



*Central and Algonquin United
Methodist Churches*

Sunday, November 30, 2025

With Pastor Marty Johnston

Mission Statement:

**Connecting all people to God by building bridges
of caring, outreach, and acceptance.**

*OPENING HYMN

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

UMH 234

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

*PASTOR’S OPENING PRAYER *

Gracious God, we praise You today. You strengthen Your people, You provide what we need, and You speak Your Word with power and mercy.

As we gather in this season after Christmas, steady our hearts. Where we are anxious, give us peace. Where we are weary, give us strength.

Where we are distracted, draw us back to wonder—back to Jesus.

Receive our worship as we lift our voices and sing. Make our praise more than words—make it trust, make it gratitude, make it love.

We pray in the name of Christ our Savior. Amen.

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Some of us come to the second Sunday after Christmas a little...wrung out.

The tree is still up, but the sparkle is fading. The calendar has flipped. Life is back in motion—and not all of it is gentle.

So John doesn’t begin with shepherds or angels or a manger. He takes us farther back—before Bethlehem, before Mary, before anything: “In the beginning...”

And then John brings it right into the world we recognize: a world where darkness is real, where people can miss what God is doing even when it’s right in front of them—where the true Light comes, and not everyone welcomes Him.

That's the tension we live in, too, isn't it?

We want God to come obvious and easy—clear answers, quick healing, a smooth road. But John says God comes in a way you can miss...unless your heart is awake. And yet—this is the hope—John also says the darkness doesn't get the final word. The darkness cannot overcome the Light.

So as we hear this reading, listen for two things: first, how big Jesus really is—and second, how near He's willing to come.

Because the staggering claim of Christmas isn't just that God visited the world... it's that **the Word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood.**

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING John 1: 1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

⁹ That^[b] was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’”

¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: **Thanks be to God**

SERMON

When God Moved In

COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Pastor:

Christ our Lord invites to His table all who love Him, who earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Confession and Pardon

Pastor:

We come to this moment aware that peace begins with honesty—honesty before God, and honesty with ourselves.

All:

God of mercy, we confess that our lives are cluttered, our priorities scattered, and our words not always aligned with Your peace. We have allowed fear to guide our decisions and impatience to shape our responses. Forgive us, and teach us again the way of Your peace. Amen.

Pastor:

Hear the good news: In Jesus Christ, God comes not to condemn but to restore. You are forgiven, loved, and invited to walk in peace.

All:

In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven, loved, and invited to walk in peace.

The Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor:

It is right—and a good and joyful thing—always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

When the world was formless, You spoke—and light appeared.
When we wander, You do not abandon us. You strengthen Your
people; You gather the scattered; You speak a Word that gives life.

And in the fullness of time, You did not send help from a distance—
You moved in close. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth.

So with Your people on earth and all the company of heaven,
we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

All:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor:

Holy are You, and blessed is Your Son Jesus Christ. He is the Light
no darkness can overcome. He came to His own—and though many
did not receive Him, He kept coming: healing, teaching, forgiving,
welcoming. And to all who receive Him, He gives the gift of grace
upon grace—and the power to become children of God.

By His baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection You gave birth to
Your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made
with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which He gave Himself up for us, He took bread, gave
thanks to You, broke the bread, gave it to His disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in
remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, He took the cup, gave thanks to You, gave
it to His disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my
blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the

forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Pastor:

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by His blood.

By Your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world—so that as we leave this table, we carry Your light into dark places and Your peace into anxious hearts, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at His heavenly banquet.

Through Your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in Your holy Church, all honor and glory is Yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

(Communion is shared.)

Prayer After Communion

All:

Lord Jesus Christ, You have fed us with grace upon grace and met us with Your real presence. Send us out as children of God—steady in Your peace, bright with Your light, and ready to welcome others as You have welcomed us.

Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Because God has met us with *grace upon grace*, let us give with gratitude—sharing what we have so others may see His light and know His love.

OFFERTORY

“Gloria for the Flutes”

arr. Jorden

DOXOLOGY

UMH 95
OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Gracious God, receive these gifts as an offering of thanks for all You have given us in Christ. Use them to strengthen Your Church, bless our community, and carry Your peace and light to those who need hope. In Jesus 'name, Amen.

HYMN

“What Child Is This”

UMH 219
WHAT CHILD IS THIS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, receive these gifts as an offering of thanks for all You have given us in Christ. Use them to strengthen Your Church, bless our community, and carry Your peace and light to those who need hope. In Jesus 'name, Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Pastor:

With confidence in the God who has come near in Jesus—Light in our darkness and grace upon grace—let us pray for the Church, the world, and all who are in need.

For the Church

Word made flesh, make Your Church a living witness—humble in repentance, rich in grace, and steady in truth.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

God of peace, quiet the rage of nations and the noise of division; guide leaders toward justice, mercy, and the common good.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

Creator God, as You send snow and wind and the warming word that melts the ice, teach us to honor and care for the world You love.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Community and Congregation

Faithful God, strengthen this church to be a place of welcome—where the weary find rest, the lonely find family, and grace is more than a

word.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Those in Need

Compassionate Christ, draw near to the sick, the grieving, the anxious, and the overwhelmed; let Your light shine in deep places, and let Your peace be real.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Ourselves

Holy Spirit, help us receive Jesus—not at a distance, but in our daily lives—so we may live as children of God and carry Your light into the week ahead.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor:

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray:

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – January 4, 2026

The Worship committee asks for assistance in taking down the Christmas decorations today after the service. Many hands make quick work.

**** Today the youth will be outside after the service to collect a Mission Love Offering and new this year, we now have a Misson's Change Jar (located on the table at the top of the stairs). All**

proceeds will go toward helping elementary school children with their needs

Missions: is collecting shelf stable foods for elementary schools and also personal hygiene items. The kind of items needed are; small bottles of combined shampoo and conditioners, bar soap, small deodorant, as well as food items; such as oatmeal packets, pop tarts, granola bars, cracker packs, Chef Boyardee, canned soup and vegetables, easy Mac and cheese, and ramen noodles. There is a tub outside the elevator upstairs and in the fellowship hall that food can be left in. *They would also like to Thank the members who have drop off items.*

Join us for Bible Study

Sunday at 9:30 AM in the CUMC lounge led by Raymond Bell.

Central Birthday/Anniversary

Jan., 1st -Marge Tomlinson **Jan., 3rd** -Kathy Packman
Jan., 4th -Doris Kelly **Jan., 7th** – Tony McLain
Jan. 11th – Pete Bush **Jan. 18th** – Carl Bell

Jan., 2nd – Evelyn & Pete Bush (66th)

Jan., 8th – Barb & Jon Carlisle (49th)



Nursery is available for infants through age 3 during worship with Mallory Baier. The nursery is located downstairs, and ushers will be happy to assist you.

*CLOSING HYMN “I Want to Walk as Child of the Light” UMH 206
I WANT TO WALK AS CHILD OF THE LIGHT

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Gloria” arr. Balcombe