

STEEPLETALK

News from Mentor United Methodist Church

December

2019

From the Pastor

"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told."
Luke 2:20

When our babies arrived, the news spread quickly. We called grandparents and aunts and uncles. We called the church office and the "prayer chain" started. With our firstborn, a page in the info book of Riverside Hospital's respiratory therapy breakroom heralded the news. Both births were listed in the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church's newspaper: "East Ohio Today". The internet was not what it is today ... I actually mailed birth announcements to many people.

For Mary and Joseph, as labor pains intensified they frantically searched for a comfortable place to welcome their first baby. However, they had to settle for a manger. There were no trained professionals to help, no comfort of medicine or even a fluffy pillow. The Christ Child was welcomed by a trusting couple and a stall full of animals.

The news spread. Angels sang and shepherds hurried to see. Stars shone – one in particular – and wise man began a long journey towards Bethlehem. Scripture does not mention townspeople gathering or newspaper articles being written. It seems to be the shepherds who return to their lives changed by a little baby's birth. They couldn't stay silent! They sang and glorified God.

Thousands of years later we are still asked to tell the story ... proclaim the birth ... send forth the announcement Jesus is born!

What if sharing the news of Jesus' birth was up to you?

In reality – it is!

Will you tell the difference Jesus makes in your life to the world?
Will you glorify and praise God with enthusiasm; with a sense of gratitude?
Will you spread the news ... as if the world depended on you for the Good News?

I hope during this Advent and Christmas Season many more will come to know what God has done ... Jesus comes to save ... because of our faithfulness in telling the story. Let's glorify and praise God together, until the whole world knows!

Pastor Sondra

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Through The Years



It's the Christmas season and it's always interesting to look at some of the holiday traditions that are observed around the world. This year we are taking a trip "downunder".

In Australia, while celebrating many of the activities we do, they also have their own unique slant on Christmas. A popular dessert at this time is Pavlova, named for the Russian ballerina, Anna Pavlova. It is basically a meringue shell with a marshmallow center covered with sweet cream, and fruit toppings. It sounds delicious! Another Aussie Christmas tradition is "Carols by Candlelight". These are large gatherings of people who sing Christmas carols with candle illumination. They draw thousands of people to large parks. The event now includes celebrities and symphony orchestras. The tradition began in Melbourne in 1938 when Norman Banks, an Aussie radio announcer, was walking home from his nighttime radio program on Christmas Eve, 1937. He passed a window and saw an elderly woman sitting up in bed listening to "Away in a Manger" on the radio and singing along with her face lit by candlelight. Banks wondered how many others spent Christmas alone so he organized the first concert in 1938. Approximately 10,000 showed up for that first event. It is now a staple of the holiday season every year. Other cities began their own concerts and now Sydney, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Canberra, and many others have "Carols by Candlelight", too.

Over in New Zealand, the Poutukawa tree is called the Christmas tree. This is because it produces large crimson flowers in December and is used as a holiday symbol. While both Christmas and Boxing Day (Dec. 26) are legal holidays in New Zealand, it is interesting to note that no advertising is allowed on television or radio on Christmas day. This rule also applies to Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, has a popular Santa Parade down Queen Street. The parade features floats and marching bands and is held in late November. (Sounds like their version of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.)

One difference with the Australian and New Zealand celebrations is that Christmas occurs in the middle of summer. Quite often a "barbie on the beach" takes the place of our traditional meals. Nevertheless, most homes still have trees with decorations. Church attendance skyrockets (sound familiar?).

No matter how Christmas is observed, the important thing is that people around the world celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He shall reign forever!

Do you have any MUMC history you would like to share with the congregation? Please e-mail to Don Humphrey at dhumphrey@ameritech.net or mail to 7330 Holly Park Dr. Concord, Ohio 44060-6704.



Young at Heart Luncheon

Wednesday, December 11, Noon in Fellowship Hall
Hosted by Mentor United Methodist Women

All those 62 years and older are invited to enjoy a Christmas lunch and program with your church staff and friends at the Young at Heart luncheon. \$5 (paid in advance or at the door) covers your meal, beverage, dessert AND fun! Please call the church office (255-3496) by December 5, and ask to be added to the Young at Heart luncheon list! Let us know when you call if you need a ride. We will be happy to arrange one for you!

2020 Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes are available in the Arcade for you to pick up beginning December 15.



