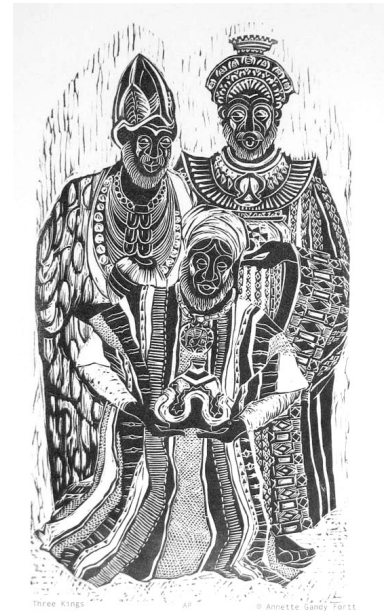




EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

January 5, 2025



WELCOME



PRELUDE *Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming* Trad. German Carol, arr. L. Larson



CALL TO WORSHIP

Stand in body. Stand in spirit. Please share in the words in bold.

Children of God, we enter the new year as we ended the last:
gathered together for worship!

We gather to seek, find, and follow the Light.

The prophet Isaiah calls to us from deep in the past:

“Arise, shine; for your light has come.”

We gather to seek, find, and follow the Light.

The magi followed a star to find a small child who is the Light of the world.

We gather to seek, find, and follow the Light.

So, let us receive the call of Isaiah and follow the example of the magi as we begin this new year turning our faces to God whose glory shows up among us as a vulnerable child, a poor carpenter, and a foot-washing servant who is the salvation of the world.

We gather to seek, find, and follow the Light today and every day. Amen.

+HYMN

Angels from the Realms of Glory

UMH 220

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Creator, come to us, for the need is great. **May empty stomachs be filled with justice and lonely pockets burst with peace. May freedom come to all prisoners. Those imprisoned by sin, addiction, fear, war, and walls, both physical and metaphoric. Open our eyes so we may see your Creation in all its wonderment. May we no longer stumble in our self-imposed darkness, but rather, let us walk in your light. By Christ's death and resurrection, I am reborn with the Holy Spirit. Help me to lead, to guide, and to protect but most importantly, teach me to follow, and show me the way that I should go. May my eyes remain affixed on Jesus, in Whose name I pray, Amen.**

HEBREW BIBLE READING

Isaiah 60:1-6, 11 NRSVUE

This is a responsive reading. Please share in the words in bold.

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

**For darkness shall cover the earth
and thick darkness the peoples,
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.**

Nations shall come to your light
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

**Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together; they come to you;**
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried in their
nurses' arms.

**Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be
brought to you;
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.**

A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.

**They shall bring gold and frankincense
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.**



+GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:1-12 NRSVUE

Please stand in body, stand in spirit, however you are led and able.

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.



+DOXOLOGY

E Minor: Em D G D B⁷ Em Am/C

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

B Em D G D B⁷

here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise

Em Am B Em Bm G

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. This, this is

D B⁷ Em Am/C B

Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;

Bm G D B⁷ Em Am B Em (or E Major)

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.



TIME for YOUNG DISCIPLES

Alexander Dungan

SERMON and INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Alexander Dungan



ANTHEM

Taste and See

James E. Moore



+THE APOSTLES' CREED, TRADITIONAL VERSION

UMH 881



INVITATION



CONFESSION AND PARDON

Gracious God, we would like to be among those who saw the coming of the Christ Child, those who dropped all that they were doing and traveled to worship the coming of God's love into this world. We would like to be those who cared for God in infant vulnerability; who tickled and cuddled and comforted the growing child, that he might know love and safety.

And yet, merciful God, we must recognize all the times we are more like Herod. Whenever we, in our actions or in our inactions, find our own need for control more compelling than the needs of others for health and safety. Whenever we cling to the security of our privilege, rather than standing up for the rights of the oppressed. Whenever we are complicit in the harming of innocents for the sake of profit, or power,

or because we fear to know, and to change, the injustices of this world.

Loving God, we confess our sins against you and one another, and pray that you will fill us with your light, that we may live our lives as true disciples in your name, without counting the cost. In the name of Christ, the one who showed us the way, we pray. Amen.

