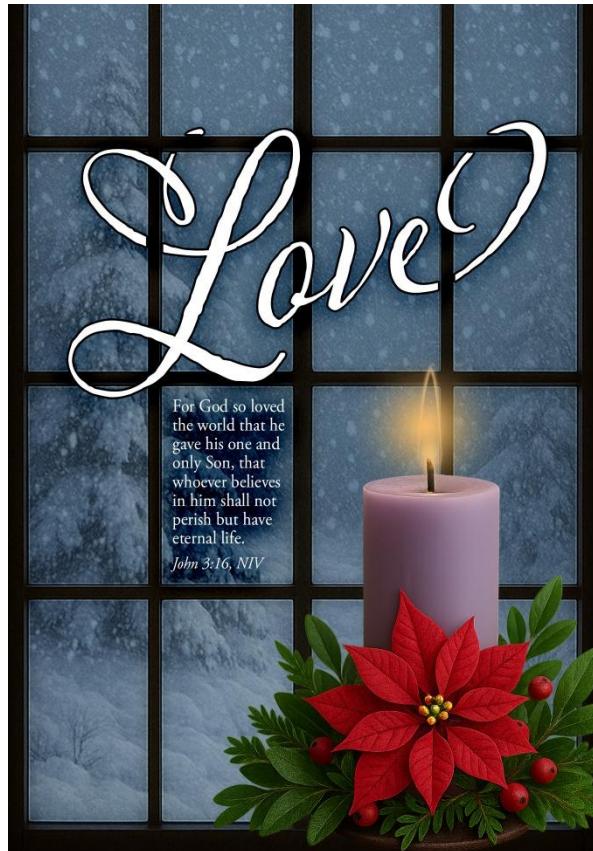


christ church

an Open & Affirming Congregation
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



December 21, 2025

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Timothy R. Perkins

Music Director: Terryl Dietert

Guitar/Visuals: Paul Mayeshiba | Video: Richard Tremarello

Liturgist: Andy Oren

Follow the Star Cantata

Sanctuary Singers: Sue Cribb, Sandra Graham, John Helt,
Janet Key, Michael Key, Pam Kothrade, Doris Mayeshiba,
Julie Oren, Tim Perkins, Rich Tremarello

Accompanist: Pam Kothrade

Readers: Mary Ann Mowery and Jill Unglaub

Welcome to Christ Church! We are so glad you are here this morning! Whether you are a "first-timer," a regular, or somewhere in between, it is a joy to have you here with us this day. May you be blessed by God's Word in worship today! If you are a **first-time visitor**, please fill out a visitor card and put it in the offering plate, and then make your way to the Chapel (in the back) after worship where we have a small gift for you.

**Please stand as you are able*

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude *The First Noel* - Held

We Light the Candle of Love

First Reader: Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary's womb as a vulnerable baby; Joseph contemplating leaving Mary because of her pregnancy; God's love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand; God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace.

All: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world's judgment.

Second Reader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our faithfulness as we seek, find, and follow Emmanuel, God with us.

Hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Hymn #154

Call to Worship

One: Come let us sing of the One who came in Love.

**Many: Come let us awaken to the story of the Messiah's birth
proclaimed in song.**

One: Come let us remember and rejoice for God is with us, Emmanuel.

Many: Come let us share God's love with the world with our hearts, and hands, and voices.

All: Come let us worship, proclaiming the love of God revealed in the One born in Bethlehem.

*Opening Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Hymn #182

*Opening Prayer

Emmanuel, we come today with arms wide open, ready to meet your precious son. Your love for us is so full that you sent a fragile babe to share your holy word, knowing that he would face human pain. Open us, God! Prepare us for his coming, that we may be messengers of your abundant love, and act to ease the suffering of all. Amen.

*Words of Grace

God's love for us encompasses every doubt and disaster we will imagine. God did not turn from our ancestors when they fell short, and God will not turn from us. Our humanity is not a flaw. It is the gift of the divine, sealed in Emmanuel's humanity. Praise be to God!

