



DECEMBER 2017

For much of my ministry I've stuck to the "no Christmas Carols during Advent" rule. Advent, the four Sundays before Christmas, are intended to be a time of preparation. But it's not a preparation focused on decorating the house, buying the tree, purchasing presents, wrapping gifts, hosting parties, putting up lights outside, and racking up credit card bills. Advent is meant to be season of spiritual preparation, readying our hearts for the arrival of Jesus. It's meant to be a season that puts us in touch with our deep need for Christ, as individuals and as a community.

The trouble is, while we're preparing in the church, the world outside the church is in full flung celebration. So what do we do? This year we'll bend the liturgical rules during Advent and let the Songs of the Season prepare our hearts for Christmas. Each Sunday in Advent the worship service will be focused on a different Christmas Carol. I hope that by exploring the images, history and context of various carols, you'll remember the promises and hopes they articulate when you hear them in the car or the at mall. Join us and celebrate the Songs of the Season.

Pastor Melissa Earley

December Worship - The Christmas Carols

December 3

On the first Sunday of Advent we'll explore the traditional Advent carol, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus", and observe Holy Communion.

December 10

The Illinois Brass Band will help us soar with the glorias of "Angels We Have Heard on High". The Illinois Brass Band will also play during worship.

December 17

We'll spend time with the lesser known carol, "Canticle of the Turning". The words are based on Mary's magnificat and the driving beat prepares us for the deep change that Jesus brings.

December 24 (Christmas Eve)

The morning of Christmas Eve, at 9:30 am, we will explore "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear", a tender carol that gives voice to our prayers for peace. This service will include prayer stations and a chance to sing your favorite carols (except "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World", which we're saving for the evening services).

December 31 (New Year's Eve)

Anthony Livoti will preach on "Joy to the World".

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

December 24

At all three of our Christmas Eve services we will continue to celebrate the Songs of the Season.

4:00 pm (child friendly service) "Go Tell it on the Mountain"

7:30 pm "Silent Night"

11:00 pm "Silent Night"

FUMCAH is planning a Haiti Mission Trip!



FUMCAH is heading to Sustainable Action International (SAI) on Sunday, July 22, 2018 for 5-7 days. In addition to visiting SAI in the rural, northern area of LaVictoire, Haiti, we hope to arrange a visit to Grace Children's Hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Grace Children's hospital is a United Methodist ministry, started in the 1960s.

Rev. Evens Paul will be at FUMCAH on Sunday, December 10, at 3:00 pm, to discuss the trip. Everyone interested in going is invited to come and ask questions and discuss possible activities. Missions has discussed the possibility of leading Vacation Bible School and/or a

women's conference. Of course, we are open to other ideas based on your interests and skills. More meetings with SAI will follow to learn about Haiti, try some Haitian food, and learn a few Creole words.

The trip is open to a maximum of 20 people (children are welcome). To make a commitment and reserve a space on the trip, we ask that you make a \$100 deposit to FUMCAH by May 31. If you have to cancel, the deposit will be donated towards trip expenses. We will fund raise as a group to help with the cost of the trip. Please contact Wendy Dunnington (wadunnington@gmail.com or 773-972-4188) for more information or to sign up!

Poinsettias with Purpose



Several years ago our church decided to turn Christmas upside down! That included an actual upside down Christmas tree in the loggia. In addition, rather than purchasing poinsettias to decorate our altar in honor or in memory of our loved ones, we encouraged members to make a donation to a charity instead.

This year we continue the tradition and our Poinsettias with Purpose cause is JOURNEYS: The Road Home. JOURNEYS is a non-profit agency that provides shelter, social services and housing to the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in 37 towns in north/northwest suburban Cook County. The mission of JOURNEYS is to individually assess and serve its clients, while broadening community awareness and involvement. The agency consists of the PADS Shelter Program, the HOPE Center Supportive Services Program, and the Pathways Housing Readiness Program focusing on intervention and assistance for those in need.

