

When do Small Groups meet next?

Book Group - "Demon Copperhead" by Barbara Kingsolver	Monday 1/26 @ 7pm
Chair Yoga	Resumes in February
FaithTalk Bible Study	Tuesday @ 12 noon
Grief Support Group	Thursday 01/08 @ 12 noon
Line Dancing	Resumes in February
Prayer Team	Wednesday @ 5:00pm
Skeptic's Circle Meets at Brick & Ivy Coffee Co. 27754 Bluegrass Dr, Channahon, IL 60410	Tuesday 01/13 @ 6:30PM
United Women in Faith Afternoon Circle	Not meeting in Jan. & Feb.
Youth Group 6th through 12th Grades	Wednesday @ 7:00pm

LEADERS IN TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE

LAY READER
SONG LEADERS

SHARI MILLARD
RUTH SATORIUS, GAIL GIRARD,
SUSAN SPENCER

CHURCH STAFF

MINISTERS
LEAD PASTOR
OFFICE MANAGER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

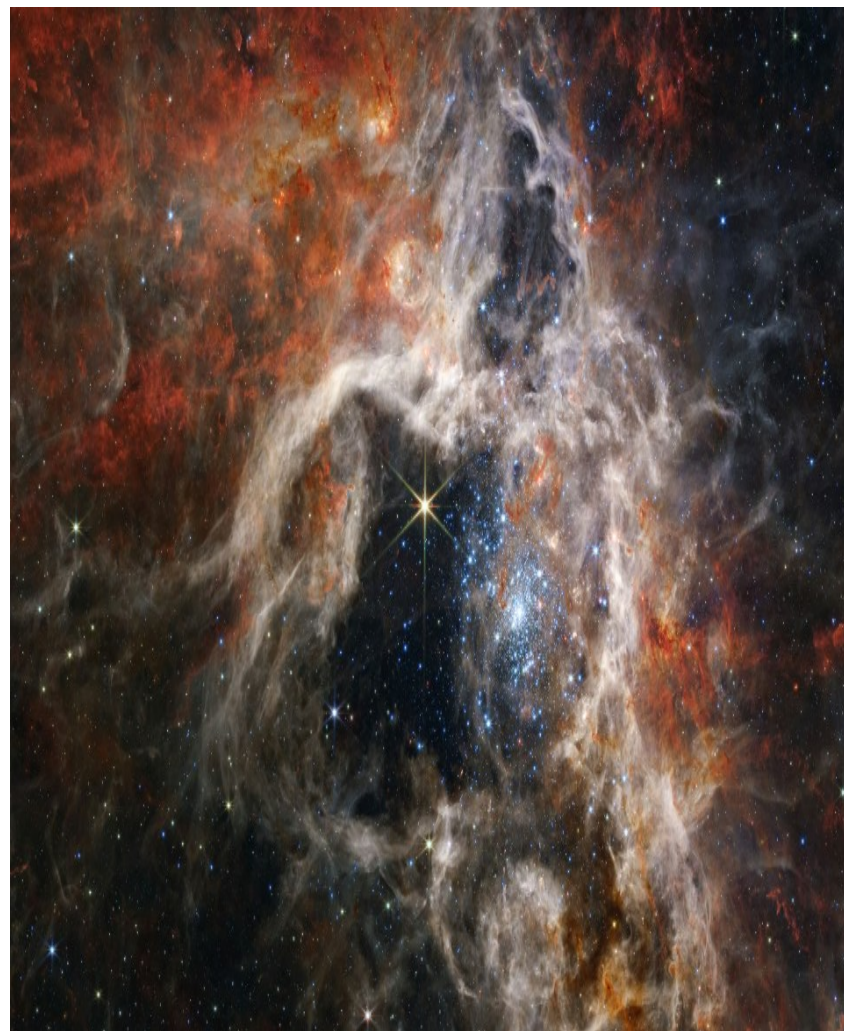
ALL DISCIPLES OF JESUS
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Fear Doesn't Stop Us



Tarantula Nebula via James Webb Space Telescope

Welcome!

Minooka United Methodist Church

Sunday, January 4, 2026 9:30am

Welcome to Minooka United Methodist Church

January 4, 2026 9:30am

* Stand if you are able

ENTERING MUSIC

WELCOMING

Pastor Dave

PREPARING

*GATHERING

Lay Reader

Reader: In the dark of morning,
Many Voices: the stars still shine.

Reader: In the depth of winter,
Many Voices: the birds still climb.

Reader: At the start of the year, tender and new,
Many Voices: God is here. God is near.

