

# The United Methodist News

VOLUME 20 NO. 12

DECEMBER, 2012

SERVING GOD 119 YEARS

## **PASTOR TO PEOPLE**

### **The Reason for the Season**

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children . . . an heir of God through Christ. (Galatians 4:4-7)*

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...” So begins the 3rd chapter of Ecclesiastes.

I’ve been thinking about the seasons and the times-for-everything-under-heaven. While the author of Ecclesiastes writes about a time to live, and a time to die, a time to laugh and a time to weep, a time to mourn and a time to dance, it seems (at least in our culture) there is also a time to buy. By the time you read this, we will have just finished cleaning up from Thanksgiving. We recover from the family, food and football season, by propelling ourselves headlong into the Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday buying season.

Just as the seasons of retail sales change with the passing of time, so also the seasons of the liturgical or church calendar change. For the church, the 4 weeks after Thanksgiving are called the season of Advent. Advent is a time of preparation and repentance in anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ and culminates in our celebration of Christmas. During this time, there will be increasing demands on your time – entertaining friends and/or visiting family, planning meals and then cooking them, Christmas plays, cantatas, parties and let’s not forget shopping for that perfect gift or in some cases any gift. And you will no doubt hear on many occasions that Jesus is the reason for the season, offered by many well intentioned folks, to remind you to focus on Jesus. Let me suggest, for your consideration, while there is still time to think about such things before the holiday assault on your time begins, that Jesus is **not** the reason for the season – **we are!**

Now before you pick up the phone or jump on the computer to contact the Bishop’s office about this preacher out in Poteau who has lost his mind, consider Paul’s words to the Galatians, “...*When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of woman...*” (that’s Christmas), “...*that we might receive adoption as children [and become] heirs of God...*” You see, the whole reason for Jesus’ birth and every other aspect of Jesus’ life, teaching, healing, passion, death and resurrection is for us! God didn’t have to do this or act on our behalf, God chose to. God, who is timeless, chose to enter into time to redeem, to claim, to adopt us. We are the reason for the season! What we celebrate at Christmas is God choosing to come to us, refusing to leave us to ourselves.

For this reason I encourage you to think of the entire story of Jesus, anticipation, birth, life, death and resurrection not as something that happened in the past. If we really believe what we claim, then the reality of faith is that we have more future with Jesus than past, more tomorrows than yesterdays. Jesus is more of our present and future than of our past.

Karl Barth, one of the great theologians of our time, says that one of the most important meanings of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ is that “we still have time.” This is why we have hope. This is why we can take comfort. We have time to reflect upon and give thanks for and accept the grace of our good God. We have time to consider the heart-warming, joy-producing, hope-inspiring, life-transforming good news, that God, in Jesus Christ declares to you and I that we are the reason for this season!!!

May we never forget. May we never take this declaration for granted.  
Glory to God! Amen!

Kyle

**REV. KYLE CLARK**



## Blue Christmas

Wednesday, Dec. 19 • 7 p.m.

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without loved family members who have moved away or recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult or painful for any number of reasons.

The constant refrain on radio and television, in shopping malls and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation – all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending.

For many, this is not a happy season. Our spirits sink, as days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. We need to know that we are not alone. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us.

If you are one for whom this time of year is painful, First United Methodist Church in Poteau offers a special “Longest Night” or “Blue Christmas” service Wednesday, Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. Everyone, regardless of church background (or lack of it), is invited to join with us as we pray for hope and comfort for ourselves and each other, as we reflect on our pain through scripture, as we remember our loved ones and as we are reminded that God’s presence is especially for those who mourn, are struggling and are alone. We are assured that God’s Word comes to shine light into our darkness.

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

There will be two Christmas Eve Candlelight services. One will be at 6 p.m. and one at 11 p.m. The 6 p.m. service will include carols, readings, and children’s time. The 11:00 service will be a more traditional service. This will allow you to choose the service best suited for your family and your holiday schedule.

