

Order of Worship
January 4, 2026 – New Year Holy Communion

Announcements and Prelude

Call to Worship – Matthew 2:1-2, 11, The Visit of the Magi

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea,
Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked,
“Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews?
We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”
On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary,
and they bowed down and worshiped him.
Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of frankincense and of myrrh.

Hymn *Another Year is Dawning* **Front Page**

Consecration of 2025 Leadership – see insert

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer

Scripture Reading – Mark 4:1-9, the parable of the sower

4 Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water’s edge. 5 He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: 6 “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. 7 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 8 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 9 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 10 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. 11 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.”

9 Then Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

Gloria Patri – [#70] **and Apostles’ Creed** – [#881]

Offering & Doxology – #95

Scripture Reading – Mark 4:10-20, Jesus interprets the parable

10 When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. 11 He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables 12 so that, “they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!””

13 Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? 14 The farmer sows the word. 15 Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. 16 Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. 17 But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 18 Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; 19 but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. 20 Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

Sermon **Pastor Paul**

Pondering the Parables:
Gateways to Understanding

This is why I speak to them in parables, because though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not understand.
Matthew 13:13

Hymn *Come, Sinners, to the Gospel Feast*

#616

Holy Communion

Invitation, Confession, Pardon
Words of Institution & Prayer of Consecration

The people called Methodist have traditionally used
John Wesley's Covenant Prayer of 1755
in coming to the Lord's Table for the New Year:

*I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt,
rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed for thee
or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.*

Hymn *For the Bread Which You Have Broken* #614

Benediction

Midweek Bible Study & Prayer
9:30 a.m. Wednesday at Jean Christman's
Today in the Word, January 2026

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New Year Holy Communion

Poplar Valley & Poplar Valley United Methodist Churches
poplarvalleyumc.info & cherryvalleyumc.info