



December 2020

Steeple Chimes

Monthly Publication by Stockton United Methodist Church, Stockton, MO.

Steeple Chimes Going Digital Starting January 2021

***Contact the office to receive your Steeple Chimes by the following:**

***Email, Pick-Up (at church), or Mail (first class)**



Pastor's Paragraph

Advent 2020 is here! Advent is the beginning of the Christian year. Advent is a season of waiting and hoping which leads up to the celebration of the birth of Christ on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day. Doesn't 2020 seem like one extremely long Advent season? We have done a lot of waiting and hoping over the last nine months. Waiting for us looks like sheltering in place. It looks like church services being closed and only available online. It looks like being unable to gather with family and friends for special occasions. It means not being able to gather for Easter to celebrate the resurrection of Christ in a timely manner. And how many of us have fearfully and anxiously waited for days in quarantine to get the results of a Covid test for ourselves or a loved one?

And what does hope look like in this seemingly never-ending season. We have hoped Dollar General or Walmart would not run out of toilet paper before we could get there. We have hoped that we would not be exposed to the virus when we could not avoid venturing out to do the essential shopping that had to be done. We hoped and prayed for our families and loved ones to be

kept safe from the virus. We hoped that folks out in public would use some common sense and wear masks and socially distance. We have hoped and prayed for a vaccine and a cure. (There is reason to be hopeful on this front, but the virus is still raging and claiming about 1,100 lives each day in the U.S.)

If ever there was a time, we needed the Christian season of Advent, it is now! We need to hear the words of the prophets and the proclamation of the gospels. We need to hear Isaiah's proclamation of the message of God to his people. We need a "thus saith the Lord." Isaiah expresses the prayer of many of us when he says, "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!" (Isa. 64:1a) He tells of how the people feel as if God has abandoned them and how he wishes God would "show up" like he did in the past with healing and power. In Mark 13:24-37, part of what interpreters call Mark's "Little Apocalypse," Jesus offers a word of encouragement to his followers who have undergone suffering: be alert, watch and wait, for God is coming to set things right.

Isaiah 40:1-11 offers a clear word of comfort to God's people who have been wandering in a wilderness of lostness and discouragement. God addresses Isaiah and tells him to speak words of comfort to Israel; that they have served their term and to make ready a highway for their God for he is coming with power and might.

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Pastor's Paragraph

Continued from page 1

Verses 10-11 say, "See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep." In Mark 1 we meet John the Baptizer. He is the one who will become Isaiah's "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" who will prepare the way of the Lord.

Isaiah 61:1-11 gives us a glimpse into the ministry of the Messiah when he comes. Of Jesus, the Messiah, Isaiah says, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit." In John 1:6-8; 19-28, the gospel for the third Sunday of Advent, we again meet John the Baptizer who testifies that he is not the Messiah, but that the one who comes after him (Jesus) is the one for whom Israel has been waiting.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent we read the Scriptures from 2 Samuel 7:1-11 and Luke 1:26-38. Samuel tells us that God promised the throne of David would last forever. Luke tells of the annunciation to Mary that she was going to give birth to the Messiah by the power of the Holy Spirit. May our response to God's call in our lives be as that of Mary's. "Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." All of these Advent Scriptures are

meant to encourage God's people as we wait in hope for God's light to pierce our darkness.

Yes, we will observe the Advent season of waiting and hoping, but we will do so with a different spirit than we have for the past nine months. And we will celebrate the birth of the Christ child with joy, music, and song. It may look and feel a little different this year than in years past, but the message is still the same: Jesus is our Immanuel—God is with us!

Blessings!

Pastor Jim

Spotlight

Sherlene Netsch, *Spotlight*

We are entering the season of loving and giving. It all started with God. "For God so LOVED the world, he GAVE His only begotten Son..."

Stockton United Methodist Church is a loving and giving church. Everyone here has a talent to share. None is more important than another, although some may take more time or energy.

December Spotlight shines on every member of our church. Think of it as God's light shining on us to illumine and strengthen us all. With the strength of that light, try to do something each day to pass it on. Maybe a specific prayer, phone call, or lending a helping hand would brighten the day for someone.

Keep the light of God, shining on us and through us, brightening the holidays for all we meet.

May God bless us all.





