

The Allen Memorial Messenger

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'"
Isaiah 52:7 NRSV

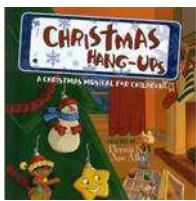
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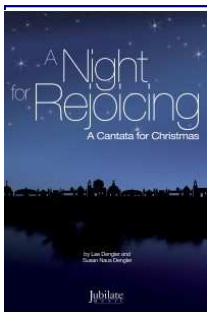


Hanging of the Greens

Please join us on Dec. 2 at 7:00 PM for our annual **Hanging of the Greens** program directed by Yvonne Raper. This is a very meaningful service based on the English tradition of decorating the home with wreaths, garlands and a Christmas tree. It readies the sanctuary (and church members) for the Christmas season. **Please don't miss this very meaningful program.**



Our **Children's Choir** under the direction of Patti Rae Bryant will present their Christmas musical, *Christmas Hang-Ups*, on Sunday evening, **December 9th**, at 7:00 PM. This humorous and engaging story, created by Dennis and Nan Allen, features delightful songs and a solid salvation message for children and adults alike. Please bring a tray of finger foods and join us for a time of fellowship following the concert. A **surprise visitor** will delight the children following the refreshment time.



The **Chancel Choir** under the direction of Dr. Nathan Windt will present their Christmas Cantata, *A Night for Rejoicing*, by Lee & Susan Naus Dengler, on **December 16 at 6:00 PM**. This new cantata tells the age-old story of Jesus' coming to earth, which culminates in that glorious "night for rejoicing." You will enjoy hearing some familiar carols as well as newly composed music. A reception for the choir will follow the service. Please bring a tray of "sweet treats" to share at the reception. Also invite your friends to come with you.



The **Athens Community Chorus** Christmas concert will be on Saturday, **December 8th**, at 7:00 PM and Sunday, **December 9th**, at 2:00 PM. Both concerts will take place at The Arts Center and will feature a wonderful selection of Christmas carols from around the world and a variety of different styles sure to please everyone. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students/seniors and free for TWC students. Please plan to join us as we celebrate the Christmas season!



Christmas Eve Service

The **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service and Communion** will be on Monday, Dec. 24, at 5:00 PM. Please plan to join us for this very important service



You are invited to join our Youth as they go Christmas caroling on Friday, December 21, at 4:30. If you would like to join the group later, see Lela for a schedule. Many of our families look forward to this visit from our youth.



UMW CHRISTMAS PARTY

UMW Christmas Party—Saturday, Dec. 8th at 12 noon. Our hostess, Mary Sparkman, would like each person to bring their favorite Christmas salad for the luncheon. Mary will also present the program. Please bring a \$15 unwrapped toy for the Rescue Squad. Also, bring a Christmas card for your Secret Pal or one to exchange if you don't have a Secret Pal.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

The **Men's Group** will meet for breakfast and devotions at 8:30 AM on Sunday, December 2. All men of the church are welcome to attend.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY Jesus!

Our **Birthday Offering for Jesus** will be on Sunday, December 16. This offering will go to the "Imagine No Malaria" fund. Please give as God leads you.



Advent Meditations

Meditations for Advent, *In Joyful Hope*, are available in both entryways. Please pick one up for your family. Sunday, Dec. 2, is the 1st Sunday in Advent.

Something for Everyone



You are invited to join us on Tuesday, Dec. 4th at 12 noon for our **Winter Wonderland** celebration in Wattenbarger Hall. The meal will feature baked ham/all the trimmings.

The program will be a slide show of the year's activities. The meal is free; however, we need to know how many to prepare for. Please make your reservations with Charlotte, 745-1915, or the church office, 745-1560 by Sunday, December 2.



