



The Main Street MESSENGER

VOLUME 66 | NO. 12 | DECEMBER 2020

*"Behold the virgin shall be with child
and shall bring forth a son;
and they shall call him
Emmanuel*

"GOD WITH US"



I remember well the births of all three of my children. I remember what I was doing the day of their birth from the very beginning of the day to the wee hours of the next morning. Such an amazing experience! It is hard to describe the joy and wonder I felt upon holding that new life for the first time. Colleen and I had prepared for each of our children in special ways. From picking the "perfect" name to preparing their new room with the right colors and wall hangings. All of these things are special and important when preparing for the coming of a new child. However, in the busyness of preparing and the shock of knowing you are now responsible for another life, we often miss the fact that this is an incredible miracle. No matter one's place in life,

from the poorest to the richest, a new child is a miracle of God and a reminder of God's love! This has been the case from the very beginning of time. In our world of cell phones and social media, the birth of a child is often announced and made known to hundreds and sometimes thousands of people within a few hours of the birth. This was not the case in first century Palestine.

In first century Palestine, at the birth of a child, I'm sure there was celebration in the village where the child was born; but beyond that, it most likely went unnoticed. That was the same for Jesus' birth. There were no Facebook posts or Twitter threads sharing the news that Jesus, the son of Mary and Joseph, had been born. There was, however, a band of angels who announced the birth to a

group of lowly shepherds in the field. This birth was made known in several ways because it was the most unusual and special birth to ever occur. Why? It was the Incarnation! What do we mean when say this? "It comes from a Latin word meaning 'embodiment' or 'become flesh.' The doctrine of the Incarnation represents one of the foundational, and some might say scandalous, claims of the Christian faith: namely, that the God who created all that is, who sustains the universe by his power, came to us in Jesus. He did not simply inspire Jesus, or speak through Jesus as he might inspire and speak through people today. No, Incarnation claims that God actually became flesh in Jesus." This is the way Adam Hamilton explains it in his book, *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*.

We will study this book together through the season of Advent. It will also help inform our time of worship during the four Sundays of Advent. Understanding and discovering the meaning of the Incarnation will make it impossible for us to lose sight of what Christmas really means from a faith perspective. Christmas will for sure be different this year because of COVID, but the meaning of Christmas is never changed by our circumstances. The Incarnation brings grace, forgiveness, and new life into every situation we may find ourselves in. Thanks be to God that God visited us in the baby Jesus. Now that is a birth to remember!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Rich

CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND LIGHTS

Join us for a “walk-through” Festival of Music and Lights from 4:00-6:00 pm on December 24, 2020 at Main Street.

- * Enter the Atrium from the Bank Street parking lot.
- * Enjoy the display of nativity scenes in the Atrium and then go to the Sanctuary by way of the lighted Duke Garden.
- * As you enter the beautifully decorated Sanctuary, you can sit for a while to enjoy the Chrismon Tree as well as organ and other various live instrumental music.
- * As you leave the sanctuary, you will pass by the lighted McLemore Garden and enter the Fellowship Hall where you are invited to make luminaries to place in the Luminary Garden outside as you leave; or take them with you to light your own home or to share with someone who may need some Christmas joy.



Volunteer opportunities include:

- * lending us your nativity scenes
- * donating or lending clear, white lights, greenery both fresh and artificial
- * helping with the actual decorating the week before Christmas
- * Volunteers for registration, ushers, greeters

For more information contact Ashley Hogg at 757-621-0176/ahogg1970@gmail.com or Jodi Browne at 757-377-7785/jodimbrowne@gmail.com



The Music of Christmas

Remember Christmas 2015? Sanctuary restoration with floor to ceiling scaffolding! So our Christmas Candlelight Cantata took place in the Atrium that year, and it was glorious! It seems fitting to remind ourselves that Main Street Church can survive and thrive through change and chaos! **So beginning Sunday, December 13, 2020, the recording of the Candlelight Cantata from December 13, 2015, will be available on the church website for your enjoyment!** Be prepared for some great memories! You will see Pastor Myrtle, Lee Bowman and Randy Maybery - all of whom have gone to their heavenly home. In addition, you will see former choir members who have since moved to other locations to be nearer their families. Music and memories!

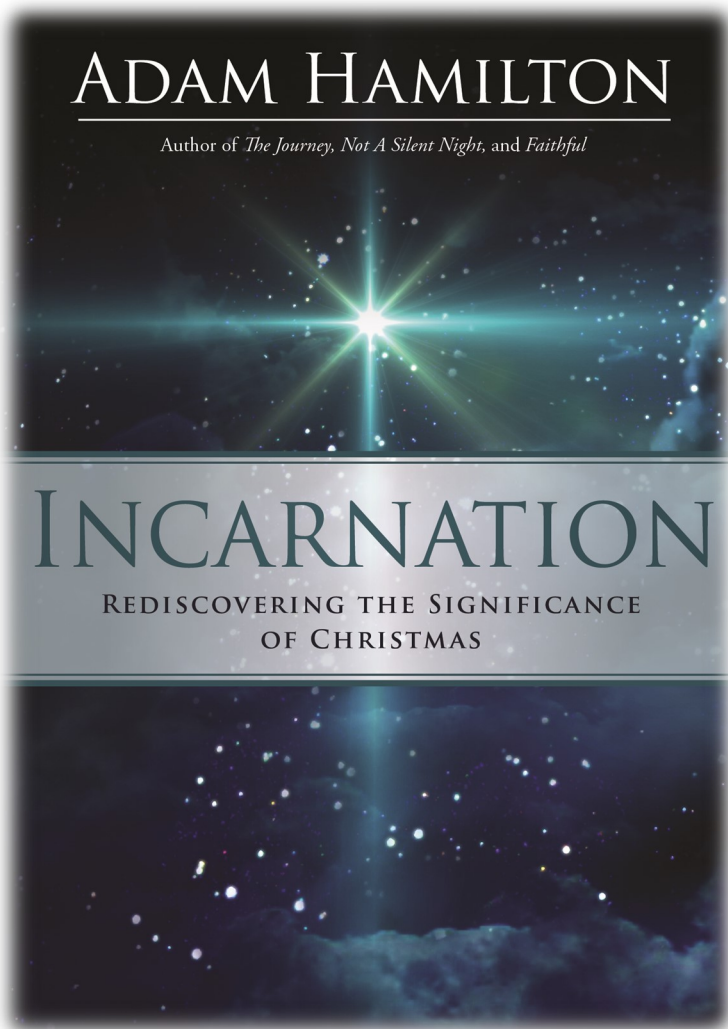


2015

Christmas Candlelight Cantata

“Sing We All Noel!”

www.mainstumc.org



Advent and Christmas 2020 promise to be much different from years past. Worship and other activities will likely take place virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its associated public health concerns. Even so, now more than ever, we need to experience the hope and joy that comes to us in Jesus Christ, whose birth we await during the Advent season.

Our 4 week Zoom study begins on **Monday, November 30 at 7:00pm** and will include the following topics. Pastor Rich's sermon series for December will also be based on this study.

- Session 1: Presidents and Kings
- Session 2: The Savior and Our Need for Saving
- Session 3: Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic
- Session 4: The Light of the World

The book is available at Cokesbury.com and Amazon.com in three different versions. Prices vary greatly.

Hardcover: Cokesbury \$11.99, Amazon \$17.99
Large Print Paperback: Cokesbury \$15.99, Amazon \$16.49
e-book: Cokesbury \$13.49, Amazon Kindle \$9.20

Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity as we prepare to celebrate Christmas together! Please register by contacting Barbara McPhail at barbara@mainstumc.org or by calling the church office at 757-539-8751.

Poinsettia and Memorial Donations

(Checks payable to Main Street UMC) **DEADLINE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6**

I would like to give _____ **RED POINSETTIAS** to be placed in the Sanctuary. (\$12.00 each)

In lieu of a poinsettia, I would like to give a contribution in the following amount. _____.

PLEASE PRINT THE INFORMATION BELOW CAREFULLY AND LEGIBLY.

In **MEMORY** of: _____

In **HONOR** of: _____

GIVEN by: _____

In lieu of placing a Poinsettia in the Sanctuary, I would like to give a contribution to Main Street United Methodist Church in

Memory/Honor of (circle one): _____



MISSIONS [NIGHT STAY DECEMBER 6 - 12]

WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH MEALS FOR THE HOMELESS!

CAPS Nightstay Program for 2020/2021 began this week, but is very different this year, due to Covid-19 restrictions and requirements. The guests will be housed at a motel through mid-March 2021, so our only opportunity to serve is to provide meals.

Main St. UMC will again co-coordinate with West End Baptist Church, with Phil McPhail as co-coordinator for Main St. serving with Molly Crow of West End Baptist.

Our week begins on Sunday December 6th with the evening meal, and ends Saturday, December 12th, with a dinner meal, a breakfast snack, and a lunch bag.

In past years, we have needed many volunteers, including drivers, overnight chaperones, etc., but this year we only need volunteers for meal provision. (We have already done health/toiletry kits, and will provide socks, caps, and other items. Thanks to our knitters who made caps, and to Robin Decker for making masks!)

There are too many details to mention here. **If you are interested in providing a meal, lunch, snack, or a \$10 gift card donation, please call Phil McPhail at 757.676.1131, or email me at jpmcphail737@gmail.com.**



Thank you in advance for being a good servant! Most importantly, keep those less fortunate in your daily prayers.

Phil McPhail

GRATITUDE SATURDAY BLESSINGS!



Thanks to everyone who participated in our Gratitude Saturday event! We gathered a lot of food for Suffolk Christian Fellowship Ministries, reached our cake frosting goal, made “thank you” yard signs and hygiene kits for those in need. It was great day!



“It was such a blessing for us to spend time with the church family today! I think each of the four of us was a little surprised at how powerful it was to fellowship and to soak up the sanctuary for a few minutes. Just wonderful!”

Looking forward to seeing y’all again soon

Eric, Angie, Caroline and Cassie Venable

DECEMBER 2020 [BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES]

[BIRTHDAYS]

12/2 Dillard Horton
12/2 Milaena Clark
12/3 Drew Catlett
12/4 Katie Askew
12/4 Hope Carr
12/6 Ruth Livingston
12/6 Marcus Welch
12/7 Scott Graham
12/9 Colette Ballard
12/10 Don Albritton
12/10 William Ballard
12/10 Jennifer Webb
12/10 Miles Birdsong
12/11 Chris Graham
12/12 Benjamin Beale
12/12 Todd Pruitt
12/12 Linda Ziegenfus
12/13 Taylor Elliott

12/14 Margo Johnson
12/15 Spencer Anthony
12/16 Miller Carr
12/17 Mary-Carson Stiff
12/18 Bo Russell
12/18 Samuel Towler
12/18 Samantha Bright
12/19 Becky Henschel
12/20 Haley Grizzle
12/20 David Russell
12/20 Laurel Johnson
12/21 Kilani Majette
12/23 Marie Baker
12/24 Jenna Brooks
12/24 Zac Hill
12/24 Sam Hill
12/24 Laura Wrighte
12/25 Henley Totten
12/27 Russell Bright

12/28 Laura Callis
12/29 Kellyann Austin
12/29 Lee Carr
12/29 Noah Callis
12/29 Tess Popik
12/30 Beth Gist
12/31 Anna Grace Towler
12/31 Kathy Salsbury

[ANNIVERSARIES]

12/07 Cliff & Pat Smith
12/08 Paul & Amy Callis
12/08 Ted & Debbie Williams
12/11 Danny & Amy Farley, Jr.
12/18 Brad & Barbara O'Berry
12/19 Jack & Lenora Holland
12/21 Jeff & Scherry Johnson
12/24 Rick & Katie Humphrey
12/30 Bill & Roberta Powell, Jr.
12/31 Robert & Marie Baker, III
12/31 Gregg & Molly Crow
12/31 Cabell & Mary Jane Birdsong



PRAYER LIST UPDATE

RECENT PRAYER: 11/22/20: Cheri Harrell Anthony, all those affected by COVID-19, Larry and Betty Hudson, Rebecca Musser, William Murphy, Matthew Agnese, Tom Buxton, Lydia Duke, Bob Callis, all who are affected by the hurricanes and fires; Annette Bailey; Andy Petras; CAPS Night Stay Program; Pastor Rich and Colleen; Sandra Wilson; Rev. Sylvia Meadows; Liz Wilson; Amy Davis Adams; June Barrett; Ann Cabell Pearce; Randy West; Sally Jo Billingsley; Gregg Crow

SYMPATHY: Scott Carr family on the death of his mother

ONGOING: Steve Clark, Sylvia Funkhouser, Heather Lawrence, Leila & Bob Tompert, Michael McPherson and Family, Lucas Lawrence, Joseph Medeiros, Stan Waterfield, Trenton Bishop, Juanita Colley, Carolyn Davis, Bobby Cullop, Pamela Edwards-Jones; Christi Bastion; Melissa Benscome

CANCER: Betty Sowell, Kate Rhoads, Brenda Atkins, Ralph Knapp, Nick Cleary, Wilma Babich, Ed Barber, Pam Askew, Linda Argust, Ray Holland, Midge Sanchez, Judy Duonela Vicars, Johnny Hardy, Thomas Burnett, Cheri Lane, Al Bremer, Diane Liles, Linda Harper, Faye Askew, Lois Barker, Angela Seed, Dave O'Neill, David Holloway, Judy Calfee, David Hollowell, Craig Holland, Christine Duran, Rod Rodrigues, Melaine Medeiros, Carol Coleman, Mary Lou Hedgepeth, Judy Holland, Kelly Grier (Ferguson) Coston, Fran Holland, Anita Nelson, June Adcock, Heather Carr, Dolores Farrero, Robert Wilson, Susan Shea, Jessica Chamberlain, Julie Nance, Michael McClung, Marshall Thomas, Jill Harris, John Nodeen, Michael Barrett, Richard J. Peko, Nancy Pike, Bill Pollock, Roland Word, Thelma Johnson, Shannon Rivera, Juel Carr, Nancy Spring Parker, Anita McLemore

SKILLED CARE: Bill Gallant, Doug McPhail

HOMEBOUND: Melanie French, Jean Sutphin

ASSISTED LIVING: Colette Ballard, Susan Rivenbark, Ray Shamburger, Frances Kelly

OUR NATION AND WORLD: Military Troops & Families: Chris Smith, Anthony Hickler, Hunter Pietrowski, Adam Waddell, Kent Brooks, Bryanna Grant, James Russell III, Kristi Kilborn, Wesley Linder, Duncan Bevan, Hayley Burton, Jonathan Burton, TJ Argust; First Responders; CAPS (Coalition Against Poverty in Suffolk); Our Schools; Main Street Day Care & Preschool; Workplaces & Homes; social justice, unity and peace; students, parents, teachers and administrators in local schools; safety and well being of our college students and professors, our President and national leaders

Church Staff & Contact Information

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DAY CARE/PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Julia Farmer | julia@mainstumc.org



The Main Street MESSENGER

OF MAIN STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



STEWARDSHIP GRATITUDE PRAYER

I have taken the liberty of acting as a representative of Main Street in order to write a letter of GRATITUDE to Our Lord and Savior, who is the Source of all gifts, which have been bestowed upon the generous givers of Main Street.

Dear Lord,

Where do I begin? First, like many members, I give you thanks for leading my loved ones and me to this wonderful family of believers we call Main Street. I give you praise for enriching my family's life through the fellowship, support, and Christian love which has surrounded us since the day we walked through these doors in the spring of 1998. I give you thanks for your divine choices of all the Pastors who have shepherded this congregation throughout the 200+ years of our existence; GRATITUDE that you anointed each of them with the undeniable power of Your Holy Spirit, allowing them to maximize their holy attributes to inspire, console, and love their parishioners.

I honor you for the lives of our Christian ancestors who served this church and now reside with you in heaven. Thank you for allowing those of us left behind to remember them, cherish them, and love them within these walls. We truly stand on the foundation of their vision, generosity and steadfast love for you.

I offer you GRATITUDE for the strength, conviction and courage for our present church family as we seek your wisdom and your direction during the difficulties of 2020 and beyond. I pray that your Spirit and your divine power continue to bring us closer together as a body of believers, even though we are being physically distanced by this pandemic.

Finally, I ask your continued blessings upon our church, our city, our state, and this great nation. May the challenges we face inspire all people to seek a closer relationship with you—the One from whom all blessings flow.

Thank you, Father,

Main Street

This prayer was written by Dr. Bo Browne, a member of the Stewardship Committee