Announcements

Church Council *Highlights*

Marvin Manring, Lay Leader

Council convened for a brief meeting at 11:45 a.m.

November 15, 2020

Attendance: Chairman Marvin Manring; Pastor Jim Coffer; Susan Holt; Sherlene Netsch; Ellen Morris; Doyle Fry; Elizabeth Erickson; Linda Hall.

The meeting was opened by Marvin.

The October 11, minutes were approved.
(Sherlene/Ellen)

Pastor Parish Relations: Sherlene motioned Christmas bonuses for the staff be the same as last year. Approved. (Sue/Ellen)

Finance: Susan reported the checking balance of \$48,522.68. The Conference apportionment is lowered to 75% due to the virus.

Stewardship: Commitment Sunday is a focus for the congregation. It was agreed to send a letter and pledge card to the membership. Pastor Jim, Ted Woodrell and Marvin will have a budget meeting soon.

Pastor's Report: Hanging of the Green will be celebrated at the November 29 morning service. Approved. (Pastor Jim/Sherlene). Saturday November 28 will be a workday in preparation for the Hanging of the Green. There are no community services planned this year.

Digital Steeple Chimes: Beginning in January, the digital Steeple Chimes will save about \$1,000. a year in paper, postage, and bulk mailing permit. Printed copies will be mailed on request and available at the church.

Online Charge Conference: Attended by Pastor Jim Coffer, Mitch Ross, Marvin Manring, and Wanda Cassell.

Pastor Jim closed the meeting with prayer.

Linda Hall, Recording Secretary

Next Council Meeting will be held December 20, 2020, following morning services.

Steeple Chimes Going Digital

Starting in January 2021, the Steeple Chimes newsletter will become digital. All members and friends for whom we have email address will receive their newsletter in this manner. Paper copies will still be printed and available for pickup at the church. If you would still like to receive your copy by mail, notify the church office at (417) 276-4717 and it will be mailed to you via first class postage.



Darlene Barker, *Rummage Sale Coordinator*

On behalf of the United Methodist Women, I would like to personally thank each volunteer for your recent contribution of time and hard work to the Rummage Sale that took place November 2- November 7. This event could not have been a success without the dedication and hard work of people like you.

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels calendar is back to normal. If you signed up, please double check your times. If you would like to sign up, please find the list on the desk in the Welcome Center across from the coffee bar. We are in need of volunteers.



Please Jesus with a “Green” Christmas for More Fun, Less Stuff

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry*

Before the wise men from the East brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to celebrate and honor Jesus’ birth over 2,000 years ago, God gave humankind our first job, tend God’s garden, take care of God’s creation. What did the Christ child think of those valuable, adult gifts? What does our Savior Jesus Christ think of the way we celebrate his birth? Excessive holiday gift buying, wrapping, packaging, eating, drinking, stress, travel, and waste further degrade God’s good creation.

Between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, the amount of trash produced in the United States increases by an estimated 25%—that’s about one million extra tons of garbage each week!

Let’s care for God’s creation. Let’s choose to reduce the extent to which we degrade God’s good creation by adopting some of these suggestions to “green” our celebrations of Jesus’ birth.

- Shop with reusable shopping bags; decline single-use plastic bags.
- Consider what you buy, where it came from, and its current and future impact on the earth.
- Resist the urge to buy things you don’t need just because they are “affordably priced.”
- Avoid excessively packaged items.
- Don’t buy useless gifts just because you feel obligated; ask yourself what the person would actually use, such as:
 - Reusable shopping bags.
 - LED nightlights or Christmas tree lights.
 - LED light bulbs, Cree, soft white (2700K), dimmable; no toxic mercury, instant full brightness; 25,000-hour lifetime; uses 85 percent less energy compared to a standard incandescent light bulb. (Home Depot, online)
 - GE 25511 Grounded power switch or single port power adapter for outlet with on/off



