A monthly publication of the First United Methodist Church

The Voice

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Issue 1 of 12

January 1, 2017

Children: Ashley Craven
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Do you ever get a song stuck in your head? What's that experience like for you? When it happens to me, it seems like it pops back into my brain at really strange times. It's like you never would have picked that song for what you are doing or what is happening around you. But there it is and there I go humming it or singing it to myself.

This time it is the "Twelve Days of Christmas." I cannot even remember all of the twelve gifts and it is after Christmas Day as I write. Maybe part of the answer is that it is still Christmas, at least from the Christian perspective (and I probably should qualify that by saying at least some Christian traditions still celebrate Christmas as twelve days). Maybe part of the answer lies in the mystery, as well as the history, of that song. It's also safe to say I have seen and had quite a few laughs over the years as people have "enacted" in various ways each of the gifts given throughout the song.

It is still Christmas. We have been very busy as a worshipping community with Advent, our first Blue Christmas service, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. All of the splendor and beauty of the Sanctuary, the decorations in our homes and businesses, the exchange of gifts, and the opportunities to gather with family and friends still cannot prepare our hearts for the gift God gave to us of himself. The gift we celebrate during Christmas.

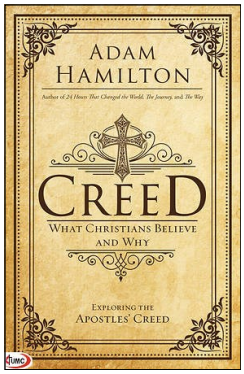
It is funny. We make plans and something happens. We have expectations and then there is reality. Things are in order and then chaos arrives. But by God's grace, life continues and we can experience unexpected joy in allowing God's presence and power to be realized. Perhaps in addition to welcoming Baby Jesus into their family, Mary and Joseph also realized all the above was true and that God was with them throughout their engagement and the turmoil of a birth in a barn and that they were better and more faithful because of it.

In Genesis, during the account of God creating the world, God brought order from chaos (Chapter 1). Maybe we can allow God to do this for us as individuals. While we make plans and prepare to worship with praise and honor for God, as individuals we also bring our own brokenness and "formless void" if you will (we don't like to think of it that way, but it may be our reality). If we don't allow for the spontaneity of the Holy Spirit, we may miss the joys that God was making available. Our plans and expectations may not be what God had planned for us. Maybe what we think is chaos might be God's way of giving order. Maybe what we think is order is really chaos that we need to offer to God so that order can be brought forward. Worship brings us together so that God is glorified. And as a benefit for us, we celebrate God's amazing grace in as many ways as our hearts and minds can fathom.

So whether it's "seven swans a swimming" or "12 drummers drumming," the "Partridge in a Pear Tree" (Jesus who is the Incarnate God) came for all of us and into quite a rabble for our sake. Let this Christmas Season remind us that no matter how much we prepare and/or anticipate, God will still be God. I don't want to miss that. The miracle(s) of Christmas is(are) as powerful today as some 2,000 years ago.

Merry Christmas and See You in Worship!

Brian



Reconnect Resumes Wednesday, January 25

Meal: 5:45 - 6:15 (Fellowship Hall)
Adult Bible Study: 6:30 - 7:30 (Fellowship Hall)
UMYF: 6:30 - 7:30 (Wesley Center)
Children's Activities: 6:30 - 7:30 (Third Floor)

We will begin with the study Creed by Adam Hamilton

Books are $15 - Sign up sheet is in the Narthex

January Happenings

Church Office Closed
Monday, January 2

Family Ministries Team Meeting
Tuesday, January 3
5:00 p.m., Character Builders Classroom

Wise County United Methodist Men
Tuesday, January 3
6:30 p.m., Oak Grove UMC

First Fridays
Friday, January 6
6:00 p.m., Nursery

Bible Journaling Class
Friday, January 6
6:00 p.m., Character Builders Classroom

Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, January 17
6:30 p.m., Character Builders Classroom

Decatur Methodist Women's Ministry (Lydia Group)
Tuesday, January 17
6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Staff Meeting
Thursday, January 19
12:00 p.m., Character Builders Classroom

Reconnect Begins
Wednesday, January 25
5:45 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Combined Worship Service
Sunday, January 29
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary

CHURCH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Thomas Kemp, Doris Sumner, Lindsey Alexander, Tim Woodruff, Roy Wilkinson, Noah Smith, Hudson Hughes, Wanda Sandford, Carl Chapman, Charles Womack and Family of David Grana

