

## When do Small Groups meet next?

<b>Book Group</b> - Book Group will not meet in December	Monday 1/26 @ 7pm
<b>Chair Yoga</b>	Resumes in February
<b>FaithTalk Bible Study</b>	Resumes Tues., Jan. 6th
<b>Grief Support Group</b>	Thursday 01/08 @ 12 noon
<b>Line Dancing</b>	Resumes in February
<b>Prayer Team</b>	Resumes Wed., Jan. 7th
<b>Skeptic's Circle</b> Meets at Brick & Ivy Coffee Co. 27754 Bluegrass Dr, Channahon, IL 60410	Tuesday 01/13 @ 6:30PM
<b>United Women in Faith Afternoon Circle</b>	Not meeting in Jan. & Feb.
<b>Youth Group</b> 6th through 12th Grades	Resumes Wed., Jan. 7th



### CHURCH STAFF

MINISTERS  
LEAD PASTOR  
OFFICE MANAGER  
MUSIC DIRECTOR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

ALL DISCIPLES OF JESUS  
REV. DAVE BUERSTETTA  
MELISSA CANDLER  
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### CHURCH CONTACT

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## Christmas Eve



"Good, New" from Sanctified Art

## Welcome!

**Minooka United Methodist Church**  
**Sunday, December 24, 2025 9:00pm**

**Welcome to Minooka United Methodist Church  
December 24, 2025 9:00pm**

\* Stand if you are able

**ENTERING MUSIC**

**WELCOMING**

Pastor Dave

**\*GATHERING**

Lay Reader

Reader: On this holy night, we gather,

**Many Voices: dazzled and awe-struck, ready to sing alongside the angels.**

Reader: On this holy night, we gather,

**Many Voices: eager and hopeful, ready to journey alongside the shepherds.**

Reader: On this holy night, we gather,

**Many Voices: quietly and tenderly, ready to worship alongside Mary.**

Reader: On this holy night, we gather,

**Many Voices: singing, trusting, believing, and proclaiming: Good news is louder than fear!**

**\*SINGING** "O Come All Ye Faithful" UMH #234, v1&6

Verse 1

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.



## Upcoming Worship Experiences

**Sunday, December 28 at 9:30am:** Christmas season worship experience, "Time to Send Them Packing" lead by Lay Speaker Kim Nave

**Sunday, January 4 at 9:30am:** Epiphany Sunday worship experience, celebrating Communion, "Fear Doesn't Stop Us"

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?

# What's Happening at Minooka UMC!

## MONTHLY SKEPTIC'S CIRCLE

Questions about faith and the meaning of life can sometimes feel overwhelming. The Skeptic's Circle offers a welcoming space for open, honest conversation about the emotions, doubts, and ideas about faith, God, and life you might have been taught not to question. Meets at Brick & Ivy Coffee Company (27754 Bluegrass Dr, Channahon, IL 60410) on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM. See you January 13th.

## MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Our Grief Support Group meets the second Thursday of each month at 12:00Noon. It is open to anyone grieving a death. There is no cost and a light lunch is provided. Join us January 8th.

## WEEKLY YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group for students in 6th-12th grades meets Wednesday evenings 7:00-8:00PM. Youth Group is a place to belong where students can show up just as they are, build friendships, and grow in their faith. All our Youth Group leaders complete Safe Gathering training and a background check. Join us when we resume after the holidays, January 7th.

## WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School for children in PreK-5th grade meets at 10:45AM following our worship service. All our Sunday School teachers complete Safe Gathering training and a background check.

### Verse 6

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

### Refrain

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT and CHRIST CANDLES

The Buerstetta Family

Family: In a fearful world, where do you see the presence of God?

**Many Voices: We see God's fingerprints all around us. We see God in the beauty of the stars. We see God in the love of this community. We see God in the dreams we hold for a better world.**

Family: You are right. Even in a fearful world, God is here. God is all around us. On this holy night, we light the Christ Candle as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, God's love is all around us.

