

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

NOVEMBER 26, 2017

**“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS.
MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY!”**

November 26 thru December 3, 2017

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun **Hanging of the Christmas Greens**
8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Traditional Worship
11:30 am Christmas Pageant Practice
12:30 am DECORATE THE CHURCH
2:00 pm JMM @ Med. Meadows
Sing-a-long
7:00 pm JMM @ WRMC

Mon 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study

Tues

Wed 10:30 am Quilters

Thurs 7:00 pm Congregational Council

Fri

Sat 9:00 am Choir Rehearsal
9:30 am Gathering Band

Sun **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
9:15 am Choir Practice
10:30 am Traditional Worship
11:30 am Christmas Pageant Practice
1:30 pm **Hunger Outreach Meeting**
2:00 pm JMM @ Evergreen
4:00 pm **All Church Advent Family
Fun Night**

Worship Highlights: 8:15, 9:00 & 10:30 am

Scripture - Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 and
Matthew 25:31-46

Sermon: *"Sheep and Goats"* – Rev. Luke Lindon

Altar Flowers: The altar flowers are given by Holly and Gary Hallman in celebration of their Anniversary.

ADVENT FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Sunday, December 3rd at 4:00 pm

Does good food, fellowship, Christmas music and fun sound good to you? Then you will want to be sure to come to Advent Family Fun Night on Sunday, December 4th at 4:00. The evening will consist of crafts and activities to help kick off the season of Advent. We will also enjoy a pizza dinner together. The cost of the dinner will be \$3 per person. Help us kick off the season of Advent and get into the holiday spirit. If you would like to attend, please sign up outside of Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there!

ADVENT READERS NEEDED...

Would you like to help out in worship during advent? We are looking for families or individuals to light the Advent candles and do a short reading.

We need volunteers for all 3 services of worship for 12/3, 12/10, 12/17 and only **1 family or individual for a single service on December 24th at 10:00 am**. Please see the signup sheets in the East Room, Fellowship Hall or near the Chapel.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

November 26th at 12:30 pm

Please come and help decorate the church for the Advent season.

A "NOISY" THANK YOU

The Hunger Mission Outreach Ministry would like to thank you all for your kind donations to our "noisy" offering last Sunday. Thanks to your generosity we were able to collect an additional \$107.40 to add to our Coin Jar Collections for the seniors of our community!

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED AT 9:45 a.m.
ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH**

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF
A STAFF RETREAT / PLANNING DAY**

**WE WILL RE-OPEN AS USUAL, ON FRIDAY DECEMBER
8TH AT 9:00 a.m.**

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

- ***November 26** – Christmas Pageant Practice
11:30 am
- ***Dec. 3** – Christmas Pageant Practice 11:30 am
- ***Dec. 3** – Advent Family Fun Night 4:00 pm
- ***Dec. 10** – Christmas Pageant Practice 11:30 am
- ***Dec. 10** – Confirmation 3:00-4:30
- ***Dec. 15** – Dress Rehearsal for Christmas
Pageant 6:00
- ***Dec. 17** - Christmas Pageant Practice 11:30 am
- ***Dec. 17** – Youth Group Christmas Parties
- ***Dec. 24** – NO F.I.S.H – Merry Christmas!
- ***Dec. 31** – NO F.I.S.H. – Happy New Year!

WELCOME AREA CHRISTMAS TREE

Once again, our welcome area will be graced by a 10' pre-lit Christmas tree. Like last year, we will trim it with simple ribbon and angel ornaments contributed by the families in our congregation. If you would like to contribute an angel, they can be handmade, a family heirloom, or thoughtfully selected from a store. There will be a collection box in the library where you can place your ornament and a list to write your name, description, and if the ornament is in honor or memory of a loved one. Angels will be added to the tree prior to each Advent Sunday. We will carefully store these angels as we take down the Christmas decorations until next year.