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 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. • Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.  
 Weekly Communion 9:10 a.m. except first Sunday

Bishop	Robert E. Hayes
District Superintendent	Darrell Cates
<b>Pastor</b>	<b>Rev. Kyle Clark</b>
<b>Youth Director</b>	<b>Kimberly Hardaway</b>
<b>Music Director</b>	<b>Steve Clark</b>
<b>Logos Director</b>	<b>Tami Matos</b>
<b>Church Secretary</b>	<b>Brenda Ferguson</b>
<b>Lead Nursery Attendant</b>	<b>Jayla Craig</b>
<b>Organist</b>	<b>Wendy Kelly</b>
<b>Custodian and Door Opener</b>	<b>Jason Dering</b>

District web page: [www.gbmg-umc.org/mc-dist/](http://www.gbmg-umc.org/mc-dist/)

## DECEMBER CHURCH CALENDAR

**Worship Bulletin Deadline: 10 a.m. Thursday**  
**Newsletter Deadline: Third Friday of month**

- SUNDAY •
  - UMYF (CHAOS), 5 p.m.
  - Disciple’s Path Bible Study, 6 p.m. Conf. Rm.
  - MONDAY •
  - Boy Scouts, 7 p.m., CFLC
  - Christian Preschool Monday – Thursday  
8:30 - 11:30 a.m., Education Building
  - TUESDAY •
  - Cub Scouts, 6 p.m., CFLC
  - Treble Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m.
  - WEDNESDAY •
  - Celebration Choir Rehearsal, 6 p.m.
  - Women’s Bible Study, 6:15 p.m. J.N. Ross Rm.
  - THURSDAY •
  - Girl Scouts, 4:00 p.m.
  - (No Scouts during Christmas break)
- 2 Adult Handbells ring in worship. (Will resume practice in January)
  - 5 Last Logos for fall semester. Christmas program in the sanctuary in the evening
  - 6 Last Sr. Cafe until January
  - 8 UMM Breakfast and Meeting, 8 a.m., CFLC
  - 9 Christmas Drive Through, 6 to 8 p.m.
  - 10 Women of Faith Meeting and Luncheon, 10:30
  - 15 Free Neighborhood Breakfast, 8 to 10, CFLC
  - 19 Membership Care Committee, 1 p.m., CFLC  
Blue Christmas Service, 7 p.m., Sanctuary
  - 24 Christmas Eve Service, 6 p.m. and 11 p.m.
  - 24, 25 Church Offices closed for Christmas

*Merry Christmas!*

## MORNING WORSHIP GREETERS

- 2 Hank and Barbara Harris
- 9 Charles and Marilyn Meek
- 16 Jerry and Mary Ford
- 23 Peggy Talley and Judy Peerson
- 30 Ben and Judy Curtis



## LITURGISTS

- 9 Connor Bandy
- 16 Adult Reader
- 23 Haven Perry
- 30 Adult Reader



## ACOLYTES

- 2 Kendrick and Kanaan Hardaway
- 9 Kyle Holt and Daniel Ambriz
- 16 Baleigh Quarry and Maci White
- 23 Demi Gilliam and Nathan Clark
- 30 Wyatt Holt and Tabi Zabala



## News of Youth

By Kimberly Hardaway, Youth Director

The youth are offering gift wrapping for the holidays!

The gift wrapping service will be offered during Sunday School Dec. 16 and 23, and also all afternoon on Dec. 16 with gifts being available for pick up between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. Bring your gifts and the youth will supply everything else . . . tissue, boxes, gift wrap, and bows. Cost is donation-based with a minimum.

## LOGOS — By Tami Matos, Director

Last LOGOS of the fall semester is Dec. 5. That night, the children will share The Christmas Shoe Tree worship service at 6:30 in the sanctuary. All are invited to come. Refreshments will be served afterwards. Santa will be there with a little gift for the kids. LOGOS resumes Jan. 16th, night at the diner. Spring schedules will be handed out on Jan. 16th. Thank you to the many congregation members that volunteer each week, we wish everyone a safe and merry Christmas!