God's light is present in this world. Present in the Christ child, born to lead us out of darkness. Present in the star, in all that guides us to love.

God's light is in the world, and the darkness did not overcome it. God's grace is in the world, and our missteps will not overcome it.

We are loved, we are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.



+SHARING the PEACE of CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.



INVITATION to the PRACTICE of GIVING

As forgiven and reconciled people, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Give by Text: (630) 528-0155, Online: wesleynaperville.org/giving

The offering basket is also available at the front of the sanctuary.



THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive. Gluten free wafers are available, and all cups are non-alcoholic.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

...we join in their endless praise, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed are they who come in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

...We have testified that this mystery of salvation found in Jesus Christ is for all, when we say:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.



HYMN DURING COMMUNION

What Child Is This

UMH 219



PRAYER after COMMUNION

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



+CLOSING HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High

UMH 238



+BENEDICTION



POSTLUDE

Go, Tell It On the Mountain

arr. J. Sanborn

Everyone is invited to a time of fellowship in the Atrium following the postlude.

PLEASE TAKE YOUR POINSETTIAS WITH YOU!



20TH ANNIVERSARY

OVERCOMING FEAR BY FOSTERING UNITY IN OUR DIVERSITY

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5TH, 2025

WENTZ CONCERT HALL, NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE, 171 E CHICAGO AVE, NAPERVILLE, IL 60540

Help us ring in the New Year with a celebration of unity. Experience Naperville's rich diversity with people of various faith backgrounds from all over the world through poetry, dance, music and storytelling.

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (ELCA), Naperville; North Central College, Naperville; DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church; DuPage National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; Islamic Center of Naperville; Naperville Baha'i Community; Fo Guang Shan Chicago Temple, Buddha's Light International Association; Pax Christi Illinois; Peace & Social Justice Committee, Christ the Servant Church, Woodridge; Congregation Beth Shalom, Naperville; Mother Cabrini Region of the Secular Franciscan Order and its member fraternities; Wesley United Methodist Church, Naperville; Congregation Etz Chaim, Lombard; Wheaton Franciscans; Naperville Interfaith Leaders Association; First Congregational UCC of Naperville; United For Peace, DuPage County; Ismaili Jamatkhana Naperville; Pax Joyce Ministries; Pax Christi Will County; Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) Temple, Aurora; Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago



PRAYERS OF
Liberation

BASED ON
Luke 4:18-19 NRSV

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

Each month throughout the year, at least one resource will be available for download and hardcopy for your individual discipleship journey.

These resources will focus on one more of the following: prayer, devotional time, Scripture study, social holiness, and/or testimonials.

For JANUARY 2025

Pick up your copy of "Prayers of Liberation," a short prayer resource from the United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race available where bulletins are found, in the Atrium, outside the church office, and digitally through Keeping in Touch.

Your **2025**
PLEDGE

Thank you for your support!

Paper Forms can be found in the Atrium and Church Office.

You can submit your pledge online at wesleynaperville.org/giving or scan the QR code.



“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

—2 Corinthians 12:9

When I was a teenager, a United Methodist pastor explained grace to me. It changed my life. That same grace continues to change my life. How has grace shaped your life? How do you continue to struggle with grace?

Grace is the unmerited, upbuilding, unconditional love God extends to all people and to the whole creation. United Methodists have an expansive view of grace. We know that grace is always among us, working in love.

United Methodists are a Baskin-Robbins of grace. We proclaim the grace that God gives us before we even know we need it or know how to ask; this is prevenient grace. We proclaim the grace of God for us and for our healing with God; this is justifying grace. The upbuilding grace that attends to growth in love within us is sanctifying grace. Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.” Our whole lives are a response to grace. I write today to invite you to observe 2025 as a year of grace.

It is a basic truth of ministry that what you pay attention to grows. If we pay attention to mission, mission grows. Attend to Christian formation and knowledge grows. How might we be changed if we focused our lives more and more on grace? What if we used grace sightings in our devotionals and sermons? Or how might we be renewed if we sing about grace? What if we practiced a grace that allows us to demonstrate our unity in Christ as a faith community? Currently, we live in a moment when powerful moneyed forces have divided this country. I believe this is an opportunity to make grace greater than our differences. I would want us to be clear that we are not proffering cheap grace for bullying, manipulation, or accommodating bad behavior that is harmful or abusive. Grace and repentance are sisters and should travel together, for grace without authentic repentance is abuse.