Poinsettias with Purpose are paper rather than real poinsettia plants. For each \$10 donation to JOURNEYS, the Missions Committee will hang a paper poinsettia at church. On these paper poinsettias, we will write your name, as well as the names of your loved ones that your donation is in honor of or in memory of. These names will also be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Forms for Poinsettias with Purpose will be in the Sunday bulletins. Use the pew mission envelope or pew envelope, include your gift and name of your loved one, and place it in the offering plate. You can also donate online at go.fumcah.com/poinsettias, drop it off in the office, or mail it to church. A member of the Missions Committee will transcribe your information to a poinsettia to hang for all to see. Thank you for lending a hand to those along The Road Home!

Missions Cookie Sale December 17



Sugar Spice and everything nice! It's cookie baking time again at FUMCAH. Our Missions Committee Cookie Sale will be

Sunday, December 17, and we could use your help. If you could add a batch of your favorite cookies, our Christmas boxes would be even more special. We will be filling individual boxes on Saturday morning, December 16, at 10:00 am and the church office will be open Friday morning to receive your cookies. Of all our mission projects, this well might be the tastiest. Please contact Pat Peterson with questions (847-255-3143).

Gift Giving for Faith Community Homes



United Methodist Women have been sponsoring a few families over the last few years by providing Christmas gifts. If you are interested and would like to participate please visit go.fumcah.com/gifts.

Communal Reading of Scripture

As the new year begins, you might want to consider tackling reading the entire Bible in one year. The Communal Reading of Scripture offers a weekly schedule that allows you to dip into various parts of the Bible each week. You do not read it chronologically. If you are interested, visit go.fumcah.com/biblereading and download the schedule.

Volunteer for Winter Warming 2018



Save the date for Winter Warming! This year it will take place on Saturday, January 13, 9:00am to 4:00pm. The Reconciling Ministries Team is currently recruiting volunteers for this annual event run by the Northern Illinois Conference chapter of Reconciling Ministries Network. For the third year in a

row, FUMCAH will host this gathering of NIC United Methodists who are passionate about full LGBTQIA inclusion in the life of the church. We are looking for volunteers who will consider giving their time to help with set-up or clean-up, registration, greeting, or room-monitoring for the event. Please contact Liz Evans (elizabeth.evans@garrett.edu) to volunteer.

Visit go.fumcah.com/winterwarming to learn more about the event,

Rainbow Circle Worship

Join Rainbow Circle for a monthly, LGBTQ+ focused worship at 4:00 pm, on December 17, in Fellowship Hall. There will be a potluck directly following worship. Straight allies welcome.

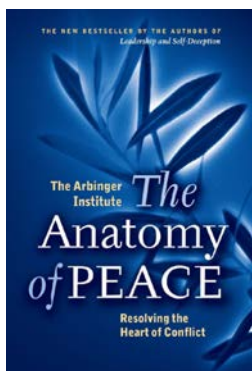
Rainbow Circle Christmas Party - All those who identify as LGBTQ+ are welcome to join Rainbow Circle for a Christmas Party on December 20, 6:30 to 9:00 pm. Bring a white elephant gift and a treat to share. Join us in the ROC.

For more information about Rainbow Circle Worship, visit their Meetup page (meetup.com/rainbowcircle/) or contact Liz Evans (elizabeth.evans@garrett.edu).

Anatomy of Peace – Small Groups for January

"Small groups are a way to connect with others in a meaningful way. A chance to get to know people in the church that you might not otherwise meet. One can learn new perspectives and ideas, thereby growing as a person."

- Tracey Ruder, one of our Anatomy of Peace leaders



At Christmas time, we welcome the birth of the Prince of Peace, but how do we incorporate that into our lives? Are our hearts truly at peace? Can we approach conflict in ways that promote just solutions rather than generating more antagonism?

In January, as a complement to our worship series, we are inviting members and friends of FUMCAH to join a small group. Groups will meet at a variety of times, growing in relationship as they read and discuss the book, Anatomy of Peace. Led by trained leaders from our congregation, groups will meet for five weeks, beginning the week of January 8.

Visit go.fumcah.com/smallgroups for updated information and registration. Small groups are one way that we can enrich our faith journeys. Contact Pastor Lynn Mikels (l.mikels@fumcah.com) with questions.

