

From the Pastor's Study...

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of darkness—on them a light has shined...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9: 2b, 6)

The season of Advent is already upon us, I feel like it has (once again) come so quickly this year! There are lots of wonderful things that I look forward to about this unique season. We have moved from autumn to winter outside, and the church has moved from ordinary time to a season of expectation as we get ready to celebrate the birth of Christ. You will notice many new sights, sounds, colors, and themes in our worship over the coming weeks. As we build toward Christmas, we will hear words from the prophets, Jesus himself, John the Baptist, and Mary, the mother of Jesus. During each of the 4 weeks of Advent we will also have themes that can help guide us spiritually and devotionally. On December 1st we will focus on **Hope** as we consider some signs that Jesus pointed to for his future return. On December 8th we will reflect on the theme of **Peace** as we encounter John the Baptist and his message. On December 15th we will encounter **Joy** as we experience the Choir's Christmas Cantata, and finally on the morning of December 22nd we will center ourselves on **Love** as we revisit Mary's Magnificat.

Each worship week in Advent will build upon the previous week and will culminate in the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior on Christmas Eve. Our service of candlelight and communion on December 24th promises to be a beautiful, rich, and meaningful service of worship, and we hope that you will join us.

During this next month my hope as your pastor is that you would carve away some time to center yourselves on your relationship with Jesus Christ and to rest. This season of the year can be incredibly enriching in many ways, but it is also a time that can pull us in more directions than we are used to. I pray that you would find time for simplicity, for prayer, for celebration, for fellowship with family and friends, and for communion with God. I hope that as we worship together, you can find some of the hope, peace, joy, and love that God wants for us, and for our relationships with others. During this month I also hope you will take time to say "yes" to some new ways to help others, and "no" to things that don't. I also hope you will find some ways to become more connected to our unique community of faith and to share your faith with others. I look forward to seeing you around the church.

In Christ,
-Chris

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Worship

Sundays
10:30am-11:30am
Sanctuary

Midweek Communion

Wednesdays
12:00pm-12:30pm
Sanctuary

Wednesday nights

Choir Rehearsal
6:00pm-7:00pm
Sanctuary

Ignite Kids Ministry
6:00pm-7:30pm
Classroom

United Methodist Youth
6:00pm-8:00pm
Youth Room

Fellowship

Sunday's
Gathering Area
10:00am

SUE'S DECEMBER NEWS

I am writing my December SUE'S NEWS on the Monday before Thanksgiving Day, and things are already at warp speed here at the church as we begin preparing for the Advent/Christmas season (and it is not even Thanksgiving yet)! Yesterday we began decorating the church building inside and outside for Christmas, and it is already beginning to look a lot like Christmas here at First UMC Madisonville. I can't believe it, but this is my 50th Christmas being on the staff here. I think about all the cantatas that the choir has done and all the Christmas plays and programs that the little children (who now have children and grandchildren of their own) have presented. I think about the fire in 2007 that changed our church forever and how last year we burned the note on our building that rose from the ashes. It makes me realize how we have changed and how we are moving forward into a very positive future.

December is going to be a very exciting month here at the church, and we want you to be a part of all that is going on. Our special events are highlighted in this newsletter. We have updated our webpage at 1umcm.com and events are listed there. I send out a weekend email with lots of reminders about everything going on. If you are not on this email list, let us know here in the office and we will get you on it. We want you to be a part of everything going on at First UMC Madisonville. The Advent/Christmas season is going to be exciting!



Merry Christmas!

-Sue

WELCOME THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH HANGING OF THE GREENS

On Sunday evening December 1st at 6:00pm we will be having our annual Hanging of the Greens service in the sanctuary. This is a beautiful worship service filled with scripture, carols, and symbols of the season of Advent & Christmas. In many parts of the world this ceremony has traditionally been used to kick off the season of expectation called "Advent." We hope you will join us for this meaningful service of worship.

Following the Service: We will have a time of fellowship and finger foods. Please feel free to bring your favorite finger food for others to sample and share.

FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER AT 6:00PM WITH AN IMPROMPTU NATIVITY



On Wednesday, December 18th at 6:00pm we will come together as a church family for our annual Christmas covered dish dinner. Then all will be invited to join us in the sanctuary for a brief, joy filled, funny, and exciting impromptu nativity that will be put on by our young people. This event is always a fun intergenerational way to remember the powerful story of Christ's birth. We hope that every child & youth in our church will be a part of the program. Bring plenty of covered dishes for dinner and join us for this exciting evening.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Please mark your calendars to be in worship on December 15th for our annual Christmas Cantata! Our church choir has been working diligently and joyfully during the 8 weeks to lead us in worship on the 3rd Sunday of Advent. They are excited to share the Cantata, "The Living Gift" by Michael Frazier. We hope you will make plans to be in worship with us for this celebration of the Advent season through song.