What if our personal anti-racism work featured grace-grounded reflection and honest conversations about blind spots and grace for others, and grace for deeper conversations and then action? What if grace called us all to grow in cultural competency so that

Year of
Grace



we might grow in faith together?

What would happen to us if we framed mission by showing grace in our communities and world? Instead of focusing only on business at our council meetings, we might ask, Where did we see grace today? How might we practice grace and extend grace to more and more in our community? Or where is grace leading our congregation now? I will be keeping a grace journal just to see what God will do.

For the days ahead, I will remind us that grace is also for the stranger and sojourner in our land. Leviticus 19:33-34 reminds us, “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Next year we will enjoy a year of experimentation for mission as we try new forms of ministry to make a difference. Some 54% percent of Northern Illinois United Methodist congregations and 60% of Wisconsin United Methodist churches have a weekly worship attendance of 35 people or fewer. Next year we will need grace for experimentation as churches yield to God’s call forward in new ways.

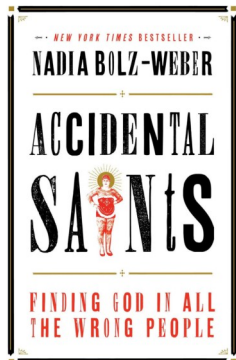
Every day the ministry holds risk and learning from experiments. We will need to experiment with new forms of ministry and offer support to local churches for their ministry as they try to respond to their post-COVID context. We need to turn our systems toward learning and sharing so that we can support local church vitality as fully as possible. What will be the impact of having two conferences—the whole episcopal area—attend to a focus on grace? Our annual conferences will celebrate the theme “Grace is Sufficient” and continue it through the end of 2025. My life was changed by grace and it continues to be changed. I believe people are looking for grace and bearers of a God working in love. I pray that a year of grace will deepen and strengthen us. Let’s try it!

Bishop Dan Schwerin,
Northern Illinois-Wisconsin Episcopal Area
December 18, 2024

ADULT ONE-TIME DISCUSSION OPPORTUNITIES

If you have interest in being a part of any of these one time gathering and discussion opportunities, reach out to Pastor Megan at 630-355-1834 ext. 102 or pastor@wesleynaperville.org. The interested group determines the date(s) and time(s) of gathering. Together, we will coordinate refreshments.

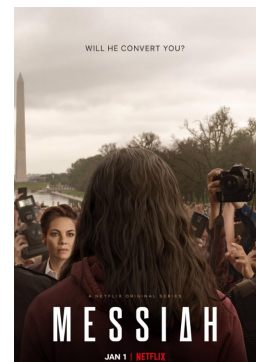
*Accidental Saints:
Finding God
in All the Wrong People*
by Nadia Bold-Weber
book discussion (books \$12)



The Miracle Club
Movie viewing and discussion



Messiah
Netflix
series
viewing and discussion
(selected episode)



CHILDREN and YOUTH

Time for Young Disciples in worship, immediately followed by Sunday School (2nd—4th Sundays). 5th Sundays beginning in December: Worship through hands on mission at 10am.

WESLEY KIDS DAY OUT

Part-time daycare ministry Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9am to 2pm for children 6 months to 5 years of age. Contact Ken for more information and tours (630) 355-1758 wesleykidsdayout@gmail.com. If you have a love for children ages 6 months to 5 years and are interested in working with them part-time, the Staff Parish Relations Committee would love to hear from you. We are presently considering applications for Teacher, Substitute Teacher, and Director. Please visit wesleynaperville.org/kdo for more info.

WESLEY KIDS DAY OUT BOOSTERS

If you would like to help support this ongoing ministry through volunteering your ideas and time, contact wesleykidsdayout@gmail.com or call (630) 355-1758 to let us know!