SERMON COPIES

Transcripts of the sermon will be available Sunday mornings in the East Room for those who are hard of hearing. Please only take one to follow along during the services. Sermons will continue to be available Monday morning for general distribution.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS GATHERING

Thursday, December 14th from 12:30 – 2:00pm

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the Christmas Gathering. We will meet in the East Room for light refreshments and fellowship. At 1:30 pm, we will be entertained by our own Hobby Horse Preschool students in Fellowship Hall.

There will be sign-up sheets outside Fellowship Hall. Let's hope the weather is good and many of you will be able to attend. If you have questions, please contact Beth Hari (330-725-3630) or Becky Weber (330-725-8545).

ALTAR FLOWERS

The 2018 Flower Chart is now hanging on the bulletin board in the East Room hallway. Please sign up to sponsor the Altar Flowers. This is a wonderful way to honor or remember someone, or to celebrate a special occasion.

Please fill in your name and write "church" or "self" to let us know if you would like the church to order the flowers for you or if you will be ordering them yourself. The cost of the flowers ordered through the church office is \$22.50.

Also, please write what you would like printed in the Messenger and if you want to claim your flowers after the 10:30 service.

POINSETTIA ORDERS

It's time to order your beautiful poinsettia again! You may donate a poinsettia to decorate the Sanctuary, East Room and Fellowship Hall for Christmas services and claim it afterward, or, you may donate a poinsettia to be delivered by the Flower Committee to a shut-in to be enjoyed before the holiday. The cost is \$8.50. **Deadline for ordering is December 4th.**

Please fill out a green poinsettia order sheet (found in the East Room and outside of Fellowship Hall) and turn it in to the offering plate or the church office.

GIFT CARDS

A limited supply of \$10 Panera, Chipotle and Starbucks cards are available for purchase. There are also a few \$25 Speedway gas cards available, as well. Please contact Kelly in the church office to purchase these cards. Remember, this is a great way to support our youth with your normal holiday spending! Other cards are available for groceries, gasoline, video rentals, home repairs, clothing and gift items. **The last order date before Christmas will be Monday, December 11th by 10:00 am.**

CHRIST TREE

The Christ Tree is now up by the elevator. Please consider taking an ornament from the tree and purchasing the item found on the back of it. Bring your **unwrapped** item back to the church and place it under the tree. These items will then be given to Community Services. All donations are needed by December 3rd so they can be distributed for Christmas. Help share the true meaning of Christmas with those in need in our area this holiday season.

ENDOWMENT FUND

Just a reminder to the church family that the Endowment Fund Committee is accepting funding requests for 2018. The application is available in the church office and on the East Room info table. The deadline is December 15, 2017. Last year, the Fund made five allocations to underwrite expenses for items outside the Operating Budget. Questions? Contact Jane Langol at 330-813-1367.

LIBRARY SHOP AND DROP

The Hunger Mission Team is reaching out to children in our community who need a snack at the library after school. There is financial support for this mission. All we need you to do is shop for snacks and drop them at the Medina Library. If you would like more information or would like to sign up to help, please contact Maureen Walker at Rini72@zoominternet.net.

A PROGRAM OF CAROLS

The Chancel Choir will be presenting a Program of Carols on December 10th. We hope you will join us to hear some familiar carols with interesting arrangements. We are sure that it will get you into the holiday spirit.

COOKING FOR CUPS

The Hunger Team provides a warm cooked lunch at Cups Café for the 60-80 guests the first Monday each month. We are **looking for additional cooks** for this mission. It is a wonderful opportunity to provide a meal to those less fortunate in our community...and add a new recipe to your collection! If cooking will not fit into your schedule, we also provide Cups with fruit (apples, oranges & bananas). A sign-up sheet can be found on a table near the kitchen or contact Linda Turek, Becky Weber, Beth Hari or Lynn Leckie for more details. **Thanks to all** who have participated in this community mission either in our monthly warm lunch or with your individual donations.

