

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Vine



DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

Finding Holy in the Holiday

I've had my share of Christmas Holidays that felt more like a gauntlet to be endured than a season of celebration. Spreadsheet for tracking gifts for family Christmas and Birthday celebrations? Check. A whiteboard full of deadlines for music choices, bulletins, poinsettia orders, and checking candles for Christmas Eve? Check. More checklists for packing small children to travel to see family? Check. A multi-color calendar crammed to the gills with holiday parties, programs, and events.... So many checks.

By Christmas morning, I was exhausted. Mentally, Physically and emotionally wiped out. Feeling anything but Joy, Hope, Peace, or Love. yes. Even as a pastor who preaches that the advent season is one for slowing down, for focusing on what matters.

So how do we choose a different way?

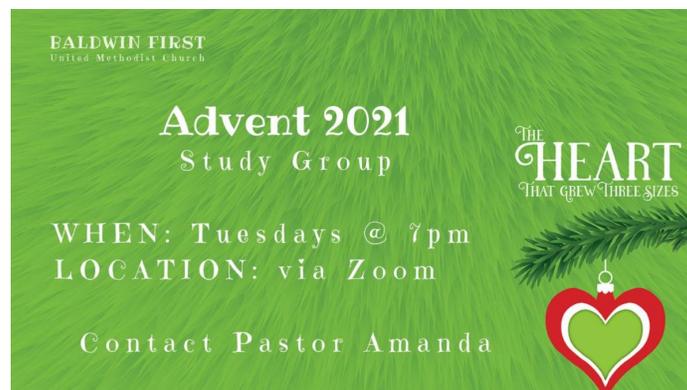
Perhaps we begin with embracing the messiness of it all.

The birth of Jesus was not perfect and serene. It was a young mother, praying her betrothed could somehow believe that the child she bore was of God. It was a young couple, making a journey to be counted for taxes to a greedy government. It was a search for lodging in the third trimester of pregnancy. It was a birth in a stable, an announcement to those at the margins, an insecure monarch, a genocide, and a flight into Egypt as refugees.

And in all of it, it is the in-breaking of Emmanuel. God with us.

There is a different kind of Christmas we can experience when we embrace the messiness and lean into a more realistic hope, peace, love, and joy.

Maybe that looks like a weekly pause to light the advent candles together as a family, naming where you have seen hope, or peace, or love or joy in your lives.



Maybe it looks like setting aside time to join others in the zoom Bible study Pastor Ross and I are leading to deepen the experience of advent.

Maybe it looks like inviting someone you know to the Longest Night service on Dec. 21 in Edgerton to lament their grief in this season.

Maybe it just looks like taking a little time each morning or evening in the light of your Christmas tree with the tv off, to ask God to keep you centered in this season.

Whatever it looks like for you, may you find renewed joy in the birth of the Prince of Peace. Emmanuel.

Rev. Amanda Baker



Baldwin First United Methodist Church
October 25, 2021

Attendees

Staff: Reverend Amanda Baker
Council Members: Council Chair Nancy Arnold, Linda Ballinger, Donna Curran, Brad Peterson,
Kathleen Thomas, Tara Welch. Participant via Zoom: Laura Dickinson, Cat Henry
Advisory Member: Katherine Cook

Opening

Nancy called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Minutes

Linda moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, and Doug seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Finances

Brad shared that finances are generally positive at this time. In terms of the capital campaign, \$53,000 of \$60,000 has been obtained or pledged. Brad presented the budget for 2022. The committee feels comfortable with the 2021 budget with a few modifications: \$73,232.50 will be applied to staff compensation, the budget for apportionments will be increased to \$20,000, and church administration will be increased to compensate for increases in operating expenses. Brad moved that we accept the budget of \$159,300 for 2022; Donna seconded. The motion carried.

SPPRC

The committee is in the midst of wrapping up staff appreciation and is working on the recommendation form for retention of staff. They will be meeting with Ives representatives in November.

Caregivers

Caregivers will meet again in November. The group will have new representation in the coming months. Regular attendees are from 4-6 each meeting.

Missions

Laura shared that Missions continues outreach via the food pantry. Financial contributions are needed at this time. Activities in conjunction with Ives are being planned for the care centers for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Blast Crew will be involved. Link is Nov. 6

Worship

Kathleen has new volunteers to serve as liturgists. She is still seeking help with children's time.

UMW

The ladies have a full month of activities:

- Rededication of the kitchen is Nov. 7 at 8:30 a.m. A list of requested items to supplement the kitchen will be made available on-line.
- The drive-thru turkey dinner will be held on Nov. 13th.
- Hanging of the greens will be Nov. 21st.
- The annual soup will be Dec. 4th.
- The living nativity will be Dec. 12th from 4:30-5:30.

Trustees

Darren and Pastor Amanda are working through the checklist for the loan for the capital campaign.