Reader: Do not rest in your fear.
Many Voices: God is here.

Reader: So like the stars and the birds,
Many Voices: Let us worship the God of all seasons and all peoples!

***SINGING** "Angels from Realms of Glory" UM Hymnal #220

Verse 1

Angels from the realms of glory
Wing your flight o'er all the earth
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth

Refrain

Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King

Verse 2

Shepherds in the field abiding
Watching o'er your flocks by night
God with us is now residing
Yonder shines the infant light

(Refrain)

~This Week at MUMC~

SUNDAY 4TH

9:30AM WORSHIP EXPERIENCE
10:45AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:45AM CONFIRMATION COHORT

MONDAY 5TH

6:00PM CUB SCOUTS MEET

TUESDAY 6TH

12:00PM FAITH TALK BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY 7TH

5:00PM PRAYER GROUP
7:00PM YOUTH GROUP

THURSDAY 8TH

12:00PM GREIF SUPPORT GROUP

FRIDAY 9TH

SATURDAY 10TH



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

6 Gus DeGuzman

5 Greg & Merinda Leach



We invite you to return January 11th for the start of our next sermon series, **The Gospel According to Pop Culture Icons**. It will be a fun look at the messages we constantly receive from folks like Taylor, Kendrick, Bruce, and more. What makes music so powerful? How do these folks use their influence? What might we learn from them about how to be faithful disciples of Jesus?



We are now serving 61 families!

We are so grateful for your generosity making that possible. We are thankful that we are able to respond to increased hunger in our community due to the delay in SNAP benefits; however we are still in need of your help . Some items we are in need of are: complete pancake mix, pancake syrup, boxed potatoes, canned pasta (Spaghetti O’s, ravioli, etc), pasta sauce, spaghetti noodles, and cereal. All food and toiletry donations are appreciated. Thank you!

Verse 3

Sages leave your contemplations
Brighter visions beam afar
Seek the great Desire of nations
Ye have seen His natal star
(Refrain)

Verse 4

Saints before the altar bending
Watching long in hope and fear
Suddenly the Lord descending
In His temple shall appear
(Refrain)

CONVERSING WITH CHILDREN

PRAYING

Lay Reader

[Quiet prayer for centering and reflection]

Call to Confession

Reader: Friends, on this Epiphany Sunday we stand at the start of a new year, and there is nothing better about a new year than the chance to begin again. That is exactly what we do in the Prayer of Confession. We speak honestly with God and God surrounds us with grace. We are able to begin again. So may we start this new year, this new season, this new week with God’s grace. Let us begin again, together.

Prayer of Confession

Many Voices: Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again. So today we pray—forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks. Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call. Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action. Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world.

Words of Forgiveness

Reader: Found Family, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid, God's love for you is evergreen. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

Many Voices: Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless. We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God!

[Quiet prayer for reflection]

Prayers for the World

Reader: Creator of stars, of sunsets and sunrises, of big horizons and even bigger skies, we ask you to fill our hearts with courage. In a world that is rattled with fear, show us the places we can make a difference. Guide our steps, so that, like the magi, we might walk toward you in courage. There are a million reasons we have to be afraid, God, but we do not want fear to stop us. So make us like the magi. Grant us the courage to keep walking. Grant us the conviction to keep hoping. Grant us the imagination to keep dreaming. Grant us the faith to keep seeking. With hope, we look to the stars. With hope, we reach for each other. With hope, we choose to keep walking. With hope, we pray together as Jesus taught us saying... [Lord's Prayer UM Hymnal #894]

***SINGING** "Carol of the Epiphany" The Faith We Sing #2094

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

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.

PRAYING AFTER RECEIVING

Many Voices: Holy God who lights our way, thank you for this moment of respite along the journey; a moment to be reminded of our belovedness and sent out to be your hands and feet in the world. Though we'd often prefer a straightforward, step-by-step plan for our lives, you've instead given us an invitation to wander, to seek, to take a different road, to be guided by a star. With gratitude we pray, amen.

***SINGING** "We Three Kings" UM Hymnal #254

Verse 1

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain

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

Verse 2

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

(Refrain)

Verse 3

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, voices raising, worshipping God on high.

(Refrain)

Verse 4

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

(Refrain)

Verse 5

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

(Refrain)

***SENDING FORTH**

EXITING MUSIC

Many Voices: Radiant God, the light of your love shines for all who seek you, guiding us not with force, but with grace. Like the magi, we bear gifts in response to the gift you've given us in Christ. Use these offerings to reflect your love, your justice, and your joy in the world. Keep us faithful in our seeking, generous in our sharing, and willing to follow wherever your star shines next. Amen.

