

Sunday, January 4, 2026

GATHERING

Gathering and Greeting

Rev. Katie Klosterman

* Call To Worship

Liturgist

Calling all seekers, all dreamers, all believers...

Calling all glass-half-full optimists and lighthouse keepers...

Calling all star-chasers and bedtime prayer speakers...

Bring your questions, your hope, your faith and your fear
into this space.

God is here.

Chalking the Door

One: May the peace of the Christ be with you and all who enter here.

All: And also with you.

One: The three Magi came to Bethlehem in search of the Lord bringing him precious gifts; gold to honor the newborn king, incense to the true God in human form, and myrrh to anoint his body, which one day would die like our own. Let us pray, O God, you once used a star to show to all the world that Jesus is your Son. May the light of that star that once guided wise men to honor his birth, now guide us to recognize him, so that we may see you in the epiphanies of our daily experiences.

All: As the Magi once sought your brilliant light, O Lord, so may we seek to live and to work in your splendor.

Rev. Katie: O God of Light, bless our house of worship and our family of faith. May each member of this community of faith cultivate gifts and graces you have bestowed, dedicating our talents and works for the good of all. Make this house a shelter in the storm and a haven of rest for all in need of your warmth and care. And when we leave this place, may we never lose sight of that Epiphany Star. Lord, Jesus through your incarnation and birth in true human form, you have made all the earth holy. We now ask your blessing upon this simple gift of your creation- chalk. Now, with your blessing, may it become a tool for us to mark the doors of our home with the symbols of your wise servants, who, so long ago, came to worship and adore you in your first home.

The door of the sanctuary is marked **20+C+M+B+26**.

(The letters C M B come from the names of the “three kings” Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. Some suggest the C M B may also stand for “Christus Mansionem Benedicat” meaning “May Christ bless this dwelling.”) The numbers stand for the year 2026.

Rev. Katie: Let us Pray together,

All: God of doors and homes, bless this home this year and every year. Bless all who come and go through this door, both those who worship here and who visit. May all who enter through this door come in peace and bring joy. May everyone who enters our homes rejoice to find Christ living among us. May the love and joy in this home overflow and spread into the community and the world. Amen.

Rev. Katie: Now let us return inside to sing the opening hymn, We Three Kings

Please join me in the opening hymn, found in your hymnal or in your bulletin

***Opening Hymn** *We Three Kings*

United Methodist Hymnal 254

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 night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light.

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

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, all men raising, worshiping God on high. *Refrain*

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

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

Liturgist: Please be seated

Special Music *Prelude to Bach's Second Cello Suite in D Minor*

Siena Higgenson

Children's Time

Away in the Manger vs 1

United Methodist Hymnal 217

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer of Illumination

Liturgist

Let us pray: Guide us, O God, by your Word, and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace; through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Old Testament Lesson *Isaiah 60:1-6*

Liturgist

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah,
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.

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise in body or spirit for the singing of the Alleluia and remain standing for the reading of the Gospel

*Alleluia

The Faith We Sing 2043

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Gospel: *Matthew 2:1-12*

Liturgist

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew,

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

please be seated

Sermon

Rev. Katie Klosterman

The Receiving of Star Words *(Ken will play while people come up to receive their star word).*

It is a prayer practice in churches all over the world to give people a star word during Epiphany. There are many reasons behind this tradition. First, we know that the Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus. Secondly, we trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words are one such lens that might provide us with a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight. Finally, we know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. However, this prayer practice invites a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful way to connect with God.

(not printed) *So in just a moment, you will be invited to select a star word. Consider this*

a guiding word for the year ahead. We invite you to remember your star word often, seeking the ways God might be moving through the meanings and definitions the word contains. However, as we prepare our hearts and minds for this centering moment, let us pray. . .

(not printed) *God of today, tomorrow, and yesterday,
As we begin this new year, we once again find ourselves looking for you.
We long for the clarity of a star in the sky, or a voice in the clouds declaring your presence in our lives.*

*So today we ask that you would make yourself known to us.
Do what only you can do. Reach into our spirits to give us a boost of confidence that love is real and we are not alone. Remind us that we are beloved in your eyes.
We know we're asking a lot for a group that brings very little. We don't have gold or Frankincense or Myrrh. We haven't thrown off our shoes to honor your holy ground. We haven't been baptized in the Jordan river. We haven't spent the last several days traveling here by camel. We're no Magi, Moses, or Messiah, but we're yours.*

Instead, we bring ourselves to this service in hopes of catching a glimpse of you. Speak to us through these star words just as you spoke through the clouds at Jesus' baptism. Let these words be an invitation and challenge for the year ahead. Let them be light in the sky that guides us home.

