

Prayer Corner

Advent Prayer of the Month:

"A Light to Guide, A Hope to Hold "

Adapted from Church Assistant: Liturgy, Bible Study, Prayer

God of light and revelation, we step into this new year carrying both memories and hopes, aware of the burdens we've known and the grace that has kept us. As the season of Epiphany unfolds, remind us that your light still shines in unexpected places. When direction feels unclear, be the star that leads us forward. Teach us to move not in fear but in faith, trusting that your Spirit is already ahead of us. May your wisdom guide our decisions and your love dwell deeply in our communities. Let this year be marked not just by what we do, but by how we follow—more boldly, more humbly, more faithfully. And like the wise ones of old, may we seek you with open hearts and return changed. In the name of Jesus, our Light and our Way, we pray. Amen.

Prayer Requests

- Carlton Garner and Garner Family
- Somali/Immigrant Community
- Project 2027 (Black Faith Agenda)
- Rondo Community

Seniors and Homebound

- Brenda Bolar
- Doris Douglas
- Johnette Houston
- Pat Jemie
- Barbara Wulf



Loving God. Loving People.



Memorial United Methodist Church

585 Fuller Avenue | St. Paul, MN 55103
www.camphorconnects.org

**January 4, 2026 | 10 am
A New Year, A New Season | Epiphany**



Rev. Cynthia Williams | Lead Pastor

Welcome to Camphor Memorial UMC!

We are an open, welcoming, and affirming congregation, intentional and inclusive of all God's people. Camphor worship services are filmed, recorded and broadcast on line. Whoever you are – you are safe here.

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- † All stand
- * Please be Seated
- Where indicated, speak or sing the words in **bold**

Centering Moment: Our Daily Bread

Check out today's passage from "Our Daily Bread" to get centered for Worship.



Prelude

† Bringing in the Light | Processional

Welcome

Pastor Cynthia Williams

† CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, people of the Light—this is not just a new year; this is a sacred beginning. God is doing a new thing, and the Spirit is already moving.

Many: **We come with wonder and with longing, trusting that the God who calls us by name is still making a way in the wilderness.**

One: The prophet declares, "Here is my servant, in whom I delight." God's justice is gentle, God's faithfulness sure. Even when the flame is faint, God does not snuff it out.

Many: **We come holding light and questions, burdens and praise. We believe that even when we cannot see the road, God walks beside us.**

One: God promises to open blind eyes and release captive hearts. This season is not about returning to what was—but receiving what can be.

Many: **We come with readiness for the unexpected, trusting that the Spirit will stir and stretch us into something new.**

One: So bring your whole self—your vision and your weariness, your fire and your faith. This is Epiphany, and the glory of God is still being revealed.

Many: **We show up open, expecting, and ready. A new season has begun, and we will not leave unchanged. Come, let us worship the God who shines, speaks, and sets us free. Amen.**

(Adapted from Church Assistant: Liturgy, Bible Study, Prayer)

Sharing of the Meal

Please come forward as the ushers direct to receive by intinction: taking a piece of bread and dipping it into the cup.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (In Unison)

Gracious and loving God, We thank You for this holy meal, for the bread that strengthens us and the cup that reminds us we are never alone. You have met us at the table with mercy, with mystery, and with joy. As we rise from this feast, may we carry Your light into the world. Let what we've received nourish our souls, deepen our faith, and empower our love. In the name of Jesus, who is still revealed in the breaking of the bread, Amen.

