

Opequon Presbyterian Church

January 4, 2026
8:30 AM & 11:00 AM



**Epiphany
Sunday**

<i>Pastor</i>	David R. Witt
<i>Parish Associate</i>	Tracie Martin
<i>Church Office Administrator</i>	Rachel Lesink
<i>Church Finance Administrator</i>	Ken Smiy
<i>Director of Christian Education</i>	Carole Witt
<i>Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries</i>	Rebekah Witt
<i>Director of Music</i>	Susan Homan
<i>Organist/Pianist</i>	Garrett Jones
<i>Facilities Coordinator</i>	Robert Sydnor
<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>	Laurie Carver
<i>Faith Community Nurses</i>	Bill Martin, Mike Nutry, Pat Williams

To reach a staff member or if a pastoral concern arises, contact the church office or note who is out of the office and email one of the pastors directly and we will respond in a timely manner.

INFORMATION FOR OUR GUESTS

To get the most out of your visit, may we recommend you familiarize yourself with the following:

- **We encourage you to share requests for prayer.** You may do so by completing the pink form found in the pew rack and placing it in the offering.
- **Trust your children to the care of our dedicated, loving workers!** The nursery rooms are located through the Gathering Area, down the Gallery and through the Dell Room. An usher will be happy to escort you. Our nursery ministry cares for infants and children under the age of 5.
- **Worship Bags are available for children ages 3 – kindergarten.** These bags are in the back of the Sanctuary. Please return the bag and supplies to the basket when you are leaving.
- **Restrooms and a coat rack** are located off the Gathering Area, just outside the Sanctuary.
- **Large-print hymnals, Bibles and bulletins** are available from an usher.
- **Personal hearing assistance devices** are available from an usher if you would like to use one.
- **Transportation can be provided to worship.** Call the church office before 12:00 PM on Friday.

Access our Online Giving at
www.opequonchurch.org/giving
or scan the QR code here:



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A000000 SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

January 4, 2026 - Epiphany; Communion; Star Words; Celebration of Our Capital Campaign

☞ **Thank you for silencing your phones before we begin the Worship Service.**

☞ **As the music of the Prelude begins, we invite you to take a moment to quietly focus your heart and prepare your inward spirit for the worship of God.**

☞ Please complete the Friendship Folder and pass it along during the greeting.

☞ PRAYER REQUEST forms are inside the pew holders – please place in the offering plate.

† = All who are able, please stand.

Bold print = All in unison.

☞ WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME ☞

PRELUDE..... *Canon de Noël*

Arranged by: Josph M. Martin

THE CHURCH BELL RINGS

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ENTRANCE OF THE WORD & THE LIGHT

†GATHERING SONG No. 127 (v. 1, refrain)..... *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! the herald angels sing.

Jesus the light of the world.

Glory to the newborn King,

Jesus, the light of the world.

[refrain] **We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.**

Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.

O, shine all around us by day and by night.

Jesus, the light of the world.

†CALL TO WORSHIP

In the dark of morning,

the stars still shine.

In the depth of winter,

the birds still climb.

At the start of the year, tender and new,

God is here. God is near.

Do not rest in your fear.

God is here.

So like the stars and the birds,

Let us worship holy God.

†OPENING HYMN No. 150 *As with Gladness Men of Old*

**As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at thy manger, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.**

**Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.**

(Please be seated for prayer.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, on this Epiphany Sunday we stand at the start of a new year, and there is nothing better about a new year than the chance to begin again. That is exactly what we do in the Prayer of Confession. We speak honestly with God and God surrounds us with grace. We are able to begin again. So may we start this new year, this new season, this new week with God's grace. Let us pray, joining in our unison prayer, then in moments of personal silence. Let us begin again.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again. So today we pray – forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks. Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call. Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action. Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world. With hope we pray, as we follow the light of that same star into a new year.

(Moments of Silent Prayer)

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of Faith, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid, God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:
Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless. We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God! Amen.

LITANY OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

†RESPONSE OF PRAISE No. 147 (v. 1, refrain, 6)..... *The First Nowell*
**The first Nowell 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]**

[refrain] **Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell;
born is the King of Israel.**

**Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. [refrain]**

†PASSING OF THE PEACE (Please share this prayer with those near you.)
May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