Holy God, you call us beloved. You are with us in our joy. You are with us in our sorrow. Surely, even as we pray, you are with us here as well. So with grateful hearts, we unite our voices in prayer, using the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

Our father...

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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

******People come forward to receive their star words on the Christmas Tree and Ken will play reflective music during that time.***

Prayer in Unison:

God of open horizons and open roads,
like the Magi so many years ago,
we are here, seeking you.

Step by step, we have wandered into this space
with the hope of feeling you in our midst.

Step by step, you have seen us, claimed us, and called us beloved.

Today we have drawn star words.

For some, these words are full of meaning, challenge, and invitation already.

For others, these words are a blank canvas—inviting you into our lives.

So as a new year dawns, we pray that just as you have spoken to the generations
before us, you would speak to us again.

Allow us to use these star words as a tool that might help us hear you more clearly.

May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi.

And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again, with mouths full of praise
for the ways in which you have been present with us.

Together we pray, with joy in our hearts.

Amen.

Hymn of Response *The First Noel*

United Methodist Hymnal 245

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: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star three Wise Men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

Then entered in those Wise Men three, full reverently upon the knee,
and offered there, in his presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense. *Refrain*

Introduction to the Offering

***Doxology**

United Methodist Hymnal 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*** Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Liturgist

Let us pray, (pause)

May these gifts we offer, God of new ways, bring comfort to those who grieve; hope to those who live on the streets of despair; peace to all the broken places; and grace to all who long to draw closer to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

***Closing Hymn** *I Am The Light Of The World* (the music is by Jim Strathdee, who was inspired to write this song based on "The Work of Christmas" by Howard Thurman)

***Benediction**

Rev. Katie Klosterman

Postlude

Ken Potter

*** Please stand in body and spirit.**

Worship Song Leader: Members of the choir

Liturgist: Terry Meerdink

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I Am The Light Of The World

Words and Music by
Jim Strathdee

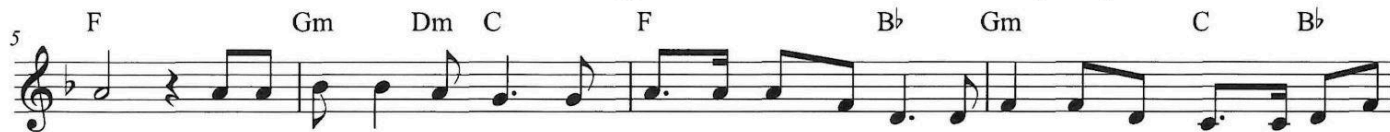
INTRO

CHORUS



"I am the light of the world!

You peo - ple come and fol - low



me!" If you fol - low and love, you'll learn the mys - ter - y of what you were meant to do and

VERSE



be.

1. When the song of the an - gels is stilled, when the

2. To find the lost and lone - ly one, to

3. To free the pris - 'ner from all chains, to

4. To bring hope to ev - 'ry task you do, to



star in the sky is gone, when the kings and the shep - herds have
heal the bro - ken soul with love, to feed the hun - gry chil - dren with
make the pow - er - ful care, to re - build the na - tions with
dance at a ba - by's new birth, to make mu - sic in an



found their way home, the work of Christ - mas is be - gun:
warmth and good food, to feel the earth be - low the sky a - bove!
strength of good will, to see God's chil - dren ev - 'ry - where!
old per - son's heart, and sing to the col - ors of the earth!