GIVING TO OUR ENDOWMENT FUND

The Endowment Fund invests donations to provide for outreach programs and to supplement the church budget. You can donate directly, dedicate a leaf on our Wesley Family Tree or put Wesley in your will. I am happy to help answer your questions. Please contact Barbara Burke, 239-405-5898, or email barbaraburke123@att.net for information on contributing to the Endowment Fund.

MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

Chancel Choir rehearses on most Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. All voices are welcome. Instrumentalists are also welcome to share their gifts. Contact Nicole Melody (Director of Music) info@wesleynaperville.org

STYROFOAM RECYCLING

You are welcome to bring your styrofoam recycling to the special recycling bins on the lower level. Stained and soiled items are not accepted. Please rinse ahead of time.

LITURGIST OPPORTUNITIES

To be a liturgist, please sign up in the Atrium or contact the office (details on back).

COFFEE HOUR

Join us after Worship in the Atrium for a cup of coffee or tea, and a little nibble. If you would like to bring a treat or help with set-up, contact our church office at 630-355-1834 or infowesley@naperville.org



DAYCARE ENROLLMENT

AGES 6 MONTHS - 5 YEARS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Full days: 9am-2pm
Half days: 9-11:30 or 11:30-2

SUMMER PROGRAM
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Full days: 9am-1pm

630-355-1758

wesleykidsdayout@gmail.com

**If you enjoy working with children of this age, job opportunities are available!
Visit wesleynaperville.org/kdo**

Sundays

Additional parking is allowed in the Old National Bank (formerly, Midwest Bank) lot

10:00 AM (Hybrid): **Worship in-person or online** wesleynaperville.org (Sanctuary—Level 1)
2nd - 4th Sundays: **Sunday School** immediately following the time for Young Disciples.

After Worship In Person **Fellowship in the Atrium** (Coffee and Nibbles—Level A)

Starting December 29th: 5th SUNDAYS ARE WORSHIP THROUGH MISSION

5:00 PM Center Street Table Dinner Dialogues
(Across the Street @ Community UMC).

Lections: "FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY" *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church, Year C* by Wilda C. Gafney © 2024 Church Publishing, Cover Image: Fortt, Annette Gandy. Three More Kings, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56019> [retrieved January 3, 2025]. Original source: annettefortt.com. *The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship*, UM Discipleship Ministries "They All Gather Together Re-Membering the Body Second Sunday after Christmas Day / Epiphany, Year C," Racial Justice Prayers of Liberation from GCORR <https://www.r2hub.org/library/racial-justice-prayers-of-liberation>, The Great Thanksgiving, Great Thanksgiving Communion Liturgy Celebrating Cultural Diversity from GCORR: <https://www.r2hub.org/library/great-thanksgiving-communion-liturgy-celebrating-cultural-diversity>, Doxology: Text and tune adapted by Dean McIntyre, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Telephone 615-340-7073. Website <http://www.umcworship.org>. Email address: music@gbod.org. Text and tune are public domain. Scripture: NRSV and NRSVUE, CVLI #505421815 CCLI #11444135

IN PERSON HOURS

CHURCH OFFICE

(630) 355-1834

Emily Torres, Administrative Assistant

Sundays: 9am—1pm

M-T: Closed

W, TH, F: 8:30 am—3:30 pm

ext. 110

Building Events

events@wesleynaperville.org

WESLEY KIDS DAY OUT

Ken Tobola, Transitional Administrator

Sherice Horton, Assistant Director

M, W, F 9am—2pm

(630) 355-1758

wesleykidsdayout@gmail.com

Rev. Megan Tobola, ext. 102

Lead Pastor

Tuesdays are sabbath

pastor@wesleynaperville.org

Alexander Dungan, ext. 104

Minister of Family & Justice

W, TH 9am -2pm

alexander@wesleynaperville.org

Rev. Duane Mevis, Pastor Emeritus

Nicole Melody, Director of Music

Svetlana Mars, Accompanist

Chelsea Guanzon, Pastoral Intern

Keeping In Touch

Our weekly e-news helps us stay connected.

We can also send it in the regular post per your request.



**God, as known to us
in Christ Jesus
welcomes ALL people.**

So do we.

wesleynaperville.org