



The United Methodist Church of Ephrata

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www.umcephrata.org

Thank you for supporting the work of the church through your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness as we pursue our mission:

“We Serve God by Serving Others”

The United Methodist Church of Ephrata



The Update Newsletter

“We Serve God by Serving Others.”

December 2020

Happy New Christian Year, which begins on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020. We await the coming of Christ and we wait in this time of the pandemic exile. It was in that Old Testament story of exile that the people of Israel waited for the Messiah. They waited to return to the Land of Israel.

Each year we come to this Season of Waiting. This year we are anxious, we want to be together. We observe some churches meeting and singing and going without masks. We long desperately for gathering. Yet we WAIT! I find myself anxious. I go to the store, some people not wearing face masks or have them below their nose or chin. I don't know where or if they receive the news. Do they know that just last week 1 million people contracted coronavirus? Do they listen only to people who make light of the situation? One cannot help feeling the frustration and wonder where is God in all of this? What in the world is going on? Yet, our Advent season gives us lessons in Love, Joy, Peace, Hope, and Faith, in various ways from Sunday to Sunday.

We are still doing and being in ministry. Zoom Bible Study and in December a zoom meeting just to visit is currently scheduled for Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. At least that is the plan and I invite as many to join to talk or speak during that time. We may have to make a virtual Christmas Eve Service. The decorations in the sanctuary would only be on the chancel. Even if only 25 can be in church we can video it. Of course, no communion, and no singing, though we can have limited instrumental music, and pre-recorded music. We will still have social distancing to protect worshippers.

On another matter, some may be aware that I brought to Council the request from a small group of Hispanic women's request to use our Fellowship Hall on Friday,

November 20th from 3:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (5 hours). Hispanic people are also seeking how to fill out tax forms for Covid-19 relief. There is obviously a language barrier with the people who provide that service and also an \$80 charge. These friends of the community do not charge and simply help them fill out the paper work for the relief. They will receive one party at a time. Everyone is required to wear face masks, use hand sanitizer after each one is helped. I will be monitoring the guests in our building.



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The rest room was off limits except for the 4 or 5 Hispanic women doing the work. I have spoken with the D.S. who affirmed my intention to host the Hispanic women who are doing essential work to help others applying for Covid relief. Again, this was a one time service in line with the way we help “the least of these” (Matthew 25.45).

At Council we can discuss building use. We would like to allow others to resume use of the building, such as quilters, AA, exercise group, men’s breakfast (can’t eat though). Also Bible Study – though zoom has and is working pretty good. The Bells ministry also should be considered. All of this would require face masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing the space used by the people. It is day by day, week to week, figuring out what we may do that is safe for us all. It is also possible that some may want to come on Fridays at 2 p.m. to observe worship, though it would be by reservation as 10 or less is the requirement. If you have questions feel free to phone me. I will try to answer and if I don’t have an answer I will seek further information.

So much waiting and wondering which seems to make Advent more experiential for all of us.

In Christ our Hope we wait,

Pastor Don



Annually we contact members and givers with regard to a pledge for anticipated giving in the coming year. We have altered ministry in the past year because of the pandemic. As I write, Grant County is in the red zone. However, we can allow groups and meetings in the building kept at 10 or less. It does mean more precautions for people attending meetings and for our custodian. Building upkeep and staff constitute the larger area of funding for the year ahead. As the development and availability of a vaccine comes our way, things will change. The changes we are facing will be with us for our future.

Giving can be a way of expressing our dependency on God. For believers we cannot trust our money - though we acknowledge our need and use of it. But deeper in ones heart and mind, and at that still place in each of us, We depend on God. It is God who has gifted us with ALL that we have. Our “thanks” is often expressed in our giving. When one gets giddy in giving, then we know we are in tune with our creator. However, others have lost income and cannot give. Neither God nor the church expects them to give. Still, we have calls for assistance, food, shelter, gas, power, water, transportation, and more. Your giving makes ministry possible with these needs.

I encourage you in giving. As you sense in your mind and heart, may you know the guidance of God’s Spirit speaking with you. It is a God thing to be able to give. So pray and Think about your part for the coming year. It would help us greatly in our budgeting process if you could let the office or Barb Deycous know of your intention for this next year.

PRAYER REQUESTS

“I call to you, Lord, come quickly to me; hear me when I call to you. May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.” Psalm 141: 1-2

One of the most wonderful gifts we are given is the gift of prayer.

We can pray for one another in times of need as well as times of celebration.

