



This was our view from the Bethlehem hotel, the very first day in the city during our recent tour to the Holy Land. Being in this town of the nativity was a very special moment for me personally, as I am sure it was for all of our group and all of those who have traveled there over the years. In so many ways, being there still seems like a dream. It was fitting that this was our first stop in our tour. Bethlehem literally means “House of Bread.” Jesus Christ, the “bread of life” was born here. The good

news of his birth was announced by the angels here, in the rolling hills where the shepherds watched their flocks. We remember these words:

“8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:8-14)

As I was looking through my pictures of Bethlehem, I found this one that I took at about the same time as the one above. I did not realize at the time that the building below my balcony was literally called “Hope Building.” What a great name for a building, especially in Bethlehem, for The Hope of the world was born here one night. Hallelujah! Christ, born of Mary, Son of God, Savior, and indeed, the Hope of all the world.



If you are a little short on hope, remember, God loves you, and He has a plan for you. Hang in there. He will make all things right. If you have His hope, continue to rejoice, for we are closer to that Great Day of reunion than when we first believed – an eternal reunion with the one who made us and the one who saved us. This hope never dies!

God bless you this Christmas season and always!

*Brian*

**Director of Christian Education**  
**Kary McAtee**

**PRORAM UPDATES**

Cokesbury's "Deep Blue Connects: Loving God, Loving Neighbor" incorporates Bible stories, service learning, science activities, arts and crafts, animated video storytelling, and active games into a "lived-faith" experience for children of all ages. This month in Sunday School and Children's Church, our theme will be "Church Communities Celebrate Jesus." As we approach the Advent season, our lessons and activities will prepare us for the coming of Jesus Christ.

December Memory Verse – The angel said, "Do not be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you – wonderful, joyous news for all people." Luke 2:10

December 1<sup>st</sup> – Mary's Story (Luke 1:26-38, 46-47)

December 8<sup>th</sup> – Joseph's Story (Matthew 1:18-24)

December 15<sup>th</sup> – Jesus Is Coming (Luke 2:1-5)

December 22<sup>nd</sup> – Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:5-7)

December 29<sup>th</sup> – Shepherd's Story (Luke 2:8-20)



**CHILDREN'S ADVENT MUSICAL**

On Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 in the Family Life Center, twenty-five of our children and youth will be performing *It All Happened in the Country* for their families, friends, and congregation! Following the program, the United Methodist Men will be hosting their Annual Advent Dinner. This will be a wonderful time of fellowship and celebration – we look forward to seeing you there!



Our children and youth have also been invited to perform their Advent Musical for the residents of Elkins Rehabilitation & Care Center at 2:00 on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>! This will be an honor for our children and youth to entertain and minister to the elderly in our community.

**CANTATA SUNDAY**

Cantata Sunday will be on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> this year! On that day, Sunday School for children and youth will be held at its regular time and places. Due to participation of numerous children and individuals in the Cantata, there will be no Children's Church held on the 15<sup>th</sup>, but the toddler room and nursery will still be available to those in attendance.



**CONFIRMATION**

Any students sixth grade and above who would be interested in participating in a confirmation class, please contact Kary McAtee at 304-636-0660 or 304-642-0518. The class is expected to start in February and will last around 9 weeks. Any adults willing to be mentors, provide snacks, or assist in lessons and activities can also contact Kary.



As Christmas fast approaches and we prepare for all of our Christmas programs, I am once again reminded of that miraculous birth. There is nothing like the announcement of a new baby to bring excitement in a family. I have felt that same excitement when my children were born. They were joy-filled, heart-warming events in my life when I gazed at what I considered to be perfect little angels from God.

Lots of years have passed since then, but I am reminded that the same excitement that comes from physical birth also occurs when we experience spiritual birth. In fact, we can have spiritual birth because of Christ's physical birth.

That blessed night that Christ was born can be considered one of the most perfect nights ever in the history of mankind. But, God used imperfect circumstances and an imperfect location in the form of a humble manger to bring His perfect and Holy Son into the world.

