

The Russell Report

Russell Memorial United Methodist Church
A Family Rooted in Christ and Reaching Out in Love



Vol. 13, No. 12

December 1, 2017

Ideas for Advent

The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning “coming” or “visit,” begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year for Christians. During Advent, we prepare for, and anticipate, the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for, and need of, forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming. As we wait with anticipation, what should we do? We have a few ideas:

1. www.adoptaussoldier.org Contact Maggie McDonald
2. Salvation Army www.salvationarmy.org
3. Relief for Widows in Asia Contact: Mark Giardinelli (markgiardinelli@gfa.org) www.mygfa.org/helpingwidows
4. Wills Point ISD Education Foundation Contact: Donna Rowland (donna.rowland@wpisd.com) www.wpisd.com then Quick Link “Education Foundation”
5. GFA Forgotten Christmas Campaign Contact: Tony Barraclough (church@gfa.org) www.forgottenchristmas.org
6. Select your own United Methodist Advance www.umcmmission.org/give-to-mission



Spirit of Christmas

Many people have asked when we are going to share about our recent trip to the Holy Land. I promise it will come soon, probably in January when all the congregation has an opportunity to be together. For now, I want to reflect on part of the trip that wouldn't make the highlight reel. You might guess where we were by answering this question: in what town would you expect to see a Christmas tree being set up? The answer, of course, is Bethlehem. I watched workers assembling the tree in the town square while our group was inside the Church of the

(cont. on pg. 6)

Mid-Winter

Rekindle the camp spirit with Lakeview at Mid-Winter. Campers will enjoy playing their favorite Lakeview games/activities, see some of their favorite camp staff/volunteers, worship with familiar faces and get a sneak peak at some of what we have in store for Summer 2018.

This retreat is for 7th-12th graders. February 16-18, 2018.

\$135 through February 1st

\$150 after February 1st

Registration Closes on February 9th

Go to www.lakeviewmcc.org to register or for more information.

K6
Kids



Our Youth and K6 Kids meet Wednesday evenings at 5:30 p.m. in the Deen Building. Join us for fun times, fellowship and FOOD!! We will feed the kiddos supper for you. Don't miss out, we'd love for you to join us! (The youth program follows the school calendar. When the kids are on break at school, we are on break also.) NO YOUTH on December 6, due to White Gift Service, join us at the high school, 7:00 p.m. bring a canned good for admission.



Hard to believe, but it's time to start planning for Summer Camp 2018! Lakeview has their website ready for folks to go ahead and register kiddos for camp. Our district will go to the fourth session, July 8-13. You can go to www.lakeviewmcc.org to get started!

Blessing Box

As many of you know, Russell Memorial is now home to its own Blessing Box located by the west entrance of the Deen Building! In March of this year, Jana Davis, Kelli Huff and Erin Galope discussed the need for a Blessing Box in Wills Point to supplement our local food agencies. Aiden Nychka learned of this need, so he offered to design and install one for his Eagle Scout project. It is now open 24/7 and is free to everyone. The hope is that this box not only helps the people of Wills Point with goods, but that it encourages others to join in the effort, whether by setting up similar boxes across our community or by resupplying this one, so feel free to add to the box any time. The sign on the Blessings Box really says it all: "Take what you need. Leave what you can. Above all be blessed."



Poinsettia Orders

We are now taking orders for Christmas poinsettias! These beautiful plants will be displayed in our church for the Advent season and can be picked up on Sunday, December 24th after the evening service. You can find an order form in the church bulletin, or contact the church office. Orders must be turned in by December 11.



On Saturday, December 16th at 5:00 p.m. we will host a Church Wide Christmas Party! Come join us for dinner, games, Caroling Karaoke, puzzles, door prizes, an ornament exchange and more. Dinner is catered and free of charge. You are welcome to make an offering to cover the cost of your meal if you so desire. You can pick up tickets from Nancy or Rene, or just come by the office (this is to help us get a head count for the food) If you want to participate in the ornament exchange, just bring an ornament with you. It's going to be a great time. Don't miss out!

