

# JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2024

## The Partner

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***"The Salvation of Christmas!"***

*"... an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph ... and said, "... Mary will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." — Matthew 1:20-21*

*"... the angel said to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid ... I am bringing you good news of great joy ... to you is born this day ... a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." — Luke 2:10-11*

*"... the Magi ... knelt down and paid Jesus homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." — Matthew 2:11*

*"Simeon ... said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel ... and a sword will pierce your own soul, too." — Luke 2:14-15*

What remarkable and unusual things were said about Jesus, and done for Jesus, before and after his birth!

Mary is told that she will bear a child and name him Jesus, because he will go on to save his people from their sins. Who says that about a baby?!

The shepherds are told they must go see a baby in Bethlehem who is a Savior, the Messiah!

The Magi give Jesus gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh! ... most unusual gifts for a baby!

And Simeon says both amazing and foreboding things about the newborn Jesus!

It's no wonder Mary pondered all these things in her heart. This is a whole lot to ponder!

As we are welcomed back to the Christmas season, we are reminded immediately of all that which makes Christmas so special. The family traditions, the decorations, the lights, the music, the special fellowship with loved ones, and more! At the heart of all this lay a Baby born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger.

*"Pastor's Letter" continued on p. 2*

*"Pastor's Letter" continued from p. 1*



The 1st Sunday of Advent is December 1. Our sanctuary will be fully adorned with greens and wreaths, our Chrismon Tree, and the Advent Wreath! Again, it will be a sight to see! Again, all of it will remind us that the heartbeat of it all is the newborn Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings, born in a stable and laid in a manger. The Chrismon Tree is especially helpful with this as it signifies with its evergreen branches and its assortment of beautiful ornaments the valuable meanings of Christmas. This Advent, which means "Coming," we await again the Coming of Jesus at Christmas, while we await also the coming of Jesus into our lives again and again, day by day! Christmas reminds us that we await a Savior! We await a Savior, born to show us the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We await a Savior, born to finish his mission on his Calvary Cross, due to our sin and humanity's rejection of His Way, Truth, and Life. We await a Savior, born to rise again on Easter!

That's why all those unusual things were said about and done for Jesus around His birth! A Savior is born! Christ the Lord! Christmas always recalls and celebrates our salvation, and everything about it!

The magi gave gifts fit not only for a King, but also for a King whose eventual, sacrificial, and saving death would make their gifts exquisitely appropriate! And the priest Simeon's words to Mary after Jesus' birth speak with remarkably accuracy about the difference Jesus' mission would make, and also how painful it would be! We'll also recall this Christmas, how the angel Gabriel said to Mary about Jesus ...

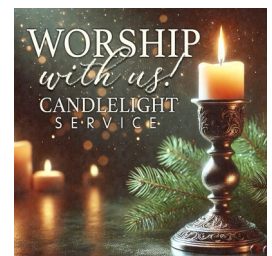
<sup>33</sup> **He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."**

We know now that Mary is being assured here that Jesus will be born to bring Easter! Everlasting Life! So no wonder Christmas is so full of Joy! So full of Hope! So full of Salvation!

I hope and pray for you a most Blessed and Merry Christmas!

Pastor Doug

## **PLEASE JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE!**



We hope you will join us this Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24 at 7:00 pm for our Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. Our celebration will begin at 7:00 pm with beautiful Christmas music led by our Chancel Choir and our Director of Music Ministry, Stephen Pompa. It will then continue with the Christmas Story in lessons and carols! We will conclude with "Silent Night" and candlelight to honor the Newborn Jesus, laid in a manger, Emmanuel, God with us, the Prince of Peace and King of Kings!

If you cannot join us in person, please join our Live stream online. We will enjoy and be richly blessed by our together in-person or in Spirit on this most Holy Night.

## BLESSING OTHERS BY SHARING OUR LOVE

The generosity of our John Wesley Methodist Church Family and Friends blesses our community throughout the year. In the next couple weeks we have the opportunity to make Christmas happier and brighter for several children/families. Please visit the display in the front of the sanctuary to find tags with their gift wishes as well as some of their wish list gifts. I hope each of us will prayerfully consider how we can be a part of this ministry as our participation will help provide gifts and food boxes for these persons.

There are two ways to provide a gift that has been specifically requested. One or more gifts may be provided by pulling a tag(s) from the display at the front of the Sanctuary. Please write your name and contact information by the appropriate Gift Tag Number in the notebook on the table and bring your purchased gifts with tags attached to church by Sunday, December 8th.