CELEBRATING COMMUNION

Pastor Dave: Holy God, we follow every path in search of you. And yet, you are already here. You have been with us all along, leaving breadcrumbs of grace. Let the taste of this bread and cup open our eyes to the places we've met you. Let these words remind us to seek you out in even the most unexpected places. Guide us, invite us, challenge us in the year ahead, and remind us that we are yours, your beloved, whom you have claimed, redeemed, and called good.

Pastor Dave: On the night before he died, Jesus took the loaf of bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his friends, saying:

Many Voices: This bread is broken as my body will be broken.

Remember me whenever you eat it.

Pastor Dave: When supper was finished, Jesus took the cup of wine, blessed it, and gave it to his friends, saying:

Many Voices: This cup is poured out as my blood will be poured out. Remember me whenever you drink it.

Pastor Dave: With thanksgiving we eat and drink; With joy we remember, and with Christ's inclusive love we gather together around this table.

Many Voices: Amen!

[The United Methodist offers open Communion. That means *all* are welcome at this table. We serve by intinction: lightly dip the piece of bread into the cup then eat. Please walk up the center aisle and return by the side aisles. If you have mobility issues, we will bring the elements to you. Self-contained packets of bread and juice are also available. All the bread is gluten free.]

Verse 3

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.

Verse 4

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.

Verse 5

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.

READING SCRIPTURE Matthew 2:1-18 (The Voice)

Lay Reader

2 Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in the province of Judea, at the time when King Herod reigned. *Not long after Jesus was born*, magi, wise men or seers from the East, made their way from the East to Jerusalem. These wise men made inquiries.

Wise Men: ² Where is this newborn, who is the King of the Jews? When we were far away in the East we saw His star, and we have followed its glister and gleam all this way to worship Him.

³ King Herod began to hear rumors of the wise men's quest, and he, and all of his followers in Jerusalem, were worried. ⁴ So Herod called all of the leading Jewish teachers, the chief priests and head scribes, and he asked them where *Hebrew tradition claimed* the long-awaited Anointed One would be born.

Scribes and Priests: ⁵ *An ancient Hebrew prophet, Micah, said this:*

⁶ But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are no poor relation—

For from your people will come a Ruler
who will be the shepherd of My people Israel.

⁷ Herod called the wise men to him, demanding to know the exact time the special star had appeared to them. ⁸ Then Herod sent them to Bethlehem.

Herod: *Go to Bethlehem and search high and low for this Savior child; and as soon as you know where He is, report it to me so that I may go and worship Him.*

⁹⁻¹⁰ The wise men left Herod's chambers and went on their way. The star they had first seen in the East reappeared—a miracle that, of course, overjoyed and enraptured the wise men. The star led them to the house where Jesus lay; ¹¹ and as soon as the wise men arrived, they saw Him with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. They unpacked their satchels and gave Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² And then, just as Joseph did a few months before, the wise men had a dream warning them not to go back to Herod. *The wise men heeded the dream. Ignoring Herod's instructions, they returned to their homes in the East by a different route.*

¹³ After the wise men left, a messenger of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

Messenger of the Lord (to Joseph): *Get up, take the child and His mother, and head to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you it is safe to leave. For Herod understands that Jesus threatens him and all he stands for. He is planning to search for the child and kill Him. But you will be safe in Egypt.*

¹⁴ So Joseph got up in the middle of the night; he bundled up Mary and Jesus, and they left for Egypt.

¹⁶ *After a few months had passed, Herod realized he'd been tricked. The wise men were not coming back. Herod, of course, was furious. He simply ordered that all boys who lived in or near Bethlehem and were two years of age and younger be killed. He knew the baby King was this age because of what the wise men told him.*

¹⁷ This sad event had long been foretold by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ A voice will be heard in Ramah,
weeping and wailing and mourning out loud all day and night.
*The voice is Rachel's, weeping for her children,
her children who have been killed;
she weeps, and she will not be comforted.*

¹⁵ Joseph, Mary, and Jesus stayed in Egypt until Herod died. This fulfilled yet another prophecy. The prophet Hosea once wrote, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Reader: God of the Stars, like the magi, we come to this place searching for you. So today, just like every day, we ask that you would remove any barricades that keep us from your Spirit. Clear out the distractions. Wipe away the doubt.

Many Voices: Open up our hearts, and speak to us through these ancient words. And as you do, we will keep walking. As you do, we will move toward you. With hope we pray, amen.

PROCLAIMING

Fear Doesn't Stop Us

Pastor Dave

GIVING

Pastor Dave

