

December 2020



Pastor's Column

How do we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ? That happens to be a very good question. In my 9 Christmas seasons with you we have celebrated in numerous ways. But we have always been able to celebrate Jesus' birth by being together. Whatever the event we were together with no masks, closer than 6 feet (sometimes shaking hands and hugging one another). Those events have been joyous occasions with the focus being Jesus! What I am trying to say is this season has always been a very warm and welcoming sense of Love, Hope, Joy and Peace. And we have to remember that does NOT change. What has changed is the circumstances and we have to find a way to still find Hope, Joy, Peace and Love!

In my 37 years in Minnesota it was the weather that interfered with Advent/Christmas but it did not last the whole season and it was always great to meet and warm each other's souls with hot chocolate and food for the Christmas programs or the Candlelight Service (always my favorite).

So, this season is a challenge especially if we are not able to meet in person for our events and worship. In case we find ourselves there I am looking at internet apps and programs like Skype, Zoom or a form of Facebook that is different than we tried last year. (It didn't work too well). But our church has always been up to the challenge no matter what the situation and I would guess we will tackle this one as well.

Our newsletter has a fairly normal sense of the season. We will try to see if these events will be able to be a reality as the season goes on. One thing I have realized is that we need to be content in whatever situation we find ourselves. Content means we acknowledge that God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. That will never change so we can put our trust in the Trinity to be with us in all seasons. So, with that as our focus how do we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus?

- 1) By the Love for Jesus and one another to show that we protect one another from whatever might harm us.
- 2) By the Hope that is in Jesus Christ both now and forever. That He is the guiding principle for doing whatever we decide to do. Letting Jesus guide our season.
- 3) By the Joy that comes in knowing we are one in the Lord. That we rejoice in the birth of a baby who would redeem our world for those who trust and believe.
- 4) By the Peace that passes all understanding. The world gives little peace but God pours out His Spirit upon all to comfort and heal. When we get together the order of the day will be -Face masks, 6 or more feet apart, 25% of our occupancy (@31) and we will attempt to keep the virus germs away. We have been doing it for 9 months and we can meet the challenge in Jesus Christ. Be safe in Jesus name!!



Pastor Jack



Scriptures for the Month of December

Sunday, Dec. 6: Isaiah 40:1-11 • Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a • Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, Dec. 13: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 • Psalm 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 • John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday, Dec. 20: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 • Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27 • Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, Dec. 27: Isaiah 61:10-62:3 • Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7 • Luke 2:22-40



Financial Note

The main note - THANK YOU! Again, even with COVID, we have been an active church in ministry. As of this writing over \$84,000 has come in for the workings of our church. This giving is divided into two main categories - General Budget and Building Fund. The General budget has taken in close to \$66,000 which means with continued support we will meet our budget needs. THANK YOU!!!

The Building Fund has taken in over \$18,000 for Capital Improvements necessary to continue towards our ministry goals of Janice's Ministry House, K&J Gazebo ministry, Thrift Store ministry and other outreach ministries plus the building fund takes care of the loan on the Welcome Center. God has blessed us so much in our work so that we can meet the needs of the community and beyond. - THANK YOU!!!

If we are unable to come to church for whatever reason, we ask that you send your donations to the Church in care of JD Settles (Financial Secretary) or mail it to him at JD Settles, P.O. Box 36, Blue Eye, MO 65611. Again - THANK YOU! for caring about your church!



Advent Bible Study

You are invited to an Advent Study with Pete Briscoe, "A Savior is Born"! Each Monday we meet from 10:30 to 12:15 to share in fellowship of joys and concerns and Bible study.

The study is: Nov. 30: HOPE

Dec. 7: PEACE

Dec 14: LOVE

Dec. 21: JOY

If you are unable to be at Bible Study we will be doing a Facebook Live from 11:45-12:15. The pastor will try to be on the same study as those watching at home! (Inside joke)

Please contact the church office to sign up for Right Now Media.



We hope to have a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Dec. 24 at 7 p.m. It is the Pastor's favorite service of the year. It is a fun, warm, meaningful and joyous occasion to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! We will have the scriptures, sing the carols, light the candles, and celebrate His birth!