- switch, to reduce phantom load. (Walmart, Lowe’s, Home Depot, online)
- Handkerchiefs.
- A solar-powered radio, flashlight, lantern, light bulb or cell phone charger. (www.nokero.com/)
- A refillable thermos bottle.
- Seeds for next year’s garden.
- Gardening gloves.
- Stainless steel takeout food boxes. (Amazon.com)
- Gift certificates good for your time, energy, or talents.
- Memberships or donations to local, national, or global social and Earth justice organizations.
 - Gifts that are durable and long-lasting.
- Swap homemade cookies instead of gifts, include the story behind the recipe.
- Decorate the Christmas tree without lights or use LED lights which consume 90 percent less electricity than like-sized incandescent bulbs.
- Wrap gifts
 - in re-used materials such as old maps, newspaper comics, wallpaper samples, old sheet music, out-of-date calendar photos, or previously used wrapping paper.
 - in cloth napkins, kitchen towels, or handkerchiefs so the wrapping becomes part of the present.
 - with reusable homemade cloth gift bags which become part of your holiday tradition through the years.
- Tie packages with reusable ribbon, fabric, or yarn.
- Decorate packages with flowers, pinecones, feathers, greens, herbs, or other natural materials.
- Pack gifts for shipping with real popcorn or biodegradable corn starch packing material instead of polystyrene “peanuts.”
- Make gift tags from last year’s cards.
- Decrease holiday waste, stress, and spending.



Stockton United Methodist Church

December Calendar of Special Events

Current as November 29, 2020. For updates, visit www.stocktonumc.org/calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			9 a.m. Yoga FLC 6-10p Rm. 100	7a.m-5p.m. WIC-Rm. 100 9 -10a.m. Exer- FLC 5-6:30 p.m. Lighting of the Square	Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	6-10p Rm. 100
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Advent 2 9:45a.m. SS 10:45a.m WC/S	9-10 a.m. Yoga Rm 100 9 -10a.m. Exer-FLC 9:30a.m. CP Rm. 100		9 a.m. Yoga FLC 3-5p.m. RLB/EP 6-10p. Rm. 100	7 a.m-5 p.m. WIC-Rm. 100 9 -10a.m. Exer- FLC	Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	6-10p Rm. 100
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Advent 3 9:45a.m. SS 10:45a.m WC/S	9-10 a.m. Yoga Rm 100 9 -10a.m. Exer-FLC		9 a.m. Yoga FLC 9a.m.-2p.m. TT Rm. 100 6-10p. Rm. 100	7 a.m-5 p.m. WIC-Rm. 100 9 -10a.m. Exer- FLC	Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	6-10p Rm. 100
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Advent 4 9:45a.m. SS 10:45a.m WC/S 11:45a.m. CCM/Rm 203	9-10 a.m. Yoga Rm 100 9 -10a.m. Exer-FLC 9:30a.m. CP Rm. 100		9 a.m. Yoga FLC 6-10p. Rm. 100	9a.m.-Noon Office Open 8p.m. Christmas Eve Service	Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed 	6-10p Rm. 100
27	28	29	30	31		
Advent 5 9:45a.m. SS 10:45a.m WC/S	9-10 a.m. Yoga Rm 100 9 -10a.m. Exer-FLC		9 a.m. Yoga FLC 6-10p. Rm. 100	7 a.m-5 p.m. WIC-Rm. 100 9 -10a.m. Exer-FLC New Year's Eve		
		KEY SS -Sunday School WC -Worship Celebration S -Sanctuary W -Welcome Area E -Education Wing CCM -Church Council Meeting FLC -Family Life Center LSHF -Lake Stockton Healthcare Facility CP -Comforter Project TT -Tomorrow's Treasures CES -Christmas Eve Service Exer. - Exercise				



Stockton United Methodist Church

December Calendar of Events

Current as of November 29, 2020. For updates visit www.stocktonumc.org/calendar

Special Events

- ★ **SAMA Bell Ringers** (November 27) **Keep An Eye Out for the Sign Up Sheet**
- ★ **December 3** (Thursday 5-6:30 p.m.) **Lighting of the Square**
- ★ **December 24** (Thursday 9 a.m.-Noon) **Office Open for Half Day**
- ★ **December 24** (Thursday 8 p.m.) **Christmas Eve Service**
- ★ **United Methodist Women** Will resume meeting the second Tuesday in November.
- ★ **United Methodist Men** Will not meet until further notice.

Mark Your Calendar Beyond December . . .

- ★ **January 2021** Steeple Chimes going digital.