✧ WE HEAR GOD'S WORD ✧

ANTHEM..... *What Shall the Children Bring?*

Arranged by: Patti J. Drennan
Jenna Arnoldy, soloist

Sing Noel. Sing Noel. The wise may bring their learning, the rich may bring their wealth, and some may bring their greatness, and some bring strength and health: we, too, would bring our treasures to offer to the King: we have no wealth or learning; what shall the children bring? Sing Noel. Noel. Sing Noel. Noel. We'll bring Him hearts that love Him; we'll bring Him thankful praise, and young souls meekly striving to walk in his holy ways; and these shall be the treasures we offer to the King, and these are gifts that even the poorest child may bring. Sing Noel, sing to the tiny Baby. Sing Noel, sing to the King. To this holy Child in a manger stall, what presents shall they bring? They have no priceless jewels, but voices that can sing, and they can give the gift of song to You, the King of kings! O come, little children. O, come, one and all, to Bethlehem's stable, in Bethlehem's stall, and see with rejoicing this glorious sight, our Father in heaven has sent us this night. Noel. Noel. Sing Noel to the tiny Baby. Sing Noel to the tiny King. Sing Noel to the baby Jesus. Sing Noel to the Child. Sing Noel!

THE READING OF GOD'S WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 60:1-6.....Pew Bible p. 602

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18.....Pew Bible p. 783

CONVERSATION WITH ALL AGES....."Follow the Star"

Nursery (Infants – Age 4)

†HYMN No. 152 *What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright*

**What star is this, with beams so bright,
more lovely than the noonday light?**

**'Tis sent to announce a new-born king,
glad tidings of our God to bring.**

**'Tis now fulfilled what God decreed,
"From Jacob shall a star proceed":
and lo! the eastern sages stand
to read in heaven the Lord's command.**

**While outward signs the star displays,
an inward light the Lord conveys
and urges them, with tender might,
to seek the giver of the light.**

**O Jesus, while the star of grace
impels us on to seek your face,
let not our slothful hearts refuse
the guidance of your light to use.**

SERMON....."Fear Doesn't Stop Us!"

Pastor David Witt

✧ WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD ✧

OFFERING OF TITHES & GIFTS

OFFERTORY MUSIC..... *The Holly and the Ivy*

Arranged by: Joseph M. Martin

CELEBRATION OF OUR PLACE AT THE TABLE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

RECOGNITION & APPRECIATION FOR OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TEAM

†THE DOXOLOGY (Hymnal No. 606) & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Loving God:

**We offer you our gold: the morning on the wing; the glow on the
faces of children at play; the shining moments that brighten our
lives. We offer you our frankincense: the quiet reassurance of**

familiar things; the grace of care and friendship; the blessing of bread and our heart's yearning in prayer. We offer you our myrrh: the ashes of our dreams; the bitter taste of our failures; the shadows through which we stumble. Transform our inadequate gifts, that they may be an acceptable sacrifice of praise, and transform our lives to reflect more deeply your justice and joy in the life of the world. Through Christ our Savior. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (Hymnal p. 9-10, spoken response)

The Lord's Prayer (Hymnal p. 35, we say "debts" and "debtors" in the prayer)

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread & Cup

Communion Music..... *What Child Is This?*
Arranged by: Garrett Jones

Closing Communion Prayer

✠ WE GO OUT IN GOD'S NAME ✠

†CLOSING HYMN No. 151..... *We Three Kings of Orient Are*
**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 gladly raising,
worshiping God Most 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]**

†CHARGE & BLESSING

†CLOSING RESPONSE No. 127 (v. 4, refrain)..... *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Jesus, the light of the world.
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Jesus, the light of the world.

[refrain] **We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.**
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
O, shine all around us by day and by night.
Jesus, the light of the world.

†POSTLUDE

COMMUNION TODAY WILL INVITE YOU FORWARD

We will come forward to the communion table to receive the sacrament this morning. Each section of pews should move to the left as directed by the ushers. Gluten-free bread is available in the center section. Please see an usher for assistance. Please come forward, receive a piece of bread handed to you and eat immediately. Receive a small cup of wine (red) or grape juice (white) and drink immediately, taking your used cup back to your pew and placing it in the cup holder. Return to your seat by the right aisle of your section.

Elders/Deacons serving at the 8:30 AM service today are: Rebecca Agbayani, Mitch Orndorff, Melissa Youngblood, Jim Youngblood, Jennie Wright, Jay Tibbs.

Elders/Deacons serving at the 11:00 AM service today are: Marj Praml, John Sherman, Robin Cooke, Bill Thomasson, Ann Smith, Ron Smith.

<h2>SANCTUARY FLOWERS</h2>

The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given by Marsha and Todd Bennett in honor and celebration of Cynthia Millard's 83rd birthday.

The rose in the Sanctuary announces the birth on Christmas Day of Quinn Delano Place, son of Neil and Krystal Hawkins Place. Quinn is the second grandson of Brenda and Kraig Hawkins and joins big brother Simon at home. Congratulations to the Place Family, as we rejoice with them in this gift of new life.

<h2>LIVESTREAM WORSHIP TIME CHANGE</h2>
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Unless otherwise indicated, our Sunday morning worship service will be livestreamed at **11:00 AM** moving forward. Thank you for worshiping with us and being flexible with our Livestream Team! All livestreamed services are archived and always available on our YouTube channel.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Quinn Delano Place
 The Family of Carole
 Walker
 Kay Caldwell & Family
 Ray Klinefelter
 Gary Johnson
 Sharon Miller
 Rick Ours
 Debbie Bender
 Don & Barbara Ratcliff
 Krista Hartenbach
 Earl White
 Brian Ingram
 Victims of Shootings in
 Australia & at Brown
 University
 Ann Denison
 Judy Gaines
 Tim Loftis
 Baby Eliza Family
 Kevin & Lisa Reed &
 Family
 Lisa Frye
 Carol Tubbs
 Wendy Wygant
 Ken Johansen
 Andrew Wolfe
 Mike Crawford
 Krista Bowen
 Ruth Eisenberg
 Bonnie Pitzer

Cherie Berotti
 Tyler McDonald
 Lynne Rosamilia
 Jeanne Crosby
 Cor & Agnes Kamerman
 Glen Kamerman
 Carol Zagorsky
 Sue Friedrichsen
 JoAnne Farrell
 Caroline Hastreiter
 Doris Smith & Family
 Jessica Wise
 Michelle Whiteman-
 McKee
 Jamaica
 Paulette Fazio
 Bob Fulton
 Karen Lemons & Family
 Katie Happel
 Joyce Williamson
 Judy Camper
 Candi Gardner
 Roger Murphy
 Bill Robinson
 Darrell Griffiths
 George Schwantes
 Carole Schwantes
 Dakota Stickle
 Geanie Henley
 Krista Strukoff
 (DeCeault)

Scarlett Kibler
 Al & May Schollenberger
 David Lewis
 Sara Frey
 David DesMarias
 Gaza Famine
 Cathy Jones
 Megan Tschappat
 Pastor Kristin Whitesides
 Judy Orndorff
 Lori Jones & Stephen
 Armstrong
 Charlotte Rosamilia
 Susan Arthur
 Bill Gesell
 Susan Kelican
 All Struggling with
 Mental Illness
 June & Nathan Windle
 Bereaved Israelites &
 Palestinians
 Mike Shade
 Jewish & Muslim Victims
 Worldwide
 Cindy Correll
 Nancy Kerns
 Kennedy Ransom
 Ukraine
 Ethiopia Church Mekane
 Yesus

✠ **PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY & THEIR FAMILIES** ✠

Cameron Andrew Veach, Kayleen Paquette, Kelly Klimek, Jacob & Tiffani Peoples,
 Sawyer Phillips, Joshua Blake, Max Crane, Andrew Crane, Thomas Crane,
 Jacob Heavner, Samuel & Julia Phillips, Brandon Michael, Michael White,
 Ben Jensen, Gavin Eanes, Eli Keaton

SCHEDULE & ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS WEEK

TODAY – January 4 (Epiphany Sunday)

Communion; Star Words; Celebration of Our Capital Campaign

8:30 AM	Worship – Sanctuary
9:45 AM	Faith Formation – Bageant Room
9:45 AM	Opie's Playhouse – Memorial Sanctuary
11:00 AM	Worship – Sanctuary & Livestream

THIS WEEK

Monday:	9:30 AM	Older Adult Planning Team – Bageant Room
	6:00 PM	Windsong – Sanctuary
Tuesday:	5:00 PM	Tech Team Meeting – Bageant Room & Zoom
	6:00 PM	Ministry Team Night – Fellowship Hall
Wednesday:	8:30 AM	Backpack Program – Bageant Room
	9:30 AM	Staff Meeting – Bageant Room
	4:30 PM	Logos (Theme: Icicles & Snowflakes Night)
	7:15 PM	Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary
Thursday:	10:30 AM	Tai Chi – Memorial Sanctuary
	6:45 PM	Micah 6:8 Faith Formation – Bageant Room
	7:00 PM	Vision Team – Fellowship Hall
	7:00 PM	ART Team – Assembly Room
Saturday:	9:00 AM	Officer Orientation – Bageant Room & Sanctuary
	5:00 PM	Spaghetti Dinner & Bake Sale – Fellowship Hall

NEXT SUNDAY – January 11 (Baptism of the Lord)

Renewal of Baptism; Ordaining, Installing, & Commissioning Our New Officers
Scriptures: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 3:13-17 Sermon: "A Light to the Nations"

8:30 AM	Worship – Sanctuary
9:45 AM	Faith Formation – Bageant Room
11:00 AM	Worship – Sanctuary & Livestream
12:15 PM	Senior Outreach Ministry
1:30 PM	Spring Arbor Worship