From the Pastor:

THE GIFT

As we enter the holiday season, or more to my liking “The Christmas Season” we can’t help but think about gifts. Maybe you are making your list of people for whom you have to buy (or want to buy). Maybe you have already started shopping. No doubt, some of you have already finished your shopping. I try to wait as long as possible to do my shopping. But I also have to depend on others to help me do my shopping.

In the frenzy of shopping and preparation it is easy to be so worn out that we don’t stop to celebrate and enjoy the season as much as we should.

There is a song by Jim Brickman titled: “The Gift.” Part of the words are: “All I want is to hold you forever/All I need is you more every day/You saved my heart/ From being broken apart/ You gave your love away/I can’t find the words to say/ That I’m thankful every day/ For the gift.

There was a movie that came out in 2000. A woman with the gift of extrasensory perception is asked to help find a young woman who has disappeared.

A third story is that of Jim and Della. It is called “The Gift of the Magi.” It is a short story written by O Henry in the early 1900s. The couple lives in a very modest flat. It was Christmas and Della had \$1.87 to buy Jim (Mr. James Dillingham Young) a present for Christmas. After pondering she decided to sell her long beautiful hair. She received \$20 for her hair. With that and her \$1.87 she bought Jim a platinum chain for his shiny gold watch that he prized which was attached to a leather strap.

When Jim arrived at home, he looked at Della with a strange expression. She finally admits that she has sold her hair to buy him the chain for his watch. She showed Jim the chain. He then laid out a set of hair combs that he had bought her for her long hair. He bought the combs with the watch he had sold. They both had gifts that neither could use. But they realized how deep their love was for each other in the sacrifice that each had made. They realized their love for each other was more valuable than any gift.

The story ends with the narrator comparing the pair’s mutually sacrificial gifts of love with the story of the Biblical Magi. The magi, you remember, were wise men who brought gifts to the new-born king of the Jews in the manger. They had invented the art of giving Christmas presents. The magi had brought gifts of their great possessions. The couple in the story had given the gift of their greatest treasure to each other. The gifts of the Magi were going to provide needed funds to travel to Egypt for safety. The gifts of the poor couple were the gifts of two people who loved each other so much that they sacrificed their best for each other.

How do you approach giving gifts to each other? And what are the gifts you are willing to sacrifice to give to God?

Joe

Divine Rhythm 2013 for young adults will be held in Gatlinburg at Mills Auditorium on February 1-3. Olu Brown will be the featured speaker. The church will help with expenses for the program fee and hotel accommodations. More information can be found at www.divinerhythm.com. Please see Jared Wright or contact the church office for more information.

Volunteer of the Month: Yvonne Raper is our Volunteer of the Month. Yvonne is Chairman of the Worship Committee and the Staff-Parish Relations Committee. The Worship Committee is charged with providing engaging worship experiences for all who come to our church. Working in close conjunction with the pastor and the choir director, the Worship Committee helps design and provide for worship that is deeply engaging and transformative. Yvonne is a very creative person. She uses her talents during the special seasons of the church year to enhance the worship setting. Yvonne also works with the pastor in planning the Easter Sunday service. She and her team are responsible for preparing the altar for Holy Communion each first Sunday.

Yvonne’s duties as chairman of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee include making sure that the staff and congregational interests are integrated to focus on the mission of the church. The committee relates to all staff, both bishop-appointed and employed staff. This is a very important position in the life of the church, and Yvonne has done an outstanding job in this area.

Yvonne is a very busy lady. She is the Food Service Supervisor for Athens City Schools and is involved in many community endeavors including Relay for Life which meets here at our church. She is a member of the Church Council and is always willing to help with all the activities of the church.

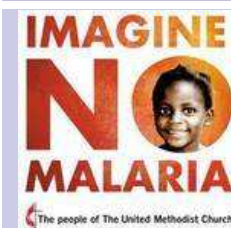
Yvonne enjoys cooking, traveling and spending time with her friends, especially her best friend, Sarge, who she rescued a few years ago.