Children and Family Ministries

Register for events through the app or at www.mentorunc.org/children
www.mentorunc.org/sunday-school

The weather is crisp. The days are shorter. The turkey has been stuffed, carved, and enjoyed. It is time for Advent and Christmas. And the end of 2019. What a whirlwind this time of year is for me and most of you. As we approach this wonderful season, I want to remind you of the importance of preparing your family for celebrating the arrival of Jesus. This is a great time of year to come together as a family, even if you have never done so in the past. If your children say something like, "we have never done this before", that is OK. Use this as a jumping off point for sharing your faith and discipleship. If you were at worship on November 24, you were offered a copy of HOPE of Christmas Past, Present & Yet to Come, a mini book of daily prayers for advent. You can also check out the various links on the MUMC Positive Parenting page www.mentorunc.org/positive-parenting.

Be sure to mark your calendars for Christmas CrafterNoon: An Ornament ADVENTure! It will be Saturday, December 7 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. This is an outreach event, so please invite people to join in the fun. Then the following week, the annual Christmas play will be performed. This year the play is *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Reserved seats are available at www.mumctip.booktix.com/.

I was a little sad that no one took me up on the November Positive Parenting Book Club. The next one is scheduled for Tuesday, January 14 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Sign up at this link <https://bit.ly/2QavOUE>. The book is Queen Bees & Wanna Bees by Rosalind Wiseman. This is the book that Tina Fey used to create the movie and Broadway musical Mean Girls. You will want to read the third edition as it is updated to include technology. This book might make a great Christmas present...

In my efforts to continue to share with you some insights from the ETCH Conference, I want to share from Josh Straub, Ph. D. He and his wife, Christi, cohost a podcast called "In This Together" and coauthored a children's book titled What Am I Feeling? I have been sharing this message from him with many people: "We don't need therapy; we deserve therapy." Parents, as you consider your parenting style and methods, it is so important that you are modeling for your children. What we do, what we say, how we act, and how we react are all being watched by our children. While that seems like a daunting thing to consider, I want to point out that we are all broken. It is how we react to our brokenness that our children will model. When we own our brokenness and react in the way that God calls us to react, we are showing our children how to handle life. What are you going to do to tend to your soul?

I am here for YOU! Please let me know how I can resource you in your journey of being your child's primary spiritual trainer. My prayer is for you to be the parent God wants you to be. I know that it is difficult as I am in the throes of parenting as well. I want to come alongside you in this journey. Let me know how I can do just that.

By HIS Grace and through HIS love,
Tammy Palermo, Director of Children and Family Ministries, tpalermo@mentorunc.org

Ruth-Naomi Circle

Thursday, December 12 at 11:30 AM, Scrambler Marie's - Mentor Avenue

Join us for lunch and a time of fellowship. Please bring a small wrapped gift (white elephant or something no more than \$1-\$2) for a fun game and story. We also ask that you bring an unwrapped knit item for a child (gloves, mittens, hats, scarves).

In case of inclement weather, our policy is not to meet if Mentor Schools are closed. Please check one of our local TV channels or call the Church Office (255-3496) -- we will advise the church if we are canceling our meeting.

Christmas Giving Trees:

This year's Giving Trees includes ornament tags supporting the following organizations: Birthright, Helping Hispanics Hope in Christ, McCurdy, and Forbes House.

**Christmas Offering Designations:**

The Missions Committee has designated the following distribution for the the 2019 Christmas Offering:

1/3 Local: Helping Hispanics Hope in Christ

1/3 National: Red Bird Mission (Kentucky)

1/3 International: GBGM Missionary in Liberia (Helen Roberts-Evans)

Christmas Eve Ushers 2019

Volunteers are needed for ushering during the five Christmas Eve Sanctuary services.

Please consider serving your congregation, and meeting new people by ushering!

A sign-up sheet will be at the Information Hub beginning December 1. You can also sign up through the website and app. If interested in ushering but hesitant, training will be provided in the Narthex on Monday, December 9 or Tuesday, December 17 from 7 – 8 PM.

If you have further questions, please contact Chris Meldrum at (440) 220-0824.

