

CAROL: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

LBW #54 (Vs. 1 & 4)

DAY TWELVE: EVE OF EPIPHANY

January 5

Lesson: Matthew 2:1

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: Thanks be to God. *Ring bells.*

The Magi traveled to find the Christ. In some places it is tradition to have a festive celebration. Partygoers move progressively, following a star to friends' homes and receiving hospitality at each house. The evening ends with carol singing, remembering the journey of the Magi.

CAROL: "The First Noel"

LBW #56

DAY THIRTEEN: EPIPHANY

January 6

Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: Thanks be to God. *Ring bells.*

*Epiphany* means manifestation, revelation, God's appearance in God's creation. There are many different traditions that are used during this time. The purpose of Epiphany is to honor the visit of the Magi. In some places there will be a party with a cake with a bean, or a coin, baked in it. Whoever gets the bean in their piece is the king or queen for the evening. Sometimes they have more of a responsibility; they also have to host the party carnival before Lent starts on Shrove (Fat) Tuesday. On the Eve of Three Kings Day in Puerto Rico, children put hay in their shoes and place them outside for the animals of the Magi as they go by. When the hay is gone in the morning, they find toys or candy in its place. In Italy, Befana leaves surprises. The name Befana is from the word epiphany. A cranky fellow named Rodolfo joins her, threatening people with punishment if they have been naughty. Befana wanted to join the Magi in search of the Christ but at the last minute lost her courage. We've all lost our courage at some point. So now on every Epiphany she goes from house to house searching for Christ. Everywhere she goes, she sees Christ in everyone she meets.

Offering & Prayers — Gift of Music: Karen Salz (Sweet Child of Mercy)

CLOSING CAROL: "The Twelve Days of Christmas" ... Vs. 12 only—see page 2

BENEDICTION & DISMISSAL (RING BELLS)

POSTLUDE



Christmas  
Bell-Ringing  
Service  
6:00 PM

"Celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas"



**INTRODUCTION**

*During the twelve days of Christmas the people of God gather to celebrate the birth of the Word made flesh, Christ our Lord. Luke recounts the familiar story of shepherds and angels; John's gospel tells of the Word that dwells among us, full of grace and truth. The meaning of Christmas is made clear: the light shines in the darkness. It is in the liturgy that we encounter the Word made flesh—in the people of God gathered together as the body of Christ, and in the meal around the holy table. We go forth to be bearers of light as we proclaim this good news of the Incarnation to all the ends of the earth.*

December 30, 2017

Eve of Christmas I

**Thanks** for worshiping with us this evening. Your presence is your gift to us. We pray that our Service of Word and Sacrament is a blessing to you. Sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are praising, proclaiming and practicing Emmanuel – God with us – in daily life! Merry Christmas!

**Visit us at:** [www.emmanuelofrochester.org](http://www.emmanuelofrochester.org)

### WORSHIP SERVANTS:

Pianist: P.J. Stohlmann

Scripture Readers: Jenna Serr & Julie Steffenson

Prayers & Communion: Julie Steffenson

Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Ushers: Bob Mulvihill & Creig Anderson

Sound System: Don Holtan

Coffee: Peg Holtan

Treats: Judy Pearce

Set Up: Julie Steffenson

Take Down: Janet Sunde & Friends

**An asterisk (\*) indicates that the congregation is invited to stand during the Worship Service.** As prelude music is played, we invite worshippers to center their hearts and minds in the living Presence of Jesus. “Be Still and Know That I am God! ... The LORD of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” - Psalm 46:10-11.

