

Service Opportunities

Acolyte Coordinators - In January, Sarah Johnson and Jinger Williams will be stepping down as Acolyte Coordinators and we are looking for someone interested in teaching and assisting our children and youth to be part of Sunday Worship. If you are interested in working with young people and being part of this service that fosters their journey with Christ please contact Brenda Sizer at 938-8875 or brendasizer@yahoo.com.

White Gifts - Please consider wrapping men's socks, hats and gloves in white tissue paper to place under the Chrismon tree. These "white gifts" will be distributed to homeless men in the Richmond area. If you have any questions, contact Donna Talbot at 379-3132.

Small Groups and Meetings

Wednesday Bible Study - The next Bible study will begin January 3 at 11 am or 6:30 pm. The title of our study will be *Epic of Eden: Isaiah* by Sandra Richter. The Book of Isaiah is often called "the fifth gospel" because it has more to teach us about Israel's coming Messiah than any other source. Isaiah was courageous, uncompromising, and brilliant in declaring that "the year of the LORD" had come and God's people needed to either step up, or stand down. Dr. Sandra Richter will guide us through this amazing study and proclamation of Jesus Christ, which Isaiah issued nearly 700 years before Christ's birth. We will seek how to apply the message of this great champion of our faith to our lives today. Visit the church's webpage to sign up.

Thursday Night Small Group: *The Problem of Pain*, by C.S. Lewis - Join Deanna and John Kim beginning Thursday, January 18 to discuss C.S. Lewis' powerful *The Problem of Pain*. Lewis asks the universal question, "Why would an all-loving, all-knowing God allow people to experience pain and suffering." We will meet Thursday nights at 7 pm in our home for this relaxed and informal 10 session study. Please contact us at kirnva@gmail.com or 378-5772 for more information. We'd love to have you!

Around Mt. Pisgah

Christmas Eve Offering - We all witnessed the devastation caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria this fall. Our Christmas Eve offering will go to support those who are still recovering. If you would like to help, please make your gift to "Mt. Pisgah" and put "storms" in the memo section. If you'd like to text your donation, please text to 804-294-3493. In the message portion of the text message, include the amount, space one time, then type "christeve". Vanco (the company we work with for the give+text) will then text you back to enter your credit card number. Thank you for your generosity. Offerings intended for Mt. Pisgah's regular ministry or mortgage & maintenance funds should be marked clearly as to their purpose.

Staff Christmas Gift - Our staff have shared their talents and worked very hard to lead and support the ministries that have allowed us to accomplish so much in 2017. We would like to express our appreciation for their leadership. As is tradition, we are requesting a special monetary contribution for Christmas gifts for the church staff. If you would like to take part, please write your check to Mt. Pisgah UMC and identify your gift as "Staff Christmas Gift" on the memo line of the check. The contributions should be made on or before Sunday, December 24.

The pictorial directories have arrived and are available for pick-up by those who had photography sessions in September and October. Directories are labeled with your names and will be available in the Gathering Room until the end of January. Our church office will have some extra directories available to those who were not photographed by LifeTouch, and they are available for \$10 per directory. Should you like a copy, please see William Marriott in the church office Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm.

CFLC Lighting Change - With the recent change to LED lights in the CFLC, we ask you to use the LED bulbs to save energy. Please use the lights with the pushbutton (smaller lights) if they are bright enough. The ones using the special key (big lights) use ten times the energy. If you need the extra light then the special keyed lights can be used. Please don't use both sets at the same time for very long. Thanks for your cooperation, the Trustees.

Prayer Concerns: Prayer request cards are in the pew racks and Gathering Room. All information is confidential. Please keep these church members in your prayers.

Joni Baker
Dave Barnes
Kaila Blackburn
Nelson Bowen
Dave Browning
Betty Dye
Virginia Ewing
Bill Fortner
Janet Friedline
Elizabeth Gundlach
Robin Hoerber

Warren Hoerber
Cade Holliday
Red Howson
Bob Lucas
Don Kennedy
Mary Helen Kennedy
Sarah Reed
Marie Strack
Diane Treadway
Millie Webb

Military Members

Spec Austin K. Brown, Army, Overseas
Christopher Durand, Army, Fort Campbell
Erin McNeill Durand, Army, Fort Campbell
Col. Stephanie K. Gerber, Army
Sgt. Benjamin Gregg, Army, Schofield Barracks
Sgt. Trevor Jerome, Marines, RS Albany
Pvt. Nathaniel Johnson, Army, Fort Jackson
Chp. Donald Smith, Army, Germany
Sgt. James D. Webb, Army, Fort Lee
Spec Jason Zinn, Army, Fort Bragg



The Chancel flowers are given to the glory of God and in honor of our family, Heather and Christopher Strack and Linda Gaudsmith, by Marie and George Strack.