Christmas Schedule of Events 2019

December 7 Christmas Crafternoon, 1 PM to 3 PM in Fellowship Hall

December 8 Christmas Cantata, Sanctuary Services at 9 AM and 11 AM

“Joy Has Dawned” by Lloyd Larson, featuring Mentor & Painesville UMC
Choirs & Orchestra

December 14 Christmas Play *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, 4 PM with potluck following the performance, featuring our Truth & Light Players, reserve tickets at <https://mumctlp.booktix.com/>, Fellowship Hall

December 20 Christmas Sing XXIII, Charter Members Men's Choir and Painesville UMC Men's Choir, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

3 PM Holy Communion in the Sanctuary with Special Music

5 PM Child-Led Service in the Sanctuary

7 PM Traditional Service in the Sanctuary with Charter Members Choir
Modern Service with the Modern Worship Band in Fellowship Hall

9 PM Traditional Service in the Sanctuary with Canticle Bells, Chancel Choir and *The Hallelujah Chorus*

11 PM Traditional Service in the Sanctuary with Special Music

Giving Trees

The Christmas trees in the Gallery and outside the Chapel are decorated with different giving ornament tags. Select an ornament and show Christ's love.

Green Trees: GIVING Gifts for children in need. Gifts are due back by noon on Sunday, December 15 and should be wrapped with the tag securely attached. There is a 2-part tag. Please fill out one and place it in the box below the tree. This gives us your contact information. The second tag is to be placed on the gift. If you would like to shop for a whole family, please contact Betsy Iskra as soon as possible at lskra5@aol.com or call/text 440-283-6524.

Red Hearts: SHARING Monetary donation to a charity may be placed in the envelope provided and placed in the box at the Information Hub. For security, the box will be in the Office during the week. Charities are : McCurdy, Birthright, Forbes House and Helping Hispanics Hope.

Yellow Angels: PRAYING Pray for the name or group listed throughout the holiday season.

Blue Bells: CARING Suggestion for something you can do to help others.



Thinking and remembering Mr. Paul Jenkins...

Ever since I can remember, Paul was an 11 o'clock Sunday school leader. He was a faithful teacher who adapted to changing curriculum and teaching the 3rd & 4th grade or 5th & 6th grade depending on where he was needed most. There were even summers where he asked if he was needed. I always tried to give him those three months off as respite.

I posted his obituary on my Facebook page to help let people know of his passing and as a way to share about how he impacted them or their children. It was touching to read the comments. I want to share some of them with you.

“Paul was a committed disciple. May God bless him in heaven for his love of teaching and sharing Jesus with our youth.” He truly exemplified being a disciple! “Some of the first Bible verses I memorized were in his 4th grade Sunday school class! He was also the one who really taught us how to use the Bible we’d been gifted the year before as 3rd graders, how to find what we were looking for instead of relying on someone to tell us where to turn.”

“I assisted Paul one year as he taught 4th grade Sunday School. Such a quiet gentle man. He amazed me how thoroughly he knew his Scripture.” I think Paul really enjoyed teaching the 3rd graders how to use their new bibles. He definitely knew the bible well! “He spent a lot of time preparing his Sunday school lessons. He often brought in photos from his trip to the Holy Land to show the children the places where the Bible stories took place.” This was a true gift for his students! “Faithful Servant does not even begin to describe this man. I cannot remember a time when he was not teaching Sunday School at MUMC.” Agreed!

Paul also helped with the Heartland services regularly and will be missed by the group that goes there. He was also a regular participant of the Christmas Caroling and would say that spending the time caroling with others was his Christmas. At the funeral, it was interesting to hear from an architect for whom Paul worked. To be able to hear about other areas of his life was fascinating. Paul was definitely a quiet, gentle man who was able to impact many lives. I know that he was able to do that at Mentor UMC through the Children's Ministry. There is definitely a hole in the hallway on Sunday mornings. He was an extraordinary man of God and will be greatly missed. Paul “definitely heard, ‘Well done my good and faithful servant’ when he met our Lord Jesus.”

Tammy Palermo
Director of Children & Family Ministries



Shhh it's a Surprise...

As Rev. Bev Wrobel transitions to a new position at Ohio Living, on December 15 we will celebrate Rev. Bev's ministry at Mentor United Methodist Church.

In preparation for that day we are creating a SURPRISE Gift of Memories. You are invited to join in celebrating Bev through the sharing of your special memories from the many years Bev has blessed this congregation with her connection, care, and counseling.

Your pictures, personal letters, and cards can be dropped off in the Church Office or emailed to tsimons@mentorumc.org ASAP. All items need to be turned in by Friday, December 13. Please contact Teresa Simons at 440-255-3496 if you have questions.

