



The Flame Newsletter

2025 December Issue

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 November 30th we will focus on **Hope** as we consider some signs that Jesus pointed to for his future return. On December 7th we will reflect on the theme of **Peace** as we encounter John the Baptist and his message. On December 14th we will encounter **Joy** as we experience the Choir's Christmas Cantata, along with Mary's Magnificat. Then on the morning of December 21st we will center ourselves on **Love** as we experience Joseph's story. 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

CONTACT US



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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

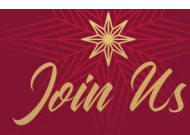
Church: 143 College Street

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Madisonville, TN 37354

423-442-2471

www.1umcm.com



Adult Sunday School

Sundays

9:30AM

Library

Fellowship Time

Sundays

10:00AM

Gathering Area

Worship Service

Sundays

10:30AM

Sanctuary

Bible Fellowship

Sundays

11:45AM

Youth Room

Wednesday Nights

Choir Rehearsal

6:00PM

Sanctuary

United Methodist Youth

6:00PM

Youth Room

Ignite Children's Ministry

6:00PM

Ignite Classrooms

SUE'S DECEMBER NEWS

I want to begin my column by thanking everyone who took part in putting together my 50th year anniversary day on November 16th and those who attended morning worship and the afternoon celebration. It is a day I will never forget. I love this church, and I never would have dreamed back in 1975 that I would still have the privilege of leading this choir and being a part of the great staff at First United Methodist Church Madisonville in 2025. It was truly a thrill on November 16, 2025 to officially be taken of my probationary period that began on November 16, 1975!

Now it is December 2025! I can't believe it! It's like we just finished celebrating Christmas 2024.

So much has happened in the last year and now it is time to celebrate another wonderful Advent/Christmas season. As I am writing, there are folks in the building beginning to decorate for the season. By the time you read this newsletter, trees will be decorated, wreaths will be placed inside and outside, Sally Angel will be in her place on our front lawn, the Advent wreath will be front and center in the sanctuary, the Advent banners will be hanging in the sanctuary, and many other things will be done in and around the church as we prepare for the season. It is an exciting time. Make sure you read your newsletter and bulletins, watch for email news blasts, and plan to take part in the worship services and special events that will take place in December here at First United Methodist Church Madisonville.

~Sue

Advent is here!

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 30th. Followers of Jesus often use the days leading up to Christmas to intentionally prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ on Christmas. Our congregation will mark the 4 weeks in Advent leading up to the Christmas season in some very rich, unique, and fun ways both on Sundays and throughout the week.

Each week leading up to Christmas Eve will have a different theme to be centered around:

November 30th: **Hope**

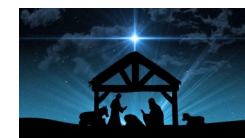
December 7th: **Peace**

December 14th: **Joy**

December 21st: **Love**

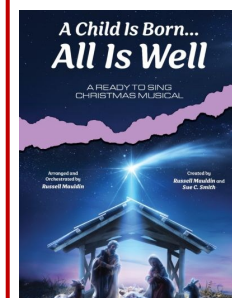
FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER

On Wednesday evening December 17th at 6PM 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 live nativity and our Ignite children will also sing! 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 14th for our annual Christmas Cantata! Our church choir has been working diligently and joyfully to lead us in worship on the 3rd Sunday of Advent. They are excited to share the Cantata, *A Child is Born...All Is Well* arranged and orchestrated by Russell Mauldin. 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 *Experiencing Christmas*



Things just look, smell and taste differently during Advent and the Christmas Season. These differences are a sign to us that God is about to do something radical and different. This study encourages us to pause, observe and immerse ourselves in the season. Bible Fellowship invites you to join us each Sunday through Advent. We meet after church in the Youth Room for lunch, lessons and fellowship. Contact Marlee Tierce for a book.

**December 28th 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 2026!

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA!

