



WELCOME to WORSHIP

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Epiphany
Second Sunday of Christmas
Communion Sunday
January 4, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude/Candle Lighting “Song Without Words (Consolation)”
(F. Mendelssohn)

Oxana Khramova

Ringing of the Bell

***Call to Worship** (*Stand if you are able)

One: We gather together in this place:
All: **prophets and dreamers, singers and poets,**
One: we who dare to imagine a world renewed;
All: **we who dare to dream God's dream.**
One: We listen with Joseph,
All: **guided by faith and dreams.**
One: In fear or in flight,
All: **God is our refuge.**
One: By the light of a star,
All: **God guides us on the way.**
One: Come and worship, all you who dream and imagine.
All: **We have come to wonder and praise.**

*Opening Prayer (in unison)

God of the journey, be our guide as we navigate ventures of which we cannot yet see the ending, paths yet untraveled, joys and perils unknown. Accompany us with protection and mercy, and aid all who are far from home. Bring us in safety to our holy destinations and our promised rest, through Christ, our companion. Amen.

***Opening Hymn** “Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning” Hymnal #67

Readings Karen Miller

Exodus 1:8-2:10; Matthew 2:1-15; Contemporary Reading, “Affirmation of Faith” from Illustrated Ministry’s “The Will to Dream” Advent series

Special Music “Little Drummer Boy” Eric Cody, Dean Langby,
Cathy Colvin

Sermon	“The Will to Dream: Courageous Defiance”	Pastor René Mehlberg
Transitional Music	“We Three Kings of Orient Are”	Hymnal #66
Prayers of the People		
Offertory	“Moment by Moment” (C. Saint-Saens, A. Moody, arr. C. Berry)	Oxana Khramova

*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.**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Now we set aside the common for an uncommon purpose as we prepare for Holy Communion, the family meal of Christ's people. In this meal, we remember the life, teaching, witness, and death of Jesus. We celebrate his continued life among us. We remind one another that we are called to participate in Jesus' Way of extravagant welcome and service. Come prepared to be blessed. Come because God has food for you. Come because Jesus invites you...just as you are.

Great Thanksgiving

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Leader: Please join me in the words of institution over the bread:

People: When he was among friends, gathered around a table, Jesus took bread and having blessed it, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, “Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you.”

Servers will pass this gluten free bread among you. As you take a piece of bread, hold it until everyone is served. We will eat the bread together, as a symbol of our unity, a world-wide Christian community.

Distribution Hymn

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

Hymnal #513

Leader: Please join me in the words of institution over the wine:

People: **In the same way, Jesus took wine and having given thanks for it, he poured it out and gave the cup to his disciples, saying, “This cup is the new relationship with God, made possible because of my life and my death. Take this-all of you-to remember me.”**

Servers will pass the juice and wine among you. The juice is dark red; the wine is white. Drink the cup as soon as you have been served in recognition of your individual relationship to God.

Distribution Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth” SoF #82

Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin with me;
Let there be peace on Earth; the peace that was meant to be.
With God our Creator, children all are we;
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me; Let this be the moment now;
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally...
Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin with me.

***Prayer of Gratitude (in unison)**

In deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you.

Take us out to live as changed people, because we have shared the Living Bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. So, gracious God, may we live to your glory, both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of your kin-dom. Amen.

***Closing Hymn** “Arise, Your Light Is Come!” Hymnal #411

***Benediction**

***Sung Benediction (unison)**

**God be with you till we meet again;
Loving counsels guide, uphold you,
With a Shepherd’s care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.**

Postlude “Great Is the Lord” Oxana Khramova
(M. Smith and D. Smith, arr. C. Tornquist)

The flowers today are in celebration of Emmett DiMauro's 22 birthday on Jan 8th from his grandparents, Deb and John Wesolek and Deb's birthday on Jan 12th.

Credits

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This Week

Wednesday, January 7: 4pm Kid’s Club, 5:30pm Chancel Choir; 6:30pm Bell Choir; 7pm Dance practice

Thursday, November 6, 9am-12pm: Tour of Homes Crafts, R1

Link to the full church calendar: <https://www.menomonieucc.org/monthlycalendar>

Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Menomonie, WI

We are called together:

To celebrate God's presence.
To help each person to grow in his or her relationship with God;
To create a welcoming and supportive community of all God's people, affirming the diversity of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and identity, social and economic status, and the differently abled;
To observe and share life's passages and our faith traditions;
To reach out in love seeking justice and peace;
And to tell the old story of Jesus and His love.

Land Acknowledgement

Here we congregate on Ojibwe, Dakota, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho Chunk land. Generations of Indigenous people occupied and provided careful stewardship of this land long before Europeans arrived on these shores. The traumatic dispossession of this land by European immigrants and the displacement of countless individuals produced collective suffering that has repercussions for our Indigenous neighbors today. The original inhabitants of this land—known to some Indigenous peoples as Turtle Island—took seriously the Creator's call to be stewards of air, land, water, and creatures. With gratitude, we acknowledge the lessons we continue to learn from our Indigenous neighbors as we seek to be good stewards and pray for guidance in learning how to make reparations.