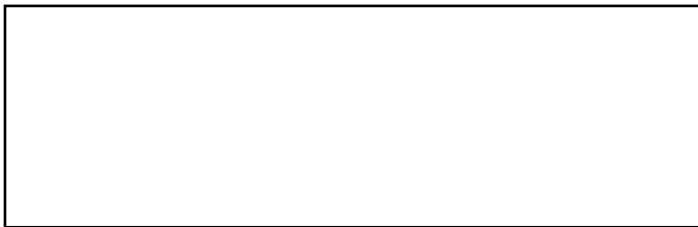
Please remember... this is a surprise.



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December Prayer Focus – Worship

God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Romans 5: 8

Compared to December, there is no greater time throughout the year for people to hear and receive the Good News of God's love. Jesus is born to bring God near ... and ultimately will die so that all might discover how serious God is about all knowing how beloved they are. Pray for our music ministry as songs tell the Good News. Pray for our drama as words and actions seek to deliver the Good News. Pray for our pastors as they prepare messages that will convey the important message of Jesus. Pray for lives to be changed ... for a community to be transformed... for the world to be different. Pray that every person would offer his or her life back to God ... in response to what God has offered in Christ. **THAT WILL BE WORSHIP!**

God is with us; He is called Immanuel. Pray that all will know Him by name.

Traditional Worship service in the Sanctuary Sundays 9 AM and 11 AM
Modern Worship in Fellowship Hall Sundays 9 AM and 11 AM
Deadline for the newsletter is the 8th of each month.

