

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ALAN

December promises to be an exciting month at First United Methodist Church! This year our Advent theme is the “**The Light that Shines**” and each week will correspond with the traditional meanings of the Advent Candles: Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. As we journey together towards the celebration of Christmas, we will explore some of the prayers that anticipate Jesus’ coming in both the Old and New Testaments, and ways that we might join in those prayers. On **Christmas Eve** we will gather to celebrate and remember Christ’s birth, with our **Family Service at 5:00 PM.** and our **Festival of Lessons & Carols at 9:00 PM.** Both services will include communion and candlelight.

I am also very excited about the **Wednesday Morning Advent Study**, which will meet **November 28 through December 19 at 11:00 AM.** Each Wednesday we will study Walter Brueggemann’s book, ***Names for the Messiah***, which explores each of the royal titles for the Messiah that we find in Isaiah 9:6—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Together we will join Brueggemann in pondering each title and how the people understood it then, how Jesus did or did not fulfill the title, and how Christians interpret Jesus as representative of that title.

Finally, just one more reminder of our new contemporary worship service, **Genesis II**, which begins on **December 2 at 10:00 AM.** We are very excited about this new opportunity to welcome new folks into our church so that together we can **Seek Relationship with God** in our worship and praise. The best way for people to find about this is through word of mouth. So, I urge you to invite people you know who might be interested to come and try out Genesis II, or any of our other worship services. This is a time of year when people feel that they want to be back in church, and sometimes all that is missing is an invitation and someone who is willing to welcome them to church and sit with them. As we prepare to welcome the Lord, one of the best gifts we can give is to invite others to join in all the good that comes into our life because of Jesus’ presence in it!

Peace,

Pastor Alan

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES | MONDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

Family Service	5:00PM
Festival of Lessons & Carols	9:00PM



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Tricia Givens, Director

"Being Present"

During my parent classes, parents shared so many concerns and issues that they face in the daily challenge of parenting. The challenge of providing for their children what they needed, but not always what they wanted. Big difference! The challenge is finding a balance. The challenge is how do we nurture children who grow up to be giving, loving and compassionate adults? One parent said he had heard it was important for a Parent to be PRESENT. Now what does that mean? Not present by just being there, but present by being really engaged with the child and truly listening and interacting. Often we are with our children, but not really with them. We are distracted, busy and hurried. Children can tell if we are not really with them. This is when they go back to the TV, the phone, or the video games. After a while, they find comfort in those things and forget even what they needed to talk to us about. So, how can we find time to be present with our children, but at the same time not become overly attentive to our children to the point of spoiling?

"The Present" - Your children may want lots of things at **Christmas**. They will have a long list for Santa. Possibly consider just giving three gifts to your child (as the three wise men did). Maybe encourage grandparents (I am at fault too) to not give but one nice present and then maybe plan a nice experience for the child. Honestly, your children would rather have some time with you and a life experience that will become a treasured memory. Your PRESENCE may be the greatest PRESENT. Trust me the toys will often get broken and soon end up in closets and forgotten. Christmas morn becomes gifts unwrapped with children's eyes glazed over with exhaustion but still asking, "are there any more presents?" It all becomes too much. However, instead of a wrapped gift; a trip, a life experience with your child may be a memory they will remember for years to come. Now, I do not mean that all gifts are forgotten, for I can still remember a baby doll I received, which I had longed for all year. I treasured that doll and I still have it. I remember a doll bed that my dad made for my doll. Yes, gifts can be treasured, kept and cherished. We know deep what those gifts are, but the giving and giving and overdoing actually lessens the joy for your child of receiving that **"special gift"**. So, giving only two or three thoughtful gifts will have more of a chance of being truly appreciated.

"The Giving Experience" - Plan time with your children to go and serve together somewhere. Create a memory of GIVING. You can just go to a nursing home, take stuffed animals and visit with the elderly. They get so lonely this time of year. Take your children and ring the bell for the Salvation Army. Have your child take money from their bank to give to the Salvation Army or the rescue mission. Have your children wrap gifts, that they help select for a needy child. Nurture their empathy, as a family, by doing these things together. Go sing Christmas carols together with another family in the neighborhood (this will be fun for you as well). Help your children send cards to homebound people. A card from a child is so special. But, mostly make a little time each day to truly be PRESENT with your child. Help them to find ways to be truly PRESENT for others where needed. Sometimes a family needs to plan ahead time, when they can truly be PRESENT with their children, during the day. It may take real effort to plan for that special time. Most importantly help them realize that God is always PRESENT, whenever they need to talk or share. HE is there for them and He is there for you also. It is nice when our children have been taught to go to God, when parents are not around or not available. Find time to share the true meaning of Christmas with your children by teaching them of Christ's coming. **Share with them the fact that God sent His only Son, Christ, to show us how PRESENT he wants to be in our lives.**

In His Service,
Tricia Givens

Sunday School (Parent Connection)

It was suggested that I share what your kids are studying in Sunday school each month. They will of course be studying the time of Christ's birth, during December. We will go over the time Mary was spoken to by God's angel and when Joseph was spoken to by an angel in his dreams. We will go over the birth and why Jesus' birth was so important and why Jesus came to earth to live. The children will learn about the Wise men who came two years after Christ's birth.

