

Racine UMC Newsletter

401 East Main Street, Racine, MN 55967

January 2025

Christmas Spirit All Year

By Kathy Hawkins

*Now that the cold of winter has set in
Keep yourself warm in faith and not sin
The spirit of Christmas brought happiness and joy
Like the sight of a child with a brand-new toy
There is no need to lose this spirit so bright
As long as we remember to face the light.*

*Jesus' birth wasn't just a one-day celebration
It is meant to be remembered throughout the nation
Jesus was given to us out of love
From the magnificent one from up above.*

*As the cold slowly passes from day to day
Let your faith shine like the sun's rays
Carrying the warmth of Christ in your heart
Is the best way for each new day to start.*

*This Christmas spirit lives within us each the entire year
Not just for one day but forever, from our Lord so dear.*

Christmas
Begins with
Christ



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

**Worship on Sundays:
In Sanctuary at 8:30am**

&

FM Radio 89.7

@8:30am

Pastoral Support Team

Pastor Bridget Sheely

Email: bridget@countrywidecarriers.com

Pastors cell # 507-438-1352

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: marburgerjon@gmail.com

Cell #507-227-6711

Racine UMC Office hours

Thursdays

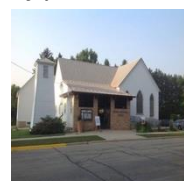
5-7pm

Office Phone:

507-378-4801

Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ:

If you have items you would like to be



*published in the
newsletter, please contact
our church secretary,
Norma Kenning, by the 3rd
Thursday of the preceding
month by emailing your*

*information to: Racine UMC
rscumc@hmtel.com) Or by bringing your
information to Norma during office hours
(Thursdays, 5-7) If you would like to
donate a gift, you may send donations to
the address above or deliver it in person
during Sunday morning worship services.*

Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 	2 Food Shelf 6-8 pm	3	4
5 8:30 am Worship 	6	7	8	9  Featuring "I Can Only Imagine" 6:00pm At Racine UMC Food Shelf 6-8 pm	10	11
12 8:30 am Worship 	13	14 Ad Council Meeting 6:30pm	15	16 Confirmation Zoom class 6:30pm Food Shelf 6-8 pm	17	18
19 8:30 am Worship 	20  Brownsdale UMC Noon Potluck Dinner	21	22	23 Food Shelf 6-8 pm	24	25
26 8:30 am Worship 	27	28	29	30 Confirmation Zoom class 6:30pm Food Shelf 6-8 pm	31	

January Worship Schedule

January 5, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading



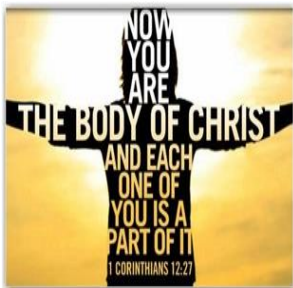
Epiphany Service of Lessons, Carols and Communion

January 12, 2025

Pastor Jon Leading



We begin this week with an emphasis on giftedness. God's love for us is shown in the work that we do and in the gifts that we use. We see God's love in the way service builds relationships and then those relationships create community. Corinth was called "Sin City" in its day. There was so much going on there and suffice it to say that it was hard to be a follower of Jesus in a city like that. It was hard to maintain purity, hard to stay out of the dog-eat-dog business of the surrounding community. It was so hard, in fact, that the ethos of the surrounding area leaked into the church. Paul's letters to the people of Corinth were written to address issues in the church



January 19, 2025

Pastor Jon Leading

Today Paul brings our focus directly onto ourselves. He says – "You are the body of Christ and individually members of it." (vs. 27.) Individual members, meaning you are important, you the individual, you the person, you matter. But we know that best when we engage in the whole, when we act as a part of the community and not just lone rangers. There are so many gifts in our faith community and so much work that is being done behind the scenes. There is no job too small and each of you is important to this body, this church community. So often we think that our contribution to the whole isn't worth a whole lot. "I'm just me," some might think, "nothing special, nothing crucial." So today let us stop and shine a light on each of your dedicated gifts of service. God's truth is that "you matter because the body won't be the body without you, without the gift that you bring, without the person that you are."



January 26, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading

Does it feel cliché to focus on love in worship? Does it seem that we might need something more profound? Actually, there isn't anything more profound than love as the determining force that motivates all that we do as the church. It begins, of course, with the desire to love God more. We're called to love with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. That seems pretty all encompassing. Can we honestly say that we love God with that kind of passion and fervor? Can we say that all our thoughts each and every day are, "How can I show love to God today? And then to love our neighbor as ourselves. The last two Sundays, we have been called to see ourselves as worth something in God's community we call the church. And now the call is to love our neighbor as though they were us, our own flesh and blood, our own bodies

December Prairieland Parish Events

Thursday, January 9th

6:00pm @ Racine UMC

Confirmation Class will be hosting a...