Scriptures



Please read the scriptures in the newsletter as they are from the Common Lectionary. We have been using the Common Lectionary since 2011. During that time I have concentrated on the Gospel lessons each week. Since we have been through these scriptures 3 times we need a change. I will still use the Lectionary but look at the other 3 lessons each week to see which one I can use on Sunday. If you haven't noticed there is a old testament reading, new testament reading, and a reading from the book of Psalms. We will see which of those will challenge our faith in 2021!

Also, you will see in our Alternate Worship time may have a different scripture than the Common Lectionary. Hopefully they connect us to the four elements of Advent - Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Please read the extra page of the newsletter as it explains "An Alternate Way to Worship" and it also shows how we are doing "Our Christmas Missions".

I wish we could do all of this in-person this season but we can do it together as we respond to the Spirit of God during the Christmas Season!



Thrift Store

The Thrift Store will not be open from December until March. We will try to be open March and April. Then we will try to have a Garage Sale in May!! Then the Thrift Store should continue from June through October.

Thanks for all the volunteers!!

Advent - Christmas

The preparation for the birth of Jesus is always a special time of the Christian year. We concentrate on four elements of the Christian Faith. They are HOPE, JOY, PEACE, AND LOVE. These four elements are part of Jesus' birth and the reason for Him coming. Our sanctuary is decorated to help express these four elements. Truly it is a beautiful time of the year. The mission outreach is set for the season (see article on Christmas Missions). the Christmas Hymns

Christmas Party - Not

Since we are still dealing with COVID we will not have a party as such but on Sunday, Dec 13 we will take time to "celebrate Christmas". During the service we will ask people what is their favorite Christmas get together. We hope to share 3-4 of these so they will need to be short (2-3 minutes). Over the years do you have a favorite Christmas get together? We will celebrate together the joy of family, friends, and neighbors.

Just a note - If we are having fun that day, the service might go until noon! It is a HOPE & JOY that it does - LET'S CELEBRATE!!!



Welcome, Susan Winston

Susan Winston will be our new secretary and custodian. Her and Dan have been members here for sometime. She has taught a couple of financial programs since they joined. We are glad to be making a smooth transition from Debra to Susan since Susan came on board the 9th of November and the two have been working together. Susan has worked in other churches so we are excited about the leadership she brings to the church. Next month she will tell us more about her and Dan. Welcome!

Not Goodbye, See You Later!

I am sure many of you have already heard that I am moving back to Texas so this will be my last newsletter. I will probably be able to help Susan with the January one a little I hope. I have enjoyed working here these past 9 years. If it says anything at all this has been my longest running job I have ever had. I can't really say that I have enjoyed EVERY minute of it, I was working with Jack after all. just kidding. 😊 It has been wonderful working with Jack as my boss, pastor and friend. I will take away many wonderful memories and I have made many wonderful friends.

But most of all I have really enjoyed working at a place that I can be of service to our Lord Jesus Christ. I am so thankful for the opportunity to have worked as a church secretary. I have always wanted to be able to do this kind of work but didn't really have secretary experience. Thank you to Jack for all he has taught me. Of course you can do good work and work for the Lord anywhere so I pray I get a job that I can enjoy as much as I have here. Thanks again Open Doors UMC for all you have done for me!

With tears of joy and some of sadness,
Debra Tompkins



Movie Night

I hope you will join us for our last movie for this year. We will be watching "Time For Me To Come Home for Christmas" on Wednesday, December 9 at 6:00 p.m. You will be missing out on a great fellowship opportunity and we may even have a surprise snack. Hint: it's caramel and puffy.
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!



Thank You-- Debra Tompkins!!

Our secretary, Debra Tompkins, will have her last day of work on Dec. 17. She has been with the church 9 years and secretary for almost all that time. We have been graced by her work. She produces very eye catching newsletters, as she celebrates each month with something new and creative. This creativity spills over into all her work- bulletins, power point, letters, cards and so on even to her office. We need to celebrate her tenure on Sunday, Dec. 20!! This is her last Sunday and we need to say a Big THANK YOU!!

Open Doors United Methodist Church of Blue Eye
6238 E. State Highway 86
Blue Eye, MO 65611
Phone: 417-779-5677 Cell: 417-527-1993
Website: www.blueeyoumc.com



We have a Facebook page, please go to our page and "like" us. You can post suggestions, pictures or anything you would like. It is also a great way to find out what is going on and see the pictures of events already taken place.