67 Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning

MORNING STAR 11.10.11.10

Reginald Heber, 1811; alt.

James Proctor Harding, 1892

1. Bright - est and best of the stars of the stars of the morn - ing,
 2. Cold on His cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing,
 3. Shall we then yield Him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion,
 4. Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,

Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;
 Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
 O - dors of E - dom and of - ferings di - vine,
 Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure;

Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - born - ing,
 An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
 Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
 Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion,

Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.
 Mak - er and Mon - arch and Sav - ior of all!
 Myrrh from the for - est, or gold from the mine?
 Dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.*

*Repeat stanza 1.

We Three Kings of Orient Are

THREE KINGS OF ORIENT 8.8.44.6 with refrain

John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857; alt.

John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857; alt.
Intro. Robert Stigall, 1988

All: 1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are,
Opt. solo: 2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain,
Opt. solo: 3. Frank-in - cense to of - fer have I:
Opt. solo: 4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume
All: 5. Glo - rious now be - hold Him a - rise,

Optional Introduction

Bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far, Field and foun - tain,
 Gold I bring to crown Him a - gain, King for ev - er,
 In - cense owns a De - i - ty nigh; Prayer and prais - ing
 Breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom; Sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
 King and God and Sac - ri - fice; Al - le - lu - ia,

moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 ceas - ing nev - er O - ver us all to reign.
 we are rais - ing, Wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 bleed - ing, dy - ing, Sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia Sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

The musical score consists of three staves of music in common time, key of G major (two sharps). The top staff is for the soprano voice, the middle staff for the alto voice, and the bottom staff for the bassoon. The lyrics are as follows:

O star of won - der, star of night,
Star with roy - al beau - ty bright; West - ward lead - ing,
still pro - ceed - ing, Guide us to thy per - fect light!

513

Let Us Break Bread Together

LET US BREAK BREAD 10.10 with refrain

African-American spiritual

African-American spiritual

Arr. Melva Wilson Costen, 1988



1. Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees; (on our knees;)
 2. Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees; (on our knees;)



Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees. (on our knees.)
 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees. (on our knees.)




When I fall on my knees, With my face to the ris - ing sun,




O Lord, have mer-cy on me. (on me.)



Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;
Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.

let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With every step I take, let this be My solemn vow.

With God our creator, children all are we.
to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let us walk with each other - in perfect harmony.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it be begin with me.

Arise, Your Light Is Come!

411

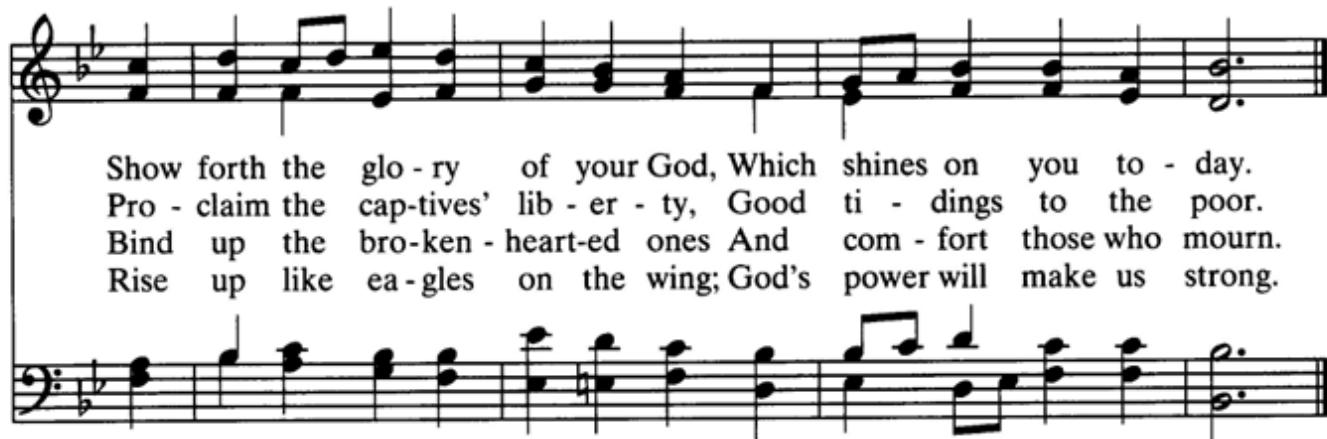
FESTAL SONG SM

Ruth Duck, 1974

William H. Walter, 1894



1. A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
2. A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
3. A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,
4. A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song!



Show forth the glo - ry of your God, Which shines on you to - day.
Pro - claim the cap-tives' lib - er - ty, Good ti - dings to the poor.
Bind up the bro-ken - heart-ed ones And com - fort those who mourn.
Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.