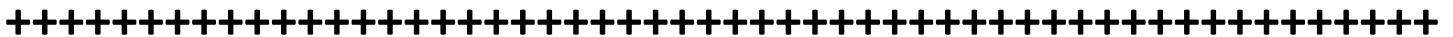
Featuring...

Storyline



10-year-old Bart Millard lives with his mother and abusive father Arthur in Texas. One day his mother drops him off at a Christian camp where he meets Shannon. Upon his return from camp, Bart finds his mother has left and movers are removing her belongings. He angrily confronts his father, who denies that his abusiveness was the reason she left. Years later, in high school, Bart and Shannon are dating. Bart plays football to please his father, but is injured, breaking both ankles and ending his career. The only elective with openings is music class, so he reluctantly signs up..

ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND ENJOY



BROWNSDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Community Noon Lunch

Monday, January 20th

12 O'clock – Noon

Come One – Come All!

Bring your friends!

Serving: hot dishes - Salads - Desserts - Beverages

FREE WILL DONATIONS

What is the Season of Epiphany?

Epiphany Reflections as described by Discipleship Ministries

Epiphany

Many of us were introduced to Epiphany through the familiar silhouetted-image of Three Wise Men bearing gifts as they followed the Great Star by night. In some cultures, Epiphany is known as the *Day of the Kings* (*Día de los Reyes*). It is also known as Twelfth Day or Twelfth Night, reflecting an old custom of giving a gift for each of the days from December 25 to January 6 for the 12 days of Christmas. The day has special meaning for a number of reasons. Several branches of Christianity celebrate the birth of the Christ Child on **January 6** or **January 7**

The word *epiphany* means *appearance* or *manifestation*. Popular usage likens *epiphany* to words such as *eureka* or *aha!* Use of this word by some English speakers conjures images of having a light bulb turned on, or of being able to see something that was once hidden from view. The texts for the Sundays after the Epiphany dramatize the many ways that we people came to understand who Jesus was, through his baptism, the miracle at the wedding, or through that bodacious declaration in his hometown synagogue! But, this ever-widening circle of revelation began 'outside the circle' of Judaism, so to speak, with the Magi.

Who were the Magi?

Many versions of the Bible refer to them as the *Wise Men*. We often forget that these Magi or Wise Men were non-Jews. **Older sources** suggest that they were priestly descendants of one of the tribes of the Medes **known for their knowledge of the stars (astronomy) and their ability to interpret dreams.**

What can we learn from the Wise Men?

First, the Wise Men began their journey because of their beliefs.

It was a common belief that when a world leader like a king was born that a special stellar phenomenon would appear in the sky. The Magi saw something that convinced them that they had seen the long-awaited sign. Historians tell us that the Jews, the Romans, and the Persians were all watching the skies about that time, looking for signs of the birth of an extraordinary king. A few years before, around 11 BC, Halley's Comet had been seen. There were other stellar phenomena, including a bright star, Sirius, which appeared brightly in the daytime instead of at night. The Wise Men saw the star and began their journey.

May God give us all inspiration for this year's journey.

Second, the Wise Men were willing to follow what they had seen into unknown territory.

Their journey took them outside their country and their comfort zone. The Wise Men risked the consequences of disobeying Herod, who was known to behave as a madman when provoked and returned to their country by another way.

The Christian journey is often an off-road excursion.

Third, the Wise Men were committed to the journey -- wherever the star might lead.

The Wise Men set out to find a newborn King by following a star and ended up in finding a baby born to young, relatively poor parents! Not exactly what they expected and not exactly what befit their dignity as priests.

In this coming year, may we look to heaven for guidance and comfort and may we accept God's blessings in whatever forms we find them, just as the Wise Men accepted that their long, expensive journey led them to a baby born to young, inexperienced parents who lived on the poor side of town.

Finally, the Wise Men brought gifts.

They did the thing that people in the East or in Africa or in India would do when visiting royalty. They brought gifts.

Gold was the kind of gift that you brought to a king. Frankincense was the kind of gift that you would bring to a priest.

Myrrh was given to someone who was about to die.

On This Twelfth Day, or Three Kings Day, otherwise known as Epiphany, think of the gift that you will offer to God in the coming year. The gift of time? The gift of your talents? Your service in the community? Your witness and testimony? The gift of undying love and devotion?

Their greatest gift comes to us in the form of a realization. The Wise Men were the first Gentiles to recognize that Jesus belongs to everyone. Good news is for everyone, not just a select few.

Star of wonder

Star of light

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading

Still proceeding

Guide us to thy perfect light.

Amen.

Luke-Acts 2025: An area-wide discipleship journey



By: Rebecca Trefz, Dakotas Conference

In her [Watch Night message](#) to begin 2024, Bishop Lanette Plambeck noted that the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer "describes the Jesus way of self-giving and self-emptying love" and that "this way of living and loving is possible only in a community centered in the life and mission of the crucified and

risen Jesus Christ."