*Passing the Peace of Christ

*Response

Glory to God

Hymn #240

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory in the highest!
Glory to God, Glory to God, Alleluia! Alleluia!**

A Message for The Young and The Young at Heart

Choir Cantata

Sanctuary Singers

Follow the Star directed by Terryl Dietert

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel - Hopson

Keep Your Lamps – arr. Thomas

Tiny Infant, Holy King - Ray/Callaway

Calypso Lullaby - Hairston/Raney

Rise Up, Shepherd - arr. Kern

Morning Bells - Martin

First Scripture Readings Luke 1:26-38 (NRSVUE)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God. "Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Second Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25 (NRSVUE)

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with
us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord
commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with
her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Meditation “Acting Out the Story” Rev. Dr. Timothy R. Perkins (Tim)

Hymn *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* **Hymn #189**

Prayers of the People (see Weekly Newsletter for details)

For those experiencing trials or ongoing health concerns: *Kathy B, Gloria H, Judy B, Jerry G, Bonnie & Jeff J, Nicole, Bart, Tom, Laurel, Bill, Blair, Joe, Kozy, Stacy, Susie*

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of our Savior

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Invitation to Generosity

This is a week when we often feel the disparity between the haves and the have nots. Many will go into debt striving for a perfect holiday, while others cannot even imagine the ability to have such a day. God has told us many times and, in many ways, where love flows from—it comes from the hand we extend when we have enough and even when we do not. Let us bring forth the true joy of this season and give as much as we are able.

SCAN TO DONATE



*Liturgy for this morning's worship service was written by members of the United Methodist Church and the Worship Ways team of the United Church of Christ. Thank You.

Offertory

Silent Night of Wonder
by Sandra Graham/music by Terryl Dietert

Silent night of wonder
I wonder now tonight
How within the darkness
Is born the star so bright
How within the silence
The inner voice is known
How within the birthing
We each become God's own...

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost, Amen

*Prayer of Dedication

Love and Light of the world, we give you thanks for these gifts.
We give you thanks for the privilege of generosity. We give you
thanks for the ability to share your divine love in a tangible form
with our siblings around the world. Help us to remember, as we
await Christ's birth, to give more generously than we receive,
knowing we will always be rich in your abundant love. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Joy to the World!

Hymn #179

*Benediction

*Benediction Song *Now it's Time to Say Goodbye*

Now it's time to say goodbye
To go on out from here
To live the visions and the dreams
To scatter hate and fear
So may the Peace be with you now
A peace that's filled with Grace
May it surround all your struggles
And everything you face.
And may you find your own way
To sing out love's own song
With courage, tears and laughter
And then to pass it on.
Yes the time has come to say goodbye
May peace be with you now

Postlude

God Rest You Merry – Held

THIS WEEK at CHRIST CHURCH

Today

Sanctuary Singers Cantata
Christmas Fund Offering

Wednesday, Dec 24

Christmas Eve Service, 7pm

NEXT SUNDAY

Lessons & Carols Sunday
Property Committee Meeting
Counters: Danette and Renolle Volz
Greeters Dec 21: Joan Gaeth, Madeline N
Greeters Dec 24: Blazaviers, Dick Gaeth

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You! | A big THANKS to all who contributed to our Christmas present donations for the Milwaukee Rescue Mission. The gifts have been delivered, and the staff was so thankful for our donation. We donated 13 board games, 9 Lego sets, 10 craft kits, 2 puzzles, 2 playdough kits, 8 card games, 6 cosmetic kits, 10 bath sponges, 1 football, 2 soccer balls, 3 coloring books, 3 packs of crayon/markers, 4 action figures, 1 baby doll, 2 truck sets, 4 blankets, 7 pajamas, 8 Amazon gift cards, and 2 hat and mitten sets. Your generosity will make the holidays brighter for others in our community.

We wanted to thank everyone who helped with planning, contributed food, and assisted the day of the Advent Brunch. Special thanks to our kitchen staff of Dean Kothrade, Mark Pfeifer, and Bob Polachowski. It was a lovely time of fellowship with our guest speaker highlighting the meaning of Advent, and a lovely song provided by Nancy Charles, accompanied by Pam Kothrade. We offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone for making this event possible!

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,
Your Social Concerns Committee

Please pick up your 2026 offering envelopes in the Chapel.