Be sure to share the Christmas story, at home, with your children. Read the story from your own Bibles at home. The birth of Christ is shared in detail in the gospel of Matthew and Luke. You may start with Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 1:18-24 and then Matthew 3:1-23, which will add some other details to Christ's birth - prior and after. If your child can read, have them read part of the Christmas story each night, till you have completed the story in both gospels. Talk about why Jesus came to live among man. We will share with them that Christ is how God came to live among us. Emmanuel

means "God is with us."

I hope this helps with family devotions and bible time at your home. Please use the advent materials your child will receive during Sunday school. Their advent material will give you scriptures and activities to do with your child, which will help you truly celebrate the real message of Christmas.

Any questions, feel free to email me at triciag@fumcsalemva.org.

Now take a journey through Advent together this year! :)

Advent Devotionals

Please pick up your family Advent devotional at the welcome center, in the Narthex or in Genesis. Advent is a time to prepare Christ's birthday.

Fellowship Sunday, December 2nd

Church Candlelight Christmas Dinner - A night of music, fellowship and surprises!

6:00 pm Music Program by all the music groups in our church.

6:30 pm Dinner (ham, beans, potatoes, cupcakes and rolls)

7:00 pm SURPRISE VISITOR (parents bring your camera)

Please bring hats, gloves, scarves and either new or gently worn coats for us to distribute to needy children in our area.

Wesley Kids & Tweens

Meet in the chapel at 5:00pm. You will be decorating the Family Christmas Tree in Genesis! You will also put together cards to send to our home bound members, hospitals and to community helpers.

Children's Choirs

Our choir Christmas party is December 16th. Meet in the fellowship hall from 5:00pm -6:30pm. We will go caroling. Feel free to bring your family and friends. Dress Warm! We will return for pizza, dessert, and a little thank you gift from me. Thank you for all your time in choir and for serving our church and blessing my life!

Kids in the Spotlight

This month we recognize Rachel Pennington. Rachel is in choirs and come to Sunday school. She participates in Wesley Kids and VBS. Rachel has a sweet and loving heart. She tries to help and works hard to do her best. She shares and is a good friend. Rachel is kind to all who are around her. Rachel is the daughter of Mike and Erica Pennington and the sister to Tara Pennington. Thank you Rachel for making a difference at First United Methodist Church.

Children's Ministry Volunteers of the Month

This month Children's Ministry recognizes Trayce Coe. Trayce has been a help to children's ministry for years. She teaches VBS and will serve wherever I need her. She teaches Sunday School. She helps with extended. She helps with many other children events. Trayce mostly adds so much support to our programs with her kind sweet spirit and jovial disposition. She is a treasure. Thank you Trayce- for making a difference here at First Church. The book, "**The Jesus Storybook Bible**," has been given to our children ministry library in your honor.

WESLEYAN PRESCHOOL

Jane Butto, Director

As you can imagine, this is an exciting and fun place, especially during the month of December!

Our children are all learning the real meaning of Christmas through Bible stories and Chapel. We are so blessed to have Bobby, Pastor Alan and Tricia leading our Chapel time this year for our Pre-K classes. We also will be having so much fun participating in Christmas traditions like decorating trees, making gifts and of course eating goodies! Our 3 year old classes will host their annual Cookie Decorating parties with their parents. Our Pre-K classes will be learning about Christmas Around the World. They also will be going to visit the Hotel Roanoke to see the trees.

Please join us for the 3 and 4 year old classes **Christmas Program on Monday, December 17th at 6:00pm** in the Sanctuary. This is a sweet musical program presented by Tricia Givens and our preschool teachers.

Merry Christmas from all of us to all of you!

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Jessica Gehman, Director

Youth Reality Check Christmas Party

The Youth will be having our final get together for 2018 on Sunday, December 9th from 6:00-7:30PM! Make sure to get a gift no more than \$20 for white elephant.

