



Forest Heights United Methodist Church

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NEWSLETTER

December 2023

“So, be alert at all times”...(Luke 21:36)

The days between Thanksgiving and Christmas form a season of the year when most of us are acutely concerned about the time! Maybe it's because there are so many things to do between now and then that we're afraid that we won't have enough time. Time is an issue for almost all of us these days. And indeed, time can be an issue even when it's not this season. We wonder how much time we have. We're afraid we won't have enough time. And we get stressed when it feels like time is running out.

Time mattered greatly to early Christians, too. In Luke 21, Jesus is speaking to his first followers about *time*. He speaks about recognizing the signs of the times, even though he doesn't tell them how much calendar time they have until some of these things take place. And finally, he tells his disciples of every age to “*be alert at all times.*”

The meaning of “time” in the Bible is even more complicated because in NT Greek there are, in fact, two words for “time.” The first word is “*chronos*,” from which we get the English word, chronology, it refers to clock-time and calendar-time. But the other word from time is “*kairos*.” *Kairos* isn't about clocks or calendars. *Kairos* means God's time. I know a pastor who once illustrated the difference by telling us the story of the morning at 3 a.m. when he was awakened by his pregnant wife who simply told him, “*It's time!*” And that had nothing to do with the hour on the clock. That's *kairos*!

It's this word *kairos* Jesus uses when he talks about time, and then calls us to be alert. He means that we should be alert to what God is doing in our lives at every time. He means that we should be open to God's call to action in every season. And he means that we should be expecting God to act, no matter what the calendar or the clock may say.

In this season of Advent, Jesus calls us to be alert to how the things that weigh us down can keep us from experiencing the joy of God's time. In this season of Advent, Jesus calls us to struggle against the things that weigh us down by looking for what God is doing in this and every season. And in this season of Advent, Jesus promises us again that God's *kairos* is always right now – and that God is inviting each and every one of us to live more fully into the time God is giving us in this moment. It's about time. Isn't it?

Drew

“Thanksgiving is inseparable from true prayer; it is almost essentially connected with it. One who always prays is ever giving praise, whether in ease or pain both for prosperity and for the greatest adversity. He blesses God for all things, looks on them as coming from him, and receives them for His sake, not choosing nor refusing, liking or disliking anything, but only as it is agreeable or disagreeable to His perfect will.”

-John Wesley, Founder of Methodism-

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Nurture News -Serving Each Other

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Our sympathy to the family of Bob Carlton. May God's love give you great comfort and peace.

Advent Calendar of Devotion Guide is available to each family of our church for the Advent season.

Please pick up your guide from the table across from Drew's office. Enjoy!

Advent Bible Study Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph

Books are available in the office for \$13.

When: November 29 through December 20 Time: 10:00am Where: Upstairs in Resource Room

Cookie Baking for our Homebound Members

Contact Beverlyann (731-431-0165) to let her know if you would like to help prepare or share your favorite Christmas cookie recipes with our youth Sunday School class. We will meet in the kitchen on December 9th at 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and noon. The sign-up sheet is outside the office. Cookies will be delivered on December 10. Come bake or bring your homemade cookies to the church on the 9th.

Christmas Caroling

Join us on Sunday, December 10th at 4:30 for Christmas caroling and a chili supper sponsored by the Chancel Choir. Our homebound members will be visited by the carolers. Another option if you don't want to sing, is to learn the history of time-honored carols presented by Elaine. Supper will begin when carolers return. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board for this activity.

Adult Sunday School Christmas Party

When: Thursday, December 14, 6pm

Where: Catfish Cabin

Meal is "Dutch treat." A reservation sheet is in the Sunday School class room or you can contact Sue Wyatt (731-343-4019). The deadline for reservations is December 10.

Christmas Cantata – Night of the Father's Love will be shared during morning worship by the Chancel Choir on Sunday, December 17th.

March to the Manger

An opportunity to give a special Christmas financial gift to our Benevolent Fund will be available during morning worship on December 17. Your gift will be designated to help members in need. Place your gift in an envelope with March to the Manger written on it.

Staff Christmas – The SPR Committee is now receiving donations for the staff Christmas gifts. If you would like to participate, give your gift to Paul Finney or put it in an envelope marked "Staff Christmas" and place in the offering plate by December 18.

Christmas Eve Worship – December 24

The 11:00 a.m. service will observe the fourth Sunday of Advent. The focus will be the coming of Christ. The 4:00 p.m. service will lead us to the manger. We will celebrate the birth of Christ with music, God's word, and communion.

Outreach News -Serving Others

Room in the Inn

It is time to serve the men at The Room in the Inn. Tuesday, December 12 will be the next meal we provide. We are needing people to donate items, help prepare the food, and/or be present to serve. Please see the list on the bulletin board for ideas on how you can help. Consider the idea of serving breakfast foods at the supper.

Other News

Special Annual Conference

Last fall Bishop McAlilly made a call for two special annual conference sessions to be held in May and November for the purpose of disaffiliation votes. The final session was held on November 13. 96% of the voting delegates voted to allow the remaining 128 churches in the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference that were requesting disaffiliation to do so. That includes 18 churches in our TN River Conference. Only East Trinity Church from the Jackson area was included in the list. At the close of the meeting the bishop prayed for the departing churches asking that their ministries will be fruitful as they follow the path on which they feel the Lord is leading them. This closed the period of disaffiliations allowed under paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline.

Holiday Office hours – the Church office will be closed December 21st through December 26th. Your 2023 giving must be received no later than December 24th to be credited to your 2023 giving statement.

Happy Birthday this month to:

Jack Finney – 12/9

Elaine Jones – 12/10

Bill Simpson – 12/12

Kathleen Wilson – 12/14

Dusty King – 12/19

Ida Tumbaga – 12/19

Marion Gaffney – 12/24

Happy Anniversary to:

Carol & Robert Reeves – 12/24