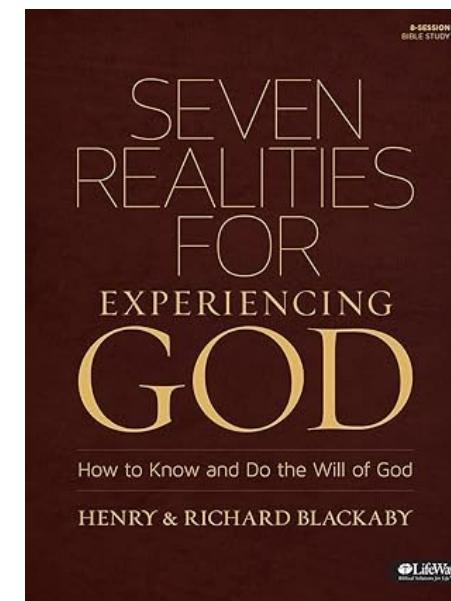
† Benediction with Blessings

Pastor Cynthia Williams

**Let the Church say Amen,
Let the Church say Amen
God has spoken, Let the Church say Amen**

(Worshippers may depart. Go in Peace)

Experiencing God Bible Study



Join us for an eight-week study, *Seven Realities for Experiencing God: How to Know and Do the Will of God*, beginning Wednesday, January 7, at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

This small-group-friendly study explores seven biblical realities from Exodus 3 that help believers recognize God at work and join in God's activity through an obedient love relationship.

The book is required for this study. You may purchase it by scanning the QR code or request to purchase a copy through the church office by emailing office@camphorconnects.org. The cost is \$15, and office purchase requests must be made by Tuesday, January 6th.

Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89022802750>



Prayer of Confession (In Unison)

Loving God, We confess that we often carry the old into the new—old fears, old habits, old hurts. We resist change and hesitate to trust Your leading. But You are the God of fresh starts and second chances. Forgive us where we've turned away. Heal what still aches. Lead us into this new season with open hearts and willing spirits. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Words of Assurance

Pastor Cynthia Williams

One: Hear the good news: God's mercy is steady, God's grace is sure, and God's light still shines. In Christ, we are forgiven and made new.

Many: Thanks be to God—renewed, restored, and ready for the journey ahead. Amen.

Service of Word and Table (The Great Thanksgiving)

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

...We praise your name and join their unending hymn **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God, and 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.**

...as we proclaim the mystery of faith **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

...now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

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, the power and the glory forever. Amen

† Hymn of Praise

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty"

AA/HH 329 | UMH 64

[Verse 1]

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee:

Holy, Holy, Holy! merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

[Verse 2]

Holy, Holy, Holy! all the saints adore Thee,

Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;

Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,

God everlasting through eternity.

[Verse 3]

Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,

Though the eye made blind by sin Thy glory may not see,

Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,

Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

[Verse 4]

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea;

Holy, Holy, Holy! merciful and mighty,

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

(Worshippers May Enter)

Centering Prayer (In Unison)

De Anna Conover

God of the new and the now, As we enter this sacred year, we come with open hearts and quiet hopes. You are not just starting a calendar—you are stirring a calling. You have promised to walk with us, to light the path before us, and to hold us steady as we step into what's next. Speak to the tender parts of us that long for change. Strengthen our spirits where we feel uncertain. And awaken our imagination for the justice, joy, and healing You are bringing to life. In Jesus' name, who is Light and Liberation, Amen.

(Adapted from Church Assistant: Liturgy, Bible Study, Prayer)

Passing of the Peace

De Anna Conover

Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation, peace, and love. Saying, to our neighbors, **"the peace of Christ be with you,"** the response is, **"And also with you!"**

(Worshippers May Enter)

Song of Intercession

Walk With Me

AA/HH 563

*I want Jesus to walk with me; I want Jesus to walk with me
All along my pilgrim journey, Lord I want Jesus to walk with me*

*In my trials, Lord walk with me; In my trials, Lord walk with me
When the shades of life are failing, Lord I want Jesus to walk with me*

*Pray with me Lord, pray with me; Pray with me Lord, pray with me
All long my, pilgrim journey, Lord I want Jesus, to pray with me*

Joys and Concerns | Intercessory Prayer

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Gathering our Community/Announcements

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Ministry of Giving/Offering

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Scan the QR Code to give online via Square or PayPal!