Small Group Information

Group	Day	Time	Location
6th-8th Grade	Mondays Last small group for the year 12/17/18	7:30-8:30pm	Off Site
9th-12th Grade	Wednesdays Last small group for the year 12/12/18	7:30-8:30pm	Off Site

Youth Contact Information

E-mail: jessicak@fumcsalemva.org

NEW Facebook Group: FUMC Impact Youth Ministry

Remind App: Text 81010 with message: @2015impact

NEW Youth Website: youth.fumcsalemva.org

Winter Camp at Alta Mons

Open to current 2nd through 12th Graders| December 14-16th| \$99 Included with the cost of registration: a Winter Camp Long Sleeve T-Shirt

S'mores over a campfire, hikes to the (potentially frozen) waterfall, starry nights, and camp friends are all waiting for you at winter camp. We'll be incorporating the highlights of summer camp along with fun Christmas activities (decorating cookies, making ornaments, other fun surprises!) to make winter camp full of memories, laughter, and community. This year's winter camp theme, "Beauty Of They Peace," Is all about finding and knowing a peace that is set apart from our circumstances. Over the weekend, campers will learn how God sent Jesus to be the peace of the world and how we as Christians can find great comfort and joy in that beautiful act. You don't want to miss out, so register TODAY! Spot go fast!

ADULT MINISTRIES & OUTREACH

Rev. Bobby J. Pickle, Director

SKY Group Luncheon

Our final SKY luncheon for the year will be Thursday, December 13th from 11:30AM - 1:30PM in the Fellowship Hall. The program will be our very own Mr. Jim Robinson playing his dulcimer and spinning some tales! This will be our Christmas luncheon and that means lots of delicious food and wonderful fellowship. So come and join us and bring a friend; you'll be glad you did!

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Heather Mitchell, Coordinator of Music Ministries

A Christmas Music Program will be held for the First Sunday event on Sunday, December 2nd at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. All of the various musical choirs and groups will provide music. Dinner will follow the music program and be served in the Fellowship Hall. Be sure to put this date in your calendar. It's a fantastic way to start the Christmas season, get in the spirit, and hear some favorite Christmas songs!

This year we will not have a specific music Sunday, like we have had in the past, when we scheduled as many groups as possible to be in the 11:00 a.m. traditional service. We are making a concentrated effort to spread all of our musical

groups between all three of our services. You will see below the additional groups that will join the Praise Band in Genesis and the Sanctuary Choir at the 11:00 a.m. traditional service.

Sunday	Musical Group(s)	Service(s)
Dec 2nd	Heavenly Bells	8:45AM Traditional
Dec 9th	Children’s Choirs	8:45AM Traditional & 8:45AM Genesis
	JuBELLation	8:45AM Genesis & 11:00AM Traditional
	Youth Choir	11:00AM Traditional
Dec 16th	Roanoke Chamber Brass	8:45 & 11:00AM Traditional
	Children’s Choirs	11:00AM Traditional
Dec 23rd	Resounding Joy	8:45 & 11:00AM Traditional

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Days for Girls Mission Project

UMW CIRCLE 5 will meet Tuesday, December 11 in Room 116 at 9:50 a.m. We will go in the church van to Rebecca S. Frazier's home for a Christmas Celebration and luncheon. We will continue collecting fabric and soap for our mission work "Days for Girls" with Northview U.M.C. The next workday is Monday, Dec.10 at 9:00 a.m. A big thanks go to all who have taken part in Circle 5's mission projects.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Pew Angels

How would you like to be a blessing to our church just one day a month? We are looking for a few people to join our Pew Angel group. It involves one day a month where you would join others to straighten up the Sanctuary, Balcony and Chapel replacing pamphlets/envelopes/pens/bookmarks, and straightening Hymnals and Bibles. It usually doesn't take more than an hour, is much appreciated by our congregation, and looks nice for visitors! You can email Hilda Paxton at hpaxton54@gmail.com or call (540) 765-7364 for more information.

Bereavement Committee

A special “Thank You” to all volunteers that are currently serving on the Bereavement Committee. You are a blessing to our congregation! These members are periodically asked to provide a simple refreshment and assist with set-up, serving, and clean-up for receptions. The responsibilities are alternately shared by three teams. The Bereavement Committee is in need of additional members. If you are willing to join this special committee, please call the church office at (540) 389-5459, email church@fumcsalemva.org, or call Donna Copenhaver at (540) 389-0743.

THANK YOU

The Property Committee would like to send a HUGE thanks to Bill Hill for his assistance in welding projects and ice machine repairs. Thank you, Bill, for volunteering your time and talents to serve our church!

FINANCIAL UPDATE

2019 Pledge Cards

If you have not yet turned in your 2019 pledge card, please do so as the Finance Committee will be reviewing total pledges vs. the provisional 2019 budget. Extra pledge cards may be found at the Welcome Center and Church Office. You may also email your pledge to margaretw@fumcsalemva.org.

2018 Finances

Please be reminded as we approach the end of the calendar year we will need to pay several months of apportionments in addition to regular monthly expenses. If you have not yet fulfilled your pledge commitment for 2018, but are able to do so now, we would greatly appreciate it.

Please remember that you may also make a gift (of stock, mutual funds, etc.) to FUMC and a) avoid all broker commissions/fees, b) avoid all capital gains taxes, c) take the full market value of the security as a 2018 tax donation (regardless of what you may have originally paid for it), d) possibly satisfy your 2018 Required Minimum Distribution

(RMD) if you are over age 70½, and e) benefit FUMC with the full market value of the security. Thank you for your faithful support of our church and its ministries!

***All mailed end of year contributions must be postmarked by December 31, 2018 to be included in 2018 tax statements. Please do not place contributions in the office or office mailbox outside of business hours without a postmark.**

CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS: Please note the church office hours for Christmas/New Year’s below:

OFFICE HOURS	
Dec 24th	8:30AM-12:00PM
Dec 25th-Dec 28th	CLOSED
Dec 31st	8:30AM-12:00PM
Jan 1st	CLOSED

CALENDAR INFORMATION

The following calendar contains information received by the Church Office as of November 1, 2018. Please contact your group leader if you have questions about a specific event. Any updates or changes will be communicated by your group leader.

Please note the following weekly calendar items are not represented due to space constraints:

Weekly Choir & Bell Schedule

Sunday

- Heavenly Bells 3:00pm
- Cherub Choir 3:30pm
- Chorister Choir 4:00pm
- JuBELLation 4:00pm
- Youth Choir 5:00pm

Tuesday

- GENESIS Praise Band 7:00pm

Thursday

- Resounding Joy 6:00pm
- Sanctuary Choir 7:30pm

DECEMBER 2018

Calendar information is as of November 1st. Please check with group leaders for more information.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Senior High Fall Retreat
2 5:00pm - Wesley Kids & Tweens 6:00pm - Music Program 6:30pm - Fellowship Dinner	3 12:00pm - January Newsletter Deadline 6:15pm - Wesley Tweens 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA	4 10:00am - SKY Board 6:30pm - Cub Scouts	5 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 12:00pm - Bulletin Deadline 5:30pm - Girl Scouts 6:00pm - Communications 7:30pm - 9-12 Small Group	6 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon	7	8 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon
9 12:15pm - Trustees Meeting 6:00pm - Youth Christmas Party	10 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA	11 10:00am - Circle 5 6:30pm - Girls on the Run 6:30pm - Cub Scouts	12 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 12:00pm - Bulletin Deadline 6:45pm - Circle 9 7:30 - 9-12 Small Group	13 11:30am - SKY Club 6:00pm - Girl Scouts	14 10:00am - Parliamentarians 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon	15
16 5:00pm - Children's Choir Christmas Party & Caroling	17 6:00pm - Preschool Christmas Program 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA	18 9:00am - DCOM 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 7:00pm - Finance Meeting	19 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 12:00pm - Bulletin Deadline (23rd & 30th) 12:15pm - Staff Meeting 5:30pm - Girl Scouts 7:00pm - Shawl Ministry	20 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon	21	22
23 All Services & Sunday School	24 Christmas Eve Church Office Closes at 12PM 5:00pm - Family Service 9:00pm - Festival of Lessons & Carols	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29
30 Combined Worship No Sunday School	31 New Year's Eve Church Office Closes at 12PM	Church Office Closed				

First United Methodist Church

125 West Main Street

Salem, VA 24153-0887

First United Methodist Church Staff

- ◆ Lead Pastor, **Alan Combs** (alancombs@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Associate Minister, **Jeffrey Dorsey** (jeff@dorseylawfirm.com)
- ◆ Director of Children’s Ministries & Children’s Choirs, **Tricia Givens** (triciag@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Youth Ministries Director, **Jessica Gehman** (jessicak@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Director of Wesleyan Preschool, **Jane Butto** (jbutto@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Coordinator of Music Ministries, **Heather Mitchell** (hmittchell@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Organist, **Judith Snyder** (jsnyder@hollins.edu)
- ◆ Piano Accompanist for Children & Youth, **London Reinhard**
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Allan Davidson** (davidsonallan4@gmail.com)
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Joey Poarch** (joseph.poarch@gmail.com)
- ◆ Office & Communications Manager, **Margaret Woolwine** (margaretw@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Sextons, **Butch & Genia Johnson** (winhoos1@hotmail.com)

Roanoke District and VA Annual Conference

Bishop, **Sharma Lewis** District Superintendent, **Kathleen Overby Webster**

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