Welcome To Mt. Pisgah United Methodist Church December 24, 2017 4th Sunday of Advent



We are glad to have you worship with us today. We invite you to make Mt. Pisgah UMC your church home. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance.

Nursery Care is available for children age 5 and younger from 9:15 am until 12:15 pm. The church nursery is located in rooms 101 & 103 in the Education building.

Blessing Bags are available in the Narthex for young children to use during worship. When the worship service has concluded, please leave the bag and its contents in the bin in the Narthex.

Hearing Assistance Devices are available in the Narthex. Please see an usher if you would like to use one of these devices.

Large Print Hymnals are available. Please see an usher if you would like to use one of these.

Enjoy our furnishings and help us keep them clean. Please do not bring food or drinks into the Sanctuary; and please, turn off or silence your cell phones.

Our Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Purpose Statement: To celebrate LIFE.

Love God
Invite others
Fellowship together
Engage the community



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Telephone:(804) 794-5856 - Facsimile:(804) 379-3970
Email: office@mtpisgahva.org - Website: www.mtpisgahva.org
Preschool: (804) 794-1720, preschool@mtpisgahva.org
Rev. Dr. Robert E. Cooper, *Lead Pastor*
Zeb Roberts, *Director of Traditional Music and Worship Arts*

Gathering for Worship

Welcome

Prelude

The Lord is My Shepherd

arr. Hustad

* Call to Worship

Leader: God's chosen people often turned away from the law and were less than faithful, yet, they were still God's chosen people.

People: Long before Christ was born, God made a promise to King David that his throne would be established forever through God's faithful love.

Leader: On the night Christ came to earth, that promise was fulfilled. Out of the house of David the Savior arose, a Savior given to redeem the whole world.

People: We rejoice! God's love for us truly does endure forever, and in remembrance of God's mighty acts through Jesus Christ we light the candle of love. *(The fourth candle is lit.)*

All: Lord God, help us always to remember that we are redeemed through our belief in your Son. No matter how far we stray, you're always right there waiting for us, loving us. We rejoice in your steadfast love for all the people of the world, fulfilled in the birth of your Son, Jesus. Amen

* Hymn No. 217

Away in a Manger

* We Affirm Our Faith *The Nicene Creed*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

* The Christian Greeting

We Hear God's Word Proclaimed

A Time of Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. AMEN.

Anthem *One Small Babe* Althouse

Scripture p. 57** *Luke 1:46-55*

Children's Moment

* Hymn No. 246 *Joy to the World*

Message *We Need to Rejoice* Bob Cooper

Prayer of Confession

Leader: Compassionate, Forgiving God, we trespass on your mercy and take your favor for granted.

People: **We think only of ourselves.**

Leader: We forget the lessons of those who came before us, and ignore our responsibility to those who will follow us.

People: **We grow proud and seek power.**

Leader: We do not know how our actions distance us from you. We do not recognize our hunger for what it is, or where it leads us.

People: **We grow faint. Bring us home to you, Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts

Offertory *Sheep May Safely Graze* Bach

* Offering Response No. 94 *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

* Prayer of Thanksgiving

We Go Forth

* Hymn No. 234 (v 1,2,3,6) *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

