



# FIRST WORD

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Volume 11, Issue 12  
December 2009

## God Comes to Us and We Come to God

We have just begun the season of advent at First United Methodist Church. Advent is a compound word made from the Latin words *ad* and *venire* which literally means "to come to." This is a season in which God "comes to us" by taking flesh in Jesus Christ. We read about this miracle, the incarnation, in the first chapter of the gospel of St. John. Advent is also a season when we "come to" God. Notice in Luke 2:15 how the shepherds said to one another "let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened". More visitors will probably attend our services on Christmas Eve than other times of the year. What would it look like if those with faith in Christ saw advent and Christmas as an opportunity to invite others to "come to" know Him? Helping others come to God is a wonderful way to put our faith into practice during this season. We can do that by inviting others to join

us for Christmas Eve and by showing everyone who visits hospitality. We can also do that by encouraging them to attend the many ministries we perform here in the name of Jesus.

As we all know, the culture often celebrates this season in absurd ways. At the very least, people are encouraged to over buy and over eat. If the past is any indication, the media will probably pick up a story about someone taking this holiday to a consumerist, secular extreme. Perhaps they will be hailed for their enthusiasm. As Christians, we should be more introspective. It isn't necessary for us to reject the culture outright because as John 3:16 states, "God so loved the world." It is, however, important for us to be inwardly and outwardly on a different path. Reason tells us that if we seek God we will find Him. When we "come to" know Him, we will be challenged to not

only love God, but also our fellow human beings (1 Cor. 13). We show love to our fellow human beings by performing acts of mercy and kindness during this season. If we are equipped and able, we can roll up our sleeves and take up the challenge of assisting CCAP with the Christmas distribution on December 21 and 22. We can also perform these acts by assisting the youth with their outreach through TOPS (Budget Motel). Or, we can give blood, sing carols at the Rose home, send a letter to a soldier, or use our own creativity to find ways to show Christian love during this time. All of these are things we can do to celebrate advent and Christmas in holy ways! They will help us be a light to the world during this season.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Will



*The virgin will be with  
child and will give  
birth to a son,  
and will call him  
Immanuel.  
Isaiah 7:14*



### Christmas and New Years Office Closings

The Staff Parish Relations committee has agreed that the church office will be closed on December 24, 25, 28, and 29<sup>th</sup>. It will also be closed December 31 and January 1. In case of emergency, please call the church office and listen to the instructions on the answering machine.

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## Gift Card Tree

Looking for a way to spread some Christmas joy this year? First Church is proud to sponsor a gift card giving tree again this year. We look forward to empowering as many less fortunate parents as possible with the opportunity to go out and purchase their very own gifts for their children.

Gift cards can be donated for any local store

(Walmart, Target, Apple Blossom Mall, etc.). For each card



you donate, we invite you to place one of the provided ornaments on the Giving Tree. Let this simple ornament be a symbol of light you

will bring into a family's life. It is our prayer that the tree will be bursting with ornaments. Gift card donations can be placed in the box provided. If you have any questions please contact the church office.



pew envelope at any time during the school year. Thank you for your generous support of First UM Church and it's missions.

## Christmas Offering

It has recently come to the attention of the Finance Committee that our Discovery Preschool is in need of some Scholarship funds for several students whose families are no longer able to afford their tuition. Because we like to keep children a priority during this blessed Advent Season, we

have decided to designate the Christmas offering to go toward scholarships for these Preschool students. If you would like to donate to this need, you can put your donation in the envelope marked Christmas Offering in your envelope book or you can designate Discovery Preschool Scholarship on your check or

**Finance Committee**

## Survey of the Bible

Beginning in January Rev. White and Bobby Dick will be teaching a survey of the New Testament course after the 3-F dinners from 6pm to 7pm in the church parlor. This class will cover all of the New Testament

books from Mark to Revelation. Participants are encouraged to use a paraphrase such as the Living Bible as they will be scanning the content of a variety of the New Testament books. Participants will be asked to

make a covenant in which they will promise to keep up with the reading that should take about an hour each week. Enroll in the class by calling the church office and speaking with Rev. White.



