

**Welcome To
Mt. Pisgah United Methodist Church
December 3, 2017
1st Sunday of Advent**

Service Opportunities

Christmas Gifts - Thank you to everyone who adopted a family for Christmas from Hopkins Elementary School. The gifts need to be returned to the Gathering Room next Sunday by 2 pm. This is a special way to show God's love. If you have any questions please contact Kathy Epperson, kathyne2010@gmail.com or 794-6612.

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.

Small Groups and Meetings

Church Conference - There will be a Church Conference today at 12:15 pm in the CFLC. We will be voting on our Nominations Report, budgetary items, and other business.

Wednesday Bible Study - The next bible study will be 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.

Around Mt. Pisgah

Richmond Concert Band Set Up - The Richmond Concert Band will present a free Christmas Concert in the CFLC on Tuesday, December 5, at 7 pm. We are seeking a few volunteers to help set up the CFLC for this popular community event. Set up will begin at 4 pm. Please contact William Marriott in the church office to volunteer.

Concert Refreshments - Refreshments will be served after the Richmond Band Concert. If you can make or bring cookies or brownies or help with clean-up, please visit the sign-up genius on our website or contact the church office. Thank you!

Children's Nativity Play will take place as part of the 5 pm Family Christmas Eve service (12/24). We need children in elementary grades to present the Christmas story (no speaking required). There will be a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 16 (time TBD). Sign up list is located on Kay's office door (Room 208 upstairs) or you may speak to Kay Adams directly if you are interested.

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 November/December newsletter can be found on the website. Printed copies are located in the Narthex, CFLC Kiosk, and Gathering Room.

Want to know more about what is going on at Mt. Pisgah? Weekly e-mails are sent with information about upcoming events and mission opportunities. To be added to the distribution list, please contact William Marriott in the church office at office@mtpisgahva.org.

Altar Flowers - The 2017 flower signup sheet is located in the Narthex. We currently have several dates left in December. Contact Marie Strack at 379-1281 for more information.

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 by an anonymous donor.



Gathering for Worship

Welcome

Prelude

* Call to Worship

Leader: We are a people accustomed to waiting. Waiting in line. Waiting in traffic. Waiting for that call.

People: **But are we waiting for the right things this December? Are we waiting for the Lord?**

Leader: Advent is a season of waiting, but this year let it also be a season of giving.

People: **Long ago, God saw his children had a great need for a savior, but even now there's a need for Christ to come down into our lives.**

Leader: As we wait for Christ to be revealed to us again, let us not wait to do the good Christ has called us to do.

People: **Today we light the first candle of Advent, for as the Lord has blessed us with so many gifts, we are called to offer hope and to be blessings to others. (A candle is lit)**

All: **Lord God, reveal yourself to us again. Help us this Advent season to focus on your son Jesus, who came not to be served, but to serve. Help us not to serve ourselves this December, but to serve you as we serve others. Amen.**

* Hymn No. 196

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

* We Affirm Our Faith

The Nicene Creed
(please see screen)

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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Preschool: (804) 794-1720, preschool@mtpisgahva.org
Rev. Dr. Robert E. Cooper, *Lead Pastor*
Zeb Roberts, *Director of Traditional Music and Worship Arts*

Proclamation and Response

Anthem *Beautiful Star of Bethlehem* arr. Ryan
 Scripture NT p. 59** *Luke 2:22-38*
 Children's Moment 11:00
 * Hymn No. 218 *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*
 Message *We Need to Wait* Bob Cooper
 We Make our Confession

It is never easy for us to confess our sins, waiting God. There are the hurts we have caused to our families and friends, which we would like to forget. There are those we believe are impossible to love, and so we don't try. There are people who live on the edge of our society, and we ignore their cries for help. Forgive us, God who comes near to us. When we have lost our way, show us yours. Lead us in humility down the streets of your kingdom. Teach us your truth, so we might be able to keep your word, revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

* The Peace
 Receiving our Tithes and Gifts
 Offertory
 * Offering Response No. 94 *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*
 * Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving and Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving No. 2257 B, C, D
 Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
 Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to the Lord
 Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.
 The Lord's Prayer
 Giving the Bread and the Cup
The serving team at the far left has gluten-free elements
 Prayer following Holy Communion

We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples. AMEN.

Sending Forth

* Hymn No. 211 (v1-4) *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
 * Dismissal and Benediction
 Postlude

**Please Stand as You Are Able*
***New Testament Page in the Pew Bibles*
No. 1-904 are found in the red United Methodist Hymnal
No. 2001 and above are found in the black The Faith We Sing Hymnal
 † † †

Hearing Assistance Devices, Large Print Bulletins and Large Print Hymnals are available. Please ask an Usher.