Instead of shopping you might wish to sponsor one of the already purchased gifts. Record your name and contact information beside the Gift Tag Number you are sponsoring and then place the gift with envelope containing the donation attached in the container provided beside the table.

You may wish to make a monetary donation or provide a gift card to someplace such as Walmart, Target, Martins, Aldi, and/or Kohls. These donations may be placed in the offering plate, sent to the church office or given to Sheila. If you prefer making a monetary donation to be used as needed for the holiday giving ministry, feel free to indicate if you'd like your donation to be used for gifts, food or whatever is needed and your wishes will be honored. On any checks, please note: Holiday Gift Ministry.

Contact Sheila if you have any questions and THANK YOU for being a blessing to others by helping children/families in our community have a brighter Christmas by returning your donations and/or gifts by SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8th.



## SHARING TEAM

Sharing Team met in November. Things are gearing up for the upcoming Christmas events and activities.

- ◇ We are once again sponsoring a family through the Salvation Army Angel Tree program. See Sheila Collins for more details.
- ◇ Coffee Fellowship continues to be held on the 2nd Sunday of each month, with UMW Wilson Wright Circle #1 hosting on December 8.
- ◇ The Youth are busy working on the Christmas pageant, to be presented during our morning worship service on December 15.
- ◇ Micah's Backpacks is running well, delivering close to 20 bags each week to the Ruth Ann Monroe School again this year. Thank you to those who are volunteering and for donations.
- ◇ Supper Club is bringing back the Christmas Caroling Sing-Along this year on the afternoon of Saturday, December 14 @ 2:00 pm, with a covered dish luncheon, followed by singing of our favorite carols, and accompanied by our own Stephen Pompa. (see details elsewhere in this newsletter)
- ◇ On December 4, join us for the Wednesday Night Alive pilot to celebrate Advent. Beginning at 6:00 for a meal and fellowship, 6:30 for a time of worship, and then at 7:00 several different activities will be available.
- ◇ Service Team continues to work with outreach projects, having just wrapped up the current Sleep In Heavenly Peace fundraiser. A Christmas Warming Event will be held on Dec. 21 to distribute hats and gloves to the homeless and less fortunate.
- ◇ The HARC Lighthouse After-School Program is currently up and running. They are in need of Program Leaders and volunteers to assist. If interested, see Pastor Doug.
- ◇ Celebration Team is organizing teams of three to help with the offering during Sunday worship. Would you be willing to help one Sunday a month? See Pastor Doug.
- ◇ We will once again be sponsoring a lamp post through the BISFA Foundation Holiday Lamp Post campaign. Look for our sign at the corner of N. Potomac St. and W. Franklin St.
- ◇ The Houses of Worship Tour will be back again this year, on December 26, 3-7 pm, with John Wesley participating. We need several volunteers to act as greeters and docents, sharing information about our church. Let Karen know if you are interested in helping.

The next scheduled meeting will be held Monday, January 9 via Zoom. Anyone is welcome to join and share at this meeting. If interested in learning more, contact Barb or Greg, or just call the church office for the Zoom link.

Have a very blessed Christmas season!

Barb & Greg Hoover



## PARISH NURSING MINISTRY - YOUR VACCINE CORNER

To help us all stay safe this winter and beyond, here are some healthy reminders when it comes to vaccines, and some general tips to help protect you from those nasty germs.



### Flu Vaccine

Did you know that getting the flu vaccine can lower your risk of heart attack and death from cardiovascular disease by 30 percent? Flu season is now in full swing till spring. Please consider getting the vaccine if you haven't already, especially if you are 50 or older or have an existing medical problem or are immunocompromised. It's definitely not too late. It takes up to two weeks to build immunity after being vaccinated. If you are 65 or older, ask your doctor or pharmacist for the high dose vaccine which provides stronger protection against flu-related hospitalization or serious illness.

### Covid-19 vaccine

We continue to see more cases of COVID circulating in our community. If you are 50 or older, please consider getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine. The virus has changed a lot over the last 3 or 4 years so without a recent vaccine, we have only "old" antibodies in our system, which don't help against the current COVID strains. Call your doctor if you're not sure whether you need the vaccine.