Pastor's Moment

November's worship theme centers on generosity and gratitude. Advent series is "The Heart that Grew Three Sizes". Longest night's service will be held in Edgerton; Christmas Eve services will be held at Eudora (at 5:30), Ives (at 7:30), and Baldwin First (at 11:00). December 5th is the Charge Conference.

Pastor Amanda offered a closing prayer and Nancy closed the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Cook

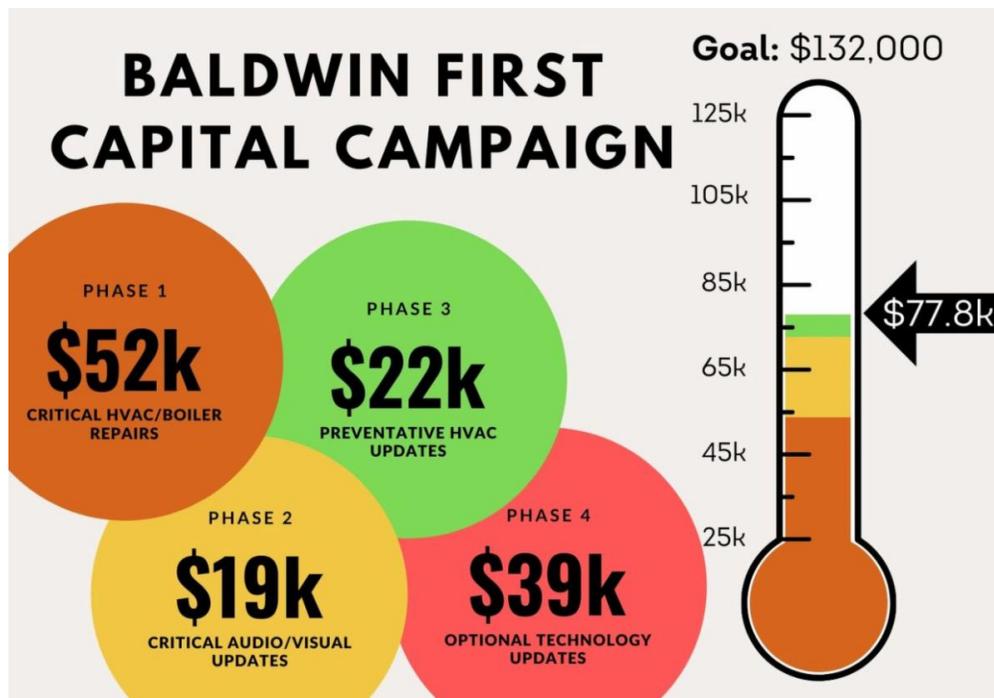
Most Current Financial Update:

2021 Budget: \$151,740.00 (averaged contribution amount needed each month: \$12,645.00) total contributions for the month of October \$14,575.00 with records indicating general budget is at 100% needed contribution for this time of the year.

<https://baldwinfirst.org/give-online>

to a designated fund: general funds, food pantry, or Capital Campaign





In this season of giving, here are two opportunities where your dollars can come back through your shopping and support BFUMC ministries. One is to indicate if buying through Amazon 0.5% of the purchase to BaldwinFirst through the AmazonSmile foundation There is no fee or extra charge for this. The link is <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/48-0576045>



STAFF PARISH PASTOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE
SPPRC TARA WELCH, CHAIR., TSWELCH@KU.EDU



This month, the SPPR committee met with the leaders of Ives Chapel to fill out some conference paperwork and to discuss our new relationship with each other. They shared how they have adapted their traditional ministries to pandemic protocols, and we did the same. Both churches are eager to help each other, especially in those ministries in which we can roll up our sleeves together to help the community. Look for opportunities in the new year!

Our Ives friends also described their leadership structure, which streamlines the many committees into one “Leadership Table.” We all left the meeting with a renewed sense of the opportunity we have to see and be the church beyond the walls of either building.



Missions

FOOD PANTRY HOURS ARE EVERY SATURDAY 10AM
LAURA DICKINSON, MISSIONS CHAIR., LDINBC@GMAIL.COM

GIVE

LOVE JOY HOPE PEACE

FOOD PANTRY – Thank you to all who have supported the Baldwin Community Food Pantry throughout 2021! It has been a difficult year for many of our neighbors in Baldwin City and afar who are facing food insecurity. We have witnessed a consistent increase in the number of persons served each Saturday at the pantry. Though a gallon of milk, a small voucher for groceries, and a bag of extras may not seem like a lot, we hear each week the gratitude from those receiving these gifts. Thank you for your gifts!

GIVING TUESDAY - LOVE, JOY, HOPE, PEACE – Where might we provide a light in the world on Giving Tuesday? There are so many places to plug in and shine the light! Giving Tuesday emerged as a movement beginning in 2012 to encourage people all over the world to embrace generosity by giving to nonprofits whose work benefits the lives of others. November 30, 2021, signifies a day of Giving. \$2.47 billion was donated to US non-profits by a reported 34.8 million people on Giving Tuesday 2020. umcmmission.org/givelove

Gifts for Baldwin Care Center and Vintage Assisted Living – We will continue to gather puzzles (300 pieces or less) and large print books until Christmas. A box is in the narthex for donations of those items.

