like to serve as a “care leader,” please contact **Pastor Nathan** at 440-234-3525 x101 or [nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org).

## Staff & Office Hours

For the protection of all, our staff continues to work from home whenever possible. If you contact the staff by email or phone message, please be assured they will respond as quickly as they are able. If your business requires a visit to the church building, please call in advance to ensure a staff member will be available.