### Some General TIPS on fighting those ever-present germs:

- 1) Remember that germs are carried into your body (nose, mouth, eyes) via your hands so don't touch your face with your hands.
- 2) Wash, wash, wash your hands frequently.
- 3) Keep hand sanitizer with you at all times, in your pocket, purse, and in your car, and get in the habit of using it every time you get in your car and before you eat in a restaurant (don't forget!).
- 4) Keep a COVID test kit on hand at all times. You never know when you'll need to test if you're feeling sick. The sooner you know whether you have COVID, the sooner you can call your doctor to discuss prescription medication which can shorten the duration and reduce the severity of the virus.

Next month we'll talk about the pneumonia vaccine and the RSV vaccine.

Yours in Faith and Health,

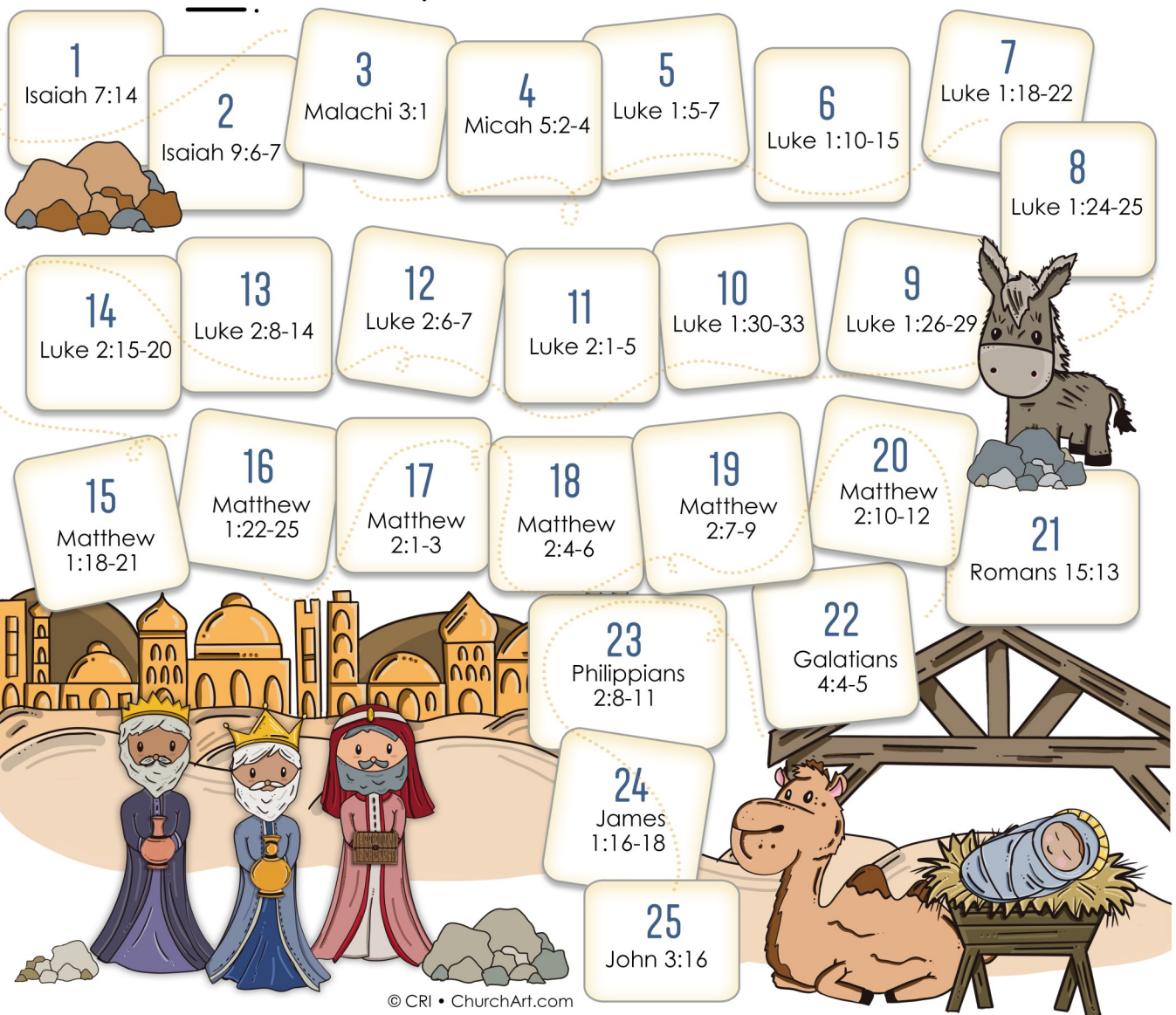
Sherry Fritsch  
JWUMC Parish Nurse





# A CHRIST-CENTERED CHRISTMAS ADVENT READING PLAN

Explore the true meaning of Christmas as you travel through God's Word. Discover God's promises he fulfilled through the birth of His only Son, the **KING OF KINGS.**