# Poinsettia Order Form



If you are interested in placing a poinsettia in the church, please complete the form below and either place it in the offering plate or mail it directly to the office. **ALL ORDERS MUST BE IN BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13<sup>th</sup>.**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias at \$11.50 each.



*Please make check payable to: FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH*

**Mark checks "for POINSETTIAS"**

IN HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

(How you would like your name to appear in print)

Total Amount Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE POINSETTIAS UNTIL AFTER THE 11 P.M. CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE.*



## Volunteers Needed!

### Volunteers Needed!

#### CCAP Community Christmas at First United Methodist Church

On Monday, December 21 & 22, representatives from CCAP, area volunteers, and members of First United Methodist Church will be hosting approximately 456 disadvantaged families from 8:30 a.m. until noon in the Fellowship Hall. This group of adults will be picking Christmas presents for approximately 1000 disadvantaged children from Winchester and Frederick County. Volunteers are needed in three categories: building supervision/hospitality (stationed around the church), runners (walking families through the line), and clean up (working with volunteers from CCAP to clean and secure the church property after the give-away is over).

This is an opportunity to be "salt and light" as Christians. Volunteers should prepare themselves to interact with people who are often frustrated because of their poverty. Persons interested in serving on December 21 and 22 are encouraged to participate in a "walk through" on Sunday, December 20 with Fran Ricketts after either of the two morning worship services.

Please sign up below and place in the basket in the back of the sanctuary.

On Monday, December 21, from 8:30 am till noon, I will serve in the following capacity:

\_\_\_\_\_ building supervision/hospitality

\_\_\_\_\_ runner (must be 18 or older)

\_\_\_\_\_ clean up

On Tuesday, December 22, from 8:30 am till noon, I will serve in the following capacity:

\_\_\_\_\_ building supervision/hospitality

\_\_\_\_\_ runner (must be 18 or older)

\_\_\_\_\_ clean up

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_



## December Youth News

### **First United Methodist Youth Mission Statement**

***"We are servants of Christ witnessing to His people through our words and actions as we grow in discipleship."***

*Dear Youth & Parent's,*

*During the month of December the youth ministry has a few dates booked for activities so please make note of those dates. But as you see we do not have any regular youth dates on Sunday evenings due to other church and family activities. May this be a season where you may spend some time reflecting on the real gift of the season, Jesus Christ. Also enjoy the other true gifts in our lives, your families and friends.*

*Blessings & Merry Christmas!*

### **Mary**

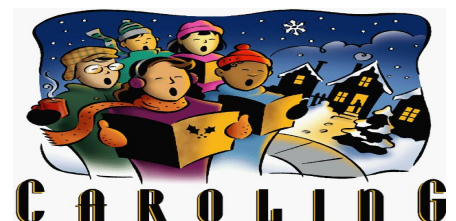


**Dec. 4th-5th-** Senior High Eagle Eyrie Retreat. We will leave the church at 2:30 on Friday and will return on Sunday around 2:30. Please bring money for two fast food meals. And bring snacks and drinks to share during the weekend with our group in the cabin during down time.

**Dec. 13th-** Adopted Families shopping and wrapping of gifts, we will go shopping here in Winchester for the children we have been working with during our "TOP" visits. Please be at the church by 3:30 and we will come back to the church and have turkey dinner together before the Children's Christmas pageant if you wish to stay. Monetary donations are needed for our "TOP" families, so please pledge your donation amount before we go shopping. Much thanks, this will help many needy families during the holidays and will make the holidays a bit more joyful and hopeful over the season.



**Dec. 20th-** Christmas Caroling at Rose Home from 4:30-6:30, afterwards we will have cookies and punch.





## December Youth News continued

**Dec. 21st-22nd**– Come out and help C-Cap give out their holiday gifts to families this year. Times will be posted in the bulletin. Also, I will have a sign up sheet on the youth bulletin board.