Kaleidoscope - An Adult Faith Formation Opportunity After Worship

December 3- Using Social Media



Our own Maya Rayner, FUMCAH's Communications Manager, will lead us in "Using Social Media." You will learn new ways to promote and connect.

December 10 - Art of the Reformation



Art historian Jeff Mishur returns to present a lecture on "Art of the Reformation." This engaging program will help us further understand and appreciate the 500th Anniversary of that important event.

December 17 - Holidays or Holidays: Self-Empowerment



The holidays can be enriching or exhausting, delightful or depressing – and sometimes a little of each. Join Dr. Joan Durlacher, PsyD, and a panel from our Depression and Bi-Polar Support Alliance, as they share valuable insights about the season.

Kaleidoscope is our multi-faceted Sunday morning program welcoming all adults. The focus changes from week to week with various topics and frequent guest speakers – all hoping to offer interesting perspectives on life and faith. Kaleidoscope meets after worship, about 10:40 am, in the Wesley Room on the lower level. Pick up your coffee in Fellowship Hall and head over! For more information about Kaleidoscope or Adult Faith Formation, contact Pastor Lynn Mikels (l.mikels@fumcah.com).

October Mission Update - Tree of Life Ministry



October's Mission was donating hats and mittens or gloves to the Tree of Life Ministry which resides on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. I wanted to thank everyone for their generous contributions.

We collected 159 sets of hats and mittens, 44 pairs of gloves, plus several scarves. A special thanks to the women of the Soothing Stitches Ministry for all their support. If anyone is interested in making or contributing hats and mittens next year, I have crocheting and sewing

patterns for your use. I can be reached via email at tpassolt@gmail.com. I send hats and mittens to the children on an Indian reservation annually.

-Terry Passolt

Letter from Student Ministry

I saw an article the other day called "Millennials are Killing These Industries". It listed products that are losing profits, which included things like wine, cable TV, and soap! Being a Millennial myself, I found it interesting that such a large group of people would be labeled as "killers of industries".

The main subject of that article is not my point, but it does highlight that there are a lot of things that the Millennial generation gets flak for. I am not defending my generation, but rather, I'd like to think about generalities as a whole. Everyone in my generation is not the same, even though we may have similarities. And it is not the sole fault of one group of people for the problems in this world, just as it will not be the fault of the generation that is rapidly approaching behind me. Often times, it seems easy to blame the problems that we face on one particular brand of person and say, if they just thought more like us, maybe the world would be a better place.

The reality is that each generation has flaws and victories, and that any generation that precedes our own likely scoffed at the previous one for being lazy and entitled. We often see the differences in our generations as detrimental or unsuccessful, when we could be teaching one another ways of multi-generational learning. One thing that has fallen by the wayside for all generations, is the ability to interact with each other. This also happens to be one of the greatest opportunities for churches in today's culture. We can do something very few other places can do: learn from each other no matter how old or young or young at heart we are!

I encourage you to build a relationship with someone outside of your age demographic. Today, four out of five high school students who graduate subsequently leave the church. The greatest factor for a person at that developmental stage, desiring to continue life in the body of Christ, is a relationship with generations that came before them. We do this officially through mentoring and discussion leadership in the student ministry, but it takes more than just official acts of staff members and leaders to make a difference.

- Teenagers, go to someone's house outside your age range and play a game with them.
- Senior Citizens, get to know a young family and encourage their children when you see them in the halls playing together.
- Families, dedicate yourselves to an older couple who have family far away and pray for them or do something special with them on grandparents day.
- Kids, ask advice from older people. Even if you don't always follow the advice, at least you'll know something new.
- College students, send letters to people from church who have made a difference in your lives. A thank you note goes a long way.

There are so many ways to unite the church body across age groups while the world around us is segregating us. Don't let that happen! Be a revolutionary change in our church body and in the world around you!

Visit fumcah.com/student to learn more about volunteer positions or contact Anthony Livoti (a.livot@fumcah.com).

How Well Do You Know The Carols?



