

The Messenger

December 2020

Red Oak First United Methodist Church

The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Core Values:

- 1. Welcome**
We are each beloved and welcomed unconditionally by God's grace.
Romans 15:7; Matthew 25: 35-36
- 2. Love**
We value compassion and care for one another and the world around us because of God's grace. John 13:34-35; Corinthians 13:4-5
- 3. Praise**
We celebrate God's love by opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit through praise and worship in living to glorify God. Psalms 96:1-4; Psalms 150:6

Message from the Worship Leader:

Greetings Congregation,

What a joy and a privilege it is to lead you in worship each week. I count it pure joy to get to worship with you each week, whether it be in person or on Facebook. I wanted to take an opportunity to publicly thank an amazing group of people. Our choir and praise team are such a blessing to me and to our congregation. The work and dedication that they share each week is both humbling and amazing to me. God has gifted each one of us with a specific and unique set of gifts and talents, and I am so thankful to our choir and praise team for the way that they have chosen to put those gifts and talents to use. Each week they learn new music, prepare in advance for upcoming Sundays, and have special rehearsals so that our congregation can have meaningful and relevant worship. They are great stewards of the gifts that God has given them as they give of their time and their talent to God's ministry and the mission of His church. God has blessed us all in so many ways and it is important for us give Him thanks for those blessings. This Thanksgiving season as we look toward to excitement and wonder of the Advent Season, and remember the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, may I just say how thankful I am for the wonderful men and women who serve in our choir and in the praise team. They are precious to God and they are precious to me as well!

Bles"Sings" to all of you! -Tim Marsden

600 East Hammond St. Red Oak, IA, 51566

Office Hours: 9:00-3:00 – Monday-Friday

(712) 623-2367 – office@redoakfumc.org

Pastor – (515) 421-0929 – eric.sayonkon@iaumc.net

Thank you to everyone for the prayers, food and running errands for us during our bout with Covid-19. 😊

-Bob and Mary Fenstermann



Our office will be closed:
Thursday, December 24th, Friday, December 25th and Friday, January 1st.
We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season!



December Birthdays



12/01 - Barb Kinard

12/01 - Sharon Wiese

12/02 - Deb Anderson

12/02 - Isaias Guerra

12/13 - Jeannie Bruning

12/14 - Donnie Torbett

12/16 - Eboni Sayonkon

12/18 - Graig Smith

12/25 - Karen Blue

12/25 - Holly Crowell

12/26 - Lanie Edie

12/28 - Cale Hall

12/29 - Carlos Guerra III

12/29 - Linda Olsen



The Mitten Tree is officially up! We will be collecting mittens, caps, and scarves, throughout the month of December. All donations will go to the Christ Cupboard.



Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Eve Service will be on Thursday, December 24th at 5:30pm.



This Advent season, help us decorate the church by buying a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone of your choice. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Blessings!



Dress A Girl Around The World

The Youth Group is still working on dresses that will be sent to girls in Africa. There was a total of 100 Dresses, cut out. As of now, half of the dresses are sewn. If you are interested in sewing dresses, please contact Julie Wolfe at (712)621-9461 or the Church Office at (712)623-2367.

Stewardship Focus

As the year comes to an end, we thank you for your financial gifts that make our ministries possible by the grace of God. Prayerfully consider making a year-end contribution. Your financial gift provides the church with a solid foundation as we enter 2021- another year of sharing Jesus' love and advancing His kingdom through our community and to the world.

God bless you!

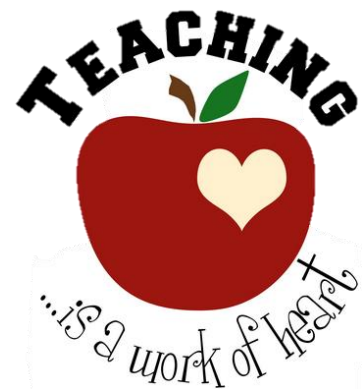
Pastor Eric Sayonkon and Church Leadership

Thank you!