Calendar of Events for December



Dates to Remember!

Friday, December 8, All Day, Angel Tree Hand Out
 Saturday, December 9, Christmas on the Bricks
 Sunday, December 10, 11:00 a.m. All Music Christmas Program
 Saturday, December 16, 9:00 a.m. Crafting with Christ, 10:00 a.m. Alternate
 Angel Tree Pick Up, 5:00 p.m. Church Wide Christmas Party
 Saturday, December 23, 11:00 a.m., Neighbor to Neighbor
 Sunday, December 24, 6:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

Community Outreach Program

Neighbor to Neighbor Lunch
 11 am-1pm
 Fourth Saturday of each month
 Deen Building - George Hall
 OPEN TO ANYONE
 WHO CHOOSES TO COME
 Please contact the church for details
 (903-873-2569).



Happy Birthday!

Kellie Caldwell	12-1	Brett Marley	12-20
Jack Golden	12-1	Wanda Baldwin	12-23
Robby Groover	12-3	Jim Lamb	12-25
Theil Shastid	12-5	Katie Keller	12-26
Kelles Miller	12-6	Jennifer Ross	12-27
Nelda Currie	12-6	Jared McDonald	12-28
Judy Dodd	12-10	Jerry Don Huff	12-28
Kay Crosby	12-11	Nancy McDonald	12-28
Taylor Ricks	12-16	Margie Aston	12-30
MH Castelberry	12-17	David Berry	12-30
Makenzie Roberts	12-18	Patt AuBuchon	12-31
Claira Huff	12-19		

December Worship Assistants

Altar Guild: Carolyn Hawkins (Chair), Nelda Currie, Molly Brittain,
 Laura Bates
Ushers: Barbara Lamb (Head), Carolyn Hawkins, Johnny Bates,
 Ron Butler



Our Presence and Our Gifts

	Nov. 5	Nov. 12	Nov. 19	Nov. 26
the early service	68	50	43	58
Sunday School	87	80	75	83
Traditional Worship	103	119	88	116
	\$8,377.01	\$6,242.50	\$3,384.35	\$2,451.00

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Communion offering this month will go toward Church Office Outreach Fund.					1	2 10:00am Cake @ Crestwood
3 8:30 am Early Service 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Potluck/ Hand Bell Concert Set Up for Angel Tree	4 10:00 am Ladies Prayer Group	5	6 7:00 pm White Gift Service at WPHS	7	8 Angel Tree Hand Out	9 Christmas on the Bricks Downtown WP
10 8:30 am Early Service 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship All Music Program	11 10:00 am Ladies Prayer Group	12	13 5:30pm K6/Youth Activities No Youth Bells	14	15	16 9:00am Crafting with Christ 10:00am Alternate Angel Tree Pick Up 5:00pm Church Wide Christmas Party
17 8:30 am Early Service 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm Church Council 2:00 pm Crestwood	18 10:00 am Ladies Prayer Group	19 10:00am Grief Support Group	20 5:30pm K6/Youth Activities No Youth Bells	21	22	23 Neighbor to Neighbor Lunch 11 am—1pm
24 8:30 am Early Service 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 6:00pm Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26	27	28	29	30
31 8:30 am Early Service 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship	1 Office Closed					

(cont. from pg. 1) Nativity. (A picture is attached beside this article.) Bethlehem is a Mecca for Christians for obvious reasons, especially at this time of year.

The Church of the Nativity is a sixth century ornate sanctuary built over the grotto where it is believed that Jesus was born. It is an understatement to say that this site attracts large numbers of visitors. That certainly was true the day our group was in Bethlehem. What I want to share here is that, while inside the church waiting to see the traditional site of Christ's birth, the people in our group experienced behavior on the part of others that could be taken as "less than Christ-like." This ranged from pushing to line-jumping, to a general lack of consideration of others. It certainly is not surprising to be in a crowd and experience distasteful behavior. What is surprising is when it comes through those who are presumably Christian.