STAR WORDS ARE HERE

The use of star words, also called "star gifts," is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year. This is the eighth year we have distributed "star words" at Opequon Church, prayerfully handed out as "God's word to you and for you." These intentional words, we pray, will guide you throughout the upcoming year. We encourage you to place your star word somewhere you will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word. For those who can't be present this morning, we are seizing any opportunity to bring God's word to you—we can mail you one upon request or you can pick one up from the church in the coming weeks.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2026 Giving Envelopes are available in the Gathering Area. Please start using the 2026 envelopes now and discontinue using your 2025 envelopes (some assigned giving numbers have changed!). If you would like offering envelopes and you do not find them in the Gathering Area, contact our Treasurer, Ron Smith (ronaldsmith1@gmail.com / 703-216-9588). We will be happy to make sure you receive envelopes.

OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE MEETS TODAY!

All families with young children are invited to join us in the Memorial Sanctuary, **9:45 – 10:45 AM**, for fun, friends and fellowship. Toys provided, children needed!

OLDER ADULT TEAM MEETING

The Older Adult Planning Team meets tomorrow morning at 9:30am in the Bageant Room. This team discusses plans for Happy Days events, day trips, and other special events. The meeting is open to any older adult who would like to attend. Coffee and morning goodies are provided.

LOGOS IS BACK THIS WEDNESDAY

After Christmas and New Year's break, Logos resumes on Wednesday! We look forward to seeing everyone for Icicles and Snowflakes Night!

MICAH 6:8 FAITH FORMATION CLASS

Beginning on January 8, this 9-week class will meet on Thursdays, 6:45 PM-7:45 PM, in the Bageant Room and be led by Beth Barr and Rebekah Witt for adults, young adults, and youth. This topic shows how we, as followers of Jesus, are pushed, pulled, invited, and commanded by God to embrace the fullness of humanity. This unit focuses on four aspects of crossing borders: leave your comfort zone, embrace relationships, challenge exclusion, and speak God's language of love. Contact Rebekah Witt (rwitt@opequonchurch.org) to let us know you plan to attend or with any questions.

SPAGHETTI DINNER & BAKE SALE TO SUPPORT YOUTH

The Opequon Youth invite everyone to come enjoy a plate full of spaghetti, eat some bread, & purchase bake sale items on Saturday, January 10 at 5:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. The Bake Sale will continue into Sunday morning as well. No reservations required for the Spaghetti Dinner, but we greatly appreciate your monetary donations towards supporting Youth who will attend the Massanetta Middle School Conference & the High School Mission Trip during Summer 2026! Thank you for your generosity!

BAKERS WANTED

Do you like to bake?! We're looking for people to provide homemade baked goods for the January 10 Bake Sale at Opequon! Contact Katie Jordan (landikm@gmail.com), Kirsta Weber (kirstaweber@gmail.com), or Vicky Astornio (vastorino12@gmail.com) to let them know what you can make. All proceeds will support Youth attending Conferences and Mission Trips. Thank you!

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR TODAY

8:30 AM Worship

Liturgist: Brian Steffens

Beadle: Ben Brooks

Door Greeters: Jordan & Carolyn
Hartman

Ushers: Steve Bock, Jim Horner, Mason
Vandertoorn, Camden Saunders, Bailey
Rockwell

Acolyte: Mason Vandertoorn

Building Steward: Terry Hartman

11:00 AM Worship

Liturgist: Lynn Metheny

Beadle: Bill Wellman

Door Greeters: Marsha & Todd Bennett

Ushers: Mike & Fran Jeffries, Mike Nutry,
Will Baker, Daniel Batcha, Luca Deptula

Acolyte: Will Baker

Livestream: Susan Ritter, John White

WORSHIP NOTES & REFLECTIONS

Notes on Today's Music

How does today's music witness to good news and hope even in the face of fear?

Notes on Today's Prayers

Where and for whom do I need to focus my prayers this week?

Notes on Today's Conversation with All Ages

How can you follow the light of the star and Jesus in this new year?

Notes on Today's Scripture & Sermon

Why do you think Matthew's version of the birth story includes the magi and also emphasizes Herod as a prominent (and violent) character?

What do the magi have to fear in this story? How do they respond to this fear?

What do you think motivates the magi to persevere?

How do the magi represent the promise the angels proclaimed to the shepherds, "good news of great joy for all people?"

How do the magi model for us what it can look like to transform fear into steadfast courage?

How will you be led by hope and insist on hope in this new year so that fear won't have the last word?

Liturgy & Prayers: Adapted by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org | Used with permission.

"What Child Is This?" Traditional Carol; arr. by Garrett Jones. Permission to use /stream granted for worship granted by Garrett Jones (2026).

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