## United Methodist Women of Faith

By Dorothy James, President

Thanks to all from the United Methodist Women! We can report a profit of \$5,000 from the Fall Festival. This money will be used for local and global missions. The UMW appreciates all the time, work and food that the congregation provided. The fellowship that was shared by the community was very special to all. Thank you again!

These are some of our missions which will benefit from the Fall Festival proceeds: Christian Free Clinic, Women's Crisis Center, Grace Cottage, Grace Place, LeFlore County Youth Services, kitchen supplies for our church, our youth, a special mission CHAOS School of Mission for two members to study our programs, Circle of Care, Boys Ranch, Wilburton College Ministry, missions in our church (diapers, Soles4Souls, Logos, NSO Conference, Neighbor Service OK, Cookson Hills, The Angel Tree.

We were happy to purchase 20 tables for the Christian Family Life Center.

We are studying the book, Singing Mary's Song; an Advent Message of Hope and Deliverance by John A. Stroman. Its theme is God uses unlikely vessels to bring the message of hope and deliverance. Preparing us in faith the true meaning of Christmas, it helps us find ourselves in the story and invites us to join in signing her song of grace, liberation and hope. All women are welcome to attend this study. Our meeting in December will be at Louise Reynolds' home at 105 Wapiti on Dec. 10th at 10:30 a.m. for a Christmas Celebration Luncheon.

May all of you have a blessed and merry Christmas.

## Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias can be brought or delivered to the church December 12 or after. (Office is closed at noon on Fridays). They will beautify the sanctuary on Sunday, Dec. 16 and Sunday, Dec. 23.



United Methodist Church  
**PRE-SCHOOL**  


By  
**Tracey Gilliam,**  
**Preschool Director**

The preschool wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We will be learning about the Christmas Story during December. The letters we will focus on will be I and J, the colors red and green will be worked with. The shape of the month is a star and the number seven will be learned. The December memory verse is "God's Son is born for us."

The preschool will be closed December 24th to January 3rd. Classes will resume on January 7, 2013.

## Missions Report

By Terri Martin, Missions Committee

A Thank You card was received from "Women's Crisis Center" graciously thanking our congregation for the diapers they received. They truly appreciate all we do to help.

The month of October was designated for collection of pudding cups. We collected and delivered 148 pudding cups to the Clearing House backpack program. Thank you Susan Mixon for delivering. Another two pillows, several more personal hygiene sample products and some small bags for hygiene products to be kept in were delivered to LCYS. They are now in their new facility and I was fortunate to be given a tour. It is really wonderful to see how the entire community of Poteau, LeFlore County and beyond supports programs like this, reaching out and touching these young people in need of shelter and nurturing.

November has been designated for collection of shoes, for Soles4Souls. Although I have not officially counted the shoes yet, the collection bins have been overflowing. Wow, how very kind and giving everyone is. It is so great to be able to be part of this wonderful church family. Since this is part of the Logos Christmas program, we will continue to collect shoes through the month of December.

Mark your calendars for the monthly breakfast, December 15. Donations given to date being donated to missions totals \$79.00

Thank you again for being such a supportive, caring and generous family.

*2 Corinthians 9:11 "You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God" NIV*

## Staff Love Offering

We are very blessed at Poteau First United Methodist Church to have an excellent staff who work very hard in ministry and service to the community. We would like to present them with a "Christmas Love Offering" to express our sincere appreciation for a job well done. Contributions will be accepted through Thursday, December 20th. Please designate your gift "Christmas Love Offering".

## "Shout the Good News!"

The Christmas Cantata this year is "Shout the Good News" by Lloyd Larson. It will be presented December 16 during the Morning Worship service.

Along with the members of the Celebration Choir, Mike Lenzini will be featured on flute.

### Annual Drive Through Living Christmas Story Dec. 9

On December 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. our church will once again be presenting our special drive through Living Christmas Story as our gift to the community.

Over the years it has become part of family Christmas holiday traditions. It has always been highly anticipated with hundreds of vehicles from around the area driving through. Many church buses from other churches have also driven through bringing viewers to enjoy the scenes.