Our free annual Breakfast with Santa will be on Saturday morning December 6th in our fellowship hall from 9:30AM-11AM. We will have lots of kid friendly breakfast food, crafts, games and a visit from Santa himself. Bring your camera (phone) and take pictures of your kids with Santa! Carolynn Greenwood will be in charge of breakfast food so let her know what you would like to bring or if you would like to help in the kitchen/serving area. Erin Strickland will be in charge of crafts and games, and she will need LOTS of helpers. Let her know if you can help in that area. We always have lots of kids attend!

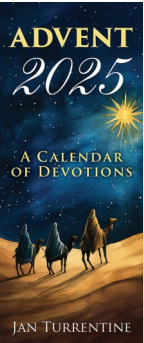


**Christmas Eve Candlelight and
Communion Service**

Christmas Eve worship at First United Methodist Church 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.



community, our church is providing a daily Advent Devotional called "Advent 2025: A Calendar of Devotions" by Jan Turrentine. These short devotions will help you prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25th. Each day's devotion, from the first Sunday of Advent to Christmas Day, is based on the Revised Common Lectionary and includes a Scripture reading, a short devotion, and a brief prayer. This daily reflection is an opportunity for us to be unified in our devotional life as we journey through Advent together. Please feel free to pick up a copy of the new Advent Daily Devotional in our gathering area.



**"Into the Bible" with Rev. Chris Black
starts back up 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 7th 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 homestyle Bible Study for all ages! Pastor Chris will offer an in-depth exploration of the gospel of Matthew, 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.



New Weekly Prayer Ministry

Beginning in December, Rev. Chris Black will begin sharing a community-wide email message called "Weekly Prayers of the First UMC Family." You should see this message in your inboxes on Mondays, and our hope is that this will act as a prayer for your week. Pastor Chris will write most of the prayers but will also invite members of the church to write as well. We will include the Lord's Prayer along with a list of requests that the congregation can pray over throughout the week. Please make sure you are subscribed to our Constant Contact emails to receive these and other messages.

Advent Daily Devotional for You!

As we begin to journey through the season of Advent as a Church

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

For many, many years our own Bruce Christopher has been a fixture in our leadership and the management of our finances here at First UMC of Madisonville. The position of Financial Secretary requires a lot of trust, responsibility, and dedication and Bruce has embodied all these throughout his tenure. This job also requires weekly trips to the bank, talking with donors, our banks, Church Council meetings, and presenting each month to the Finance Committee. His role also requires detailed record keeping and a big investment of personal time. We want to extend a special word of thanks to Bruce Christopher for all the days, months, and years of dedicated service as Financial Secretary here at First UMC. Oh, and Bruce is in the Choir too!



THANK YOU, Bruce!

Our Church Prayers...

- **Harrell/Moore Family**
- **Kefauver Family**
- **Leinart Family**
- **Brandon Beason Family**
- **Linda Giles (Penland)**
- **Rapking Family**
- **Evan Kile Family**
- **Stuckey Family (Huff)**
- **Joe Grubb/Quinn Strickland Family**
- **Peery Family**
- **Gay/Venable Family**
- **Parker Family**
- **Nelson/Stratton Family**
- **Richardson Family (Dopkins)**
- **Maiuri Family**
- **Miranda Larson and Family**
- **Tate Sherrer Family**
- **Conley Family**
- **Connie Caroine Family (Hibbert)**
- **Breyne/Alford Family**
- **Bear Humphries Family**

We support our Church by...

Our Gifts:

- ◆ Helping to decorate the church building for the Christmas season.
- ◆ Giving your time to the Coffee Bar on Sundays serving our congregation and guests.

Our Presence:

- ◆ Joining us in worship during Advent and the special Christmas services.
- ◆ Participating in the many events offered at FUMC during Christmas time.

Coffee

December 7
Glenda Parker

December 14
Janet Tweed

December 21
Open

December 28
Open



Flowers

December 7
Communion

December 14
Advent

December 21
Advent

December 28
Open