The way God brought His son into the world is much the same way He works within our lives. Often, God takes the imperfections in our lives and uses them to perfect us, to save us. God loves to take the physical and emotional scars we have and use them to grow us into stronger people. He also desires us to take what we learned from our imperfections and offer to help others who may be struggling with the same things.

So whatever sin, whatever shortcoming, whatever failure, whatever weakness you may have, a child was born to bring new life to all who believe. He is the true reason for the season, so maybe we should celebrate both our physical and spiritual birthdays. After all, the day Christ came into our life is just as important as the day we came into being.

John 10:10 says, "One...came...that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." We have a new life and the hope of salvation all because of one child: Jesus.

So as you reflect on this blessed Christmas season, be thankful for that holy night when

**"CHRIST WAS BORN TO SAVE"!**

Christmas Blessings,  
Susan

## Mission Minute

In the busyness of Advent, school programs, church programs, choir, cantata, dinners, baking, visiting family, friends, the elderly, etc., please take time to reflect on – Jesus! Jesus, the baby born in a manger, the Son of God, came to save us by dying on the cross, raised from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father. Merry Christmas from the Mission Committee!

The Mission Committee has been busy continuing to work with the Lighthouse Community Recovery Home. The lighthouse on the stage will be moved during the Advent season. It will be on the altar in the blue room. Tags can still be taken off and items returned to the church office. Thank you so much for your support of this incredible project serving those in our community.

November was busy completing the shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.



What a wonderful Sidewalk Supper in the Family Life Center at First United Methodist Church. A great big thank you to the 25 volunteers who came out to serve, talk with, and hand out coats, gloves, hats, socks, etc. to the 30+ people in need. So many thank you's!!!



Thank you to Deborah Stout and Bonnie Woodrum from the Health Department who came and gave out free flu, Hep A and Hep B shots.



Thank you to the Elkins High School Athletic Department who provided the yummy food (ham, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, and desserts). Thank you Marshall Howser for cooking dinner.

Thank you First United Methodist Church for hosting our dinner and Brian Seders for supporting our efforts. Thanks to our Mayor Van Broughton for stopping by and encouraging us.

Our next Sidewalk Supper (in the Family Life Center) will be Friday, December 13, 2019 at 6:00 pm. This dinner will be a sit-down dinner and we will need servers. Please prayerfully consider coming out to eat dinner with us, serve, and talk with those less fortunate.

In His Service,  
Kim Urban

## PIONEER CLUB MINISTRY



We began November studying Paul and Silas. Paul (Craig Hyre) and Silas (Greg Johnson) took the children on a journey to what life was like in their time. Bob Cowgill presented Operation Christmas Child to the club and explained who receives a box and the ministry in each box. We watched a video and saw how far the boxes travel to the children, even by oxen to some regions. It is so important for children to understand giving without receiving anything in return by filling four boxes (2 boy and 2 girl). It is important children see how volunteers, like Bob, are so passionate to serve Christ.

Thank you for the financial donations and those who sponsored a Bible off the Bible Tree. The Pioneer Club Ministry could not happen without your support and prayers. We were happy to include the WV Children's Home and the Mountain School boys who volunteer with the Back Pack Program. There is no greater gift than to give someone the word of God. We are to teach children about the Bible so they may apply it to their everyday life.

We received a wonderful blessing of craft supplies (paper, markers, scissors) and beautiful fall fabric. Your kindness made our November crafts extra special. The pumpkins were so much fun to make out of simple things like a roll of toilet paper, fabric, pipe cleaners, ribbon and a cinnamon stick. The children were so proud and excited to show off their pumpkins.

November ended with a family style Thanksgiving meal for the children, their families and our volunteer families. Our volunteers prepared and served a wonderful Thanksgiving meal providing veggies and side dishes to share. We enjoyed special music by Seth Maynard and Roger Corder. Our families made a Thanksgiving harvest cross with the following on it. "God put colors for you and me on all the Indian corn we see! Brown is for the beauty of fall, Red is God's love for us all. Yellow is for the golden sun, White tells us to love everyone. Orange tells us to give God praise and keep him with us every day". My heart leaps with thankfulness that God has called us to share the love of Jesus with the children through the Pioneer Club Ministry. I am personally thankful for our volunteers who are faithfully giving of their time and talents each week: Cindy and Roger Corder, Kathy Hitchcock, Sheila Johnson, Leon Mallow, Craig Merriam, Jackie Potts, Bill Riffie, Kelly Simmons, Barbara Tyre and Pastor Brian. A very special thank you to Kathy Hitchcock who shows her love through her special gift of hospitality. Kathy plans the meals, shops, prepares, serves the meals and clean up, week after week with such a joyful heart. Very special thank you Hugh Hitchcock for pick up, delivery and clean up each week!