Remember in Your Prayers

December (2 Weeks)

Family of Wes Arington; Tebby Coffey; Isabel Dyer; Leia Green (Pastor Jim & Tebby’s grandchild); Marci Haralson; Rex Holt; Duane Hubbard; Family of Steve Ingram; Jolene Knight; Barbara Martin; Deb Meisinger; Rose Mary Owens; Marcia Stapert; Stewart Thomson; Jacky Vincent; Family of Sheila Wallace; Family of John Warner;

Long-Term Needs

Betty Anthony; Michael Anthony; Rick Ayers; Bob Ballenger; Roger Behrens; Carrie Blakley; Rose Mary Clemons; Howard Coambes; Bryan Coffey; Gracen (Coffey Family); Tebby Coffey; Harold Cross; Jay Cross; Phyllis Ewing; Agena Farmer; Larry Gibson; Amanda Gustin; Charlotte Haden; Carolyn Hall; Haralson Family; Jeanette Helter & family; Leonard Hopkins II; Duane Hubbard; Dale & Grace Kraemer; John Lehman; Jane Mills; Monda Jeffreys; Mary Ann Manring; Gary Maugh; Charlie McGinty; Vicki McNellis; Debbie Miller; Carol Montgomery; Rose Mary Owens; Nick Pardee; Todd Pardee; Pat Patterson; Sara Poppa & Family; Bill Seibel; Eli Smith; Anne Rippeon(Sara Criswell’s Daughter); Nancy Schulze; Stewart & Angela Thomson; Jim & Nancy Toombs; Michael Tunnell; Paula Walters; Stacy Watson; Sue Webb; Steve Woody; Teresa Woody; Roy (Linda Halls nephew)

- ★ If you need prayer or to add someone to our Prayer List please contact the office via phone, email, or mail.

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NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR

Noel Hallelujah Merry Christmas Happy New Year

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Financial Report *Church Financial Information*

- ★ Full financial reports are in the church office and are available to any church member or constituent upon request (in person or by mail)



Annual Request for Donations

Sharon Linnartz, *SAMA Food Pantry*

Stockton Area Ministerial Alliance (SAMA) Food Pantry is asking for donations for the coming year. ALL donations are very much appreciated. This year we are bringing back the "FAITHFUL STEWARDS," if you can commit to yourself to try and donate at least \$50 or more to the SAMA Food Pantry yearly it would bless this ministry. Since there will be NO SAMA Community Thanksgiving Service this year, we would like for you to take this opportunity to see an increase in contributions to help with the unforeseeable needs of 2021.

Checks can be made payable to your church (Mark "SAMA Food Pantry" on the memo line) give at your church. You can also send checks made payable to SAMA directly to SAMA, P.O. 171, Stockton, Mo 65785 or drop them off at the pantry any Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Receipts are available upon request. Please contact Sharon Linnartz 417-399-2596 or your pastor with questions. Also please call if you would like to get on the volunteer list. (We are currently operating as contactless drive-thru only.) Please continue to pray for SAMA and its ministries. Be blessed.

5th Community Prayer Walk and Trash Pickup, Saturday, December 5

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry*

Our Go Green Team invites members of our congregation and friends to join us as we walk Stockton's streets, Saturday, December 5, to pray for God's blessings on the residents and pick up trash. Meet in the church parking lot at 10 a.m. We will organize into small groups, walk less than two hours, return to the church before noon, and separate recyclables from the trash. We will provide trash bags.

Dress warmly, including hat and gloves. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Bring a pickup stick if you have one. Little wagons help haul the bags back to church, so consider bringing one, if you have one. Weather permitting, wear your Go

Green sweatshirt. Bring your own water bottle and/or coffee thermos.

If you cannot walk with us, please join us in prayer for Stockton residents from 10 a.m.-noon wherever you are. In case of inclement weather, we will reschedule. Call Cheryl for more information, 276-2501.

Our Go Green Team exists to take action to help renew God's good creation. Please consider becoming part of this action-oriented team committed to doing what we can to protect and renew our planet home.

Recycle Christmas Lights Now through January 24



- Bundle each string
- Wrap end of cord to secure
- Deposit in white bin beside SUMC recycling cabinet

PLEASE, NO PLASTIC BAGS!

