



# OPEN DOORS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## WELLS CAMPUS

595 1st Ave SW, Wells, MN 56097  
507-553-5453 | [opendoorsumc@bevcomm.net](mailto:opendoorsumc@bevcomm.net)  
Worship: 9:00 am | Coffee: 8:30 & 10:00 am

## KIESTER CAMPUS

116 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Kiester, MN 56051  
507-294-3300  
Coffee: 10:00 am | Worship: 11:00 am

Pastor: Chris Leistra | Office Phone: 507-553-5453;  
Cell Phone: 920-765-3665 | Email: [pastorumc@bevcomm.net](mailto:pastorumc@bevcomm.net) | Web Site: [www.opendoorsumc.org](http://www.opendoorsumc.org)

January 1, 2023 – Epiphany Sunday

Please turn off or silence your cell phone.

John Wesley

*O Lord, let my New Year's resolution be to follow you more closely  
and to trust in your loving guidance.*

### – Gathering in Faith –

#### Gathering Music

#### Welcome & Announcements

Leader: Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

People: **You are the one true God who reigns forever.**

#### \* Call to Worship

\* Song "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" #117, vs. 1, 3, 5

Leader: A new day has dawned, a new year begun.

People: **O Lord, call us so we may hear Your voice.**

Leader: The world turns to hope and dreams of the future.

People: **O Lord, keep us in Your ways and on Your path.**

Leader: We enter this new year with hope and excitement.

People: **O Lord, remind us that You lead us.**

ALL: **O Lord, guide us as we look to You and worship You. Amen.**

\* Song "Great Is the Lord" #2022, vs. 3  
"Holy, Holy, Holy" #64, vs. 4

#### \* Passing the Peace

#### Opening Prayer:

Leader: Almighty God, You search our hearts and You see every part of us. All our desires are known to You, and from You no secrets are hidden. By the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts so we may perfectly love You and glorify Your holy name. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### – Hearing Our Faith Story –

Scripture Lesson 2 Kings 23:1-3 (NRSV) Pew Bible O.T. page 356  
Psalm 50 O.T. page 519  
1 Peter 1 N.T. page 232  
\* John 15:1-8 N.T. page 109

\* Hymn "More Like You" #2167

### – Covenant Renewal –

#### Proclamation

#### The Confession

Leader: We are those who seek to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ, but sometimes we fall short. Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and submitting our hearts so that we do not deceive ourselves and cut ourselves away from God. Let us pray:

**People:** Father God, You have set forth the way of life through Your Son Jesus Christ, whom You love dearly. We shamefully confess that we have been slow to learn of Him and have been reluctant to follow Him. You have spoken and called to us but we have not listened. You have revealed Your beauty to us, but we have been blind. You have stretched out Your hands to us through our friends, but we have passed by them. We have accepted Your gifts and offered little thanks. We are unworthy of Your unchanging love.

**Leader:** We now confess to you our sins.  
Please forgive us for the poverty of our worship...  
for the selfishness of our prayers...  
for our inconsistency and unbelief...  
for the ways we neglect fellowship and Your grace...  
for our hesitation to tell others about Christ...  
for the ways we deceive others...

**People:** Forgive us for when we waste time and when we misuse the gifts you have given us. Forgive us for when we have made excuses for the wrong things we have done and when we have purposefully avoided responsibility.

**Leader:** Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good and that we have not been ready to carry our cross. Forgive us that we have not allowed Your love to work through us to help others and that we have not made their suffering our own. Forgive us for those times when instead of working for unity we made it hard for others to live with us because of our lack of forgiveness, inconsiderate judgment, and quick criticism.

**People:** Forgive us for when we have not tried to reconcile with others and when we have been slow to seek redemption.

**Leader:** Forgive us also for these sins that we silently confess to you now.

*Words of Assurance and Pardon*

*The Invitation*

**Leader:** Let us gathered here before the Lord now in covenant commit ourselves to Christ as his servants. Let us give ourselves to Him so that we may fully belong to Him. Jesus Christ has left us with many services to be done. Some of these services are easy and honorable, but some are difficult and disgraceful. Some line up with our desires and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we please both Christ and ourselves, but then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.  
Jesus Christ, we offer You this prayer:

**People:** Let me be Your servant. Let me follow your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. I give myself completely to your will.

**Leader:** The power and strength to live as true servants is given to us in Christ. We accept the place and work that He gives us, acknowledging that He alone will be our reward.

**People:** I am not my own. I am Yours alone. Make me into what You will. Rank me with those You will. Put me to use for You. Put me to suffering for You. Let me be employed for You. Let me be laid aside for You. Let me be lifted high for You. Let me be brought low for You. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have all things or let me have nothing. With a willing heart, I freely give everything to Your pleasure and disposal.