In the Military: Charlie Fortenberry, Michael Jordan, Jake Logue, Garrett Muelstein, Josh Murphy, Chris Hammond, Matthew Roberson, Kolin Rottner, Joshua VanNoy, Matthew Broker, Keygun Beaver and Bryce Dudley

January Birthdays

1 - Jan Brummell, Garry Johnson, Derrick Minor, Kurrie Murphree
2 - Tristan Gillespia, Scott Hudson, Theresa Johnson, Jimmy Kirk
3 - Becky Galindo
4 - Clark Allen, Tanaya Lunday, Mark Null, Dena Silvers
6 - Eddie Allen, Becky Lyles
7 - Irene Griffith, Amber Ramsey, Shelby Sewell
9 - Morgan Payne
10 - Valleri Sewell, Don Stephens, Clarence Winn
11 - Lilly Rosenbaum
12 - Jason Johnson, Cassidy McQuiston, Jennifer Smurthwaite, Cathy Tally
14 - Kelsey Males
15 - Kaitlynn Koger, Sharon Meyer, David Pierce
16 - Langley Smurthwaite
17 - Judy Hill
18 - Joe Miller, David Murphree, Clark Waggoner
19 - David Rosenbaum, Adelynn Summers
20 - Bert Little
21 - Bonnie Cocanougher, Linda Cowell, Sharon Montgomery
22 - Blanca Galindo, Roy Wilkinson
23 - Richard Brown, Shannon Johnson
24 - Paula Null
25 - Donna Davidson, Rubye Helm, Cheryl Renfro
27 - Logan Cullop, Charlotte Meador, Patrick Murphree, Zach Stacy
28 - Cheryl Fostel
29 - Christopher Caballero, Payton McAlister
30 - Richard Bastian, Bill Hill, Randall Watson
31 - Kreid Hafer, Steve Young

Donations for WARM
Canned Goods

Sunday Refreshments
Men's Class

Sunday Morning Greeters
Upper Room & Unnamed

Visitor Follow-Up
Sharon Smith

Care Corp
Annette Stephens, Notifier
Sharon Voss, Shirley Byers & Sharon Walker

Confirmation Retreat This Month

This year, our Confirmands will be participating at a Conference-wide Confirmation Retreat as a part of the Confirmation process.

The Retreat occurs January 13-15, 2017 at the Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center (our United Methodist camp) at Lake Bridgeport.

Our Confirmands will get to meet others from across the North Texas Annual Conference who are also using *Credo* as their primary Confirmation resource.

Confirmation Sunday is planned for April 23rd this year. Cost is $100 for the Retreat. Online registration is required and the cost is reimbursed by the Church with a receipt.

Combined Worship
10:00 a.m.
Sunday, January 29th

January 29th is a 5th Sunday, which means we will have a Unity Sunday where the 8:30 and 10:50 am worship services are combined into **ONE** service at 10:00am that day.

Please mark your calendars and remind one another as that Sunday approaches.

Worship Assistants

January 1st
8:30 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Barbara Haley
Communion Servers: Virginia Caraway & Marguarette Roberts
Acolyte: Eleanor & Ben Bond
10:50 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Murvelle Chandler
Communion: J.E. & Betty Carson
Acolyte: Kathryn Highlander & Kennedy Hafer
Counters: Fred Renfro

January 8th
8:30 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Virginia Caraway
Communion Servers: Sharon Meyer & Thomas Laird
Acolyte: Noah Holt
10:50 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Valleri Sewell
Acolytes: Nolan & Shelby Sewell
Counters: Cary Bohn & Richard Pitman

January 15th
8:30 Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Youth
Communion Servers: Youth
Acolyte: Audree Knox
10: 50 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Youth
Acolyte: Wiley Stone & Emma McAlister
Counters: Mason Woodruff & Dwight Reeves

January 22nd
8:30 Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Rita Tucker
Communion Servers: Ronnie Walker
Acolyte: Ellie & Lexie Miller
10: 50 a.m. Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Fred Renfro
Acolyte: Julie Stone & Parker Deaton
Counters: Jim Henderson & Cary Bohn

January 29th
10:00 Worship Service
Scripture Reader: Sally Rieger
Communion Servers: Jack & Sharon Smith
Acolyte: Audree Knox
Counters: Foster Walker

January Communion Set Up: Life Builders

Update on the Methodist Activity Center (aka: the Building Project)

On December 11th, the Administrative Board, acting on surveys recommending naming of the new building, officially named the building the Methodist Activity Center (aka: the MAC). Inside spaces were also designated with names. The Youth end of the building shall be called the "Fire Hall" and the multi-purpose end "Asbury Hall." These names will allow events and activities to be assigned space and help participants locate them.