**No Worship Team on Wednesday throughout the month of December, we will start back up on January 6th.**



**Happy Birthday to the following individuals:**

**December 1st**

**Isabella Dickens-Bowman**

**December 4th**

**Bailey Disque**

**December 23rd**

**Tyler Dick**

**December 25th**

**Pastor Will**

## Need to get in touch with the Youth Director?

Mary Vorous  
252 McGuire Road  
Winchester, VA 22603  
Home: 678-4014  
Work: 662-3151  
Email address:  
mvorous@fumcwinchester.org

Feel free to call me if there is anything I can help with.  
Blessings,  
**Mary**





## December Church Calendar

### **Dec. 2**

4:00 pm Bulletin Deadline  
5:15 pm 3-F Dinner  
6:00 pm Hand Bell Choir  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

### **Dec. 3**

6:30 pm Financial Peace Univ.

### **Dec. 4**

2:30 pm Senior High Youth  
leave on Winter Retreat.

### **Dec. 5**

8:00 am United Methodist  
Men's Meeting

### **Dec. 6**

8:30 am Worship Service  
**(Second Sunday of Advent)**  
9:45 am Sunday School  
9:45 am Children's Choir  
11:00 am Worship Service  
4:30 pm Christmas Pageant  
Practice

**No Evening Youth**

### **Dec. 7**

7:00 pm Church Council

### **Dec. 9**

4:00 pm Bulletin Deadline  
5:15 pm 3-F Dinner  
6:00 pm Hand Bell Choir  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir  
8:00 pm Laity Team Meeting

### **Dec. 11**

6:30 pm Preschool Christmas  
Program

### **Dec. 12**

7:00 am Pancake Breakfast  
10:00 am Christmas Pageant  
Dress Rehearsal

### **Dec. 13**

8:30 am Worship Service  
**(Third Sunday of Advent)**  
9:45 am Sunday School  
9:45 am Children's Choir  
11:00 am Worship Service  
3:30 pm Youth shopping for  
adopted families.  
4:30 pm Turkey Dinner  
7:00 pm Christmas Pageant

### **Dec. 14**

4:00 pm Newsletter Deadline  
6:45 pm Trustee meeting  
7:00 pm Finance Meeting

### **Dec. 16**

10:30 am J.O.Y.S  
4:00 pm Bulletin Deadline  
5:15 pm 3-F Dinner  
6:00 pm Hand Bell Choir  
6:00 pm 3-F Planning Meeting  
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

### **Dec. 17**

8:00 am CCAP Setting up.

### **Dec. 18**

8:00 am CCAP Setting up.  
4:00 pm Newsletter Deadline

### **Dec. 19**

8:00 am CCAP Setting up.

### **Dec. 20**

CCAP Setting up.  
8:30 am Worship Service  
**(Fourth Sunday of Advent)**  
9:45 am Sunday School  
9:45 am Children's Choir  
11:00 am Worship Service

**No Evening Youth**

### **Dec. 21**

8:00 am CCAP Christmas Give-  
away.

### **Dec. 22**

8:00 am CCAP Christmas Give-  
away.  
4:00 pm Bulletin Deadline

### **Dec. 24**

**Office Closed**

5:00 pm Children's Christmas  
Eve Service  
7:00 pm Candlelight Service  
11:00 am Candlelight Service

### **Dec. 25**

Merry Christmas-Office Closed

### **Dec. 27**

8:30 am Worship Service  
9:45 am Sunday School  
9:45 am Children's Choir  
11:00 am Worship Service  
1:30 pm Wedding  
No Evening Youth

### **Dec. 28**

**Office Closed**

### **Dec. 29**

4:00 pm Bulletin Deadline

### **Dec. 31**

**Office Closed**



## Merry Christmas to all from the Caring Team

We are into the Holiday Season and will be playing Santa to our shut-ins. We have made cookies and candy and have packed tins with these goodies to be delivered. Our Thanksgiving cards have been sent and Christmas cards are ready to be mailed.

