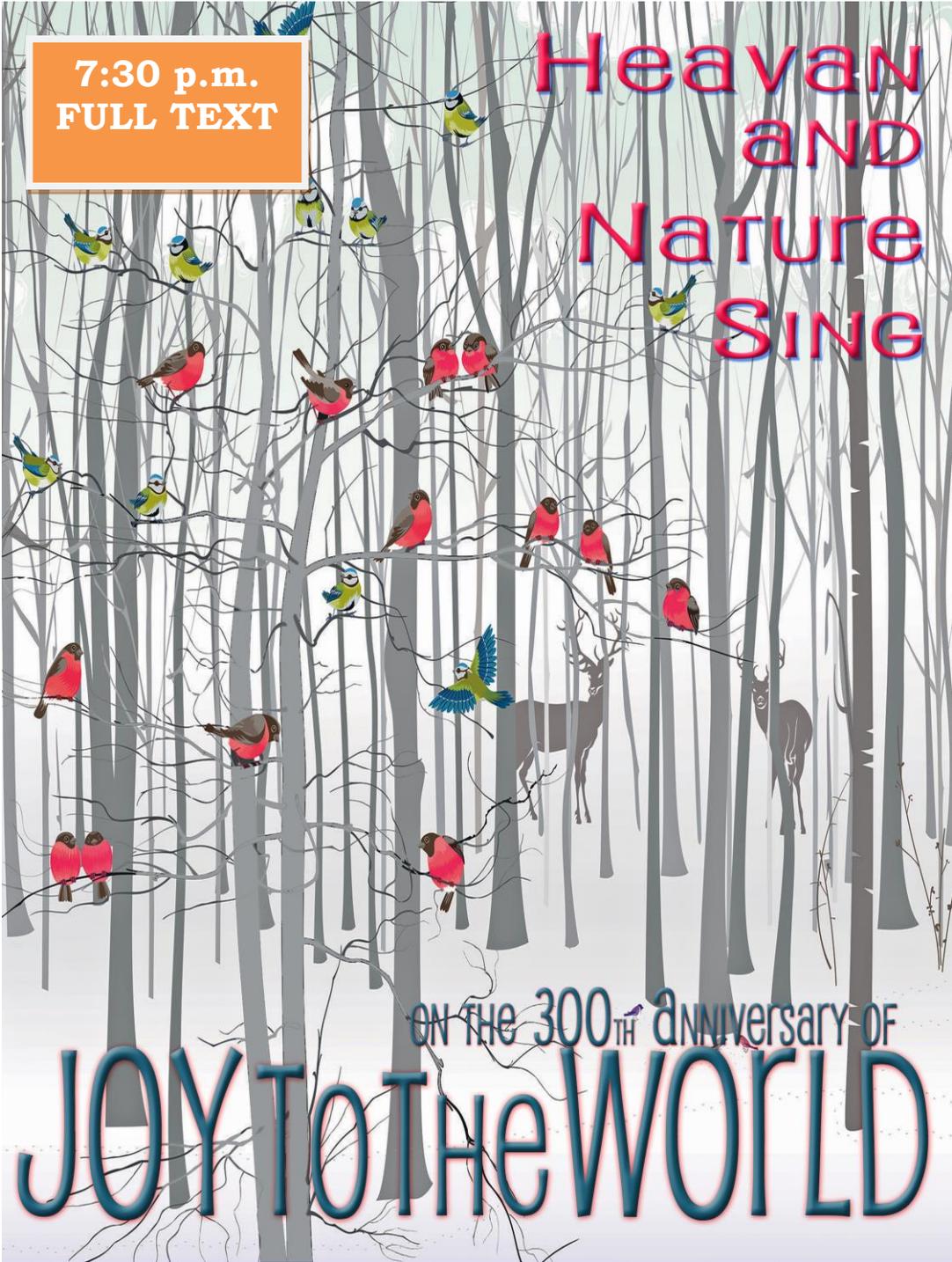


7:30 p.m.
FULL TEXT

Heaven AND Nature SING

on the 300TH anniversary of

JOY TO THE WORLD



Welcome to Christmas Eve at Epworth! We extend a special welcome to all guests who are worshipping with us this evening. For more information about our church, we invite you to visit our website at www.cumcrb.org. Sunday mornings our Contemporary service (9:15 am) offers ASL Interpreting, nursery care, and children's Sunday school classes. Please check the schedule for upcoming services.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, through Holy Communion, all are welcome at the table of the Lord.
Our Communion elements are wheat bread and unfermented grape juice. Gluten-free elements are available to the right of the altar.