1 Isaiah 7:14

2 Isaiah 9:6-7

3 Malachi 3:1

4 Micah 5:2-4

5 Luke 1:5-7

6 Luke 1:10-15

7 Luke 1:18-22

8 Luke 1:24-25

9 Luke 1:26-29

10 Luke 1:30-33

11 Luke 2:1-5

12 Luke 2:6-7

13 Luke 2:8-14

14 Luke 2:15-20

15 Matthew 1:18-21

16 Matthew 1:22-25

17 Matthew 2:1-3

18 Matthew 2:4-6

19 Matthew 2:7-9

20 Matthew 2:10-12

21 Romans 15:13

22 Galatians 4:4-5

23 Philippians 2:8-11

24 James 1:16-18

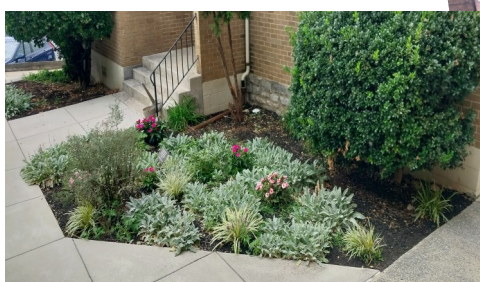
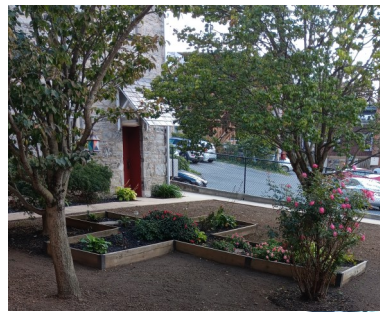
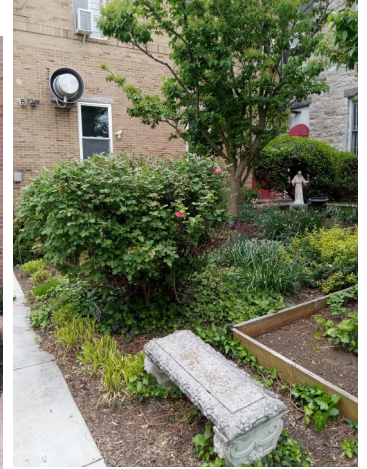
25 John 3:16

# MEMORIAL GARDEN TRANSFORMATION!!

Larry Gibson, our Church Caretaker, has been beautifying our church and grounds throughout this past year. Check out the improvements to the Memorial Garden!



**BEFORE**

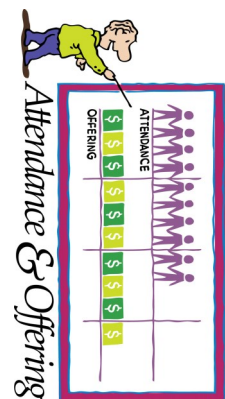


**AFTER**

## Attendance & Offering Report

<u>Date</u>	<u>In-person</u>	<u>Online</u>	<u>Total Attendance</u>	<u>Total Offering</u>
Oct. 27	41	6	47	\$ 1,670.00
Nov. 3	44	3	47	1,778.15
Nov. 10	35	5	40	2,515.00
Nov. 17	48	2	50	1,099.38
Nov. 24	43	3	46	1,475.00

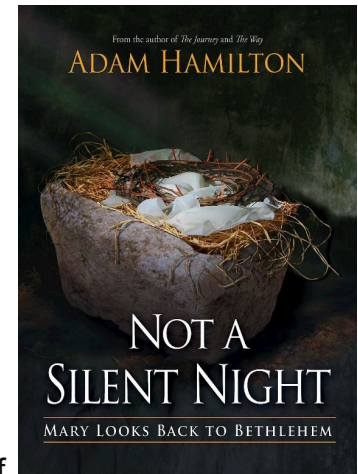
~ Blessings, Sheila & Sherry



## WEDNESDAYS ADVENT STUDY

The Heavenly Living Workshop will continue its 5-week Advent Season Zoom discussion (Meeting ID: 828 4006 3526 Passcode: 404756 Phone: 1-301-715-8592) each Wednesday evening from 7:00 pm until 8:30 pm. Please join us!!!!