GIVING THANKS

"For our human community, our common past and future hope, our oneness transcending all separation, our capacity to work for peace and justice in the midst of hostility and oppression: We give thanks this day."

- Rev. O. Eugene Pickett, "[Giving Thanks](#)"



Kid Ministry

CYNTHIA PEREZ, CYNTHIAAPEREZ1975@GMAIL.COM

Children's Sunday School is meeting in the Fellowship Hall at 10:45. Our Advent series started on Nov 28th, titled "The Heart That Grew Three Sizes", is based on the Dr. Seuss book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and is the Worship Advent Theme this year. If you would like your child(ren) to participate via zoom, please contact Cynthia Perez at the above email link.

Children's SS is in need of a few copies of the book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas". If you have a copy to loan us for the month of December, please let Cynthia know. Thank you!



Poinsettias (at \$20 each) can be order from In Full Bloom Too, at 913.800.1850. Deadline is Dec. 12. There are forms (to be left in the offering plate) in the narthex to let us know who you may want to donate the flowers to in memory of or in honor.

**Order Your Poinsettia for
Worship Service Display**

UMW Schedule of Events for Second Weekend in December



UMW Tea, Saturday, Dec. 11

UMW will host a Tea in Fellowship Hall at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 11. Ives Chapel UMW are also invited.

BALDWIN FIRST UMC PRESENTS:

LIVING NATIVITY

Date | Sunday, Dec. 12th
Time | 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
Location | Baldwin First UMC

Happy 100th Birthday Ruth Ann Nutt

Ruth Ann celebrated her 100th birthday on Nov 14. A lifelong resident of Baldwin City, she currently lodges at Brandon Woods Retirement Center in Lawrence. If it seems like you have read about another 100th birthday associated with this last name it's because you did. Her husband of 79 years (anniversary Sept 20th) celebrated his centennial birthday on May 30th of this year. She and Don raised three sons.



Ruth Ann was active in the community, as well. She was a member of the Baldwin City Business and Professional Women, PTO, HESTA, and served chaired United Methodist Women.

Beyond Baldwin City, she had the distinction of being the first woman to serve as chair of the Douglas County Extension Council Executive Board. During her time as chair, Extension built its new home on the Douglas County Fairgrounds and founded the Douglas County 4-H Foundation.

holiday hol y day

Rabbi Sidney Greenberg wrote "On holidays we run away from duties. On Holy-days, we face them. On holidays, we let ourselves go, on Holy-Days we try to bring ourselves under control. On holidays, we try to empty our minds. On Holy-days, we attempt to replenish our spirits. On holidays, we reach out for the things we want. On Holy-days, we reach up for things we need. Holidays bring a change of scene. Holy-days a changed heart."



Worship Services 9:30 AM (In person and Live Online Services)

Nov 30 Advent Study online 7PM

Dec 1 Care Giving Mtg 1:00PM

Dec 5 Church Conference 5:00 pm at
Lawrence Central (1501 Massachusetts
St, Lawrence)

Dec 6 Missions Mtg 7:00PM

Dec 7 Advent Study online 7PM

Dec. 11 UMW Christmas Tea 9:30AM

Dec 12 Outdoor Living Nativity Scene
4:30PM - 5:30PM

Dec 13 Trustees Mtg 7:00PM

Dec 14 Advent Study online 7PM

Dec 20 Finance Mtg 7:00PM
SPPRC Mtg 7:00PM

Dec 21 Longest Night of the Year
service
7:00 PM Edgerton UMC
Advent Study online 7PM

Dec 24 Christmas Eve
5:30 Service at Eudora UMC
7:30 Service at Ives UMC
11:00 Service at BFUMC

Dec 25 Merry Christmas!

Dec 31 New Year's Eve

Jan. 24 Next Council Meeting

Church Streaming & Zoom Meeting Links Directory

*Note: Links are accessible in the email version of
this newsletter, the links are not available on
the website version of the Vine due to PDF.*

*Sunday School and Small Groups are
meeting at 10:45p.m. on Sundays*

***9:30 AM Worship Live Stream:**
<https://www.Baldwinfirst.org>

or at

<https://www.facebook.com/baldwinfirstumc>

or at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMwpl81KtGg7h9AhRFW9NWQ>

***For ALL scheduled CHURCH
optional Zoom Mtgs go to**

**<https://zoom.us/join>
mtg ID #: 9644607669
Password: 042020**



News items for the Vine need to be in the office by the evening of Church Council (the 4th Monday of every month). If you prefer to get the newsletter electronically, please provide your email address to the office (594.6612 or office@baldwinfirst.org) to help alleviate mailing costs.

Church office hours 9-2, Monday-Thursday