### PRELUDE

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tonight’s Service is very informal. Keeping the Twelve Days started back in 567 A.D.; the purpose of which was to allow God’s people more time to reflect upon and celebrate the gift of the Incarnation (God with us in the flesh). Some start counting THE DAYS on December 25, others start on December 26 and run through Epiphany (the arrival of the Magi). So we have a dozen, or perhaps a baker’s dozen of DAYS. We welcome your bells! **You are invited to ring your bell at any time that the Spirit moves you, but especially after the reading of Scripture. After the reading of Scripture, the Reader will say, “This is the Word of the Lord,” and the response from you, along with the ringing of the bells, is “Thanks be to God.”**

### \*DAY NINE: INCARNATION

January 2

Lesson: John 1:14

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God. *Ring bells.*

Words can kill, and words can make alive. Words have power. In the beginning, God said, “Let there be;” God spoke creation into existence. When asked why Jesus was called The WORD, an eight-year-old girl gave this response: “Because Jesus is all God wanted to say to us.”

\*CAROL: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

LBW #41 (vs. 3-4)

\*THE GIFT OF HOLY COMMUNION: EUCHARISTIC PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

\*THE LORD’S PRAYER: Traditional Version

LBW Page 91

CAROL: “Joy to the World!” (Don & Peg Holtan)

LBW #39

\*TABLE BLESSING

\*DAY TEN: BAPTISM

January 3

Lesson: John 1:29-36

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God. *Ring bells.*

John, in his Gospel, refers to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Baptism is a covenant, a promise, a sacrament. There’s a gospel song on a Christmas tape called “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” It’s the same song that we learned as children, but the last line is “Mary had a little lamb and Jesus was his name.”

\*CAROL: “When Christ’s Appearing Was Made Known”

LBW #85 (Vs. 3)

\*DAY ELEVEN: PEACE

January 4

P: Arise, shine; for your light has come,

C: **And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.**

P: Nations shall come to your light

C: **And sovereigns to the Brightness of your rising.**

Isaiah 60:1,3

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God. *Ring bells.*

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you. (Share God’s Peace)**

CAROL: "Go Tell it on the Mountain"

LBW #70

DAY SIX: THE HOLY FAMILY

December 30

Lesson: Luke 2:25-40

L: This is the Word of the Lord.  
C: Thanks be to God. Ring bells.

Anna and Simeon waited on the LORD. Patiently, they longed for the fulfillment of promise. In the Christmas Child, in the dedication of Jesus, they saw the redemption of Israel. Together they sang their Christmas carols to the praise of God.

GIFT OF MUSIC: "O Lord, Now Let Your Servant"

LBW #339

DAY SEVEN: WATCH NIGHT

December 31

Lesson: Matthew 25:31-46

L: This is the Word of the Lord.  
C: Thanks be to God. Ring bells.

People of faith wait and watch for new beginnings to arrive. For everything there is a Season. During the Christmas Season we remember Christ's presence among the poor and we meet Him in the needs of our neighbor.

CAROL: "The Bells of Christmas "

LBW #62

DAY EIGHT: MARY, MOTHER OF OUR LORD

January 1

Lesson: Luke 2:16-21

L: This is the Word of the Lord.  
C: Thanks be to God. Ring bells.

The first day of the year is given to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as an important person in our Christian heritage. Let's consider the importance of this person in the life of Jesus. The Luke passage speaks of the shepherd's visit to Mary, of her careful pondering of the things they proclaimed. She listened. She pondered. She obeyed. God's child is now Mary's child.

CAROL: "What Child is This"

LBW #40

\*OPENING CAROL: "The Twelve Days of Christmas"

On the First day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me A Partridge in a Pear Tree

God  
Jesus Christ on the cross

On the Second day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Two Turtle Doves  
and a partridge in a pear tree.

Old and New Testaments

On the Third day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Three French Hens  
two turtle doves  
and a partridge in a pear tree.

Trinity or Gifts of the Magi, Matthew 2:11  
or "Faith, Hope & Love" 1 Corinthians 13

On the Fourth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Four Calling Birds...

4 Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

On the Fifth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Five Golden Rings...

Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,  
Numbers, Deuteronomy

On the Sixth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Six Geese a laying...

6 Days of Creation, Genesis 1

On the Seventh day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Seven Swans a swimming...