To join the email prayer chain, email Tresa at office@umcephrata.org

Prayers for Health, Healing, and Well-Being

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| • Bob St. Clair Jr | • Dan Anderson | • Amy Torrens-Harry |
| • Ed Sivula | • Ed Warren | • Eric Moulton |
| • Ron Gardner | • Marlene Fisk Warren | • Francie Hernandez |
| • Steven Grass | • David Prince | • Shirley Johnson |
| • Brian Davisson | • Abbie Thorndike | • Jeremy Warren |
| • Renee Muse | • Dennis Ackerman | • Kierra Smith |
| • Al Davisson | • Amy Torrens-Harry | • Jessica Smith |
| • Steve Smith | • Rayce & Tiffany Barnes | • Julea Dunn |
| • Justin Townley | • Tabatha | • Cammy Hatch |
| • Gail Catlow | • David Thompson | |
| • Eleanor Gausman | • Marie Marsh | |



Chris Wash

Kevin Harmon

Michael Oliveira

Please let us know if someone should be added or taken off our prayer list by contacting the church office: Also contact the church office if you know of someone in need of a visit by our Congregational Care Team or Pastor Don.



Advent Schedule



Nov 29th - First Sunday of Advent
The Coming of the Cosmic Christ - The Hope!

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Dec 6th - Second Sunday of Advent
Holy Anticipation - Prepare!

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-18



Dec 13th - Third Sunday of Advent
Good News - PEACE!

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

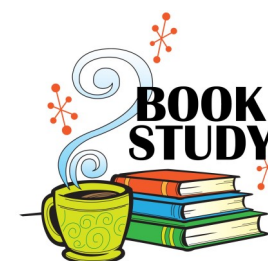
Dec 20th - Fourth Sunday of Advent
The Angel Brings News - Rejoice!

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:47-55
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38



EUMC Updates/Announcements

- The Pastor has spoken to the D.S. about Advent and it was suggested that we set up Advent stations up to and including Nativity. Families and small numbered units can reserve a time to visit and take in Advent and Christmas in the Church. Please let us know what you think of this and if it is something that you would be interested in assisting with and attending. Please call the Pastor with any questions or suggestions.
- With Advent at Christmas we would like to at least decorate the chancel. Since we are video recording worship we only need to focus on that location in Church. If you are willing to help with this it would be very appreciated. Please contact the church office or Pastor Don if interested. We can decide on a day & time later.
- Pastor would like to say Thank You to whoever it was that ordered the Cotton Patch Gospels by Clarence Jordan. This is a most appreciated gift. Thank you for an insightful paraphrase of the New Testament. He is thoroughly enjoying it.
- Pastor found the song Mercy Now by Mary Gauthier and finds it worthy of listening to and suggests it for others, especially the 2018 edition on YouTube.



Book Study & Men's Group



We are finishing the book Priorities. It has given us all much to consider - scripturally and with regard to our responsibility to others with an understanding that is broad for Christians.

I would like to invite others also to consider joining us when we begin to read a shorter book, Fear of the Other by William Willimon. He is a really good preacher and communicates well. Hope you can join us.

With the Men's Group we will continue our video on Peter. Adam Hamilton is really good as he takes us on location in Palestine - Israel. So far everyone gleaned much from his video. We all need help in this department.



Online
Devotional



Online
Bible Study

Connect With Us!!

Links to all sermons, Zoom bible/book studies are on our website at
www.umcephrata.org

Zoom Bible Study (Sermon text for Sunday), Wednesdays at 12pm

Zoom Book Study (Priorities by Ann Robertson), Mondays at 11am

Zoom Social Hour, Tuesdays at 1:30pm

Sermons posted by Saturday to our Facebook & YouTube Channel

***Subscribe to our YouTube channel and get notifications when a video has posted.*

—STAYING—
CONNECTED



DECEMBER Birthdays

Ed Warren
December 3rd

Pastor Don Dunn
December 5th

Ed Rogers
December 11th

Darryl Pheasant
December 30th



DECEMBER Anniversaries

Ed & Marlene Warren
December 24th

Alan & Mary Fulk
December 29th

Tom & Vi Baars
December 31st

Mark Your Calendar

Nov 29	First Sunday of Advent
Dec 6	Second Sunday of Advent
Dec 13	Third Sunday of Advent
Dec 20	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Dec 21	First Day of Winter
Dec 24	Christmas Eve
Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 31	Community Dinner 5:30pm (Pick Up & Delivery Only) New Year's Eve/Watch Night