November

January



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Office Hours 9-5	3 Office Hours 9-5	4	5 Prayer Breakfast 8:15
6 Welcome Center 9:30 Praise & Worship 10:30 Communion	7 Church Hours 10-5 Bible Study 10:30 Women's Ministries	8	9 Movie Night 8:00 *Time For Me To Come Home For Christmas* Office Hours 9-5	10 Office Hours 9-5	11	12
13 Welcome Center 9:30 Praise & Worship 10:30	14 Church Hours 10-5 Bible Study 10:30 Women's Ministries	15	16 Office Hours 9-5	17 Office Hours 9-5	18	19
20 Welcome Center 9:30 Praise & Worship 10:30 BLUE SUNDAY	21 Church Hours 10-5 Bible Study 10:30 Women's Ministries	22	23 Office Hours 9-5	24 No Office Hours Candlelight Service 7:00	25 	26
27 Welcome Center 9:30 Praise & Worship 10:30	28 Church Hours 10-5 Bible Study 10:30 Women's Ministries	29	30 Office Hours 9-5	31  Office Hours 9-5		



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
					John & Monica Bennett	Charles Julian
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Joanne Burrows		Gary Gunther				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
					Debbie Herrmann	
					Jack & Vivian Jensen	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Zackery Wagner	Mary Little			Sharon Gilliam	
					Merry Christmas	
27	28	29	30	31		
Heather Wagner	Frank & Sarah Evans	Vivian Jensen				

WORSHIP

AN ALTERNATE WAY TO WORSHIP

Even if we are able to come back for in-person worship during Advent/Christmas Season some may not feel comfortable doing so. This is an alternate worship format.

Starting Monday, November 30, the church will offer this worship format on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9a.m. to 5p.m.

- 1) The Sanctuary will be available for individuals/families to come during that time period.
- 2) The power point will be on with the scriptures for the week and a brief devotional with pictures, of course!! Also, there will be suggestions on what to pray for while you are there.
- 3) Christmas music will be playing in the background so you might like to sing along.
- 4) The traditional place to leave your offering is in the hall which will be picked up every night at 5p.m.
- 5) This worship experience will be around 15-20 minutes but you are welcome to stay as long as you need, the power point will repeat itself.
- 6) This format should allow you to come and feel safe to worship in your own house of the Lord.
- 7) There are the four elements of Advent so each week will have a new element-HOPE, JOY, PEACE and LOVE.
- 8) Come and enjoy the beautiful atmosphere of the decorated sanctuary and hopefully feel the Spirit of Christmas.
- 9) Someone (Pastor Jack, Debra, or Susan will be here during the day to make sure everything in the sanctuary is working.
- 10) Come and prepare for the coming of Jesus!!

LOVE

HOPE



PEACE





OUR CHRISTMAS MISSIONS

1) Community Toy Drive for Stone County children 0-18 years of age.

Please bring new and unwrapped toy/s to the church by Sunday, Dec. 6.

We got involved kind of late in the process but they could use our help. If you don't want to purchase the toy/s you can make a donation to the church stated for this project and we will buy the toys.

Just remember older youth 14-18 like to be remembered at Christmas.

Your donation can be left in the regular offering plate in the back of the church or the toy box provided on Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays 9a.m. to 5p.m.

THANKS for helping make a child's Christmas a joyous and happy one!!



2) Donations to the USO.

Make your donations out to the church as we send one check to the USO.

We would want every military person who cannot be home for Christmas to know someone is trying to make their lives happier.

We state to them that we would like our money to go for the USO Holiday Care Packages which include toiletries, snacks, cozy hats and face coverings. Plus making sure the USO centers have a huge range of virtual activities for the service members like being able to call home. And that there would be USO centers open to celebrate the Christmas season.

Our military are the front line people who protect us each and every day and help preserve our freedoms.

Many cannot be with their loved ones during the holidays. Let's make them feel appreciated, and keep them connected, when the need is most.

We will send that donation after Sunday, Dec. 6. You may leave that donation in the same way as the toy drive.

THANKS SO MUCH
FOR GIVING AND CARING!!