Recycling Reminders

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry*

The list of items accepted in our SUMC recycling cabinet changes from time to time along with markets for the items. The list of items currently accepted is posted on the recycling cabinet door. Please check it before you leave items in the cabinet and do not leave items that are not on the list. If you have a question about recycling a particular item, check our *Guide to Recycling and Reusing in Stockton*. Pick up a copy in the media rack in the Welcome Area, or check the link on our SUMC Website, http://stocktonumc.org/images/2020_10_Guide_to_Recycling_in_Stockton.pdf.

We do not ever accept small batteries in our recycling cabinet. Please collect them in an old coffee can or bucket in a safe place at home. We collect them once a year at our annual Dead Electronics and Appliances Recycling Drive and we pay \$1/pound to responsibly recycle them.

We stopped accepting oatmeal containers last April. If your brand has a plastic ring at the top, you can either tear it away from the paper and recycle the paper portion or dispose of the whole thing with your household trash. Dispose of the plastic lids with your trash.

For the time being, we are no longer accepting paper towel and toilet tissue tubes. Your generosity more than met the needs of the Willard School District elementary science classes, so please recycle them now with your other paper recycling.

When we recycle, we imitate God's creation design.

Solar Energy Pumps SUMC Water

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry and Stockton Solar Gardener*

When you run water at SUMC, you are using solar energy. During March and April 2019, the city of Stockton installed two solar energy generating systems, one near each of the city's two water towers. Each system is sized to produce approximately 100% of the energy required to power its respective water pumping station over the course of a year. As one of many city water customers, all of the water consumed at SUMC is pumped with solar energy. Stockton will pay for the project over 10 years with energy savings accrued from installing the solar systems and replacing most of the light bulbs in eight city facilities with LEDs. The LEDs reduced the city's lighting electricity demand by at least 80%.

This is an example of Just Energy for All, the multi-year United Methodist Women's campaign that advocates for energy that is cleaner and does not harm God's people or God's creation, and is therefore more just for all. Stockton's solar powered water pumping stations provide all residents, businesses, government offices, churches, and schools, affordable access to clean energy, regardless of economic position, occupation, faith, gender, age, or sexual orientation. The city's solar systems do not have battery backup, but when the sun shines, the systems produce electricity. When they produce more than the pumps require at the moment, the excess is stored on the Liberty Utility grid until needed, making the city's water supply more resilient in case of a severe weather event.

It is rare for a city of 1,900 in southwest Missouri to provide affordable just energy for all. Thank you, former Mayor Mary Norell, for her leadership providing affordable community solar energy for all in our little city.



The Mailbox



Join us for our Third annual
Stockton Area Chamber of Commerce

Lighting of the Square

From 5–6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3

FESTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE:

- * Lighting of the Christmas Tree
- * The Arrival of Santa Claus
- * Letters to the North Pole
- * And the mean 'ol Grinch



Birthdays and Anniversaries *Happy Birthday! Blessed Anniversary!*

Personal information not included in Web Steeple Chimes

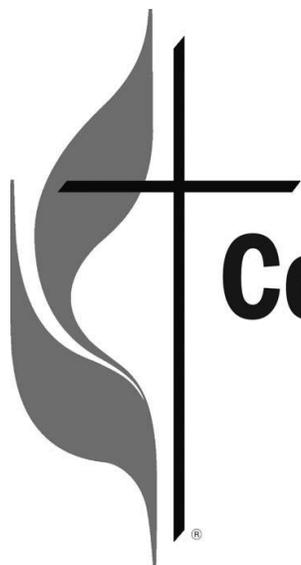


SAMA Food Pantry
December Needs: toilet paper
& dry pinto beans

FOOD PANTRY

Servants

Liturgist: Rusty Maggard
Sunday Morning Greeters: Ted & Brenda Woodrell



People
Connecting with **Jesus Christ**

STOCKTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Steeple Chimes

Worship 10:45 a.m.

Jim Coffey, Pastor

Jacky Vincent, *Organist*

Stockton United Methodist Church

708 E. Hwy 32, Post Office Box 329, Stockton, MO 65785

Telephone (417) 276-4717

E-mail stocktonumc@windstream.net

www.stocktonumc.org

Sunday School 9:45-10:30 a.m.

Rose Mary Owens, *Director of Music*

Mary Anne Manring, *Pianist*

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