ADVENT BIBLE STUDY OF ALMOST CHRISTMAS



The authors of this four week study draw on scriptures and the writings of John and Charles Wesley as they consider God's gifts of the traditional themes of Advent: peace, hope, love, and joy. Bible Fellowship invites you to join us each Sunday, starting December 1st, through Advent. We meet after church in the Youth Room for lunch, lessons & fellowship. Contact **Marlee Tierce** for a book.


We Support Our Church By...

Our Gifts:

- Helping to keep the church cleaned up after events
- Supporting members in times of sadness and need


Our Presence:

- In church average for November-102
- Celebrating the lives of those who have passed on to be with Jesus




Ways To Give...

- ◆ Monetary giving in Church
- ◆ Monetary giving online
- ◆ Joining us in worship during this Advent season



Advent Flowers all month



December 1
Jan Johnson

December 8
Janet Tweed

December 15
Susan Sherrer

December 22
Brenda Alford

December 29
Armida Conley

We Support Our Church By Our Prayers...

- ◆ Prayers for Larry Davis' family and friends
- ◆ Ruby Levinson and family
- ◆ Family of Darrah Wiseman
- ◆ Allan and Julia Reedy
- ◆ Kefauver family
- ◆ Family of Mary Margaret Mason
- ◆ The Maiuri family
- ◆ The Peery family
- ◆ Ann Byers and family
- ◆ Doug Riddle
- ◆ Betty Hicks and family
- ◆ Armida Conley and family



DECEMBER 29TH IS A FUN & SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE

On the first Sunday after Christmas, (*which also happens to be the week leading to New Year's Eve*) we want to invite you to join us for a casual and simple worship service at 10:30am. We will be having a hymn sing where you get to choose what hymns we sing together. Near the end of our time together we will also have a moment to reflect on the previous year and the upcoming year via a Wesleyan Covenant Renewal meditation. You are invited to join us to have a little fun, sing some great songs, and prepare our hearts to continue to adore Him in 2025!

A SPECIAL THANKS FROM THE COMMUNITY CAFÉ MINISTRY

We want to thank all of you in the congregation for stepping up and helping us have the funds to assist those who come to the Community Café each week. So much was given that we have the opportunity to give a small gift card to help supplement folks with food for the month. Again, thank you so much.

Also, a special thanks to Kris Browder for cooking the turkeys for the meal on November 26th. And cooking so much that nearly 30 people can eat turkey on Thanksgiving Day as well.

Lastly, a personal story to share. I was shopping at our local Food City and talked with the manager about helping us with the Community Café. They ended up giving us over 25 items at cost (which ended up being much less than half price). We are so blessed to have such a wonderful store here locally!

We at Community Café hope you've had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that you have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Again, thank you. Because of your help and donations, the folks that come to Community Café will have an easier holiday season this year.

Dora Nelson & Jan Johnson
representing the Community Café



CHRISTMAS EVE Candlelight Service



Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service

Christmas Eve worship here at First United Methodist Church of Madisonville will be held at 7:00pm in our Sanctuary. We will have communion together and celebrate the birth of our Savior through song, scripture, sacrament, and light. We hope you can join us for this beautiful service of worship on one of the most holy nights of the Christian year.



Into the Bible with Rev. Chris Black starts in January

Have you ever been intimidated by the Bible? Or felt that you didn't know where to start with reading or studying scripture? Have you ever wanted to go deeper and to learn more?

Beginning on Wednesday, January 8th at 7:00pm Rev. Chris Black is beginning a new Pastor's Bible Study Class that will help you approach the Bible with confidence. This class will meet in the fellowship hall and will be a home-style Bible Study for all ages! Pastor Chris will offer an in-depth exploration of the gospel of John, and then he will move into other areas of the scriptures. In the midst of our study the group will discuss some fundamental ways to engage with the Bible, so that you may apply it to your life today. It doesn't matter if you're new to the Christian faith or have studied the Bible for years, you are welcome to attend. If you have any questions about the upcoming class please email Pastor Chris at cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org