



Christ United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 710
Levelland, TX 79336

THE BELL RINGER DECEMBER 2019



COMING IN DECEMBER

Sunday, December 1 – Women’s Study Group 2:00 p.m.

Tuesdays, December 3 & 17 - Grief Support Group with Ann Akin in the parlor at 1:30 p.m.

Wednesdays, December 4, 11, 18 – Advent Study at 5:00 p.m.

Thursdays, December 5, 12, 19, 26 – Pastor’s Devotional

Sunday, December 1 – First Sunday in Advent; United Methodist Student Sunday; Imagine No Malaria

Wednesday, December 4 – Levelland Outreach Christmas Gifts due in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, December 8 – Second Sunday in Advent/ Methodist Children’s Home Sunday
Donation Lunch – Christmas Ham & Trimmings

Monday, December 9 – S/PPRC Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 10 – **Pastor’s Open House (Fellowship Hall – 6:00 p. m. – 7:30 p. m.)**

Sunday, December 15 – Third Sunday in Advent; Providence Place (Methodist Mission Home) Sunday

Sunday, December 22 – Fourth Sunday in Advent

Tuesday, December 24 -- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**
Refreshments and Desserts following

Tuesday, December 24 & Wednesday, December 25 – Office Closed for Christmas

Sunday, December 29 – First Sunday After Christmas Day

Tuesday, December 31 & Wednesday, January 1 – Office Closed for New Years

December Birthdays – Miran Hill- Dec. 5, Sherron Johnson – Dec. 8, John Clanton – Dec. 12

December Anniversaries – Buddy & Susan Faulks - Dec. 16

Donation Lunch
December 8 – 12:00 Noon
Christmas Ham & Trimmings

Levelland Outreach Christmas Gifts
Gifts are due at the church on Wednesday, Dec. 4th

Advent Study
We began studying the book “Light of the World”
Tuesday, November 26th at
5:00 p.m. Please join us for the remaining three sessions
Wednesday, December 4, 11 & 18 at 5:00 p.m.
The schedule is flexible.

S/PPRC Meeting
Monday, December 9th at 5:30 p.m.
New members for 2020 are also invited.

Pastor’s Open House
Fellowship Hall Tuesday, December 10th,
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
This is a “come-and-go” affair.
Sandwiches, desserts and punch will be provided.

Methodist Children’s Home
Providence Place (Methodist Mission Home)
Opportunities for special offerings
Methodist Children’s Home - Sunday December 8th
Providence Place – Sunday December 15th

Poinsettias
If you wish to order a poinsettia plant in memory or
honor of a loved one, please place your order on one of
the forms available each Sunday or call the church
office, no later than noon on December 5th. Plants, with
covers, will be \$12 each for 6 ½” or \$27 for 8” and may
be taken home after the
Christmas Eve Candle Light Service.

Candlelight Service
Tuesday, December 24th at 6:00 p.m. Refreshments will
be served in the fellowship hall following the service.

Shared Ministries
To date we have paid \$11,097.00 for Shared Ministries,
“Apportionments.” This represents 99.17% of our
responsibility. We have been 100% for many years.
The balance we need to pay our full apportionment this
year is \$98.00. Any overage will apply toward 2020
Shared Ministries.

A Word from the Pastor

Dear Open Giving Saints,

It is thought that between the years 341 and 352
on December 6th, St. Nicholas died in Myra which was
the primary city of Lycia which was in Asia Minor
(Turkey). Nicholas was the Bishop of Myra, so his body
lay in state for several days. In the eleventh century his
relics were removed to Bari, Italy to protect them from
destruction by the Muslims. And yes, the person I am
writing about was the original Sana Claus.

Prior to becoming Bishop of Myra, Nicholas had
inherited his parents’ wealth and chose to give it away to
people in need. The legend says that he would throw gold
into houses or down chimneys of those who were
experiencing difficulties. All of this was done in secret.

While returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy
Land he was credited with performing several miracles,
one of which involved bringing a dead sailor back to life.
When he was back in Myra, he was chosen to become
bishop upon the death of the current bishop. The choice
was made because of his unassuming ways and devout
spirit.

Once he became bishop he no longer performed
his acts of kindness in secret. He wanted to serve as an
example by doing good. An example of his kindness
included opening his home to those who needed refuge.
Nicholas was a tireless supporter of the early church and
fought hard against Arianism (the belief that Jesus was
not divine). Throughout parts of Europe December 6th is
celebrated as St. Nicholas Day in memory of his death. It
is celebrated by acts of kindness and gift giving in the
name of St. Nicholas. Over time, largely due to the efforts
of Martin Luther in Germany, the tradition of gift giving
transitioned to giving gifts in name of the Christ child.

In 1 John 3:18 we read “Little children, let us love, not
in word or speech, but in truth and action. On December 6th as
we think about the original Santa Claus, we would do well to
reflect on 1 John 3:18 throughout Advent and Christmas.
Indeed, we would do well to reflect upon it throughout the
whole year. St. Nicholas is a prime example of this passage. He
stood for truth in the face of heresies. He gave away his wealth
to those in need. And, most importantly, he stood for Christ
through his willingness to open his home to those needing
refuge. He was a generous man exemplifying sacrificial love
and kindness.

I pray that we will think often of all of the acts of
kindness found throughout the Bible and our own experiences.
May the joy that we experience during the seasons of Advent
and Christmas fill us with a joy that is outpouring; outpouring
not just for friends and family, but for those whose names are
not known to us.

(The following website was referenced for this message:
<https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/301-600/the-body-of-st-nicholas-lay-in-myra>)

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dennis