Leader: Christ is Savior to those who are His true servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. To be His servant is to consent fully to His will. Christ accepts nothing less. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Now confirm this truth in holy covenant. Make it a reality in your life in these three ways:

First, set apart time in your day, more than once, to be spent alone with the Lord. Seek to perceive God's special care for you and gracious acceptance of you. Carefully think through the words of this covenant and its conditions. Examine your heart, even if you have freely given your life to Christ. Name the sins in your life. Reflect on whether you are willing to choose Christ's holy laws and strict commands. Be sure you are clear in all of these so you do not lie to God!

Second, uphold a serious spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant. Do not trust in your own strength and power but rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength. In this way, He will empower you to keep your promise.

Fourth, be determined to be faithful. You have given your heart and life to God. You have opened your mouth to dedicate yourself to the Lord. With God's power, never go back to your former way of living.

And last, be prepared to renew your covenant with God. Fall on your knees. Lift your hands. Open your hearts.

#### *The Covenant Prayer*

Leader: Let us pray together:

**People: My righteous God, for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, see me now as I fall down before You. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done your will. You promise mercy if I turn to You with my whole heart.**

Leader: God requires that you rid yourself of every idol in your life.

**People: From the bottom of my heart, I here and now renounce every idol in my life, covenanting with You that I will not commit any known sin. By turning against Your will I have turned my love toward the world. In Your power I will watch for any temptation that will lead me away from You.**

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God again, if you allow Him to be.

**People: Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be Your servant and to serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.**

Leader: Jesus Christ is the only way and means to God. God has given us Jesus as the way and means to salvation.

**People: Jesus, I here and now accept You as the only new and living Way. I join myself in covenant with You. I come to You hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of Your servants. With all my power, I accept You as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own unworthiness, and vow that You are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom and take You for my only guide. I renounce my own will and take Your will as my law.**

Leader: Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

**People: Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with You and accept whatever comes in life. Through Your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from You.**

Leader: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

**People:** I here and now willingly take on Your yoke and burden. All Your laws are holy, just, and good. I accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

**Leader:** The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart.

**People:** O God, You know that we have made this covenant today in sincerity, without deceit or reluctance. If You find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right. And now, glory be to You, God the Father. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my God and Father. Glory be to You, God the Son. You have loved me and washed me from my sins in Your own blood. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to You, O God the Holy Spirit. By Your almighty power, You have turned my heart from sin to God. From this day forward I shall look upon You as my Comforter and Guide. O mighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through Your infinite grace, have become Your covenant servant. You are mine and I am Yours. So be it. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

*Reflection*

Pastor Christopher Leistra

**– Communion –**

*The Great Thanksgiving*

pg. 9

*The Lord's Prayer (unison)*

**Leader:** Now as God's dearly loved children, let us pray together:

**People:** Our Father in heaven, holy is Your Name  
Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven  
Give us today Your daily bread  
And forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil  
For the Kingdom, the power, and glory are Yours, both now and forever. Amen.

*Receiving the Gifts of Bread and Cup*

*You are invited to come forward to receive this gift of God's love in Christ as instructed by the pastor. Everyone is welcome to the Lord's table in the United Methodist Church, as Christ's act of love is offered to all. After you have communed, please return to your seats by the side aisles. If coming forward is difficult for you, signal the communion servers who come to the back of the sanctuary and overflow room – they will be happy to bring communion to you. Thank you.*

*Prayer after Receiving*

**– Sending Forth –**

\* *Dismissal with Blessing*

**Leader:** May our God, who establishes covenant relationship with those who seek to enter the Kingdom, be with you always. May Jesus Christ, who seals the new covenant with his blood on the cross, bring you peace. May the Holy Spirit guide your life both now and for ever. Go in peace to serve the Lord!

**People:** Amen.

\* *Hymn of Going Forth*

"Here I Am, Lord"

#593

\* *Postlude – The Church Scatters for Ministry . . .*

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**Welcome to worship** on this first Sunday of a new year. Let us praise the God who is always doing something new! Everyone is invited for coffee and treats, both before and after the 9:00

worship service at the Wells Campus and on most Sundays before the 11:00 am service at the Kiester Campus.

**The nursery** is available for parents to use during worship on Sunday mornings. The nursery is on the south side of the entryway next to the restroom. The TV may be turned on to watch the service.

**Keep in your prayers this week:** The family of Dorothy Garver; Bev Niebuhr and Joan Christian with cancer; Alan Yokiell; all those grieving, hurting, and lonely; all those struggling with challenging life situations; all those serving in the military and their families.

### ***Announcements***

**Dorothy Garver** went to her heavenly home on December 28. Her funeral will be Friday, January 6, at 2:00 pm at Open Doors, with visitation an hour before. Coffee and refreshments will follow in the church basement. Burial will be at a later date.