All Church Christmas Dinner Gathering | Thurs, **Dec 18**, 5:30pm at Joe's K Ranch

Greeters, Thank You!! | Thank you to everyone who greets on Sunday mornings—your role shapes our newcomers' first impressions. Our church layout can be confusing with its steps and hallways. Greeters help visitors find the sanctuary, restrooms, and fellowship hall. If you'd like to help, sign up on the "Greeter Sheet" at the Lenox Street Entrance.

Key reminders: Wear your name tag. Arrive by 8:55 a.m. Welcome everyone with a smile. Assist newcomers and guide them to the sanctuary, restrooms, and cloak room. Help anyone needing the elevator reach the sanctuary level.

Stay until 9:35 a.m. for late arrivals. (Ushers distribute bulletins.)

If you can't greet as scheduled, please ask another greeter to substitute.

Thank you for making our congregation, newcomers, and visitors feel welcome. Any questions? Contact *Andy Oren or Joan Gaeth*

Lessons and Carols | Join us on **Dec 28** for the last Sunday of 2025. We are planning a special service called *Lessons and Carols*. There will be a series of scripture readings (lessons) and some of your favorite hymns that reflect the message of the readings (carols). This type of service dates back to the late 19th century, designed to help people reflect on the meaning of the birth of Jesus. And, there will be a brunch to follow! Please sign-up on the sheet posted on the Lenox Street bulletin board.

End-of-the-Year-Stewardship-Campaign! | We are a family—a beautiful church family. We have a solid history of pulling together in times of need and in times of joy. We show up in a BIG way to support our family, and I'm so very proud to say *that is who we are*.

By now you should have received an end of the year letter from Christ Church. We are excited to begin our new Stewardship Campaign to raise \$11,000 by **Dec 31**! Yes, you heard that correctly, by Dec 31. We have decided to meet the new year "head on" with a goal of \$11,000 in order to meet our 2026 budget.

Please take a look at the lovely poster board Christmas tree display in our chapel. Thank you, Jan Naefken for creating this beautiful display! Each time we collect a total of \$500, a new ornament will be placed on the tree. When we have reached our \$11,000 goal, we will add the bright yellow star to the top of the Christmas tree!

Consider donating \$100, \$250, \$500, \$1,000, or however much the spirit moves you. During this time of Christmas celebration, *please contribute until it feels good!*

Please place your gift in the envelope provided in your letter. If you prefer, you can scan the QR code located on the poster in the chapel. Or, you may use another envelope, as long as you kindly include your name, your envelope number and the notation "Stewardship Campaign." Let's pull together in a BIG way to meet our goal by Dec 31!

Submitted by Pam Kothrade

Amazing Faiths LUNCH Dialogue | Gather for LUNCH at NOON on Monday, **Dec 29** at Cudahy United Methodist Church. People of all faiths and no faith, all spiritualities and theologies gather in small groups to share a meal and participate in a moderated discussion using a proven model, evoking deep exchanges about lived experiences and the role of faith and/or spirituality in their lives. Through exploration and dialogue, participants learn about the beliefs and traditions of others within an atmosphere of respect and understanding, and are empowered to stand as witnesses for tolerance and inclusion. Register at <https://www.interfaithconference.org/amazing-faiths-project>

Hunger Task Force | We'll be working at Hunger Task Force (5000 W. Electric Ave.) on Wednesday, **Jan 7** from 9am to noon assembling food boxes for seniors. This is a fun and fast-paced opportunity to do some real good for our seniors. Please sign up on the Lenox Street bulletin board. Any questions, see *Andy Oren*.



Monthly Activity	November	YTD
Contributions	\$11,820	\$97,501
Other Income	\$299	\$80,484
Total Income	\$12,119	\$177,985
Expenses	\$30,845	\$199,435
Budgeted Amount	\$14,867	\$163,533

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Instagram: instagram.com/christ_church_uccmke/
Livestream: youtube.com/@ChristChurchUCCBayViewWI

If you should need pastoral support, please contact
Rev. Sandy Graham at 414-943-6321 or RevDrGraham@gmail.com
or **Rev. John Helt** at 262-622-3165 or JohnCliffordHelt@gmail.com

