

# Welcome to Worship!

**Sunday, December 28, 2025**

**First Sunday after Christmas**

**Worship Theme: Building Community**

**\*Please stand as you are able.**

## PRELUDE

*O Little Town of Bethlehem* arr. by E. Smith  
Piano/Organ Duet; Lisa Hamilton and Marilyn Tice

## WELCOME

Pastor Karen Evenson

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

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 witness with Anna.      **All: Jesus is our hope!**  
One: We hold fast to our faith,      **All: trusting God's promises.**  
One: Young and old, declare it together:      **All: love is born and salvation is here!**  
One: Come and worship, all you who dream and imagine.  
**All: We have come to wonder and praise on this first Sunday of Christmas!**

## \*HYMN

*The First Noel* (UMH 245 v 1-2)

## OPENING PRAYER

God of hopefulness, give us lives of holy anticipation, that we remain fervent in faith, and persistent in love, as we await the revelation of your redemption. Bless us in every stage of life with your unfailing presence, promised through the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

*(insert)*

**HYMN** (*remain seated*)

*Away in a Manger* (UMH 217 v 1)

**KIDS MESSAGE** (*Kids of all ages are invited to come up front for a kid-friendly message*)

**MOMENT TO SHARE THE STORY**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

One: God of generations, we know that in the temple, at the table, elders speak from sacred experience. In the classroom, at the park, children enact the realities they imagine. On the canvas, in the wilderness, at the bus stop, your people share their dreams for a world healed and made whole.

**All: Holy One, we pray gratefully for deep faith, courageous wisdom, and enduring hope.**

One: When we are tempted to listen to the loudest, to trust the strongest, to give our attention to those who buy and sell it, call us back to you, and to those whose witness points to you. Remind us that your revolution chooses prophets we might not expect to deliver good news we couldn't have dreamed up.

**All: Holy One, we pray in gratitude for deep faith, courageous wisdom, and enduring hope.**

One: Make us attentive to each other's needs, curious about each other's visions. In each other's cries of pain and proclamations of blessing, may we hear your heart for our world. Today we offer these specific prayers of our congregation...

*(Leader will offer the prayers of the congregation)*

**All: Holy One, we pray in gratitude for deep faith, courageous wisdom, and enduring hope. Amen.**

**\*HYMN**

*Angels We Have Heard on High* (UMH 238 v 1-2)

**SCRIPTURE READING**

**Luke 2:22-40** (CEB)

**MESSAGE**

***"Generational Praise"***

Adam Breiner, Discipleship Coordinator

**HYMN DURING THE OFFERING** (*remain seated*)     *O, Come All Ye Faithful* (UMH 234 v. 1-3)

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* (UMH 94)

**\*THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**\*HYMN**

*Go, Tell it On the Mountain* (UMH 251)

**PASSING PEACE TO ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

***From one to another, "May God's peace be with you (and also with you)."***

**\*BLESSING AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

*God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* arr. by G. Pollock

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*Stewardship Note: a reminder that all Christmas offerings and year-end gifts must be made in person, online, (or postmarked) by December 31, 2025 in order to be counted in 2025.  
The church office closes at 3:00 p.m. on December 31st.*

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**January 4, 2026**  
**9:30am Worship (in-person and online)**  
**Epiphany Sunday and Communion Sunday**  
**Matthew 2:1-15**  
**“Courageous Defiance”**  
Message by Pastor Karen Evenson

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**Worship Hospitality Team**  
Building Opener and Closer ~ Adam Breiner  
Choral Conductor ~ George Chu  
Coffee/Donut Steward ~ Bridgett Ansong and Cassie Johnson  
Congregational Care Coordinator ~ Sue Buckland  
Greeters ~ Lisa and Will Hamilton  
Liturgist ~ Bridgett Ansong  
Music Ensembles ~ *To be prayerfully determined*  
Nursery Coordinator and Volunteer ~ Amanda Harris and Sarah Dhein  
Organist ~ Marilyn Tice  
Pastor ~ Rev. Karen Evenson  
Praise Team Coordinator ~ Kelvin Paye  
Scripture Reader ~ Bridgett Ansong  
Snow Removal and Salting ~ Arlee Carlson and Ian Wallin  
Sunday School Leader and Assistant ~ Julie Weber and Meredith Berry  
Ushers ~ David Blincow, Gail Sanstad, Ian Wallin,  
Joyce Buffington, Roxy Crane, and Mark Worst  
Welcome Center ~ Colleen Capuzzi  
Worship Tech ~ Dallas Berry

