SAINT ANDREW
United Methodist Church
DECEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

- ***Administrative Board.*** There will be no Administrative Board meeting in December. The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2027 at 7:00pm.

- ***Christmas Pageant*** will be held in the Sanctuary Sunday, **December 13** during the 10:00am worship service.

- ***Christmas Cantata.*** Join us Sunday, **December 13 at 3:00pm** for our Christmas Cantata, *"What Sweeter Music*" by Mark Hayes, sung by the St. Andrew Cantata Choir. Brings friend and neighbors!

- ***Longest Night Service.*** On **Monday, December 21 at 4:00pm** we will have a very special service for anybody who would like to quietly celebrate our Lord's birth. Maybe you are ill, grieving, lonely, or just feeling like holiday cheer is too overwhelming this year. Our longest night service allows us to embrace the Prince of Peace and light a candle as we sing of a silent night that changed the world.

- ***Christmas Eve Worship Services Thursday, December 24***

5:00pm Christmas Eve Family Service
7:30pm Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service with Harpist Karen Stern

- ***Church Envelopes 2027.*** Envelopes will be available Sunday, December 6 in the Narthex. If you don't have envelopes and would like them please contact the church office at 732-349-5367 or email Lee at standrew.umctr@gmail.com. If you give online, please pick up your envelopes as there are special giving opportunities within the box. You don't need to be a member to receive envelopes.

- ***The Church Office*** will not be running on normal hours the week of Monday, December 28, through January 5. Voice mail messages will be checked intermittently and handled. For food pantry requests please contact Dave Richardson, cell: 732-779-1869, wdrichardson1960@verizon.net for building maintenance issues contact Dave or any Trustee member. Prayer Chain requests email Sue Herflicker, flikerfarm96@gmail.com. Emergency situations contact Pastor Anna, 325-669-4380, anna@standrewtr.org.

- ***Meals That Heal.*** Our annual Christmas dinner will be on Wednesday, **December 9**. Join us for a delicious meal featuring baked ham, scalloped potatoes and other goodies. **Big favor, as you do your holiday baking please make extra cookies to share with our guests.** Thank you! There is food for all and all are welcome! Fellowship Hall 5:00-6:00pm.

- ***Poinsettia Dedications.*** Order forms are on the tables and in the bulletins. **The deadline to order is Sunday, December 13**. See or call Mary Garreau at 732-762-9137 for more information.

- ***Thanksgiving Baskets.*** Thank you to all who supplied the Thanksgiving Basket Ministry. As of press time, 43 families are signed up to receive the Thanksgiving dinner food items, plus a generous supply of everyday food pantry goods. Blessings to all!

- ***Trustee News.*** **Blood Drive Friday, December 18 from 12:30-6:30pm in classrooms 4-6**. Appointments are encouraged. Walk-ins are welcome! For an appointment call 800-933-2566.

Library Changes: As mentioned during Sunday services the library is moving. The Trustees will be endeavoring in December to downsize the library, retaining books for both adults and children that are biblically and theologically based and donating the remaining mix of books to the Free Books Library Project in Camden. The Project is a wonderful operation bringing books into marginalized areas in Camden and surrounding areas. You can learn more about the project at https://thefreebooksproject.org/. The remaining books will be placed on shelving to be constructed in rooms 4, 5 & 6, as well as the display in the Sanctuary where these resources will be much easier to access. The leadership invites our members and friends to peruse the library shelves in the next week or two to see if there are particular books you may be interested in adopting or borrowing. If you need help finding the Library, please seek out one of our longer term members who will help you. The church remains indebted to all the wonderful stewards who built, maintained and managed the library over the years and hopes that this endeavor will match the spirit of the Love they gave to this ministry.

Building Use Request: The Trustees urge all groups and persons interested in using rooms and halls in the church to try and plan at least three (3) months in advance. Classrooms 4, 5 & 6 have a good amount of daytime flexibility but Fellowship Hall has daily weekday pickleball use through the winter, making the space mostly unavailable, except for important church needs that come up. Fellowship Hall does have pretty good flexibility for use on Saturdays.

See Something, Say Something: The Trustees encourage all of our members and friends to never be timid in alerting our Committee to areas of need - whether they be comfort or safety. The Trustees will evaluate all concerns and suggestions.

Sunday Service Security: Did you know that we have a team that provides a basic level of security to the church during services? The team of currently seven (7) members rotates weekly, keeping tabs on the building during service - making sure doors are locked (including our front doors after service begins), the children get to Sunday school safely, assisting visitors with bathroom locations and stationing ourselves in the Narthex so as to monitor the front doors for any late arriving members. If you would like to help and be part of the team, please check us out and let one of the members know.

A Friendly Reminder about Donations: We are grateful for everyone who generously supports our church and its missions. Your donations are a blessing and help us serve our congregation and community. We kindly ask that all donations and items being dropped off at the church be coordinated with the church office beforehand. Please do not leave donations at the church, outside the building, in hallways, or in other areas without first notifying the office. There may be times when the church is unable to accept certain items, or when there is no one available to receive, sort, or properly store them. Unannounced drop-offs can also create additional work for our staff and volunteers. Before bringing or leaving any donation, please contact the church office to make arrangements. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and continued generosity. We truly appreciate your desire to support our church and its missions.

- ***United Methodist Men's Breakfast***. The men's breakfast will be on **Sunday, December 13.** Breakfast will be served at 8:00am. All men are welcome and encouraged to come!

- ***United Women in Faith (UWF)***. ***SAVE THE DATE***: Our White Elephant fundraiser to support JBJ Soul Kitchen will be on **January 30, 2027**. Join us from 10:00am - 1:00pm in rooms 4-6.

- ***WOW! Women's Book Club.*** Calling all Women who love to read! Our selection for December is *The Man Who Invented Christmas* by Les Standiford. We will meet via ZOOM on **December 19 at 10:00am**. Happy Reading!