The insulation and sheet rock installation is near completion as the *Voice* goes out. The awnings over the windows and side doors are installed and we may even see some landscaping appear shortly. The parking lot and driveways are poured and only some sidewalks and approaches to the front doors remain unpoured.

We don't have an exact occupancy date yet, but the United Methodist Men, in conjunction with the Youth and any others who may want to assist, will arrange a Saturday for furniture and equipment to be assembled and placed. Also, the Cross and Flame Sunday School Class has volunteered to host a grand opening party for the Church once the MAC receives its Certificate of Occupancy from the City of Decatur.

It is exciting to see the progress and know that it will soon be in use. Thanks again to all who continue to support the project with prayers and financial gifts!

2017 District Leadership Training

Each year, the Northwest District offers Leadership Training for new and current leaders. Several new leaders are coming onboard this year and this is a wonderful way to learn about responsibilities and expectations in those roles. The training is being held at FUMC Henrietta on Sunday, January 29, 2017 from 3:00-5:30pm. We will take the Church van.

There is a signup sheet in the Narthex if you are attending the workshop.

We are excited to introduce Give by Kiosk, a safe, modern & convenient way to make offerings.

It's faster than having your checks manually processed and it's easy to use. Simply tap the touch pad screen to choose the fund you want to give to and then enter the amount you want to contribute. Once you swipe your credit or debit card and complete your transaction, you can print or email yourself a receipt on the spot. Even better, print a donation slip that you can later place in the basket during services.

Stop by the church lobby and try the newest way to give.

Gifts made on the Kiosk will appear on your quarterly giving statement just like all your other donations.

The Youth Zone

Christmas Progressive Dinner

Youth News

Activities and events for Sr. High Youth are being planned by Deroy & Kristi Bennett and Jason & Meradith Culpepper. The Middle School activities and events are being planned by Amy Young and Stuart & Laura Highlander. Austin Sewell will continue teaching. Hopefully we will get a Sunday afternoon, local mission project that will combine all ages so that everyone can be the hands and feet of Christ together! Thanks to all who are leading and making plans for the Youth!

The Open Doors class went caroling at Heritage Place. Songs like Silent Night, O Little town of Bethlehem, Away in a manger, and even Jingle Bells were sang throughout the halls for all the residents. The residents joined in and received ornaments that the kids made especially for them!

The Cross and Flame class and the Open Doors class teamed up to bring some holiday cheer to a local family this Christmas. Toys, clothes, food, toiletries, warm meals, money, gift cards, a tree with ornaments, and much more were collected and delivered to a family of 5 this month. As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, we are thankful to be able to share the love of Christ with

Children's Corner

What we are learning in Sunday School

Jesus God's Son

- Search for the King
- Talk With the Teacher's
- Come to the River
- Change the Water
- Born Anew

Reconnect Starts January 25th!

Children will Build their Faith Brick by Brick

Each Wednesday night we will have hands on experiences constructing God's Words and the stories throughout the Bible.

C.I.A (Children In Action!)

Formally know as hardcore helpers, will have their first event of 2017 on February 18th.

The children will show extra LOVE to our local animal shelter by collecting donations as well as dog/cat food to deliver to the shelter on Saturday February 18th.

Sunday School Volunteers

1st Sunday-Susan C. / Megan Hammons

2nd Sunday-Ashlee Bohn / Casey Edwards / Penny Holt

3rd Sunday-Debra Walker / Jamie Milliman

4th Sunday - Regina Stone / Barbara Haley

A look back on some things Decatur Kids did last year.

Awnings

Sheetrock going up everywhere!

Insulation is in

Plenty of parking for everyone

Update on the Building Project

First United Methodist Church
104 South Miller Street
Post Office Box 302
Decatur, Texas 76234-0302

Presorted Standard
Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 166
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

THIS NEWSLETTER CREATED ESPECIALLY FOR

YOU!

Happy New Year!

Learning • Growing • Giving • Serving

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www.decaturmethodist.org

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FUMC Decatur, Texas

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@fumcdecaturtx

Follow us on Instagram
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Instagram

Newsletter
DEADLINE!

Monday, January 30 at 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 2
8:30 a.m.—Character Builders Classroom

For any submissions you would like put in The Voice either call the church office at 627-3362 or email administrator@decaturmethodist.org.

If you want to see your church event pictures in The Voice, send them to us! We would love to include those for all the church members to enjoy.