✠ WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY ✠

Gathering Music

A Celtic Noel ... arr. Joseph M. Martin
Patapan ... arr. Linda Lamb

Chancel Choir
Memorial Bell Choir

Welcome and Greeting

Todd

*Processional Carol *O Come All Ye Faithful ...* arr. Cynthia Dobrinski (vs. 1, 3 & 6) UMH 234
Chancel Choir & Memorial Bell Choir

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.
*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*
3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest. *{Refrain}*
6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *{Refrain}*

*Call to Worship (from Thom Shuman)

- L: On this holiest of nights,
P: we come, joining the shepherds who are stunned by wonder.
L: On this most silent night,
P: we come, our hopes and dreams joining those of Mary and Joseph.
L: On this nights of carols and candlelight,
P: we come, our glad songs joining with the choirs of angels over us.

[Advent Candle Readers come to the wreath]

Advent Reader

Jeff McGuire

Tonight the world no longer waits for the star to shine, for the angels to sing, for the baby to cry. We are here and it is Christmas! So after four weeks of waiting and lighting all the candles on our Advent wreath, we finally light the candle at the center. It represents Christ – and the light from that candle illumines our lives and warms our hearts. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for you! (*Light the Christ Candle*)

✚ LESSONS & CAROLS ✚

(all lessons read from the lectern)

Lesson

The Prophecy of Peace - Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

Kathy Shook

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Anthem

An Advent Garden... Joseph M. Martin

Chancel Choir

Lesson

The Angel Visits Mary - Luke 1:26-35, 38

Gwen Osborne

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most

High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Then the angel departed from her.

Carol

To a Maid Engaged to Joseph (vs. 1, 2, 5 & 6)

UMH 215

1. To a maid engaged to Joseph, the angel Gabriel came.
"Fear not," the angel told her, "I come to bring good news, good news I come to tell you, good news, I say, good news.
2. For you are highly favored by God the Lord of all, who even now is with you. You are on earth most blest, you are most blest, most blessed, God chose you, you are blest!"
5. "How shall this be?" said Mary, "I am not yet a wife."
The angel answered quickly, "The power of the Most High will come upon you shortly, your child will be God's child."
6. As Mary heard the angel, she wondered at his words.
"Behold, I am your handmaid," she said unto her God.
"So be it; I am ready according to your word."

Lesson

The Angel Visits Joseph - Matthew 1:18-21

Diana Young

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way.

When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Carol

Joseph Heard the Troubling News

TUNE: PIAE CANTIONES

1. Joseph heard the troubling news: Mary was expecting!
What should he, a just man, do? He sought God's directing.
Joseph thought to send her home — leave her, without blaming;
Then an angel in a dream spoke of joy, proclaiming:
2. Go, take Mary as your wife; Joseph, don't you fear it —
God has formed a precious life by the Holy Spirit!
Mary soon will bear a son; you shall name him Jesus.
When the prophet spoke of him, he said, "God is with us!"

3. God of love, we too may face times of doubt and trouble.
May we know your daily grace, even when we struggle.
Just as Joseph answered, "Yes!" with new dedication,
We rejoice, for we've been blessed by your incarnation.

Lesson

The Birth of Jesus - Luke 2:1-7

Linda Kauffman

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.

This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

All went to their own towns to be registered.

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Anthem

Innkeeper ... Roger Emerson

Chancel Choir

Lesson

The Shepherds and the Angels - Luke 2:8-14

Peter Keeble

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

“Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!”

Carol

Angels We Have Heard on High

UMH 238

1. Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

3. Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Lesson

The Shepherds and the Angels (continued)

Rob Linder

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

UMH 240

1. Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, "Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come, off-spring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Meditation

Joy Putting on Flesh

Rev. Vicky Starnes

Offering Prayer

Please sign the blue Connections Pad and pass it down the row.

Todd

*Offerings are given through cash and check, on-line giving, Texting at 302-488-0038
and by using our Giving Kiosk in the main lobby. There are Giving Cards in the pews to place in the plate, if you wish
Bless your heart for supporting our ministries!*

(This is spoken by pastor before offering is taken)

Holy Child of Bethlehem, bless these gifts,
that they may be the grace of God
for a community in need;
that they may be the light of Christ
for the people who dwell in darkness;
and that they may be the Spirit of peace

for a world at war with itself.
Bring your peace into our darkness,
and flow through our lands
with your glorious love.