*[Light all the candles]*

**Many Voices: Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.**

**\*SINGING** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" UMH #240, v1

### Verse 1

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:  
Peace on Earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

### Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**\*SINGING** “Angels We Have Heard on High” UMH #238, v1&3

Verse 1

Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Verse 2

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

**PRAYING**

Lay Reader

*Call to Confession*

Reader: Found Family, on the night of Jesus’ birth, a crowd of angels appeared before a group of rag-tag shepherds to tell them the good news. The angels *could* have gone to Herod’s house. The angels *could* have sung in the city square. The angels *could* have found the most important, faithful, and powerful to share the good news, but instead they told a group of low-status shepherds. The angels’ message was clear:

This is *good* news of *great joy* for all people. The good news of this night is for you too—no matter who you are, what you’ve done or left undone. The angels are singing for you. So join me in the Prayer of Confession. Join me in drawing closer to the God who has already drawn close to us. Let us pray.

Christmas Eve | What do you fear?  
Good news is louder than fear

## *Honeysuckle*

*There is an abandoned house on my block.  
Maybe someone owns it and is just waiting to fix it up,  
or maybe it belongs to a family that simply cannot let it  
go.  
Either way, the yard is an overgrown tangle of weeds—  
crabgrass and yellow nutsedge, horsetail and clover—  
unforgiving and entrenched.  
Over the summer, a honeysuckle bush crept  
from that forgotten house over the fence and through the  
yard.  
It spilled out in broad patches on the sidewalk. As a  
result,  
you could not pass that mess of a house without the taste  
of honey in your mouth.  
You could not pass that mess of a house without being  
engulfed in the sweet scent  
of something good. It was almost as if the earth was  
saying, sure, things are chaotic here,  
but pause for a moment. Pull a flower bud off in your  
fingers. Break the stem.  
Slurp the tiny bead of honey at the base. Remember that  
even when bad news is unforgiving  
and entrenched, good news grows out of its cage, across  
the sidewalk, just to get to you.*

Poem by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

**\*SINGING**

“Joy to the World”

UMH #246

Verse 1

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Verse 2

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Verse 3

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.

Verse 4

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

**\*SENDING FORTH**

**EXITING MUSIC**

*Prayer of Confession*

**Many Voices: God of angel choruses, you hang the stars in the sky, but we do not see them. You fill the night with angelic song, but we do not hear it. You send shepherds to tell the good news, but we do not believe them. You bring love into the world, but we do not seek it. Quiet the fear in us that works to rationalize, minimize, and distract from the good news you put forth into the world. Tune our hearts back to your song. With hope we pray.**

[Quiet prayer for reflection]

*Words of Forgiveness*

Reader: Found Family, when the angels arrived in the field that night, the shepherds were afraid. But the angels said:

**Many Voices: “Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people.”**

Reader: This good news is:

**Many Voices: love freely given, grace radically extended, welcome always offered, belonging never restricted.**

Reader: Friends, we are seen, loved, welcomed, forgiven, called, and sent to serve. Thanks be to God for a love like that! Our prayer concludes as Jesus taught us to pray, saying,

**Many Voices: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

Prayers adapted from Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



**GIVING**

Pastor Dave



**BLESSING our GIFTS with MUSIC & PRAYER**

Lay Reader

**Many Voices: Loving God, this night our hearts are full. May our response be generous. May our gifts be welcome. May our time and work bear fruit. Take who we are, what we can offer, and use us to share your love, born this night. Amen.**

**\*SINGING and CANDLE LIGHTING**

“Silent Night” UMH #239

[As “Silent Night” is sung and lights are dimmed, Pastor Dave will light a candle from the Christ candle and then light the candle of the first person at the end of each aisle. As the light is passed down your row, keep the lit candle upright and tip the unlit candle. Before leaving the pew, please extinguish your candles. Battery candles are available for children.]

Verse 1

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Verse 2

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Verse 3

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
Radiant beams from thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Verse 4

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels let us sing,  
Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Pastor Dave: On the night before he died, Jesus took the 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: And so, in remembrance of Jesus—the One who knows us and calls us by name—we offer our lives in love and service. Send your Holy Spirit on this these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the nourishment to be Jesus’ body in the world, carrying love to every corner where names are forgotten, where lives are overlooked, and where hope feels far away. The bread we break is the bread of life. The cup we bless is the cup of love. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

**Many Voices: Amen!**

[The United Methodist offers open Communion. That means *all* are welcome at this table. Today 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.]