Now, as we prepare to turn the calendar to 2025, Bishop Lanette is encouraging United Methodists across the Dakotas-Minnesota Area to commit to this centering

— as individuals and as a community — by immersing ourselves in the accounts of Jesus and the missional response of the early church found in the scriptures.

Beginning in January, Bishop Lanette invites clergy and laity across the Area to join in a journey through Luke and Acts, reading one chapter each week throughout the year. This shared experience will foster a sense of encouragement, challenge, and community as we delve into the seamless story of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and the Spirit's work through the early church. Comprised of 52 chapters together, they provide a natural framework for intentional spiritual practice through 2025.

We will share resources and journal/discussion prompts through our weekly conference emails and social media platforms to help participants engage the text starting the week of Jan. 5. Check out the [Minnesota Conference website](#) later this month for reading guides and graphics. Bishop Lanette will provide a breakthrough prayer each month, inviting the Holy Spirit to form and transform us through this communal practice. Our hope is that these resources not only encourage your personal journey into these passages of scripture and provoke you to new steps of faith, but also support you as you invite and lead others to do the same.

Additionally, to help spur one another on, we invite you to share ways in which you and/or your congregations are participating in this discipleship journey as a means of growing in Christlikeness and being renewed in our commitment to be sent into the world to share the hope and good news of Jesus Christ.

"This journey is more than reading," said Bishop Lanette. "It's about growing as disciples; finding alignment in heart, mission, and ministry; and discovering how the Gospel can inspire us today. By walking through these scriptures together as an Area, we center our lives on Christ's teachings and create space for the Spirit to work in new and powerful ways—renewing our faith, reaching new people, and offering healing to a world in need."



Christmas Word Search Puzzle

Courtesy of Christmas-Projects.com



TYULETIDEMCHRISTMASLIGHTSPACBNG
 NSLIHAOAHVHSNBGESNOWFLAKEBDKHCI
 CRHDVCGSCTIGNTOMOTATHREEWISEMEN
 STOYSYUHAOMEDHEWNUTCRAACKERVFJWG
 CNLBJCMEYSNCBORNAMENTSUZSWIYZIE
 JOLLYARRUDEHALGAKIGLYMOECRAEOCR
 ITYOJWADXNYEMISTLETOEOELSEHSLLEB
 NSCANDYCANESCDFVGRYPNDOPDURNSAR
 GOBPUACHRISTMASTREEMNGLSTREMNGE
 LCSCROOGEBLNDYCAITNAIAGTREASTYA
 ETGTWDMBVSEULSEVNHCESFEKRECNAD
 BSNHIAEEFUITVCJRKTSEILUCDNHOIRM
 EILJRHTMRHGSHAEFEMASGEHOQUCOAIA
 LWKFUYZNERHCDISWBGRCGEVERNAKUKN
 LECAEPWVSAYVEQUJBTNALNCSRSITAE
 SOOINREINDEERHSAOECARAHOEMOEAPV
 NHTNYEVXRNTNSUMEIKUOMCUECHVSARI
 LMSOGSAETAESPPODFAVMWSIHSILESNIT
 CEDBUEUNATIVITYOFSOJACKFROSTUHS
 UOGBTNHCOEYKRMUTLNORTHPOLECFWRE
 PSWINTERSLTEISDYSPENSASWRUKRNAF
 IEFRESVOIWRSTZOMTCHLROUCLYMOIRC
 DKLTLLULMEUEPRANCEROGARLANDASETA
 JOSTVYAEAOUIHBNITREICTOEBWITYRG
 NAPWEFRXDELCEMZEPA LRANEZVOXTYNOJ
 CHRISTMASDINNERCDEFBLITZENDFIMK

Angels
 Candy Canes
 Chimney
 Comet
 Donner
 Frosty
 Ivy
 Joy
 Noel
 Prancer
 Santa Clause
 Snowflake
 Tinsel
 Yuletide

Bells
 Cards
 Christmas Dinner
 Cookies
 Elves
 Garland
 Jack Frost
 Manger
 North Pole
 Presents
 Scrooge
 Snowman
 Toys

Blitzen
 Carols
 Christmas Lights
 Cupid
 Family
 Gingerbread Man
 Jesus
 Merry
 Nutcracker
 Reindeer
 Season
 Spirit
 Vixen

Bow
 Cheer
 Christmas Tree
 Dancer
 Festive
 Holidays
 Jingle Bells
 Mistletoe
 Ornaments
 Ribbon
 Sled
 Stockings
 Winter

Candles
 Chestnuts
 Church
 Dasher
 Fireplace
 Holly
 Jolly
 Nativity
 Peace
 Rudolph
 Sleigh
 Three Wise Men
 Wreath



Racine United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 127
Racine, MN 55967

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401 E. Main St.
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Phone:
507-378-4801
E-Mail:
rscumc@hmtel.com

Our mission is
to make disciples
of Jesus Christ for
the transformation
of the world

Sunday Morning Schedule

8:30 am in person
Online
Radio 89.7 FM

Church Website
<https://www.umcracinemn.org>

January 2025