Be sure to express your appreciation to Yvonne when you see her.



Coming in January!!!

A new Sunday School Class is being formed for Young Adults taught by Jane Jeffreys. The targeted group for this class is post college age through age 40(ish). The first class session will be on **January 13th** starting at 10 AM in the classroom next to the Pastor’s Office. If you would like more information, give Jane a call at the church office, 745-1560.



The Church Council voted to set a goal of saving **250** lives. For just \$10 you can save a life. This campaign runs until Annual Conference in June. Please be generous. Just mark your check “Imagine No Malaria.” Thank you.

The Church Staff would like to wish everyone a very merry and blessed Christmas. Our prayer is that you will experience peace, love and joy throughout the Christmas season and the coming year. *Pastor Joe, June and Charlotte*

Weekly Recurring Events

Monday
6:00 PM Junior Girl Scouts

Wednesday
5:00 PM Children’s Choir Practice
6:15 PM Prayer Ministries
7:00 PM Chancel Choir Practice

Sunday
10:00 PM Sunday School
11:00 PM Worship
4:30 PM Youth

Monthly Recurring Events

Sunday
8:30 AM 1st Sunday—Men’s Group in WH
5:00 PM 1st & 3rd Sunday—Super Sunday for Kids
4:00 PM 3rd Sunday—Rejoicing Spirits at Cedar Springs

Tuesday
1st Tuesday—Something for Everyone—Check bulletin

Thursday
7:00 PM 1st Thursday—McMinn Ministries at Cooke Center

Saturday
12:00 Noon: 2nd Saturday —UMW in WH

Special Events/Meetings

12:00 PM—Sunday, Dec. 2nd, Dinner after Church
1:30 PM—Sunday, Dec. 2nd, Decorate the Church
7:00 PM—Sunday, Dec. 2nd, Hanging of the Greens
7:00 PM—Sunday, Dec. 9th, Children’s Choir
Christmas Concert/Refreshments follow
11:30 AM—Friday, Dec. 14th, UMW Meal for Grace & Mercy Ministries
Sunday, Dec. 16th, Birthday Offering for Jesus
6:00 PM—Sunday, Dec. 16th, Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata/Reception following the concert
4:30 PM—Friday, Dec. 21st, Christmas Caroling
5:00 PM—Monday, Dec. 24th, Christmas Eve Service and Communion

Please Note: The Children’s Choir will practice on Tues.-Friday, Dec. 4th—7th each evening from 5—6:30 in the sanctuary. They will practice on Saturday, Dec. 8th from 10—12 noon. Please be sure to have your children here for these very important practices.

Altar Flower Schedule

December 2 Tim & Sue Walker
December 9 Vaughn & Jane Jeffreys
December 16 John & Martha Penney
December 23 Brian & Kelly Bean
December 30 Church



Poinsettias are used in our church for the Christmas season. According to legend, a poor Mexican child had no present for the baby Jesus. The child pulled weeds from the roadside and placed them on the altar, where they burst into scarlet hues. Considering this to be a miracle, Latinos christened the plant “flor de la Noche Buena,” meaning “flower of the Holy Night.”

OUR STEWARDSHIP

“I will be loyal to the United Methodist Church and do all in my power to strengthen its ministry by my prayers, my presence, my gifts, my service, and my witness.”

ATTENDANCE

The attendance statistics for November will be published in the January Newsletter. *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some,.....Hebrews 10:24-25a ESV*

OUR GIFTS

The financial statistics for November will be published in the January Newsletter. *“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, “It is more blessed to give than receive.” Acts 20:35 ESV*

OUR PRAYERS

Our Country, our Leaders and our Troops
Our Pastor, Rev. Joe Black
Our District Superintendent, Rev. Joe Green
Our Bishop, Rev. Mary Virginia Taylor
Our Missionaries, both at home and overseas

Remember to Pray for Your Sheep!