Adopt A Teacher

This month, we are adopting teachers from Red Oak Jr./Sr. High School. This way we will show each teacher that we are thinking of them in these hard times. Follow these steps and you can adopt a teacher!

1. Take a tag from the tree and write **YOUR** name on the clipboard next to the name on the tag.
2. Between now and December 13th, drop an offering in the labeled basket to help contribute for a gift card to a local business for your adopted teacher.
3. Bring a note of encouragement for your adopted teacher and place it in the basket. They will be delivered in person, no need for stamps!
4. Keep your card in a safe place and remember to pray for them often!



Financials

A couple of weeks ago, Pastor Eric acknowledged the end of the Grace and Gratitude stewardship campaign and shared the results of the campaign.

To date pledges total \$123,000... estimated unpledged contributions and giving for specific purposes brings our total estimated income to \$162,590... of which \$143,000 is for operational expenses... total estimated expenses are \$204,119.



A LOOK at the BUDGET

The Administrative Board thanks you for your generous response to the pledge campaign. Through our faithful giving we will be able to continue God's work in our Church and Community.

We Believe God will provide as we strive to do his work. God also looks to us to carry our share of the load. Increased giving will probably be necessary to balance the budget along with careful management of expenses.

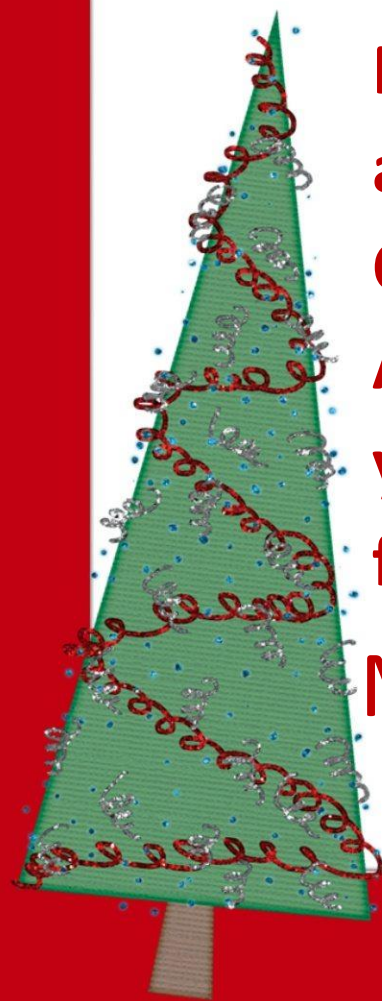
We will continue to keep you informed of our work and ask you to pray for our church and our community.

In our effort to keep you informed we have full copies of the Budget available in the office. Feel free to stop and secure a copy. If you have any questions, feel free to call me (Bob Lewellen) at 513-509-4753.

**May the peace
and joy that
Christmas brings...**

**Always be with
you and your
family!**

Merry Christmas!



Advent is a season of waiting, making ready, preparing a space for what God is doing in and through us. The invitation is to be attentive and behold the wonders of God's love in the season of Advent and Christmas. Advent looks back to the first coming of Christ at Bethlehem, and it looks to the future when Christ will come. again

Christmas is one of God's perfect miracles. It is not a one-time event we remember each year. It is an ongoing event that is fresh and transforming. It is the time of new beginning, the beginning of God's kingdom on earth; and it is an ending, the end of searching and waiting for God's promised salvation.

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 s Savior who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11).

I am so glad that God did not wait for us to get it right; God came to us right where we are. When we celebrate Christmas this year in the midst of the pandemic whether it is at church or with family, let us remember that Jesus is our hope and Savior. Jesus offers you eternal life and He is the greatest gift. Grace to you and God bless you!

May you have a Christ filled Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Because of Jesus,

Pastor Eric Sayonkon