Offertory

Still, Still, Still... arr. Sandra Eithun

Memorial Bell Choir

(GIFTS NOT BROUGHT FORWARD)

***The Great Thanksgiving**

Vicky

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.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.
You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.
In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our savior,
and at his birth the angels sang
glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

(Please be seated)

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem
and there found no room,
so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected.
As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born,
so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Todd

As you Word became flesh, born of women, on that night long ago,
so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Vicky

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

Todd

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

UMH 895

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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sharing Bread and Cup

Music during Communion *O Holy Night* ... Adolphe Adam
Carolyn Robinson, soprano

Chancel Choir

Communion Carols

Away in a Manger

UMH 217

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

It Came upon the Midnight Clear (vs. 1, 2 & 4)

UMH 218

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo! The days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

☞ THE LIGHT OF CHRIST ☞

All Lights Out including Narthex and Hallways – KEEP CHRISTMAS TREES ON

Doug begins to play intro to Silent Night as Todd reads poem.

Vicky puts out altar candles

Todd reads from Chancel Center

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

Sharing the Light of Christ

Lighting of Individual Candles

*Vicky gives instructions to congregation, candle light passes from the Christ candle to Vicky
and the ushers & then to the congregation as we sing:*

Carol

Silent Night

UMH 239

1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright, round yon virgin, mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight; glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia!" Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!
3. Silent night, holy night, son of God, love's pure light; radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
4. Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

☞ THE LIGHT OF CHRIST LEADS US INTO THE WORLD ☞

(All Lights on)

*Sending Forth (by Roddy Hamilton)

Vicky

- L: Believe: for light is now in the world
- P: Believe: for God has become one of us
- L: Believe: for Love is born in each of us
- P: Believe: for the manger is full
- L: Go and believe it is as the prophets said
and the blessing of Christmas of family, of friends
and of God be with you today
- P: We believe!

*Sending Forth Carol

Joy to the World (verses 1, 2 & 4)

UMH 246

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.
2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love, and wonders, and wonders of his love.

*Postlude

Gloria! ... Jason D. Payne

Doug Yetter

Upcoming Services Times

Christmas Eve Services:

10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service

Sunday, December 29: – One service at 10:00 a.m.

Sundays in January - One service at 10:00a.m.

Bulletins for the month of December are sponsored in honor of Denny's birthday, 12/14, and granddaughter, Sarah's birthday, 12/16, by Laurel St. Germain.

Thank you for donating poinsettias and funds toward the "Youth Rally." Lists of donation remembrances can be found in the narthex for those who have not received a copy. This is our effort to be good stewards of our environment and cost. Thanks for your understanding.

DVD and Broadcast Ministries: All Church Service at Epworth are presented using multimedia technology. The screens above the Chancel area are used for text, videos, photographs and live cameras. Each service is digitally recorded for archive purposes as well as for distribution to our homebound members on DVD. These recordings may also be broadcast or archived on our web page. Therefore; you may, at any time, be seen and recorded on camera - anywhere throughout the Sanctuary.

Assisting with today's service as

Sound: Sharon Wert, Josh Megee, Arne Jerfsten, Karen Kaufman, Sofia Tamburello
Ushers: Head Usher: Jim Blakeslee
Usher Coordinator - Worship Pathway:
Bunny Maher, Russ Mullen

Ministers: The Church Family... *Lay Leader:* Gwen Osborne
Senior Pastor: Rev. Vicky Starnes ... *Associate Pastor:* Rev. Todd Shultz
Director of Music Ministries: Doug Yetter ... *Choir Accompanist:* Linda Hess ... *Coordinator of Caring Ministries:* Mickie McManamon
Manager of Facilities & Technologies: Kenneth Mahan ... *Office Manager:* Darlene Ford ... *ASL Interpreter:* Sandy Davis
Special Projects: Debbie Hunt ... *Administrative Assistant:* Diana Young ... *Sound Tech:* Josh Megee
Preschool Director: Betsy Plowman ... *Nursery:* Cathy Crawford ... *Cemetery Superintendent:* Jay Stevenson
Custodian: Wanda Hudson...*Maintenance:* Mike Harrigan...*Lead Interpreter:* Sandy Davis



EPWORTH
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a United Methodist Church
Open Hearts Open Minds Open Doors

19285 Holland Glade Road Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971
302.227.7743 www.EUMCRB.org



Large-Print Bulletins & Hearing Assist Devices are Available
Please see an Usher for assistance



American Sign Language
at 9:15 Service



Affiliated with other United Methodists for greater inclusiveness through the Reconciling Ministries Network
www.RMNetwork.org

worship@epworth
7:45 & 11:15 - Traditional 9:15 - Contemporary