A NOTE OF THANKS AND AN INVITATION FROM HARRY BUCH AND PAM BRANSCOME

We are grateful for the many ways in which folks of this congregation reached out to our mother (and mother-in-law), Dolores Buch during her time in Medina. When she arrived here two years ago, she was a person in great need of life-giving relationships. You, dear friends, were instrumental in helping her make the happy journey from an increasingly-isolated existence into a whole new world of friends, experiences and spiritual stimulation which helped sustain her until her peaceful death on October 12th. We conclude our thank-you with an invitation for members of this congregation to participate in a Memorial Service for Dolores, to be held on Saturday, December 9th at 1:00 pm in the Sanctuary, with a reception afterwards.

GOLF OUTING RESULTS

On October 1st our church members and friends gathered to participate in our 4th Annual Bicentennial Golf Outing and Fundraiser.

It was a beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon and a grand time was had by all. Twenty-eight participated in golf and many gathered in the evening for dinner and a chance to win one of the beautiful baskets assembled by so many of our church teams, members and friends. The fundraiser was successful in raising \$5,500!

Thank you to all who participated in golf, dinner, donated basket raffle items, silent auction items, hole sponsors, bake goods, ticket purchasers, and worker bees!! Without your help and gifts we could not be successful.

\$2,000 will be added to the fund to hire a keyboard/music coordinator for our 9:00 am Gathering Service and \$3,500 will be placed in the "Building for the Next 100 Years Fund" to be used as needed.

Thank you for your continued support for this event and the life of our Church on the Square.

Blessings, Arnold and Cheri Ingraham

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

It's that time of year again! Practices will begin for the annual Children's Christmas Program. We will have rehearsals immediately following the 10:30 service today, Sunday, November 26th, Sunday, December 3rd and Sunday, December 10th. Dress rehearsal will be Friday, December 15th at 6:00 pm. The program will be performed by our children and youth on Sunday, December 17th at the 10:30 am worship service. Make sure to mark your calendars now!

The prayer Jesus taught us starts with a word filled with meaning - Abba. It's usually translated as "Father." Jesus does not tell us to address God as "LORD" (or YHWH/Jehovah), though he is. We aren't told to call God "Creator," although he certainly is. We aren't told to pray to God as judge, although he definitely is that, too. Jesus doesn't tell us to put on our theological thinking hat and call God the "Eternal Self-existing one", although he is that, too. He says, "Abba". "Abba" is hard to translate. "Father" is not intimate enough. "Daddy" is closer, but it may not be reverent and warm enough. The female counterpart for the word is an equally warm, "Imma". "Abba" and "Imma" - beautiful, warm, tender and loving words!

But why did Jesus tell us to pray to our "Abba?"

Maybe it is part of God's design and desire for you and me. From the very beginning, the Bible teaches us that God's creative work was done in very close proximity to the earth, with God's spirit brooding on the ancient waters. During the Exodus, God's presence was near his people. In Israel and Judah, the temple was in the heart of the nation. Later, God came closer still.

Jesus himself, we know, is Emmanuel - God with us. Finally, Jesus sends his Holy Spirit into the very hearts of his followers. How intimate!

Clearly, God does not wish to be far off. God is very close, and he wants to be closer still. He wants us to know him and commune with him as our "Abba."

Is that our experience? Is that our desire? Do we want to draw near to our "Abba," or do we want to give him a quick nod in the hope that he will leave us be so that we can get on with our diversions? Is there room for Abba in our lives?

If not, are we satisfied with the alternatives we pursue, or like Augustine do we confess, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee."?

It's just something to think about next time we begin to say the "Lord's Prayer."

The deadline for submission of articles for NEXT Sunday's *Messenger* is this Sunday at 11:30 am.

Submit articles to: office@uccmedina.org Or: messenger@uccmedina.org

*****CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm MONDAY THRU FRIDAY*****