We have had several new members join our group and we welcome them! There is always room for more, so if you feel inclined and would like to join us, we would love to have you. We have found that we are the ones that receive the blessings as well as our shut-ins.

In August we had a luncheon to meet and greet the pastor. The day was a great success. There were forty six in attendance and it was a beautiful day. Everyone had a wonderful time.

We are continuing to send cards to the visitors to let them know how much we appreciate their visits and invite them back. Cards also go out to the ill and sympathy cards to members that have lost loved ones. If at any time you know of someone needing a card or visit, please contact one of the Caring Team Members.

**WE DO NEED GREETERS.....** The signup sheets are in the window in the back of the sanctuary. You will really get to know the members of the congregation. We do want to thank everyone that has helped us this year to make it a success.

Blessings,

***The Caring Team***

## Blood Drive

Give the gift of life by participating in our January blood drive through the American Red Cross. Participants are encouraged to arrive between **noon and 6pm on January 5<sup>th</sup>**. As you are probably aware, in recent years blood supplies have not kept up with the need. As we are reminded in the Sermon on the Mount, **"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."**

**(Matthew 5:7, NIV)**

## Year End Giving

The church is very thankful for all of your financial contributions throughout the year. As you know, the calendar year ends December 31, 2009. In order for your gifts to be credited to the 2009 tax year, they must post marked by that date and sent in the mail to the church. Of course you are also welcome to make your offerings in worship or drop them off at the church office prior to December 31. Statements of giving for the 2009 year will be mailed to you in early 2010. Thank you again so much for your faithful stewardship throughout the year. May God bless you richly!



## Parish Health News

### “Get My People GOING!!” – An Invitation to Wholeness

You are invited to take a healthy lifestyle challenge with others from our congregation that will take place from January 17 through March 7<sup>th</sup> immediately following the 11:00 a.m. service. This “invitation to wholeness” encourages you to identify small changes in your lifestyle which would help you be healthier. YOU choose three areas you would like to work on, and YOU set your own goals. WE will encourage each other, and WE will journey together.



Moses was radically changed by his experience in traveling with the people of Israel on their way out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Our program is based on the Exodus story and invites us to encourage each other to seek wholeness in all areas of our lives – from healthy eating, to moderate exercise, to getting enough sleep. It is for all ages, and for people of every health condition, because it is completely tailored to your situation and your choices.

Ellen Cavanagh will be glad to answer any questions you might have about the program. You will receive a small packet of materials when you sign up. We will be available before/after worship on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> to sign you up, and get you started.

Blessings on your journey,  
***Ellen Cavanagh, RN***

## Maverick Sunday School Class

The Maverick Adult Sunday School class is beginning a new study using the book "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God" by Henry & Richard Blackaby. This is a study that can help guide the participants beyond knowing about God to actually experiencing a life-changing encounter with the living God. It is an opportunity to discover practical ways to apply spiritual truths to your life. Please join us beginning December 13th!



## Breakfast with Santa



*Especially  
for the  
children...*

### **Breakfast with Santa**

**First UMC, Fellowship Hall**

**Saturday, December 12, 2009**

**7am - Noon**

**\$6 (Adults)**

**\$4 (Children 12 and under)**

Tickets are only available at the door.

**Have breakfast and get a free picture of your child  
with Santa Claus.**

**Menu:** Pancakes, Sausage, and Apples

**Drinks:** Coffee, Tea, and Apple Juice

**You are invited!**

*This event is sponsored by the Trustees and friends of First United Methodist Church.*





## Be a volunteer Cook for Food Faith & Fellowship Dinners!

The 3-F dinners will resume on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:15pm! In order to make this effort a success, please volunteer to be a “lead cook” which is to develop a menu for one of the Wednesday evenings, purchase the ingredients (you’ll be reimbursed), and organize and lead the cooking and serving team for that night. A gathering of “lead cooks” will be held on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm in the Social Hall and **newcomer cooks are needed and appreciated**. The 3-F dinners support other ministries by providing a meal before participants go to other ministry activities. This is a way to show Christian hospitality and most cooks find this to be a lot of fun.