**“Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem”**  
**by Adam Hamilton**



Imagine Jesus from Mary’s point of view—proud of her son, in awe of his gifts and mission, guided by love for him as a person and so much more. In this book, Adam Hamilton begins at the end, with Mary at the crucifixion and resurrection; travels back in time as she witnesses his life and ministry; and ends at the beginning, with the Christ child born in a stable, Mary’s beautiful baby. This year, experience Advent and Christmas with Mary.

Three remaining sessions are:

**\*\* Thanksgiving Celebrations \*\***

3. Amazed, Astounded, and Astonished — December 4
4. Mary, Full of Grace — December 11
5. It Was Not a Silent Night — December 18



**JWUMC SUPPER CLUB**  
**CHRISTMAS CAROLING SING-ALONG**  
**Saturday, December 14 @ 2:00 pm**



**JWUMC Supper Club** will be hosting an old-fashioned Christmas Caroling Sing-Along on Saturday, December 14, starting at 2:00 pm in the Social Hall for a covered dish luncheon. Chicken and drinks will be provided. Bring a dish or dessert to share.

After the meal, there will be a time for fellowship, followed by the singing of our favorite carols, where you get to pick the Christmas songs you want to sing. We will be accompanied by our own Stephen Pompa, who may also share a few special arrangements of our favorite carols.

All are invited, invite a friend, a relative, or anybody else you think might benefit from “a little bit of down time,” and a nice way to get your Christmas season started. Join us for an afternoon of “seasonal fellowship.”

Plan to join us! Be sure to let us know by December 9 if you are planning to attend so we have enough seating and food.

Either call or email the church office: 301-733-0391 [jwumcmd@yahoo.com](mailto:jwumcmd@yahoo.com)  
or Barb & Greg Hoover: 301-797-5157 [bhoov72@aol.com](mailto:bhoov72@aol.com)

