

**First United Methodist Church of Freehold  
Bulletin**

**Sunday, December 28, 2025  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day**

Announcements: Sharon Shutzer

Prelude

Welcome: Sharon Shutzer

**\*Call to Worship:**

Leader: God has led us through wilderness we did not design.

**People: God has kept our feet moving, even when the road was long.**

Leader: God humbled us so our hearts would learn their true home.

**People: God fed us daily so we would become a people formed together.**

Leader: Every unseen stretch of this year was held by God's hand.

**People: We worship the God who carried us while we kept walking.**

**\*Opening Prayer: (In Unison)**

**Faithful God, you have led us through wilderness places, both seen and unseen. You teach us that strength is a gift, humility is a posture, and gratitude is our witness. As we bring this year toward its close, shape us still into a people who remember your faithful hand. Form our hearts for trust, and our lives for your service. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn:** "Away in a Manger" UMH #217

**\*Praise Song:** "Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child" Arr. Jeffrey Radford

Children's Moment: Pastor, Doby Amos

Introduction to Prayer: Pastor, Doby Amos

*[For those joining us online, please submit your prayer requests in the comments on the virtual attendance sheet, or email the church office. Your prayer requests will be lifted up in next Sunday's service.]*

Prayer Song: "Isn't He" John Wimber

Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Doby Amos

The Lord's Prayer: UMH #895

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-6 Melanie Bowen

Friendship Moment and Passing of the Peace

*[For those joining us online, please take a moment to sign the online attendance form:*

*[www.freeholdmethodist.org](http://www.freeholdmethodist.org)*]

Message:

“Not Without God in the Wilderness”

Pastor Doby Amos

Offering Time: The December Special Offering will benefit **Local Charities: Open Door, The Emergency Housing and Advocacy Program (E. H.A.P.) and Habitat for Humanity. Giving Page:**

[www.freeholdmethodist.org/give](http://www.freeholdmethodist.org/give)

Offertory:

“Offering”

Paul Baloché

\*Doxology:

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

UMH #95

\*Offering Prayer: (In Unison)

**God of generous provision, what we give today is not payment, but testimony. Receive these gifts, and make them a continuation of your grace at work among us. Let them bless our community, strengthen our calling, and extend your care to the vulnerable. Amen.**

\*Closing Song:

“Hymn of Joy”

Tomlin & Cash

\*Benediction:

Pastor, Doby Amos

\*Postlude

**Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-6 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)**

**Liturgist: Melanie Bowen**

<sup>2</sup> And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. <sup>3</sup> And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word[a] that comes from the mouth of the Lord. <sup>4</sup> Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. <sup>5</sup> Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. <sup>6</sup> So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him.

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Opening Hymn:**  
**“Away in a Manger”**  
**UMH #217**

(Verse 1)

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.

(Verse 2)

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 'til morning is nigh.

(Verse 3)

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.

**Praise Song:**  
**“Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child”**  
**Arr. Jeffrey Radford**

Jesus, Jesus,  
Oh, what a wonderful child.  
Jesus, Jesus,  
So holy, meek and mild;  
New life, new hope  
The child will bring.  
Listen to the angel sing,  
“Glory, glory, glory,”  
Let the heavens ring.

**(Repeat)**

**Prayer Hymn:**  
**“Isn’t He”**  
**John Wimber**

(Verse 1)

Isn't He beautiful? Beautiful, isn't He?  
Prince of Peace Son of God. Isn't He?

(Verse 2)

Isn't He wonderful? Wonderful, isn't He?  
Counselor, Almighty God. Isn't He? Isn't He?  
Isn't He?

**Offertory:**  
**“Offering”**  
**Paul Baloche**

(Verse)

The sun cannot compare to the glory of Your love;  
There is no shadow in Your presence.  
No mortal man would dare  
to stand before Your throne;  
Before the Holy One of heaven.  
It's only by Your blood,  
And it's only through Your mercy, Lord I come.

(Chorus 1)

I bring an offering of worship to my King;  
No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing.  
Jesus, may You receive the honor that You're due;  
O Lord, I bring an offering to You.

*I bring an offering to You*

(Chorus 2)

I bring an offering of worship to my King;  
No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing.  
Jesus, may You receive the honor that You're due;  
O Lord, I bring an offering to You.  
O Lord I bring an offering to You.  
O Lord I bring an offering to You.

(Ending)

I bring an offering to You.

**Doxology:**  
**"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"**  
**UMH #95**

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

**Closing Song:**  
**"Hymn of Joy"**  
**Chris Tomlin & Ed Cash**

**(Verse 1)**  
Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,  
God of glory Lord of love.  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee  
Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day.

**(Chorus)**  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel;**  
**Your love has come here to dwell.**

**(Verse 2)**  
All Thy works with joy surround Thee;  
Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays.  
Stars and angels sing around Thee;  
Center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Singing bird and flowing fountain  
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

(Continued...)

**(Chorus 2X)**  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel;**  
**Your love has come here to dwell.**

**(Verse 3)**  
Mortals, join the happy chorus  
Which the morning stars began.  
Father love is reigning o'er us;  
Brother love binds man to man.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife.  
Joyful music leads us sunward  
In the triumph song of life.

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are donated by Nancy & Charlie Mongano, in memory of Anthony and Angela DeCarlo.

The church office will be CLOSED December 29 – January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Check out the new **Ministry Fair Booklet** in Fellowship Hall. Thank you to AnnMarie Meredith for putting it together so beautifully.

**From the Financial Secretary:**

For those of you who plan to fulfill your 2025 pledge, I would appreciate having all contributions mailed to the church office (*Attention: Financial Secretary*), put in the offering plate during church services or done with online giving **prior to Monday, December 29, 2025**. A final bank deposit of cash/checks will be made the next day. Additionally, I will be completing the final entries into the church's financial management program in order to prepare end-of-year contribution statements. Any money received after the December 29<sup>th</sup> date will be credited for the new year, 2026. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

*\*\*\*Also, anyone who has not sent in their 2026 estimate of giving/pledge card, please do so as soon as possible. If you've misplaced yours, contact me for a new one.*

Thank you,

**Carol Davison**

**CDavison12@aol.com**

**732-919-1744**

**This Week at a Glance (December 29 – January 4)**

Monday: \*\*\*

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. - Walking Group (ZOOM)

Wednesday: **NEW YEAR'S EVE**

Thursday: **NEW YEAR'S DAY**

Friday: \*\*\*

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - Seventh Day Adventist Church (Sanctuary & Wesley Hall till 4:00 p.m.)

Sunday: **EPIPHANY SUNDAY**

9:00 a.m. - Joyful Noise Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

**10:00 a.m. - Worship with Communion (Sanctuary)**

11:00 a.m. - Fellowship Time and Refreshments (Fellowship Hall)

(Nursery care for our youngest members is available during worship service.)

\*\*\* No Events Scheduled

***December Birthdays***

(1) Sandy Kaiser	(8) Ashley Moore	(13) Chloe Jeon	(28) Nancy Schwarzkopf
(5) Ryan Brigid Mento	(8) Ray Ritchie	(26) Cathy Rupner	(29) Sean Cronin
(5) Rebecca Leader	(11) Kristine O'Donnell	(27) Linda Gatti	(31) Lorena Catalina Lawrence
(6) Susan Moore	(12) Erika MacDonald	(27) Opal Peart	

***January Birthdays***

(1) Ed Beach	(21) Gabrielle Lux
(7) Cindy Curtis-Budka	(21) Gilliane Lux
(12) Melanie Bowen	(21) Gerhard Lux
(18) Olivia Garcia	(31) Beth Avallone