## Discovery Preschool Christmas Program

Children are important to God. Part of our ministry at First UMC is the Discovery Preschool. They will have their annual **Christmas program in the sanctuary of the church on December 11, at 6:30pm**. Church members and friends as well as the parents of the preschool children are welcome. The Discovery preschool choir will sing and the various classes will be recognized.

Jesus said, *“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God.”* ~Jesus Luke 18:15-17

## Turkey Dinner & Children’s Pageant

**Join us on December 13, anytime between 4:00 and 6:30pm for a wonderful dinner** in the Social Hall. The UMM will prepare a meal of turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans and other items. **Promptly at 7pm, the children will present a drama titled, “The Little Star”**. Come find out how the little star finds his place in God’s kingdom. The program ends with a traditional nativity scene. Children who are participating are encouraged to come to the dinner during the early portion of the serving time so they will be ready for the drama. Please support our men’s ministries and children’s ministries by attending both the dinner and pageant. The cost of the dinner is \$7 for adults and \$4 for children.

*“While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”*

Luke 2:6-7 (NIV)





## Epiphany Sunday With The Wise Guys

Sometimes good and entertaining things come in threes. Have you heard of the three tenors or the three musketeers? You certainly know about the three stooges. Long before these notable threes there were three other important persons mentioned in the Bible. Join us on January 3 as they visit us during the regularly scheduled 8:30 and

11:00am worship services. No, you won't see Shadrach, Mesach, and Abednego of fiery furnace fame. Instead we have scheduled the three Magi themselves—Melchior, Balthazar, and Caspar. Or, is that just tradition? Come visit us on Epiphany Sunday and learn more in a special dialogue sermon. More importantly, find out about their

devotion to the Lord we worship.



## Christmas Eve at First UMC



What:  
"The Transformation of the Grinch"  
*Children's Christmas Eve Worship Service*

Where: Sanctuary of First United Methodist Church

When: Christmas Eve\*5pm

***YOU ARE INVITED!***

*"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God."*

~Jesus

*Luke 18:15-17*

## Candles, Carols and Communion



Join us at 7 and 11pm for a traditional Christmas Eve worship experience.

Christmas Eve Service

The chancel choir will provide special music and Rev. White will provide a special message titled "Incarnation".

First United  
Methodist Church  
308 North Braddock Street  
Winchester, VA 22601  
& Apple Pie Ridge  
Campus directly across from the  
Apple Pie Ridge  
Elementary School

Web site:  
[www.fumcwinchester.org](http://www.fumcwinchester.org)  
**Church: 540-662-3151**  
**Fax: 540-662-1462**

**Staff**

Rev. William M. White  
Pastor

Mary Vorous  
Director of Youth  
Ministries

Kristen Grzywacz  
Office Manager

Debbie MacKnight  
Preschool Director

Ralph Gronlund  
Lay Leader

Jennifer White  
Treasurer

Ellen Cavanagh, RN  
Faith Community Nurse

Queenie Dockene  
Custodian

Wayne Corbett  
Organist and Music  
Director

Gary Fisher  
Choir Director

Melinda Russell  
Hand Bell  
Director

Wayne Corbett &  
Melinda Russell  
Children's Choir  
Directors

Non-Profit Org  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 136  
Winchester, VA

Christmas Open House

**Melody and Jim Harmon** would like to invite their  
**Church Family** to a  
**Christmas Open House** at their home on  
**Saturday, December 12, 2009** from  
**2:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**  
**182 Highview Road**  
**Stephenson, Virginia**  
**22656**