I am mindful that the site attracts people from all over the world, and thus from cultures that are different from our own. I am also mindful that just being in line to see the birthplace of Jesus does not automatically mean that people are Christian. Even with these considerations, there is a point to be made. The point is that we must be mindful of how our behavior is perceived by others. People operate on presumptions all the time. For instance, if you are eager to visit Christian holy sites in Bethlehem, most people will presume that you are a Christian. If you have an ichthus (the Christian fish symbol) displayed on your car, most people will presume you to be a Christian. If you are wearing a Russell Memorial UMC shirt or some other explicitly Christian garment or jewelry, most people will presume you to be a Christian. Having presumed us to be Christians, people will keenly watch our behavior. When that behavior conflicts with what people expect of Christians, our witness to Christ is compromised.

At this point I can hear the "They need to understand that Christians aren't perfect" speeches warming up. Save it; I understand that completely. Remember, our witness is on the line. At this busy and tense time of year, a more generous helping of the Holy Spirit bearing fruit in our daily behavior could speak volumes. During a month when we sometimes see the worst in people, let others see the best in us. For the worn-out clerk at the department store, speak words with an extra seasoning of grace. When waiting longer than normal for service, display an extra helping of patience (it is a fruit of the Spirit!). The true spirit of Christmas will be experienced when the disciples of Jesus put on full display the Spirit of Christ working through them. Let the world see His Spirit working in you this Christmas season. Merry Christmas!

Pastor Dave

Remember in Prayer:

Huff Family and friends
Culpepper Family
Alice Kolb
Allen Thompson
Amy Alonzo
Andy Anderson
Annette & Gerald Clemmons
Beau Poteet
Benny & Kay Mitchell
Dennis Basham
Bernadette Kolb
Betty & Denny McCormick
Bobby & Lajuan Mayfield
Charlotte Conn
Chris Conn
Chuck & Nelda Currie
Craig & Vicki Collins
Crestwood Nursing &
Assisted Living

Daisy Bates & Family
Darlane Fuller
Dave & Dee Lutzinger
David Cartwright & Family
Diana Lovell Perry
Donna Whitehead
Grief Support Group
Methodist Church (RMUMC)
Homeland Security
Hurricane Victims, VZ County
Tornado Victims
James & Brenda Brown &
Family
Jeannie Hattaway
Jennifer Barnett McCann
Jerry Bodin
Jim Burden
Jimmy Wilson
John Buffington
Kyle Anderson

Larry Turner
Lawson & LaNell White
Liz Ellis
Lois Butts
Mark Welsh
Marvin Carlisle
Mickey Chapple
Missionaries in Iraq
Our Armed Forces, Troops in
Korea
Mark Brown
Rachel Brown
Rev. Michael Dobbs
Ron Turner
Students, Teachers, &
Administrators
Susan Gillis
Tristan Parsons
Vera Lofland
Virginia Cockerham

Thank You

The family of Jerry Huff would like to thank each of you for your love, support, prayers, thoughts, donations, calls, emails, meals, texts, flowers, cards, and your condolences in memory of Dalton Huff. Your kindness did not go unnoticed. We love each of you dearly. Again, THANK YOU! God is good!



Christmas tree in Bethlehem

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Rev. David Cartwright, Pastor
Nancy McDonald, Office Administrator
Theresa Turner, Ladies Hand Bells Director
Kristy Adams, Pianist
Erin Galope, Youth Bell Director
Amy Goodson, Contemporary Prayz Band Leader

Dr. Bob Gilbreth, Music Director
Fritz Gilbreth, Organist
Kelli Huff, K6 Kids Coordinator
Jackie Cockerham, Financial Administrator
Jerry Don Huff, Youth Director

Join us Sunday Morning!

Contemporary Worship @ 8:30 Sunday School @ 9:45 Traditional Worship @ 11:00

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday-Thursday

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED