



**ASBURY**  
United Methodist Church

A FUTURE AND A HOPE:  
TO LISTEN, GROW, AND LOVE WITH GOD

# THE MESSENGER

## DECEMBER 2023

Dear Friends,

It's almost Christmas, "the most wonderful time of the year," according to the song. But this wonderful time of year can bring up the Santa controversy on the elementary school bus, where kids of different ages come from families with different belief systems. Some of the children want to believe in Santa, others know Santa is their parents. Some families emphasize the religious nature of the holiday, others don't. As a bus driver, I field questions and arbitrate disputes. How would you answer, "Is there a Santa?" to a six-year-old? Or a twelve-year-old?

All our lives, we will encounter people with a variety of beliefs, in a variety of stages of life. How do we deal with that? If we aren't careful, we can end up ranting against everybody who doesn't believe like we do. Or end up afraid to talk to anyone for fear of saying the wrong thing.

I've chosen what I believe is the Biblical approach: "You will know them by their fruit" (*Matthew 7:16*). If I'm asked about Santa, I say, "Are you giving anyone a present this Christmas? Is anyone giving you a present?" The answer is always "yes." Then I say, "that sounds like fun, and I don't think it matters what you call it. Do you?"

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, is reported to have said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

That sounds like Santa to me. How about you?

Blessings,

Tom

		Asbury Staff			
Lead Pastor	Tom Vansant			Children's Ministries	Susan Lamy
Administrative Assistant	Julia Machin	Student Ministries	Leon Johnson	Pianist & Organist	Teresa Kays
Music Director	Kathy Love	Community Outreach	Linda Adams	Gifts That Count	Jim Wilson
1500 S Campbell Avenue Springfield, MO 65807			Pastor's Email: thomasavansant@gmail.com		
www.asburyunitedmethodist.org			The office is open Monday — Thursday		
Church Email: asburyumc@sbcglobal.net			9:00 AM – 2:00 PM		



### UMW/UWF

All women of the church and guests: Please join us at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, December 2, at Asbury for fellowship, a Christmas devotional, brunch and beautiful Christmas music provided by an ensemble from the PSHP Home School orchestra. Bring a dish or be our guest! Music will begin about 10:45 and we should be eating by 11:00.

This comes with holiday wishes from the United Women in Faith/United Methodist Women.

### Those Serving This Month



**Accompanist:** Teresa Kays

**A/V:** Steve Collum, Bill Love, Robbie Vansant, Sara Love, Chuck Gregg

**Readers:** Kimberlea Gray, Mark Gideon, Ruth Spargo, Nancy Lollar, the children of Asbury

**Greeters:** Joan Wilson, Karen Nordstrom, Suzanne Boyts, Sheryl Hill, John Fox, Judy Fox, George Sly, Georgianne Sly, Bill Frogge, Heather Frogge

### First Friday Family Game Night December 1—6:00 pm

Did you miss the Family Game Night in November? One Heart has decided to host this event on a monthly basis. Please join us for the first Friday evening of each month at 6:00 pm. Bring your favorite game(s) and a snack to share. Your next opportunities are December 1 and January 5.

### Brunch Church

**Sunday, December 31—10:30 am**

Join us for one service on New Year's Eve for Brunch Church! That's right, we are going to have brunch while we celebrate the end of the year in an informal church service in the Fellowship Hall. Plan to bring a dish to share; breakfast or lunch food & drinks are welcome! Ukulele Revival will also be back with us to provide music for this special time together. Celebrate our church by looking back & planning forward for 2024! All are welcome, so bring a guest!

### Poinsettias for Advent

Orders for Poinsettias for Advent will continue until Sunday, December 10. The cost is \$10.00 each. Poinsettias will be in white & pink to adorn our sanctuary on Sunday December 17 & can be taken home after services that day. You may purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone or to the glory of God. If you don't wish to purchase a poinsettia, you can make a donation to the AUMC Altar Fund. Order blanks will be available in the church office, in the Sunday service bulletins, & from our ushers.



## PRAYER REQUESTS

The family of Alice Stehle, Frank Hinkle, the family of Dixie Wooters, the family of Gary Metcalf, John Bingham, Kenney Hill, Judy Clements, Karla Gregg & family, Jack Gladson, Mary Blumhost, the family of Dan Whitescarver, Clark Mikkelsen, Jim Wilson, Sue Ann Holloway, Gene Day, Don & Debbie Jeffrys, Marlene Garling, Nicole Johnson, Teresa Kays, Ron Garling

All prayer concerns will be listed for one month unless otherwise notified.

### Those we hold in loving care who are homebound or limited in their transportation:

Ann Marsh, Barbara Davidson, Bob Drake, Joy Whitescarver, Kathy White, Kay Keltner, Marlene Jones, Nicole Johnson, Sharon Coomer, Shawna Allen, Warren Meadows

### Serving our country:

Cameron Cox, Shane Luke, Tyler Moore



On behalf of the members of the Gifts That Count committee, I would like to thank

the congregation for their support of the nut sale. We have surpassed the sales of the past few years. With this money we are able to meet some needs of the church that are not covered by the budget.

Jim Wilson, Chairman



## MARK your CALENDAR



### December 1

First Friday Family Game Night

### December 2

UWF Christmas Potluck  
Hanging of the Greens

### December 7

Mission Springfield

### December 9

UMM Meeting  
Calendaring Meeting

### December 11

Naomi Ruth Circle

### December 12

Trustees

### December 13

Mary Martha Circle

### December 14

Lunch Bunch  
Education Committee

### December 16

Scouts BSA Merit Badge Class  
Harmony House Lunch

### December 17

Christmas Musical Service  
Christmas Caroling  
Birthday Party for Jesus

### December 20

Crosslines Day



## MARK your CALENDAR



### December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

### December 25

Merry Christmas!

### December 30

Jarrett Prayer Walk

### December 31

Brunch Church

## December Birthdays

- 02 John Fuge
- 03 Leon Johnson
- 04 Dana Collum
- 05 Lincoln Johnson
- 10 Brandy Hardin
- 14 Tara Johnson  
Kathy White
- 15 Donna Brown
- 18 Peggy Baier
- 27 Ella Hostetler
- 28 Jane Metcalf
- 29 Alena Pike
- 30 Nicole Johnson



### Job Opening

We are currently seeking a leader for our praise band, Alabaster. If you or someone you know is musically-inclined, please visit <https://asburyunitedmethodist.org/jobs/> for application information.



### Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will be meeting on Thursday, December 14, at 11:30 am. This month's restaurant selection is Smokin' Bob's BBQ at 2100 W Republic Rd Ste 100.



### Power of Love

Our Power of Love collection for December is for Safe to Sleep. Their needs are:

- Coffee – regular and decaf
- Dry cereal / pop tarts / oatmeal packs
- Dry coffee creamer
- Bus passes
- Mr Clean
- Kleenex – boxes and travel-size
- Cough Drops

If you would like to make a financial donation, please make sure checks are written out with Power of Love in the memo line. Gifts can also be given online on our giving page under the Power of Love project.

### 2023 Mission/Vision Team

Janice Greene: Mission/Vision Chair

Kimberlea Gray: Recording Secretary

Susan Conover: Member At Large

Amy Langston: Member At Large

Amy Meriweather: Member At Large

Renee Mikkelsen: Member At Large

Bill Love: Finance Chair & Lay Member to Annual Conference

Carol Daniel: SPR Chair & Treasurer

Chuck Ewy: Trustees Chair

Glenda Hefty: Education Chair

Kathy Love: Worship Chair

Ruth Spargo: Hospitality Chair

Sheryl Hill: Mission Springfield Chair

Jay Polchow: Accounts Reconciler

### Advent Church of the Wild Sundays in December—3:00 pm

Come experience a new way to celebrate Advent! We will meet outside to worship in God's creation and see how creation prepares for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. There will be a time of personal exploration/contemplation of Jesus' birth and of creation.

We will meet on the north side of the church at 3:00 pm on the Sundays of Advent. Bring a chair; a few will be available if you don't have one or forget one. You may also want a blanket. It will be getting dark so you can bring a light if you want.

*The creation all around us is waiting on tiptoe for Creator's sons and daughters to be revealed in the full beauty of who he has created them to be.* (Romans 8:19, First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament)

## Financial News

As of 10/31/2023:

**Contributions for October:** \$14,316

**Contributions Budget:** \$19,167

**Contributions YTD:** \$154,692

**Budget YTD:** \$191,667

**Other Income (Church Use, etc.) YTD:** \$9,167

**Other Income Budget YTD:** \$18,708

**Expenses YTD:** \$197,481

**Budget YTD:** \$241,466

### Restricted Fund Use (CWS, Apportionments, etc.)

**October:** \$0

**Budget:** \$1,871

**YTD:** \$33,516

**Budget YTD:** \$29,168

Thank you for your generosity! As we approach the end of the year our apportionment obligation to the Missouri United Methodist Conference comes into focus. Any additional gifts to this obligation are encouraged! As of 09/30/23 we have \$1,270 of our \$27,718 obligation (4.6%).



## Check It Out!

To mention just two of the church library's Christmas books: Cosmic Christmas by Max Lucado is quite different from most Christmas books. While it has all of the sense of awe and wonder at Jesus' birth, it also introduces the character of the rebellious Satan. It ties the profound birth with the understanding of His sacrificial death.

The other book I'm "mentioning" is Christmas with Southern Living. A Southern Living book is, as you would expect, a treasure house of decorations, crafts, entertaining ideas and many recipes.

A Different Idea: I have a number of Christmas books such as those published annually by Ideals and Guideposts. Maybe we could do some book sharing. I will set out some check out cards—with paper clips—so that a person who wants to borrow a book can just leave your name on the check out card. If you have any books (not just at Christmas) you don't want to give away but you'd like to share, be sure your name is in the book and leave it on the library counter with a note that says "Share."

## Hanging of the Greens Saturday, December 2

Join your Asbury family as we decorate our sanctuary for Advent. We will begin our work promptly at 12:30 pm & continue until 3:30 pm. Volunteers are needed to help decorate the tree, hang wreaths, string ornaments, cut ribbon & more! There will be jobs for every skill & activity level from sitting at a table to work on ornaments & ribbon to climbing a ladder to decorate the tree. The more folks we have, the more quickly we will finish as many hands make light work. We have invited the members of the Anglican church, The Table, to join us for this event as they will be using our sanctuary beginning at Advent or before. There is a job for you & there are jobs for everyone. If you don't help, who will?







### Harmony House Lunch Saturday, December 16

This month we will be providing our regularly scheduled meal for the residents at Harmony House. If you would like to donate food, please review the available slots at the link below and click on the button to sign up. If you need help with signing up, please call the church office and Julia will assist you. Refrigerated and non-refrigerated items can be dropped off at the church the week prior to December 16, or you may also bring food that morning (please have the items to the church no later than 10:30 am).

Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050A4BABAF28A1FD0-46378545-harmony>

### Video Worship

Miss a Sunday? Watch the worship service video at [www.asburyunitedmethodist.org](http://www.asburyunitedmethodist.org)

# CALENDARING MEETING

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

10:00 AM

*To avoid identity theft and spamming, no personal contact phone numbers and email addresses are published in this newsletter. If you would like to reach out to someone who is listed, please contact the office and we will help you.*