7 Miracles in John's Gospel,  
or 7 Gifts of the Spirit, Romans 12:6-8

On the Eighth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Eight Maids a milking...

8 Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-11

On the Ninth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Nine Ladies dancing

9 Fruits of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22

On the Tenth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Ten Lords a leaping...

10 Commandments, Deuteronomy 5:7-21

On the Eleventh day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Eleven Pipers piping...

11 Faithful Disciples, Acts 1:12-26

On the Twelfth day of Christmas my true love  
gave to me Twelve Drummers drumming...

12 points in the Apostles' Creed

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

- P: We will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
- C: **Because of all that the Lord has done for us, according to the abundance of His steadfast love.**
- P: He will become our Savior, His presence will save us in our distress.
- C: **In His love and in His pity He will redeem us, and we will sing His praises!** *Isaiah 63:7 (adapted)*

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE** *(Congregation may be seated)*

**THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS**

**DAY ONE: CHRISTMAS DAY** December 25  
**Lesson: Luke 2:7**

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: **Thanks be to God.** *Ring bells.*

Christmas is a joyous proclamation of God’s coming in the form of humanity – the human, Jesus – Emmanuel, God With Us, bringing power and love. Christmas is a feast, a mass (Christ-mass), celebrating the birth of Jesus. Let us reclaim these days, proclaiming God’s presence, our unity in Christ, and our response to God’s good news.

**CAROL: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”** **LBW #55**

**DAY TWO: SAINT STEPHEN’S DAY** December 26  
**Lesson: Acts 6:1-15, 7:54-60**

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: **Thanks be to God.** *Ring bells.*

The early church dedicated the second day of Christmas to Stephen, the first martyr, patron saint of deacons and diaconal ministers, and for those who serve in the faith. As the first martyr, Stephen is given the most honorable day, right next to Christmas. It is called Boxing Day in England – it would be easy to assume that people fight each other – but this is not so. What it really means is that food from the feast is boxed up to go out into the community, to the poor – food, not fighting.

**GIFT OF MUSIC: “Good King Wenceslas”** Elijah Matzke & Pastor

If you listen closely to the words of this song, you will learn the story of a good man who lived out his faith by taking care of the poor as Jesus directs us to do. Good King Wenceslas, a Bohemian prince born in A.D. 903, was known for his charity to the poor. On Saint Stephen’s Day, we remember those who serve; and we serve.

**DAY THREE: SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE & EVANGELIST** December 27  
**Lesson: John 1:1-5, 21:20-25**

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: **Thanks be to God.** *Ring bells.*

John’s Gospel tells the story of the incarnation (God in flesh). The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us full of grace and truth. Jesus is crucified and raised from the dead for the forgiveness of our sins. This is how God loves the world: God gives His only Son. St. John was a bishop in the early church, in Ephesus, which is in present-day Turkey. John was always calling on Christians to “love one another”.

**CAROL: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”** **LBW #60**

**DAY FOUR: THE HOLY INNOCENTS** December 28  
**Lesson: Matthew 2:13-18**

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: **Thanks be to God.** *Ring bells.*

We remember that Herod was a bloodthirsty, horrid person. He murdered members of his own family, killing 3 of his sons. He felt that his throne was threatened, & he had no scruples in murdering the innocent children of Bethlehem to protect that throne. We read this story in the celebration of the twelve days, because there will always be the innocent, the victims. We should remember them and pray for them.

**GIFT OF MUSIC: “Oh, Sleep Now, Holy Baby”** **WOV #639**

**DAY FIVE: NATIVITY** December 29  
**Lesson: Luke 2:8-16**

- L: This is the Word of the Lord.
- C: **Thanks be to God.** *Ring bells.*

This is a familiar picture. Animals were present at Christmas time. They are a favorite part of every nativity scene – the sheep, the cattle, the donkey, the camels. This is a reminder of God’s goodness in creation, and it is used to illustrate peace and living together unthreatened.