December we celebrate Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love by celebrating God's greatest gift Jesus birth. We will meet on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, December 12<sup>th</sup> and December 19<sup>th</sup>. We will not meet on December 26<sup>th</sup> or January 2<sup>nd</sup> as the club follows the school calendar for holidays and snow days.

God Loves you and so do I,  
Shelley.

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## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD NEWS



Shoebboxes from The First United Methodist Church have been sent to the Processing Center in North Carolina. As of November 15<sup>th</sup> our church had packed over 900 gift filled shoeboxes and anticipate that another 300 will have been sent by November 25<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks to all who packed boxes with your family, made donations or packed boxes during our Shoebox Packing Party. Just think of the tremendous impact that this church will make on 1,200 children who will receive these gifts and a message of God's Love. Working together, we are changing the lives of children all over the world, "One Shoebox at time".

Happy New Year from the Operation Christmas Child Volunteers!





### ANNUAL FAMILY ADVENT DINNER

On Sunday, Dec. 1 at 6:00 p.m., we will be sharing in an Annual Church Family Advent Dinner following the Children's Advent Musical. The United Methodist Men will be serving ham, green beans, mashed potatoes with gravy, rolls and cake. Please join us!

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## United Methodist Women

### News From the First United Methodist Women

#### Teaming Up For Mission Projects

For several years now First United Methodist Women have been sending layettes to Davis Medical Center for newborns and families. Social Action Chairperson, Penny Friddle, along with Kary McAtee, Director of Church School of Ministries, have engaged students of Children's Church to assist in the project. The children help pack large bags with items that any family of a newborn would appreciate. Cuddly blankets appear to be appealing even to these children. The children pose with 10 bags ready to be delivered to the medical center.



## Fall Bazaar is a Success

The fall bazaar held on November 7 & 8 went well with an amazing number of volunteers and attendees. Mission project sales went well; food was sold in record time; the Country Store had shoppers mingling and buying and bake sale/crafts offered a table of excellent selections.

Pictures show the long line of those attending the luncheon; volunteers serving food; country store workers wrapping purchases; mission table covered with beautifully displayed baskets with theme items and the mission quilt displayed in the background. Lunch guests filled the colorful, fall decorated tables while enjoying a hearty, reasonably priced meals with family and friends.

Thanks goes to so many volunteers who make this project possible and to our customers, many of whom return year after year.



## Supporting Operation Christmas Child

Our group provided a pizza lunch to those who attended the OCC packing party on Sunday, November 17. This is just another way that our proceeds from our bazaars help mission projects, both local and international.

**Upcoming Dates:** Next Executive Board Meeting: Monday, December 2 at 1 pm in the Parlor

**TYRAND COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES  
CHRISTMAS STORE  
ADOPT-A-CHILD**

Your donation of \$20.00 will help purchase the following items for one (1) child for Christmas



**A New Toy  
Socks  
T-shirts  
Underwear  
Gloves  
Toboggan**

**PLEASE HELP US BRING A SMILE TO A CHILD'S FACE. YOU CAN MAIL YOUR  
DONATION TO:**

**Tyrand Cooperative Ministries  
P. O. Box 365  
Mill Creek, WV 26280**

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**Mitten and Sock Tree:** We will decorate the Bible Tree with children's mittens, gloves, scarves, hats and socks. These will be distributed in our community for needy children. These items need to be in by Sunday, December 15.