FUMCAH parents often tell me that their kids “just don’t know the Christmas carols.” It’s true; other than a few select places, we’re all more likely to sing “Santa Baby” than to sing about the baby born in Bethlehem. I’m glad that our December worship features a special carol each Sunday. We’ll enjoy singing old favorites and discover others that are destined to be favorites in the future.

To help set the mood, I’m offering a Carol Quiz. See if you can “name that carol” based on a couple of lines from the second or third stanzas of the carol. All of the words lift up the wonder of Christmas: that age-old story still capable of transforming lives today. May your home and heart be filled with the songs, stories and spirit of Christmas!

Pastor Lynn

Christmas Carol Quiz! Answers on page 6

All carols are from our United Methodist hymnal.

1. Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray.

2. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come peasant, king to own him; the King of Kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.

3. Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar; seek the great Desire of nations.

4. Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger, we would embrace thee with love and awe. Who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?

5. All Glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace; good will henceforth from heaven to earth begin and never cease.

6. No more lets sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground.

7. There's a tumult of joy o'er the the wonderful birth, for the virgin's sweet boy is the Lord of the earth.

8. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

Childcare provider needed for JAM

FUMCAH is looking for someone with a love for children to provide care on Wednesday evenings during the JAM program. Children range in age from infancy to 4 years old. The position is paid and runs from 4:45pm - 7:15pm Wednesday evenings during the school year. A delicious dinner is also provided. If you are interested or know someone who is, please have them contact Sara Reich at sarajreich@gmail.com.

Thank You from Bountiful Harvest

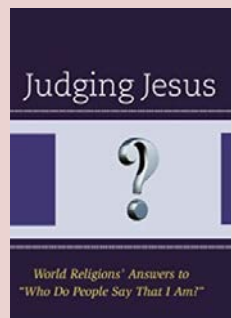
Thank you to all the gardeners who brought their produce to share. Thanks also to all those who selected items and donated money. Because of all this generosity we were able to donate \$575 to North West Compass for their Food Pantry.



**Christmas Tea
Hosted by United Methodist Women
December 5**



United Methodist Women invite you to Christmas Tea on Tuesday, December 5, at 7:00pm. Join us for an evening of refreshments and music from the Rolling Meadows High School Madrigal Singers. All are welcome.



**Book Discussion with Dr. Wayne Johnson
December 6**

Dr. Wayne Johnson, author of "Judging Jesus: World Religions' Answers to 'Who Do They Say That I am?'" will join us on Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 pm, in the Wesley Room to discuss his book.

Dr. Johnson's book examines both the

nature of religion and how major world religions consider the significance of Jesus of Nazareth. Voices from Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism make differing evaluations of Jesus. Dr. Johnson is a former Lutheran pastor and Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, UW-Parkside.

Leah Nakamura is bringing Kringle from Racine. Please let her know at mrsldn1@gmail.com or 847-560-4110 if you would like to join the discussion so enough food is available.

**Illinois Brass Band Performance
December 10**



We are delighted that the Illinois Brass Band will be joining us again on Sunday, December 10, playing a variety of Christmas music and holiday favorites. They will present

an extended Prelude and play throughout the worship service. Please make sure to come 15 minutes early that morning, so you don't miss out. Nothing beats the beautiful sound of brass, especially at Christmas time!

**FAITH Circle Holiday Dinner
December 13**

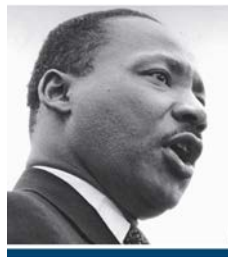


Mark your calendars for a fun evening of fellowship at Bistro Chen in Arlington Heights on December 13, at 6:30pm. Please contact Patty Neuswanger (pattyneu@sbcglobal.net) with questions.

**FUMCAH De-decorating
January 6**



Save the date! Join us on Saturday January 6 to help put away decorations. Please call GERALYN MAY with questions (847-452-9980).



Save the Date!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Faith in Action Assembly - January 15, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Join the Faith in Action Team and other northwest Community Renewal Society churches at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Faith in Action Assembly and Governor's Candidate Forum.

The 2018 Assembly will be held at Old St. Patrick's Church at 700 West Adams in Chicago. This will be an opportunity to learn about the candidates for Governor and share our priorities with them.