The Long-Awaited Jesus

The world was a very dark place for God's people at the time of Jesus' birth. In order to understand the importance to the Jews of the coming of Jesus--The Light, it's important to understand the status of the Jews in that world. They had endured a millennium-long Diaspora (dispersion) of their people, beginning with the Assyrian conquest and Babylonian exile and continuing through Persian, Greek and Roman domination, even after the return of a remnant Jewish population to the Promised Land. There they were still basically in exile--without a Jewish homeland--forced into allegiance to and taxation by Rome that often left them impoverished. After several revolts, Julius Caesar appointed Herod as king over the Galilean and Judean region in 63 BC, to assure control of the Jewish population, and, after Herod's death in 4 BC, his son, Herod Antipas, even more despotic than his father, was appointed by Caesar Augustus to succeed him in that region, and Roman governors, including Pilate, were eventually appointed under him to even more closely monitor the populace. The Jews, after this seemingly never-ending waiting period, looked ever more longingly for their deliverance, while enduring the political and religious conditions into which Jesus was born, as the Hope of God's people. It's understandable that they were awaiting the arrival of a powerful military/political leader, rather than a tiny baby born in relative obscurity. It would take time for Christ's light to shine into the rest of the world, but the Light of Hope, vested in the coming Savior, was on the horizon. Mark tells us of Isaiah's cry, "Prepare for God's arrival! Make the road straight and smooth, a highway fit for our God. Fill in the valleys, level off the hills, Smooth out the ruts, clear out the rocks." (Isa 40:3-5, The Message)--proclaimed again by John the Baptist. Preparing the way for the Lord--his first or second coming--means to create a favorable environment for the arrival of Christ on earth, and, further, to make it easy for Christ to come into and work within our lives. Our task is to remove all obstacles to welcoming this most precious gift of God into our hearts. The four Advent Sundays of "cheerful anticipation" will be accompanied by increasing light on our altar, signifying the entry of light into the world at Jesus' birth. Each week throughout Advent, that light will grow in brilliance as we move toward the incarnation of our Savior.

Marty Hines

Worship at MPUMC Today - The Bible says that if we wait upon the Lord, our strength will be renewed (Psalm 27:14). Waiting can be renewing. However, waiting is difficult. It doesn't come naturally. What can we gain this Advent Season by waiting?

Next Sunday - The Bible invites us to seek the Lord (Isaiah 55:6). Seeking requires us to allow the agenda to be set by others. They do not come to us, we come to them. What can we gain this Advent Season by seeking?



The scripture for next Sunday is shown here with its QR Code. Scripture for December 10, 2017 Matthew 2:1-12

This Week At Mt. Pisgah

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

Sunday, December 3

8:15 am Traditional Worship - Sanctuary
 9:15 am Fellowship Time - CFLC
 9:30 am Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 am Fellowship Time - CFLC
 10:45 am ARISE Worship - CFLC
 11:00 am Traditional Worship - Sanctuary
 12:00 pm Church Conference - CFLC
 3:00 pm Youth Choir - Music Room
 5:00 pm Youth Band - CFLC

Monday, December 4

9:00 am UMW Puppet Team Practice - 217 & 303
 10:30 am Caring and Sharing - Clair Cosby's Home
 6:30 pm Boy Scout Troop 897 - JB Hall
 6:30 pm Girl Scout Leaders - 107/109
 6:30 pm Trustees Branch - 214
 7:00 pm Chancel Choir - Music Room
 7:00 pm ARISE Design Team - 303

Tuesday, December 5

6:30 am Ecumenical Men's Prayer Breakfast - CFLC B, Kitchen
 10:30 am Kindermusik - 209
 6:15 pm Bear Den 8 - 107/109
 7:00 pm Boy Scout Troop 876 - JB Hall
 7:00 pm Richmond Concert Band Christmas Program - CFLC
 7:15 pm Nominations & Leadership Branch - 303

Wednesday, December 6

6:00 pm Carol Bells - Sanctuary
 6:00 pm Cherub Choir - 209
 6:00 pm Youth Bells - Music Room
 6:45 pm kidzJaM - 211
 6:45 pm ECHO (Small Group) - 301-302
 7:30 pm ARISE Rehearsal - CFLC
 7:30 pm Chancel Choir - Music Room

Thursday, December 7

10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry - 217
 1:00 pm Martha Circle - 107/109
 6:00 pm Den 2 Pack 876 - 214
 7:00 pm Chancel Bells - Music Room
 8:00 pm NA Meeting - JB Hall

Friday, December 8

10:00 am Guitars 4 Vets - JB Hall
 10:30 am Prayer Group - Clair Cosby's Home
 5:30 pm Drama Kids - 107/109
 6:30 pm Midlothian Ruritan Club - CFLC

Upcoming Events

12/10 Christmas Concert
 12/17 Youth Tacky Sweater Party
 12/23 Contemporary Christmas Celebration
 12/24 One service in the morning at 10:00 am
 12/24 Christmas Eve services at 5:00, 8:00, & 11:00 pm
 12/31 One service at 10:00 am

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—November 26, 2017

	8:15	10:45	11:00	Total
Attendance	70	42	141	253

Defying Gravity Update - As of November 26, we have received \$505,554 from 138 families for the Ministry Fund and \$172,774 from 109 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