



THE BEACON

EUMC Monthly Newsletter

VOLUME 14 Vol. 12

DECEMBER 2025



Advent/Christmas Eve Worship Services



Second Sunday of Advent - December 7 10:00 am

Week 2 Sermon Series

“What Child is This?” [Beyond the Lullaby] WDS 2025

Message: “The Silent Word” (PEACE) – Pastor Melody Olin

Luke 1:5-25; 57-80 (Inclusive Bible) The poet of our theme carol, “What Child is This,” penned the phrase “the silent Word is pleading.” Our vision of that child may be the soothing lullaby and the silent night, but the reality of babies, and of that time in history, was a “crying out.” It was a time for prophesying justice in the midst of trauma, as Zechariah does when his silence is lifted. The Word became Flesh for such a time.

- How will we cry out for true peace for all people? How will we soothe the trauma of the world in our time?

Third Sunday of Advent - December 14 10:00 am

Week 3 Sermon Series

“What Child is This?” [Beyond the Lullaby] WDS 2025

Message: “Son of Mary” (JOY) – Pastor Melody Olin Luke 1:26-56 (Inclusive Bible)

We often hear Jesus referred to as the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man.” But this carol points out his identity over and over as the “Son of Mary.” This equally powerful description points to his being reared by a woman who, upon hearing she would bear a child, said “yes” to one of the most difficult and precarious situations she could face. And then she sings with joy a song of justice for the ages. She goes on to guide and help form this child who would tend to the suffering ones.



- How can we proclaim a deep joy “in spite of” hardship in our time?

Special Music by the Choir: “How Will We Know Messiah?”

Message: "Enthroned by Love" (LOVE) – Pastor Melody Olin Matthew 1:18-25

(Inclusive Bible)

When we hear "let loving hearts enthrone him" in our theme carol, we are encountering the "essence of the message." Love is at the heart of this beloved story of the birth of Christ. It is love that is the true definition of "kingdom," of "kinship." No one exemplifies this more than Joseph's love for Mary and for the child. He is protector of Love; he is hospitality incarnated. Not only the very life of Jesus was in his hands, but his own character and sacrifice were influential in the way that Jesus went on to live his life and center "lover for all" as his message.

- How will we make sacrificial love our aim in our time?



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 5:00 pm

Sermon Series "What Child is This?" [Beyond the Lullaby] WDS 2025

Message: "The Babe" – Pastor Melody Olin

(Luke 2:1-19 Inclusive Bible)

God's Body knows trauma, just as we do. God so loved the world that God became us in order to know us, love us even more deeply. Not just the cross, but the trauma of the time of Christ's birth, can show us the reality of "God-with-us" no matter what. This is a theme from our faith story that can open our hearts and our lives to our own place in the heart of the story.

No matter how afraid we are, the Babe, "whom shepherds guard and angels sing," lives within us waiting to grow into Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love incarnate.

- *Candle lighting – "Silent Night"*



Bishop's Advent Offering

This year's Bishop's Advent Offering supports [Gardens of Hope](#), a Michigan Conference initiative that partners with ministries in Haiti to plant seeds of renewal—both literal and spiritual. Through community gardens, nutrition programs, and agricultural training, our Haitian partners are building resilience, sustaining families, and nurturing hope. Congregations across Michigan are invited to receive an offering during Advent to support the Gardens of Hope campaign. Bishop David Bard shares, "When we give together, we embody Christ's love in tangible ways. Gardens of Hope is a

way to feed the body and the soul, helping families in Haiti cultivate food, faith, and a future rooted in God's abundance." ~ image by Boonyachaoat from Getty Images



Empire Unit – UWF

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

"There's Something About that Name "

Our Annual Christmas Luncheon

Gathering at 11:30 AM

Program - Lunch - Carols

Please RSVP by 12/2/25



COLLECTION for LEELANAU CO. Children

Leelanau Co. Toys for Tots falls under the purview of NW Michigan Toys for Tots based in Traverse City and the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

NW Michigan Toys for Tots collects **new, unwrapped toys** for needy children throughout Northwest Lower Michigan including Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties. The toys collected in Leelanau County will be distributed to Leelanau County children. *[Used toys, homemade toys, clothing, school supplies or fund will not be accepted by Toys for Tots]*

Providing Christmas gifts to children in need depends on our community working together. Leelanau County has many caring individuals and businesses, and we rely on their support to help local children again this year.

Questions:

- **Leelanau County Toys for Tots:** Sharon Husted at 231-357-2667 or sharon.k.husted@gmail.com.
- **Holiday Needs Program**, the program that prequalifies families and distributes the toys, contact Mary Stanton at 231-510-0271.



At Christmas time, it is our annual custom to honor the Pastor and Staff (administrative assistant/custodian and musicians) with a monetary Christmas gift to show our appreciation for all they do.