This year it will be staged on our big parking lot where viewers will enter from the far end on Walter Street and exit into the alley at the library.

Featured will be Mary and the angel; Joseph in the carpenter's shop with the angel; Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem; shepherds and the heavenly host; no room at the inn, and the stable scene along with many animals.

All characters have two 30-minute performances with a 30-minute break to warm up and have refreshments in between. Please do not leave after your first performance.

If anyone could loan a heavy duty extension cord, please write your name on the cord and drop it off at the church.

Anyone who can help set up for the drive-through, please meet at the church parking lot at 1 p.m. on Dec. 9th.

### Membership Care Christmas Cards

Christmas cards and names of those on our Membership Care list are available in the Narthex. The Membership Care Committee will be collecting your signed Christmas cards the first two Sundays of the month, December 9th and December 16th.

We will deliver the cards to the following persons: Dora Baldwin, Mary Bruce, Vera Bullock, Eloine Crews, Jim and Ruth Ann DeCamp, Slim Durham, Dartha Garner, Jo Gee, Betty Gillson, Sam Harris, Marilyn Johnston, Ted Kilgore, Martha Kidd, Dana Lee, Trudie Mathies, Bessie Moreland, Christy Oehlschlager, Dortha Sue O'Neal, Jean Potts, Betty Ridenour, Shirley Rodgers, Jim Shore, and Joe Renfro. You may use your own cards or take cards from the basket in the Narthex. You don't have to write to everyone on our list, but please take the time to write a personal note on the cards you send.

The Membership Care Committee will meet at 1:00 in the CFLC on Wednesday, December 19th to distribute the Christmas cards from the congregation and deliver them before Christmas.



## Our Sympathy

Our love and sympathy is extended to Keith Thomas and family on the death of his brother, Dean; and Doug Stone and family on the death of his mother, Margaret.

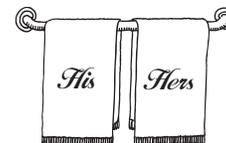
## December Birthdays

- 1 Connie Sabatucci
- 2 David Roberts, Marilyn Johnston, Ted Kilgore, Mike Sullivan and Tatum Shelton
- 4 Judy Moore, Adrianna Johnson and Sam Shore
- 6 Jaydon Bandy
- 7 John Perry
- 8 Virginia Stanley, Shelley Johnson and Dale DeCamp
- 9 Sheri Zabala
- 10 Jason Bandy
- 11 Jamison Shackelford
- 12 Jo Gee, Curtis James and Cole Forsberg
- 13 Bryan Gilliam
- 14 David Redhage
- 15 Pegee Werline
- 16 Julie Lee, Judy Peerson and Kyle Matos
- 18 Justin Hebert and Jarot Garner
- 19 Morgan Bandy
- 21 Vera Bullock
- 23 Donna Kendrick and Bob Reynolds
- 24 Becky Fruen
- 25 Gary Brown Jr., Seth Garner, Steven Sockey, Heather Emery and Holley Ambriz
- 28 Jim Skelton
- 29 Joe Sabatucci
- 30 Jerry Thompson
- 31 Rosalind Kendrick and Ronnie Oehlschlager



## December Anniversaries

- 1 Ed and Cindy Brody
- 3 Charles and Marilyn Meek
- 4 Marvin and Janet DeSpain
- 13 Mike and Lindsay Murray
- 14 Fredrick and Nina Ritchie
- 17 Brian and Mandy Roberts
- 18 Henry and Rozelle Hardaway
- 19 Kyle and Kimberly Hardaway
- 23 Joe and Connie Sabatucci
- 26 Joe and Martha Renfro



### Poteau F.U.M.C. Report for October 2012

2012 Average Attendance Figures for October: 129

2012 Budget Requirements: \$397,000.00

Needed for Budget Each Week: \$7,634.62

Needed through October: \$328,288.66

October Receipts: \$20,127.40

October Expenditures: \$23,794.20

### New Building Fund Figures:

Deposits: \$1,297,394.66; Expenditures: \$2,554,914.39