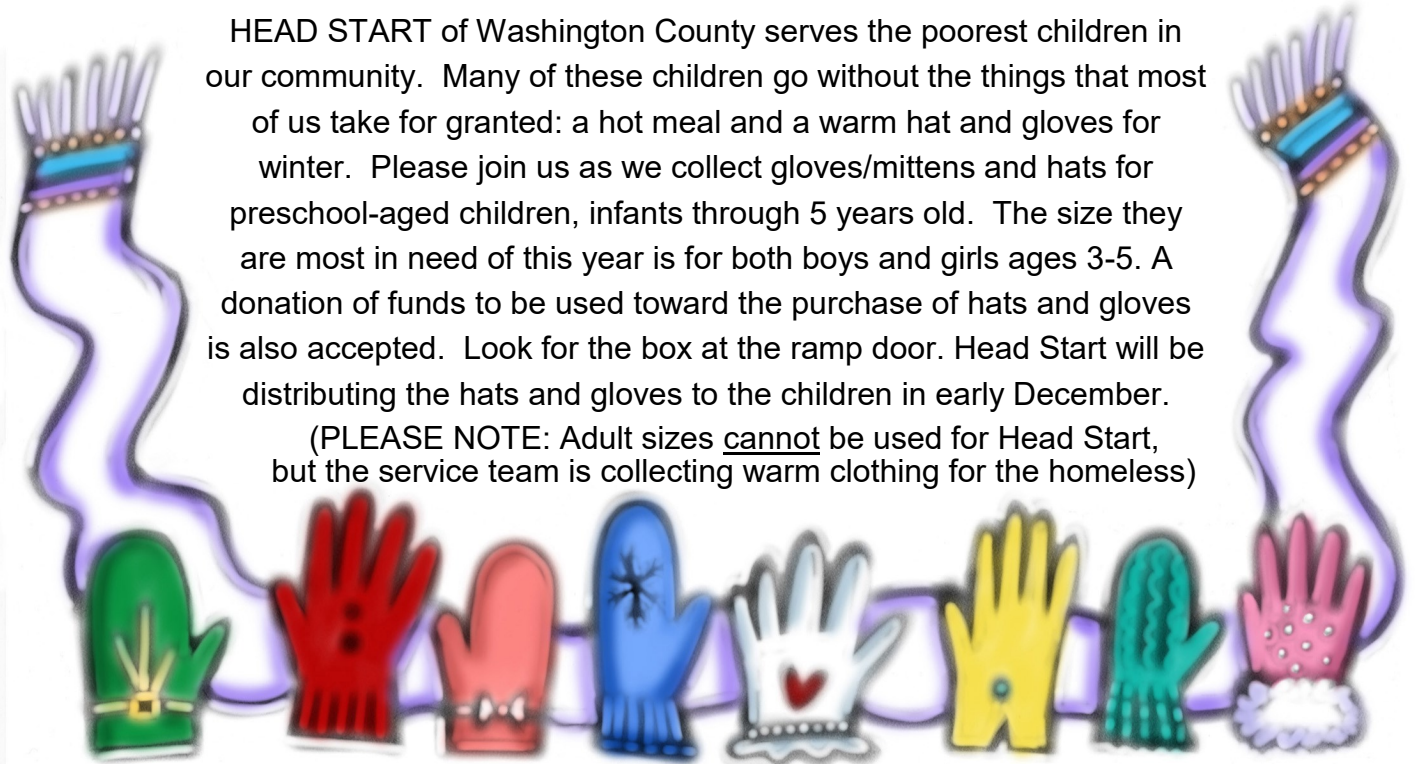




## HAT AND GLOVE COLLECTION

HEAD START of Washington County serves the poorest children in our community. Many of these children go without the things that most of us take for granted: a hot meal and a warm hat and gloves for winter. Please join us as we collect gloves/mittens and hats for preschool-aged children, infants through 5 years old. The size they are most in need of this year is for both boys and girls ages 3-5. A donation of funds to be used toward the purchase of hats and gloves is also accepted. Look for the box at the ramp door. Head Start will be distributing the hats and gloves to the children in early December.

(PLEASE NOTE: Adult sizes cannot be used for Head Start, but the service team is collecting warm clothing for the homeless)



## OUR INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

- ◆ If the Snow Emergency Plan (link is <https://chart.maryland.gov/SnowEmergencyPlan/GetSnowEmergencyPlan>) is in effect at **7:00 am** on Sunday morning, both Sunday School and Worship Service are canceled.
- ◆ You may also tune into **WJEJ radio @ 1240AM or 104.3FM** for announcements, check our Facebook page, or our website at [www.jw-umc.org](http://www.jw-umc.org).
- ◆ If the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect at **5:00 pm** on a weeknight, all meetings/rehearsals are canceled.
- ◆ When schools are closed, the church office will be closed as well.

## GET READY FOR WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE!

Join us on December 4th to preview what's to come from this exciting program.

Starting January 8, 2025, John Wesley is launching a brand-new program to energize your Wednesday evenings!

Join us for:

Dinner: a free meal at 6:00 pm

Worship: contemporary praise, scripture and Holy Communion at 6:30 pm

Classes and Activities: beginning at 7:00 pm, choose from a variety of options, which will include Hebrew and Greek, the renowned Experiencing God course, Disciple studies, and even a board game club!

We look forward to making Wednesday nights a time of renewal, fellowship, and learning together at John Wesley United Methodist Church. Be sure to join us December 4th at 6:00 pm for our WNA Advent experience!



## A NOTE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Thank you to everyone who provides financial gifts for the ministries of John Wesley United Methodist Church. This year, December 29th will be the last time we have the opportunity to place offerings in the plate at Church to be reflected on your 2024 Giving Statement. Many of our congregants mail their contributions to the church office or give electronically through VANCO. It would be most helpful if any contributions you wish to have reflected on your 2024 Giving Statement are mailed early enough to reach the Church Office by Friday, December 27th. If you are giving electronically, please remember that there is a two-day transaction period, so these gifts as well should be made by Friday, December 27th so that they will post by Tuesday, December 31st for credit in this calendar year. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me (301-730-7997), and again, thank you for your continued financial support of the ministries of John Wesley United Methodist Church. May each of you and those you love have a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

~ Sheila Collins, Financial Secretary



## A NOTE FROM THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE

### Freezer Alert

JW Kitchen Committee is asking that anyone who has any kind of food in the kitchen freezer to either mark it or remove it by December 31 so the freezer may be cleaned out. We will be cleaning out the freezer sometime during the month of January. Any food not removed or clearly identified by December 31 will be thrown out. Any questions or concerns on this request, contact Greg or Barb Hoover, Kitchen Committee Chair, at 301-797-5157 or [bhoov72@aol.com](mailto:bhoov72@aol.com).

Thank you.