### PRAYING AFTER RECEIVING

**Many Voices: Loving God, in a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits.**

**You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, amen.**

### \*SINGING

“The First Noel”

UMH #245, v1-2

#### Verse 1

The first Noel the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

#### Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
Born is the King of Israel.

#### Verse 2

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east, beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.

(Refrain)

### READING SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1-20 (The Voice)

Lay Reader

*Around the time of Elizabeth’s amazing pregnancy and John’s birth, the emperor in Rome, Caesar Augustus, required everyone in the Roman Empire to participate in a massive census—<sup>2</sup> the first census since Quirinius had become governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> Each person had to go to his or her ancestral city to be counted.*

<sup>4-5</sup> Mary’s fiancé Joseph, from Nazareth in Galilee, had to participate in the census in the same way *everyone else did*. Because he was a descendant of *King David*, his ancestral city was Bethlehem, David’s birthplace. Mary, who was now late in her pregnancy *that the messenger Gabriel had predicted*, <sup>6</sup> accompanied Joseph. While in Bethlehem, she went into labor <sup>7</sup> and gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped the baby in a blanket and laid Him in a feeding trough because the inn had no room for them.

<sup>8</sup> Nearby, in the fields outside of Bethlehem, a group of shepherds were guarding their flocks *from predators* in the darkness of night. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly a messenger of the Lord stood in front of them, and the darkness was replaced by a glorious light—the shining light of God’s glory. They were terrified!

**Messenger:** <sup>10</sup> Don’t be afraid! Listen! I bring good news, news of great joy, news that will affect all people everywhere. <sup>11</sup> Today, in the city of David, a Liberator has been born for you! He is the promised Anointed One, the Supreme Authority! <sup>12</sup> You will know you have found Him when you see a baby, wrapped in a blanket, lying in a feeding trough.

<sup>13</sup> At that moment, the first heavenly messenger was joined by thousands of other messengers—a vast heavenly choir. They praised God.

<sup>14</sup> **Heavenly Choir:** To the highest heights of the universe, glory to God!  
And on earth, peace among all people who bring pleasure to God!

<sup>15</sup> As soon as the heavenly messengers disappeared into heaven, the shepherds were buzzing with conversation.

**Shepherds:** Let’s rush down to Bethlehem right now! Let’s see what’s happening! Let’s experience what the Lord has told us about!

<sup>16</sup> So they ran into town, and *eventually* they found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in the feeding trough. After they saw the baby, <sup>17</sup> they spread the story of *what they had experienced* and what had been said to them about this child. <sup>18</sup> Everyone who heard their story couldn’t stop thinking about its meaning. <sup>19</sup> Mary, too, pondered all of these events, treasuring each memory in her heart.

<sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned *to their flocks*, praising God for all they had seen and heard, and they glorified God for the way the experience had unfolded just as the heavenly messenger had predicted.

Reader: Prince of Peace, bless the reading, hearing, and living of these words. Awaken in us your love, which is bigger than the sky, and as close as our very breath.

**Many Voices: Amen.**

**PROCLAIMING** Good News is Louder than Fear Pastor Dave

### CELEBRATING COMMUNION

Pastor Dave: On this holy night, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we remember that love knows our names. From the shepherds in the fields, to Mary in her strength; from Joseph who stood by her, to the shepherds who were the first to respond; God’s love called each by name. And tonight, God’s love calls you.

**Many Voices: We come to the table where love meets us, knows us, and welcomes us.**

Pastor Dave: This is Christ’s table, open to all who seek the way of love. No matter who you are or where you come from, love knows your name and makes space for you here. God is with you. On this holy night, we give thanks for the gift of Jesus, who was born into the world to show us that love is not distant but near—near enough to call each of us by name.

**Many Voices: We thank you, O God, for your love that spoke creation into being, for your faithfulness through prophets and promises, and for your presence in the life of Jesus, who taught us how to love and be loved.**

Pastor Dave: With angels singing and shepherds rejoicing, we join the heavenly chorus:

**Many Voices: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**