For the most current information, please see the calendar at www.mentorumc.org.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
01 09:00 AM - Confirmation Class 10:00 AM - Journey Group 10:15 AM - Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:15 AM - Cherub Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM - Lion Witch & Wardrobe Rehearsal 05:00 PM - Journey Group - Carr 05:00 PM - Bible Quizzing 06:00 PM - Youth Group 06:45 PM - Sunday Night Basketball - Hope Ridge 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Nagle	02 08:00 AM - Preschool Thanksgiving Break - no school 09:15 AM - Parents Morning Out 10:00 AM - Centenary Bible Study - Carr 10:00 AM - Worship at Brookdale Hesley 11:00 AM - Worship at Africa Newell Creek 06:30 PM - Disciple II - McAdams 07:00 PM - Men's Group Meeting	03 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Palermo 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Ring 07:00 PM - Emmaus/Journey Group 07:00 PM - Wolfgang Bible Study 07:00 PM - Chrysalis Group	04 08:00 AM - Organ Tuning 01:00 PM - Knitting Group 04:30 PM - Trustee Meeting 07:00 PM - Missions Commission 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Callagher 07:00 PM - Boy Scout Troop #280 08:00 PM - Staff Parish	05 10:00 AM - Overeaters Anonymous 06:00 PM - Canticle Bells 06:30 PM - Disciple I - Snode 08:45 PM - Charter Members Rehearsal 07:00 PM - S.A.L.T. 07:45 PM - Chancel Choir Rehearsal	06 09:30 AM - MOPS Playdate 01:00 PM - Journey Group - Fournier / Korenko	07 08:00 AM - I-Connect - Vocal Rehearsal 08:00 AM - I-Connect Rehearsal 09:30 AM - Christmas Cantata Rehearsal 09:30 AM - Bible Quizzing 01:00 PM - Christmas Craftroom	
08 09:00 AM - Christmas Cantata 10:00 AM - Journey Group 10:00 AM - Christmas Cantata - Army 10:15 AM - Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:15 AM - Cherub Choir Rehearsal 01:00 PM - Lion Witch & Wardrobe Rehearsal 05:00 PM - Bible Quizzing 05:30 PM - Journey Group - Strang 06:00 PM - Youth 56 Meeting 06:00 PM - Youth Group 06:45 PM - Sunday Night Basketball - Hope Ridge 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Nagle	09 09:15 AM - Parents Morning Out 10:00 AM - New Day Circle 06:00 PM - Fellowship/Evangelism 06:30 PM - Disciple II - McAdams 07:00 PM - I-Connect Planning Meeting 10:15 AM - Men's Group Meeting 07:00 PM - Usher Training	10 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Palermo 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Ring 07:00 PM - Emmaus/Journey Group 07:00 PM - Wolfgang Bible Study	11 09:30 AM - Young at Heart Luncheon Prep 12:00 PM - Young at Heart Luncheon 12:45 PM - Piano Tuning 01:00 PM - Knitting Group 07:00 PM - Children's Ministry Team 07:00 PM - Finance Committee 07:00 PM - Boy Scout Troop #280 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Wobbel	12 10:00 AM - Overeaters Anonymous 11:30 AM - Ruth Naomi Circle 06:00 PM - Canticle Bells 06:45 PM - Charter Members Rehearsal 07:00 PM - S.A.L.T. 07:00 PM - Mentor Jr. Women's Club Meeting 07:45 PM - Chancel Choir Rehearsal	13 09:30 AM - MOPS & MOMSnext Meeting 01:00 PM - Journey Group - Fournier / Korenko	14 08:00 AM - I-Connect - Vocal Rehearsal 08:00 AM - I-Connect Rehearsal 04:00 PM - Christmas Show - "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" 06:00 PM - Potluck Dinner	
15 08:00 AM - Christmas Gift Sorting 09:00 AM - Confirmation Class 10:00 AM - Journey Group 10:15 AM - Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:15 AM - Cherub Choir Rehearsal 04:00 PM - YSP Meeting Adults 05:00 PM - Bible Quizzing 05:00 PM - YSP Meeting 06:00 PM - Youth 56 Christmas Party 06:00 PM - Youth Group 06:45 PM - Sunday Night Basketball - Hope Ridge 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Nagle	16 08:00 AM - Christmas Gift Sorting 09:15 AM - Parents Morning Out 10:15 AM - Worship at Mentor Ridge 11:00 AM - Worship at Africa Newell Creek 04:00 PM - Youth 56 SERVICE PROJECT 04:00 PM - Christmas Gift Distribution & Coat Ministry 06:30 PM - Disciple II - McAdams 07:00 PM - Men's Group Meeting	17 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Palermo 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Ring 04:00 PM - Christmas Gift Distribution & Coat Ministry 07:00 PM - Emmaus/Journey Group 07:00 PM - Usher Training	18 01:00 PM - Knitting Group 01:15 PM - Mentor Miscellany Club 07:00 PM - Boy Scout Troop #280	19 10:00 AM - Overeaters Anonymous 06:00 PM - Canticle Bells 06:45 PM - Charter Members Rehearsal 07:00 PM - S.A.L.T. 07:45 PM - Chancel Choir Rehearsal	20 09:30 AM - MOPS & MOMSnext Meeting 01:00 PM - Journey Group - Fournier / Korenko	21 08:00 AM - I-Connect - Vocal Rehearsal 08:00 AM - I-Connect Rehearsal	
22 10:00 AM - Journey Group 10:15 AM - Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:15 AM - Cherub Choir Rehearsal 05:00 PM - Bible Quizzing 05:30 PM - Youth Group 06:00 PM - Youth 56 Christmas Party 06:00 PM - Youth Group 06:45 PM - Sunday Night Basketball - Hope Ridge 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Nagle	23 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 06:30 PM - Disciple II - McAdams 07:00 PM - I-Connect Planning Meeting 07:00 PM - Men's Group Meeting	24 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 08:00 AM - Christmas Eve - Church Office Closed Christmas Eve Services 3 PM - 5 PM, 7 PM (Modern and Traditional), 9 PM, 11 PM	25 08:00 AM - Christmas Day - Church Office Closed 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	26 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 08:00 AM - Church Office Closed	27 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 09:30 AM - MOPS & MOMSnext Meeting	28 08:00 AM - I-Connect - Vocal Rehearsal 08:00 AM - I-Connect Rehearsal 04:30 PM - More than a Meal Prep 05:30 PM - More than a Meal	
29 09:00 AM - Confirmation Class 10:00 AM - Journey Group 05:00 PM - Bible Quizzing 06:00 PM - Youth Group 06:45 PM - Sunday Night Basketball - Hope Ridge 07:00 PM - Journey Group - Nagle	30 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 09:00 AM - Newsletter Assembly 06:30 PM - Disciple II - McAdams 07:00 PM - Men's Group Meeting	31 08:00 AM - Preschool Winter Break - no school 09:30 AM - Journey Group - Palermo (Church Office is closed New Year's Eve and New Year's Day)	<i>Merry Christmas!</i>				

DECEMBER 2019