Visit go.fumcah.com/mlk for additional information.



Save the date!

Winter Farmers Market - February 11

Enjoy fall and winter produce, honey, jams, meats, and more while supporting local farmers. If you'd like to help promote our market event or assist with setup or take down, contact Allison Anderson on our Faith in Action Team (allison.anderson.1804@gmail.com or 847-525-7518).

A Green Gift in Memory and its Lasting Legacy

At this time of year, we remember the ones we love. It is especially so for Stephanie Sutton, whose Mom passed away 3 years ago around Thanksgiving. As a way of celebrating her life, the Sutton family used memorial funds to make a contribution towards FUMCAH's solar panels. This "green" gift literally provides light and energy to our congregation, and is a lasting, loving legacy to Meg Ziegler's children, grandchildren and our church family. In recognition, we thank the Suttons and remember their memorial gift. Please consider what's meaningful to you. What legacy would you like to be remembered for?

Answers to the Christmas Carol Quiz on page 5

1. Away in a Manger
2. What Child Is This
3. Angels from the realms of Glory
4. O Come, All Ye Faithful
5. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks
6. Joy to the World
7. There's a Song in the Air
8. O Little Town of Bethlehem

Building Committee Update

The building committee met a number of times over the last month. The main discussion point was: can the church afford the projected \$2,000,000+ cost of the New Welcome Center addition? The conclusion is that even if we could afford the cost of that project, it would still leave the office/preschool area of the building in need of updates that we would probably not be able to afford to address for another ten years. It was decided we would explore taking the main goals of the Welcome Center project and incorporating them into our existing building while addressing the deficiencies of that space. We used the Feasibility Study that was prepared for FUMCAH by the Generosity Group, as a guideline in establishing the parameters for the plan. Those would include 1) a main entrance that is handicap accessible including a covered portico extending into the parking lot; 2) a first floor gathering area with modern restrooms, 3) nursery space and 4) a food preparation area. The plan is to incorporate these ideas into the design along with updating windows, air conditioning, fire suppression and bringing the space up to village code.

Our architectural firm, JNKA Architects, are preparing ideas that when completed, will be presented to the congregation. Because of the reworking of these plans, the parking lot reconstruction has been put off until the beginning of spring. We wanted to make sure that any changes done with the design of the building be coordinated with the parking lot reconstruction. We look forward to keeping you updated.

Tom Herr - Building Committee Chair

Congregation News

Baptisms

Clara Mae Livoti on November 5, daughter of Becca and Anthony Livoti

Julianna Pauline Conroy on November 12, daughter of Adena and Jim Conroy

Death

Jonathan Mayhercy on October 6

2018 Stewardship Update

As of today, we expect the giving from pledges in 2018 to be about \$616,000, roughly a 6% increase from 2017. So far, we've received 149 giving commitments. Thank you to the 50 givers who increased their pledge and thanks also to the 13 new pledges. We are still waiting to hear from 34 families whose giving we expect to be at the same level as 2017. Thank you to all who give to the ministries of First United Methodist Church. If you have any questions or concerns about your pledge, please contact Melinda in the church office.

Financial Report through September 2017

October Revenue: \$61,802 Year-to-date Revenue: \$611,534

October Expense: \$72,235 Year-to-date Expense: \$617,125

We have paid ten months (\$75,600) of our \$90,720 apportionment for 2017.

Consider Electronic Funds Transfer – no need to worry that you don't have your checkbook or cash with you! And, please let me know if you'd like any help looking at your pledges and contributions on our church database, Access ACS.

With Access ACS, you can also set up contributions, through your bank account or credit card. Please consider rounding up your donation to cover the fees for this service, especially on credit card charges (2.25%). We really encourage EFTs; it's great for household and church budgeting!

Contact Melinda in the church office with any financial questions or concerns.

Thank you very much for your good stewardship in 2017!

Thank you Letter from Bonnie Beckonchrist

In this season of Thanksgiving I count you among my many blessings. Your cards, calls, flowers, visits, meals and prayers have buoyed these difficult months of injury and rehab. For your attention I will be forever grateful.

Bonnie



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