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**Worship services in Kiester** will continue through January and then take a break until Easter. However; today and January 22, we are having joint services at 9:00 in Wells. January 22 is the Annual Meeting. Kiester folks are encouraged to come to Wells the Sundays there is no worship in Kiester. So, plan on 11:00 church in the basement at Kiester on January 8, 15, & 29.

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**The Advent offering** – Today is the last day to give to the Advent Offering. This year the offering goes to help people right here in Faribault County who are at the poverty level and in an emergency situation. Through the Salvation Army, we can directly reach people who need emergency financial assistance with lodging, rent, heat and utilities, gas, car repairs, or emergency prescriptions. Make your checks out to Open Doors UMC and use the special Advent offering envelopes or write “Advent Offering” in the check memo line.

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**Mitten Tree:** Thank you for all the gifts of hats, mittens & scarves! It’s fun to see how full the tree in the entryway is now! These will go to USC and Semcac in Albert Lea.

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**Wednesday Night Suppers are coming back January 11!** Yes, enjoy a night away from the kitchen and out with friends at church! The first night will be **Wednesday, January 11**, in our new kitchen. John & Melissa Kruse will start us out as cooks and a schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the entryway for others to volunteer to cook. Serving will be from 5:00-6:15 each Wednesday and we’ll ask for a free-will donation. Invite your friends or meet them here! And please consider volunteering as a Wednesday night cook!

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**Offering envelopes** are ready for you to pick up in the entryway. If you would like a box and you don’t find your name, contact Sarah in the church office. Envelopes are also available for your children upon request.

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**Painting Class** – We’re going to continue with the painting class into the new year and are hoping a few more people will take the opportunity and join the group. The class meets on Mondays in the basement Youth Room at the Wells Campus from 9-11am. Jim Dalton teaches the class. It is open to acrylic or watercolor painters, novice or experienced. Your supplies for the first day are provided so you can see if it is something you want to continue and invest in. The next session will be January 9. Hope to see you there!

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**Sunday School** classes will not meet today but will resume January 8.

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**Next Sunday is UM Student Day.** Right now, there are United Methodist young people who might not have the resources to attend a school of their choice or, for some, any school at all. However, because of people like you, they will be sent into the world with gifts made through United Methodist Student Day. The funds received from this special offering are used to underwrite scholarships for United Methodist students. Your contribution is an acknowledgment that the church has confidence in them and in their abilities. Supporting this ministry allows us to invest in future missionaries, engineers, teachers, pastors, film producers and so many other careers. Our students are depending on your support.

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**Jan./Feb. Upper Room** daily devotionals are available to pick up in the entryway or north hall. Start your new year off right with daily devotions.

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**Community Prayer Group and Bible Study** – Prayer is powerful, renewing, and healing. There is a group that meets every Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. for prayer in the Hospitality Room of Open Doors UMC and you are invited. Following prayer at 10:00, there is a community Bible Study that is open to all, as well. They are studying the book of John. Just bring your Bible.



**THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE**

**Sunday, January 1**

**WK** 9:00am JOINT Worship in Wells  
10:00am Coffee

**Monday, January 2**

Office Closed for Holiday

**Tuesday, January 3**

9:00-11am Coffee with Pastor at The Bean

**Wednesday, January 4**

**W** 9:30am Staff meeting  
9:00am Community prayer  
10:00am Community Bible study  
**W** 5:45pm Praise Team  
6:30pm The WAY Youth Group at USC:  
Christmas Dance Party

**Thursday, January 5**

**W** 6:30pm Church Board mtg.

**Sunday, December 8–UM Student Day**

**W** 9:00am Worship  
10:00am Sunday School / Coffee  
**K** 10:00am Coffee  
11:00am Worship

**WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS**

Pastor.....Rev. Christopher Leistra  
Organists..... Jan Johanson  
Cross Bearer..... tbd  
Scripture Reader ..... Alice Oleson  
Communion ..... Sharon Miller, Brooklyn Miller  
A/V..... Don Stenzel, Sarah Hankerson  
Projection..... Karen Stenzel

**Birthdays This Week:**

January 1 ..... Elizabeth Bathke  
January 2 ..... Wes Mortenson  
January 4 ..... Jada Lau  
January 5 ..... Sawyer Schroeder  
January 6 ..... Roxanne Bruckhoff, Nevaeh Roberts  
January 8 ..... Henry Mortenson

**Cable Schedule of Wells' Sunday Service:**

Tuesday: 11:00 am & 8:00 pm (Bevcomm ch 990)  
Friday: 6:00 pm (Bevcomm ch 990)

**Live Stream:** Sundays at 9:00am on Facebook, YouTube and [www.opendoorsumc.org](http://www.opendoorsumc.org).