If you wish to contribute, please mail your donation to EUMC, Attn: Treasurer, PO Box 261, Empire, MI 49630; mark

the memo line with: *Staff Christmas Gift; or place in the Sunday offering plate.*

The deadline is Dec. 15

Thank you, Administrative Council

CARE GIVERS GROUP

Meets Every Other Wednesday @ 11:00 AM

Dec 10 – Dec 24

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Barb Foged 231-633-3348 or

Kay Coombs 231-227-1051

EUMC FELLOWSHIP HALL - Public Welcome

=====



FOR DECEMBER – Pastor’s Discretionary Fund and/or RANDY HILDEBRANT, GCCP Director

The Pastor’s Discretionary Fund is available to those in our community who are facing an immediate need. Your contribution will help to relieve the stress of rent and utility payments, car

maintenance, gas costs, etc. It’s a blessing to those who receive and to those who give. - **OR** -

RANDY HILDEBRANT – Director: **God’s Country Cooperative Parish stretches across 2,500 square miles of the eastern Upper Peninsula. At its heart is the Dunlap Center in Newberry, MI. This former elementary school has been rehabbed and houses a free store called The Church Mouse. It also serves as a home away from home for volunteers who come to the area to do home repairs. Donations will be applied to missions personnel Advance # 982961.**

Please be generous! Mail your donation to: EMPIRE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - Attn: Pastor’s Discretionary Fund and/or Randy Hildebrant - GCCP, PO Box 261, Empire 49630. ❤

The United Methodist Church’s special giving structure ensures your generosity blesses as many people as possible in sustainable, strategic ways. Through your support, and our church, we fund many projects each year.

PAPER PANTRY UPDATE ...



ALL items on the Paper Pantry shopping list are needed to restock the shelves monthly. Donations are accepted during open hours of the church office or on Sundays after worship.

In November eight people were served. Please bring or send your donation [purchased items or \$\$] for the next **PAPER PANTRY on Tuesday, December 23, 5:00 TO 6:30 PM.**

**** A Volunteer serves 1-1/2 hours on the 4th Tuesday of the month [you choose the month] to help distribute paper pantry items to community families at EUMC. Volunteers appreciated. Thanks!**

FIRST SUNDAY of the month



HOLY COMMUNION served
***“Take communion as often as you can.
... It is food for the journey.”***
ALL ARE WELCOME!



SECOND SUNDAY of the month Food Pantry collection

Leelanau Area Food Pantry Collection - Donations of canned goods and packaged food.
The pantry is always in need of volunteers. Please contact Elaine Pentilla for more information.

FIRST MONDAY of the month

Worship Team	10:00 AM
United Women of Faith	11:00 AM

FOURTH TUESDAY of every month:

EMPIRE PAPER PANTRY - 5:00-6:30 PM
Volunteer sign-up sheet on table in Fellowship Hall

Year-round Mission Giving – Check out the Lighted “Giving Tree” in the Lobby!

- ❖ *Do not forget the Socks Box for the TC homeless! Thanks for your support to “Safe Harbor.”*
- ❖ *Paper Pantry products! Your donations are appreciated.*

MISSION OF THE MONTH Offering – This month, place checks, cash, or coins in the tin pails at the back of the sanctuary. The **“Mission of the Month”** supports various charities and the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund for local families in need. Global, Conference, and local charities are chosen year-round. For mission suggestions or questions, contact Jim Sorbie, Missions Team chair.



	<u>HOST</u>	<u>COUNTERS</u>
DEC 7	Kay Coombs	Gerri Sorbie, Tom Haiderer
DEC 14	Sandi Flack	Jan Lyon, Beth Noonan
DEC 21	Jean Petersen	Tom Petersen, Sandy Mallory
DEC 28	Meredith Goodrick	Kay Wilcox, Meredith Goodrick

Thank you for serving!



EMPIRE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"An Anchor in the Community"

1884 – 2025

The Beacon is a monthly publication of The Empire United Methodist Church. Contact us at PO Box 261, 10050 Michigan Street, Empire, MI 49630, by phone at 231.326.5510, or email empireumc@gmail.com. Submit items for publication by the 3rd Wednesday each month.

Our Mission Statement: "To live out a faith in Jesus Christ through our efforts to hear others, share in God's truths, join in worship and celebrate in the Joy of God's grace."

SUNDAYS	10:00 AM – Worship Service	7:00 PM AA Group
MONDAYS	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM Church Office open	
WEDNESDAYS	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM Church Office open	
	11:00 AM – Care Givers Group every other week	
	12:30 PM – 12-Step Women's Group	8:00 PM – NA Group
THURSDAYS	Church Office closed	2:00 PM – Bible Study 3:45 PM – Choir Rehearsal



EMPIRE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PO Box 261 – 10050 Michigan Street
Empire, MI 49630

Rev. Melody Olin, Pastor
(231) 326-5510
Cell: (989) 560-1667
Email: empireumc@gmail.com
Facebook.com/Empire United Methodist Church
Website: www.empireumc.org