Nancy Barton	Bonnie Richards
Chris Beaton	Mildred Smith
Warren Brewster	Nell Smith
Linda Brown	Mary Sparkman
Joseph Carpenter	Edward Tessier
Kathy & Milford Clark	Roy Thomas
John & Pam Cooley	Bruce Vincent
Ingrid Cooley	Mildred Vincent
William Cross	Emily Grubb Wade
Linda Dennis	Mike Wallace
Al Gamble, Jr.	Brenda Walker
Carol Hope	Jim & Mary Watkins
Mike Jackson	Ogle Wattenbarger
Steve King	Renay Wattenbarer
Anne Morgan	Nancy White
Jim Neil	Sandy Yielding

OUR SERVICE

The ladies will be feeding the clients at Grace & Mercy Ministries on Friday, December 14th. Pastor Joe will have a devotion following the meal. **Please pray for the homeless and the hungry.**

The 2013 Flower Chart is up on the bulletin board in the side vestibule. Reserve your Special Date! This is an opportunity for service.

Dinner After Church—December 2—The menu will be vegetable soup, potato soup, chicken noodle soup, grilled cheese sandwiches and dessert. There is no charge for the meal but the youth will gladly accept donations for their projects. You are invited to stay after the meal to help decorate the church for the Hanging of the Greens service which will be at 7:00.

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 Athens, TN 37303

Return Service Requested



Sunday School 10:00 AM
 Morning Worship 11:00 AM
 Youth - Sunday 4:30 PM
 Prayer Ministries - Wednesday 6:15 PM
 Adult Choir Practice- Wednesday 7:00 PM



Our Youth
 Any youth 6th—12th grade is invited to participate in our Youth Group. Our meetings begin on Sunday afternoons at 4:30.

Youth Schedule for December:

The Youth Calendars are now on sale in each entryway for \$10. Please support our youth by buying one of the calendars.

December 2nd— Dinner After Church—Hanging of the Greens Service. The Youth will sing. Contact Lela or Patti Rae for more information.

December 9th—Children’s Christmas Concert. Youth will help prepare and set up for the concert. See Patti Rae for more information. Deposit of \$25 due for Resurrection.

December 16th—Regular Meeting. The Youth will make gifts for the shut-ins.

December 21st—(Friday) The Youth will go Christmas caroling. Please be at the church by 4:00 PM.

December 23rd and 30th—No Youth Meeting

Camp Lookout Christmas Camp, December 15 & 16. Activities include Crafts, Christmas Carols, Hay Ride, Games, Camp Fire Fun, devotions and Worship! **Grades 3rd—6th**—Cost: \$58. Register online at camplookout.com and look for the Christmas Camp link on the home page. Call Don or Jackie at Camp Lookout, 706-820-1163, for more information.



Our Kids
 Super Sunday for Kids is for children ages 3—5th grade. Our meetings are on the 1st & 3rd Sundays at 5:00.

Super Sunday for Kids Schedule for December:

No meetings are scheduled for December. Watch the newsletter and bulletin for meetings in January.



Bible Question for December:

Who announced Jesus’ birth to Mary?

Correct answer for November: trumpets and cymbals. *“When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and Levites with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord... Ezra 3:10*

First Person (s) to correctly answer last month’s question:
 Mildred Vincent and Elizabeth Coleman

In order to conserve our resources, the Newsletter has been reduced from 6 pages to 4 pages. The birthdays & anniversaries will no longer be published in the newsletter. A few copies will be placed in the side vestibule each month for those who would like this information.

THE ALLEN MEMORIAL MESSENGER, a monthly publication of the Allen Memorial United Methodist Church, is intended to be an informative link between the church members and friends. Your comments and/or article contributions are welcome! If you know of other people you would like to receive this newsletter, please contact the church office at 800 Decatur Pike, Athens, TN 37303 or call (423) 745-1560. Jane Jeffreys, Charlotte Newman and Joe Black, Editors.