* Dismissal and Benediction

Postlude *O Come All Ye Faithful* arr. Hofland

**Please stand as you are able*

*** New Testament page number in the pew Bibles*

Numbers 1-904 are found in the red United Methodist Hymnal

Numbers 2001 and above are found in the black The Faith We Sing Hymnal

Rejoice! The Lord Has Done Great Things

The song of Mary in Luke 1:46-55 (called the Magnificat-the first word in the Latin version) first reveals Mary's personal joy and praise to God for choosing her, in her lowly state, to be the mother of the long-awaited Redeemer of Israel. After receiving this news and having God's presence within her confirmed by her cousin Elizabeth, she bursts forth with this song of praise for the wonderful thing God is doing for her in the present, but also remembering and rejoicing in the faithfulness of God to His people in the past--performing mighty acts, demonstrating repeatedly His steadfast devotion to the children of Abraham, despite their disobedience and disappointing behavior. Perhaps Mary was thinking of Hannah, who faithfully and fervently prayed for a child after years of unfulfilled anticipation. When God blessed her with a son, she rejoiced similarly (1Sam 2:1-5) and dedicated his life to the Lord. This child, the prophet Samuel, anointed David, Jesus' ancestor, as God's choice to become Israel's King. Bishop Fulton Sheen described Mary as being "a magnifying glass that intensifies our love of her Son." Mary wants us to focus on what God has done and what God is doing in delivering the promised Messiah. Through this Son of Mary, we too have received great things. As Christ's followers, we carry Him in our hearts, and He speaks to us through the Holy Spirit. As we rejoice in the birth of the Savior, we still await, as Mary did, the time when all things will be made right--when justice will come into this unjust world, peace to this warring world, and relief and release for the lowly, hungry and oppressed. Like Mary, we magnify God by rejoicing in Him--being happy in the mercy, grace and love of God. What God wants us to do is to love this world and its people and, through our actions, remind them of God's love until He comes to take us home. Isaiah's vision tells us "only the redeemed will walk there, and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion (New Jerusalem) with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." (Isa 35:9-10) The true joy of the Christmas season is found in the marvelous birth of Jesus, knowing God hasn't forgotten us, that He's with us personally--past, present and future--for every heartbeat and heartache.

Marty Hines

Worship at MPUMC Today - The word "rejoice" is not a word we use a lot. The dictionary defines it as "to feel joy or great delight." The Bible encourages us to rejoice (Philippians 4:4). This time of year we seem to feel more stress than joy. What can we gain this Advent Season by rejoicing?

Next Sunday - We believe we are not alone. In fact, we believe the presence of Jesus Christ is among us. As we enter a new year, we can move forward in hope. We are connected to the Source.



The scripture for next Sunday is shown here with its QR Code. Scripture for December 31, 2017 John 15:1-11

This Week At Mt. Pisgah

Who are you going to Invite, Pick up and Bring to church?

Sunday, December 24

10:00 am Combined Worship - Sanctuary
5:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary
8:00 pm Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary
11:00 pm Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary

Monday, December 25 - Merry Christmas

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, December 26

Church Office Closed

Wednesday, December 27

7:30 pm ARISE Rehearsal - CFLC

Thursday, December 28

8:00 pm NA Meeting - JB Hall

Friday, December 29

10:00 am Guitars 4 Vets - JB Hall
10:30 am Prayer Group - Clair Cosby's Home
5:30 pm Drama Kids - 107/109

Upcoming Events

12/31 One Service at 10:00 am
1/3 Wednesday Bible Study Begins
1/13 Upward Basketball Games Begin
1/14 Missions 'til Midnight
1/18 Thursday Night Small Group Begins
1/28 Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, December 31

On Sunday, December 31, we will have one worship service at 10 am in the Sanctuary. Nursery will not be available, we encourage families to worship together.

The Mission Box Offering for December will be given to United Methodist Family Services (UMFS) in Richmond.

UMFS offers help and hope to children and families in many ways. Through the treatment foster care program, foster parents and children find one another and often go on to become adoptive families. Through the residential treatment programs at the Child & Family Healing Center and Leland House, girls and boys overcome trauma and heal. Through Charterhouse School, students with special needs and autism find help and success and through Project LIFE, teens aging out of foster care find new skills and a voice. Please give generously to UMFS during this season of family, love, and giving. This year's offering will be used to supplement the food backpack program for day students at the Charterhouse School.

Our Stewardship of Gifts and Presence—December 17, 2017

Attendance	8:15	10:45	11:00	Total
	72	37	202	311

Defying Gravity Update - As of December 17, we have received \$546,394 from 153 families for the Ministry Fund and \$193,174 from 122 families for the Mortgage & Maintenance Fund. Thank you to those who have pledged; we appreciate your generosity. If you have not pledged yet, you still can. Pledge cards are located in the pew racks and in the Gathering Room (on the window ledge). We hope that all families will pledge so we can partner with God to accomplish great things for his glory. We have been blessed by a generous God so we can be a blessing to others.



QR code for online giving