Greg Hoover  
Kitchen Committee Chair



## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 15, 2023

at the 10:30 worship service

### “Our Christmas YES”

All are invited to this surprising telling of the Christmas story that was written, produced and performed by our youth of John Wesley!



- 1st: Gloria Donat
- 2nd: James Snurr
- 3rd: Michel Pujazon
- 4th: Jack Mesner
- 5th: Tracy Morgan  
Histon Tolbert
- 6th: Ben Guessford
- 10th: Shayla Morgan
- 11th: Carol Behan
- 13th: Fred O'Neal
- 14th: Martin O'Connor
- 15th: Evelyn Donley
- 17th: Lisa Fennel
- 18th: Owen Mesner  
Krista Wagner  
Jill Will
- 19th: Michael Rowan
- 20th: Wendy Chapin  
Joanna Suddueth

- 23rd Tina Snurr  
Christopher Stone
- 24th: Gregory Eckard  
Trumer Wagner
- 25th: Scott Brandt  
Marilyn Galley  
Pat Hansford  
Jonathan Kresge
- 30th: Bob Bell



- 22nd: John & Carole Keyser
- 23rd: Mark & Susan Saunders
- 26th: Jeremy & Lori Baughman
- 27th: Donald & Patricia Eckard  
Charles & Cheryl Strong

*(If your birthday or anniversary is this month and does not appear on this list or appears incorrectly, please call the church office or email us at [jwumcmd@yahoo.com](mailto:jwumcmd@yahoo.com) and let us know. Thank you!)*

## WESLEYAN CLASS SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Wesleyan Class meets at 9:00 on Sunday morning in the Wesleyan Room. We have a short devotion, a prayer and two hymns. We are currently using the Cokesbury Adult Bible Studies curriculum for our lessons. As we are getting ready to move into the winter quarter, we would like to share an excerpt from the Student book.

*As we begin this season of Advent, we do so with a sense of anticipation, longing, and wonder. As children, we seemed to wait for Advent forever. But once it arrived, the church was immediately filled with all the symbols of the season.*

*As we move through this season together, our lessons will in some ways connect with the candles on the Advent wreath. We will first focus on hope for the future, hope for something better, and hope for what God has in store for us. Then we will consider love, especially love of neighbor. How does God call us to love one another more fully, and how does God define love in the birth of God's son?*

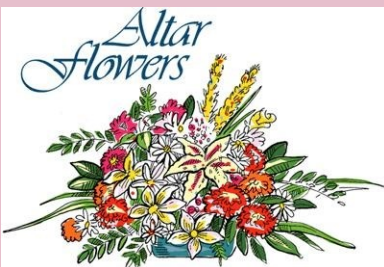
*Next, we will explore the joy that isn't defined by temporary happiness or emotion but comes from the fulfillment of a promise. As we light the peace candle, we will consider what it means for us to confess Jesus as the Prince of Peace who came for all. Finally, with the Christ candle, we will celebrate the birth of our Savior, the Savior for all.*

*During Advent, we are reminded that there was a time when the hope of the Messiah seemed like a faraway promise that would never be fulfilled. Today, we may be included to miss this message or take it for granted. This series of lessons inspires us to be compelled by faith and by a story that we know well, perhaps hearing it in new and different ways.*

*Allow this season of hope, love, joy, and peace to draw you to rest, finally at the foot of the manger. May this season bring new life, new understanding, and a stronger assurance of God's love for us.*

We invite, and would love for you to also come and join us on a Sunday morning. We also welcome anyone who would like to be a guest teacher. We have a Teacher's Guide and Concise Commentary book to accompany the Student book. Contact Barbara Hoover or the church office for more information.

Blessings to you



### Altar Flowers

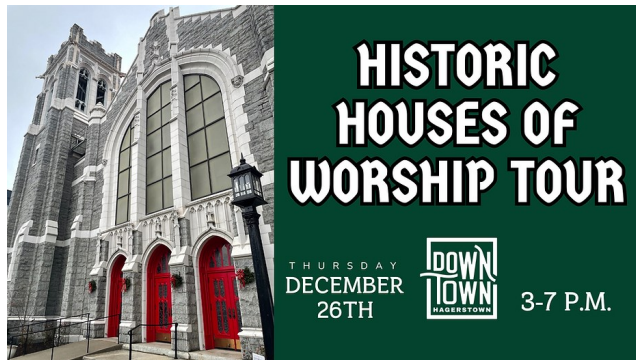
If you would like to place altar flowers on the altar for 2025, please reserve through the church office. The cost is \$60. Please send in Sunday desired, wording for bulletin, along with payment to Karen in the church office.

## HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP TOUR

John Wesley UMC will be participating in The Historic Hagerstown Houses of Worship Tour again this year. The tour will be held Thursday, December 26 from 3-7 pm (snow date December 27).

This is a wonderful opportunity to visit other houses of worship, see the interiors, learn about the architecture and ecumenical heritage, enjoy the beauty of their sanctuary, and just share the joy of the Christmas season with others.

We need people to be onsite to act as greeters and docents, sharing information about our church. If you can give an hour or two of your time to welcome visitors to our sanctuary on the 26th, please call the church office.

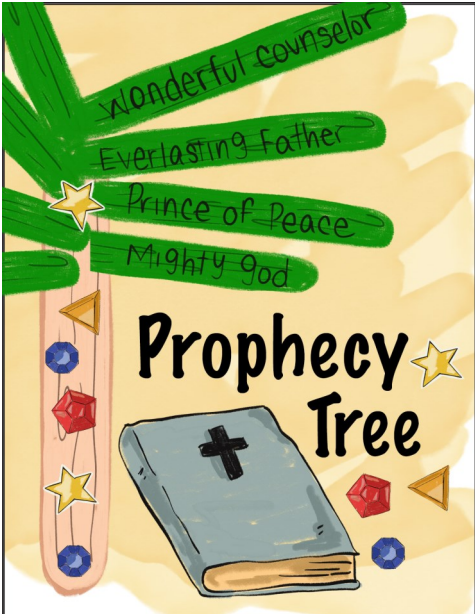


- 1st: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 1st: 10:30am, Advent 1 Worship
- 4th: 5:15pm, Choir Rehearsal
- 4th: 6:00pm, Wednesday Night Alive
- 4th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study #3
- 5th: 8:30am, Men's Breakfast
- 8th: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 8th: 10:00am, Coffee Fellowship
- 8th: 10:30am, Advent 2 Worship
- 11th: 5:15pm, Choir Rehearsal
- 11th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study #4
- 14th: 2:00pm, Christmas Supper Club
- 15th: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 15th: 10:30am, Advent 3 Worship/Pageant
- 16th: *Partner deadline*
- 17th: 6:00pm, Wilson Wright Circle
- 18th: 5:15pm, Choir Rehearsal
- 18th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study #5
- 21st: 2:00pm, Homeless Warming Night
- 22nd: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 22nd: 10:30am, Advent 4 Worship
- 24th: 7:00pm, Christmas Eve Service
- 25th: Church Office Closed
- 26th: 3:00pm, Houses of Worship Tour
- 29th: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 29th: 10:30am, Sunday Worship

The church office may experience some vacation time during the week in between Christmas and New Year's. Please be patient when calling the office.



# PUZZLE PAGE



## Prophecy Tree

Make this Christmas craft to display special names for Jesus.

### What you need:

- Large wooden craft stick
- Small green wooden craft sticks
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Bible
- Permanent marker
- Craft glue
- Optional: star stickers or craft jewels

### What you do:

1. Place the large stick on a table vertically, like a tree trunk.
2. Cut the green sticks into pieces that measure 4", 3½", 3" and 2½".
3. On each green stick, write a name for Jesus from Isaiah 9:6 — Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Write small or ask an adult for help.)
4. Use a dot of glue to attach each green stick to the large stick, like tree branches.
5. Decorate your Christmas tree with stickers or jewels.



## CLUES ABOUT CHRISTMAS

The Old Testament contains many details about Jesus' birth. Can you uncover what Isaiah prophesied?

Directions: Use the code to write the letters and complete Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	!	@	#	\$

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
%	^	&	*	(	)	-	?	>	<	:	;	{

For to us a 3 8 9 # 4 is 2 ^ ( %, to us a ) ^ %

is 7 9 > 5 %, and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful 3 ^ ? % ) 5 # ^ (

\$ 9 7 8 - ; God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the

greatness of his government and & 5 1 3 5 there will be no 5 % 4.

He will reign on David's - 8 ( ^ % 5 and over his @ 9 % 7 4 ^ \$,

establishing and upholding it with ! ? ) - 9 3 5 and righteousness

from that time on and 6 ^ ( 5 > 5 (. Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV

# JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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jwumcmd@yahoo.com

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## DECEMBER 2024 *PARTNER*



**TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET.**

*Matthew 1:22, ESV*