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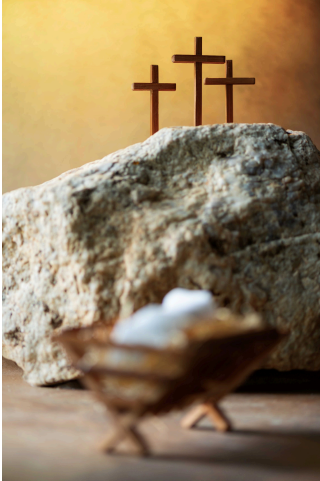
**WEEKLY SCHEDULE:**

UMCA Office Hours: 9:00am - 3:00pm ~ Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday  
Or by appointment, please contact us at:  
Phone: 763-421-2378 | Email: [umcanoka@gmail.com](mailto:umcanoka@gmail.com)

Tuesday, December 30, 2025	1:00pm Card Games in the Community Room 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal
Thursday, January 1, 2025	Have a Happy and Safe New Year!
Friday, January 2, 2025	9:30am Feed My Starving Children
Sunday, January 4, 2025	<b>SUNDAY SERVICE</b> 9:30am Worship (In-Person & Online) 9:45am Sunday School 12:30pm Confirmation

# DECEMBER

## Ministry Highlight of the Month



**United For The Community:  
EASTER “Resurrection & New Life”**

**We will be inviting our neighbors to an  
Easter Community Event in March/April of 2026.**

**Easter is April 5, 2026**

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### **WORSHIP NOTES:**

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**Scan QR Code to connect to our website for more information on  
the church, to donate, or view our weekly bulletin:**



## FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

**Scripture:** Luke 2:22-40 & Psalm 148

**Character Spotlight:** Anna

### THEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

This week's text offers no miracles, no angels, no crowds. Instead, we see a quiet, sacred unveiling—an infant brought to the temple by faithful parents, met by two elders whose wisdom and devotion allow them to recognize what others might miss. Anna's story reminds us that faithfulness is often slow, persistent, and rooted in daily presence. Her authority doesn't come from spectacle or visibility, but from decades of prayer, praise, and showing up. She blesses with her life and her voice.

In a society that often devalues aging and sidelines women, Anna's witness disrupts the myth that worth is tied to productivity or youth. Her story names what's wrong—that long love and quiet devotion are too often overlooked—and imagines better: a kin(g)dom where faith is honored not with position but with presence. We lament the loneliness of waiting and being unseen. But Anna teaches us how to live it out: by recognizing what is holy, naming what is true, and proclaiming joy even after a long silence.



### CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT

Anna's name means "grace," and her life is grace in motion. Described as devout and present day after day in the temple, Anna is not remembered for dramatic acts or public miracles, but for her recognition. Her long years of worship, prayer, and fasting form the foundation of a holy attentiveness. She sees what others miss: that this ordinary-looking baby is the beginning of something extraordinary. Her ability to recognize God at work is her gift—and her voice rises to share it.

While Simeon speaks to the parents, Anna speaks to everyone who waits and longs for redemption. She doesn't just keep her recognition private—she announces it with joy. Anna's presence is her proclamation. In a culture that often ignores elders, dismisses women, and values usefulness over devotion, Anna becomes a witness not in spite of her age, but because of it. She teaches us that recognizing what is sacred, especially after long waiting, is a holy act. And when we see clearly—like Anna—we must speak.



## First Sunday after Christmas: Lighting the Candles

Person A: Jesus is born!  
us!

**All: Emmanuel! God is with**

Person B: Today, we light the four Advent candles...that we might be reminded to have *vigilant hope*, bring *prophetic peace*, being open to *unexpected joy*, sharing *merciful love*

*(Light the four candles...for hope, peace, joy, and love)*

Person A: So, what is different? For Mary and Joseph, everything changed. They were parents now, tasked with caring for a fragile infant. We weren't witnesses to the actual birth; rather, we are celebrating a memorial of a momentous event. We live on this side of the crucifixion and resurrection, and through the Holy Spirit, God is with us every day. *So, what is different?*

Person A: With the new year upon us, take a moment and name injustices, difficulties, and systemic changes that harm our community and world.

*(pause for people to name these out loud, in their hearts, and in the online chat)*

Person A: Naming what is wrong is a sacred task of the church known as lament. We can't work toward making things right if we don't understand and name what is wrong.

*Light the Christ candle.*

Person B: Struggles, however, are not the only reality. We light the Christ Candle as a reminder of the promise of blessings that are also present and deserve attention. Like the candles, blessings brighten when lighted and displayed for all to see. As we approach a new year, we will now share out loud some blessings that have taken place over the past year and ones we anticipate for the coming year.

*(pause for people to name these out loud, in their hearts, and in the online chat)*

**All: Emmanuel, God-with-us, thank you for giving us your will to dream, and giving us the strength to go forward, living out your blessings for generations!**