1st Offering: Change for Change

Organization Spotlight: Agape- Kea Sparkman

2nd Offering: Tithes & General Offering

† The Doxology

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

UMH 95 | AA/HH 651

Ministry of Music

Sanctuary Choir

† Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 42:1-16 (NRSVue)

David Webb

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations 2 He will not cry out or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street;

† Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 42:1-16 (NRSVue)-cont'd

David Webb

3 a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth, and the coastlands wait for his teaching. 5 Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: 6 I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. 8 I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. 9 See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them. 10 Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth! Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants. 11 Let the desert and its towns lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits; let the inhabitants of Sela shout for joy; let them shout from the tops of the mountains. 12 Let them give glory to the Lord and declare his praise in the coastlands. 13 The Lord goes forth like a soldier; like a warrior he stirs up his fury; he cries out; he shouts aloud; he shows himself mighty against his foes. 14 For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. 15 I will lay waste mountains and hills and dry up all their herbage; I will turn the rivers into islands and dry up the pools. 16 I will lead the blind by a road they do not know; by paths they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do, and I will not forsake them.

(Leader: The Word of God for the People of God/ **All: Thanks be to God**)

Ministry of Music

Sanctuary Choir

Sermon

A New Year, A New Season

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Invitation for Prayer

Pastor Cynthia Williams

(Those who desire prayer or anointing with oil may come at this time.)

Call to Confession

Pastor Cynthia Williams

A new year has begun, but the truth remains—we still miss the mark, still fall short, still need grace. God's light reveals not only what is new, but what still needs healing. The good news is this: God's mercy is new every morning. Let us come honestly and hopefully before the One who makes all things new.

Save The Date



Annual Meeting & Chili Cook-Off

Camphor family, you're invited to our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 25, following Sunday service. We will begin with a Chili Cook-Off, sharing food and fellowship, and then gather to reflect on the life of the church and prayerfully plan for the year ahead. Interested in participating in the Chili Cook-Off? Please email our Communications Coordinator, Hannah Matthews, at communications@camphorconnects.org. All church members are welcome as we come together to celebrate where God has been at work and look ahead in unity and hope.

Black Affair Photos for Sale

Photos from the Black Affair are now available for purchase at \$10 per image—visit the front page of camphorconnects.org to access the order form. Complete the form by reviewing all photos, selecting the images you wish to order, and choosing the quantity for each. The order form will remain open through January 31, 2026, with all orders delivered by email beginning the week of February 1, 2026; questions may be directed to office@camphorconnects.org.



Camphor Bulletin Board

Announcement Submissions: Please submit announcements for the newsletter, bulletin, and Tuesday weekly email by 10 a.m. two weeks before the desired publication date, ensuring events are promoted at least a month in advance to allow the congregation sufficient time to engage and participate.

This Week @ Camphor Memorial UMC

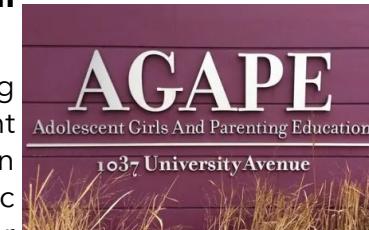
Monday, January 5th	6:30 pm- Trustee Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday, January 6th	6 pm- Special Admin Council Meeting (Zoom)
Wednesday, January 7th	4 pm- Woman's Chorale Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 6:30pm- Bible Study (Zoom)
Sunday, January 11th	8:45 am: Adult Sunday School (Conf. Rm) 10 am: Worship (Sanctuary & Live-Stream)



Change for Change: Small Coins, Big Impact!

We are excited to continue our Change for Change monthly offering—an opportunity to share loose coins and spare dollars to support local organizations making a meaningful difference in our community. All funds are received through the Oglesby House of Blessing and distributed to a different recipient each month. **The January 2026 recipient is Agape High School.**

Agape High School supports pregnant and parenting teen mothers by providing a nurturing environment where they can complete their high school education through a holistic approach focused on academic success, parenting support, and college and career readiness. Bring your loose change each Sunday and join us in this small but powerful way to make a difference together.



Stay Connected with the Camphor Community by scanning the QR Code to subscribe & obtain updates in your inbox!