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**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
DECEMBER 24, 2019  
7:00PM Service  
11:00PM—Traditional Communion Service  
Candlelight at both services.**





### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Connie Caudy	7	Matt Tyre	15	Julia Preusch	22	Dianne Marstiller
1	Rhys Lefler	7	Manda Pawelczyk	16	Vince Johnkoski	22	Brooks Spears
2	Amon Marstiller	7	Holly Elbon	16	Monica Wamsley	22	Lexi Reger
2	Jessica Wilmoth	7	Olivia Seibert	16	Emma Pingley	23	Jin Rhee
2	Autumn Trupo	8	Susan Sneed	17	Bud Rexrode Jr	23	Bill Basil
3	Jeff Barb	8	Eli McWhorter	17	Donna Mouser	23	Juliann Harlan
3	Beth Conklin	8	Cassandra Lawson	18	Jack Batdorf	25	Barbara Tyre
3	Bryan Davis	9	Toni Herron	18	Emily Bennett	26	Jo Ellen Jones
3	Ryan Merriam	9	Sheila Gregoire	18	Becky Cain	27	Roy White
3	Dallas Poyner	10	Elsie Bucher	18	Ella Berdine	27	Mike Ebel
4	Leigh Fletcher	11	Margie Sutton	18	Maggie Conrad	27	Tara Standridge
4	Maxine Varney	11	Mike Pizzino	19	Mary Ann Gay	28	Barbara Criss
4	Betty Jo Kostakos	12	Carol Holt	19	Frank Gola	28	Buck Hammer II
4	Paul Grindle	13	Lloyd Teter Jr	19	Barbara Wetsch	28	Linda Patterson
5	Bonnie Marstiller	13	James Smith	19	JoJo Rhee	28	Jessica Johnson
5	Stephanie Reed	13	David Ferguson	19	Patrick Thompson	29	Max Jones
6	Eric Ferguson	14	Simmie Hoeft	19	Matthew Spessert	30	Chris Patella
6	Sam Tuning	14	Mike McDowell	20	Kathy Hitchcock	30	Michelle Pratt
7	Shawna Davis	14	Emily Shobe	20	D.K. Curtis-Golden	30	Todd Schoonover
7	Jay Dailer	14	Alexa Sanders	21	Carol Pizzino	31	Hollie Pritt
7	Phil Hinkle	14	Jacob Pritt	21	Donnie Teter	31	Lorrie Downs
7	Jennifer Gouer	15	Larry Jones	22	Judy Vandenberg	31	George Mallow
7	Amy Simmons	15	Noah Patella	22	Sue Wolfe		

### DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

3	Dave & Donna Simmons	20	John & Laura Chapman	31	Steve & Kristin Satterfield
6	Glenn & Patty Godwin	22	Bill & Linda Patterson		
8	Jim & Sue Sayres	25	Calvin & Margaret Bennett		
11	Brad & Missy Reger	29	Vince & Phoebe Johnkoski		
14	Bob & Sara Hinkle	29	Vilas & Norma Stalnaker		
16	Jerry & Bobbi Trimboli	30	Jim & Wilma Crowley		

### CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

*to the families of*

Liz Lafayette-Thomas and family upon the death of her husband, Chad,  
 Jim Yorkey and family upon the death of his father, Charles Yorkey, Jr.,  
 Christine Harris and family upon the death of her mother, Fran McLaughlin,  
 and Deborah Fincham, Donna Simmons and Dee Dee Ice and their families  
 upon the death of their mother, Carol Ice.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
315 KERENS AVENUE  
ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA 26241-3852

**The Circuit Rider**

**December 2019**

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**PAID**

FIRST U.M. CHURCH

ELKINS, WV

PERMIT NO. 14

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Thursday 8:30 AM – 3 PM / Friday 8:30 AM – 12-noon PH: 304-636-0660

Pastor: Brian Seders (304-636-0406 Home)  
blseders@gmail.com

Office Manager/Treasurer: Rhonda Elmer  
rhonda@fumcelkinswv.com

Director of Church School of Ministries: Kary McAtee  
kary@fumcelkinswv.com

Financial Secretary: Julie Civiello

Music Director: Susan Seders

Organist/Handbell Choir Director: Scott Green

Pastor Emeritus: Basil Hensley

Custodian: Angela Kisner

Nursery Worker: Jennifer Wanless