CCLI Song # 7068562

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Upcoming Events

- January - New Sermon Series
- Today - Epiphany Sunday worship 10am
- Jan 5 - 6:30pm Theology Quest on Zoom
- Jan 8 - 11:30am Food Bank set-up
- Jan 8 - 4-6pm Food Bank Distribution
- Jan 8 - 7pm Choir rehearsal at church
- Jan 10 - 9am Service Saturday at church
- Jan 11 - 10am Worship
- Jan 12 - 6:30pm Theology Quest on Zoom
- Jan 13 - 10am Happy Bookers at church
- Jan 15 - 7pm Choir rehearsal at church
- Jan 17 - No Ladies breakfast
- Jan 17 - 11am Celebration of Life for Dale Lien, reception following
- Jan 17 - 2pm Celebration of Life for Al Meeds, reception following
- Jan 18 - 10am Worship
- Jan 19 - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day
- Jan 19 - 6:30pm Theology Quest on Zoom
- Jan 20 - 10am Easy Writers at church
- Jan 22 - 11:30am Food Bank set-up
- Jan 22 - 4-6pm Food Bank distribution
- Jan 22 - 7pm Choir rehearsal at church
- Jan 24 - 1pm Celebration of Life for Marty B, reception following
- Jan 25 - 10am Worship
- Jan 25 - after worship make 300 PBJ sandwiches
- Jan 26 - 6:30pm Theology Quest on Zoom
- Jan 27 - Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Jan 29 - 7pm Choir rehearsal at church
- Jan 31 - Noon Cancer Support Group

Please check for all announcements and events in your weekly Enews. If you are not receiving the Enews, please contact the Church Office.

The Ritual of the Chalking the Door on Epiphany

This ritual of chalking the door on Epiphany occurs on January 6th, exactly twelve days after Christmas day. This practice reminds us that our homes are an extension of ourselves, as we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. When we chalk our door with the inscription 20+C+M+B+24 we are setting our homes apart in the world as they are places of Christian hospitality. Just as our church is a place of love, healing, rest and peace, so too are our homes for all who enter its doors. By chalking our door we are inviting God's presence into our homes asking God to bless all who reside there, and all who will visit through the year. The chalk represents an ordinary substance of the earth that is put to holy use. Chalk will not permanently mark the door, but helps us to rededicate ourselves to who God calls us to be by using God's gifts for holy action in the world.

WHAT ARE STAR WORDS?

The use of star words, also called "star gifts," is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year that has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. The idea is that a list of intention words, or guiding words, are written or printed on paper stars. These paper stars are then arranged, most commonly face down, on the Communion Table or in a large basket. At some point during your Epiphany service, individuals are invited to draw a word from the basket or off the Table, and to use that word as a guiding word throughout the year. Typically, participants are encouraged to trust the word they have drawn, and not to replace the word. However, there is not a strong need to be the "star police" if an individual wants to trade. Individuals are often encouraged to place their star word somewhere they will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word.

THERE ARE SEVERAL THEOLOGICAL STATEMENTS BEING MADE IN THIS TRADITION:

- 1. The Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.*
- 2. We trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words are one such lens that might provide us a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight.*
- 3. We trust that it is often easy to miss God in our daily midst. Having an intention word to consider both in present days, as well as to reflect on at the end of the year, allows for us to see God in ways we may not have seen God before. This is the greatest gift.*

4. We know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. We believe that star words invite a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful new way to connect with God.

5. By not looking or sorting through the star words at their selection, we practice the spiritual task of receiving. It is not us that are in control in this moment. Instead, we trust that God is present, and we let go of our desire to cultivate or control.

All Are Welcome!

No matter where you have come from or where you are going, you are welcome at Browns Point UMC! We are a community committed to offering hospitality, asking questions, growing in our faith, supporting and nurturing one another, and serving our neighborhood and the world.

All Means All!

BPUMC joyfully embraces God's acceptance and love of all people. We affirm that all individuals are persons of sacred worth. We welcome the full participation in our church of everyone, without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, education, marital circumstances, physical and mental abilities, or economic status. We are committed to discovering how we can most faithfully include, learn from, and grow with all people in our community.

Land Acknowledgement

We, of Browns Point United Methodist Church, worship on the ancestral lands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians and Coast Salish Native-peoples, who share a dialect of the Southern Lushootseed language. We value this land for its beauty and our history on it. Yet, we remember how the land was stolen from Native peoples through the Medicine Creek Treaty in 1864, which led to the Puyallup Nation being relocated onto reservation land in present day Tacoma. Though the Puyallup people retained their fishing, hunting and gathering rights, they lost most of their historic territory. We lament this betrayal of trust. As well, we lament the great loss of Native lives due to various smallpox epidemics that began in the 1850s, which were brought by white migration. We celebrate the resilience of our Native siblings in the face of this history. We lift our thanks for their care of this land over millennia.