



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Rev. David S. Lake – Pastor

Zaq Phillips – Youth Minister

Dianne Runser – Director of Music Ministry

December 14, 2014

Third Sunday in Advent

GATHERING & WELCOME

***PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

L: The Peace of Christ be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Please pass the Peace of Christ to your neighbor.

MOMENTS OF INFORMALITY

THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

MUSIC OF PREPARATION “Christmas Fantasy”

ADVENT READING

ALL: COME, LORD JESUS. AMEN.

Wreath Lighters:

ADVENT SONG

Until Jesus comes, until Jesus comes,

I’ll be watching and waiting until Jesus comes.

(repeat)

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: When the Lord restored our fortunes, we were like those who dream.

P: **Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with shouts of joy.**

L: Restore our fortunes once more, O God, that our tears may turn into shouts of joy,

P: **our weeping may give rise to singing.**

L: Come worship the Lord who clothes us with the garments of salvation.

P: **Worship the Lord!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

God of Dreams, from times of old, you have done great things for your people. Awaken us to the dawn of your glory. Fill our mouths with laughter, our tongues with shouts of joy. Anoint us with your oil of gladness and give us a garland instead of ashes. May we be known among all people as oaks of righteousness, the plantings of the Lord. Amen

***HYMN OF PRAISE No. 213**

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

Children come forward during the last verse.

CHILDREN’S MOMENTS

(Our Children’s Collection this morning will be given to “Westmoreland Churches Committee for Emergency Aid.”

Please see the announcement for more details.)

ANTHEM 8:15 - “The Perfect Tree”
10:45 – “Hear the Sounds of Christmas”

PRESENTATION OF GOD’S TITHES AND OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY 8:15 – “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”
10:45 – “Carol of the Bells” – Cathedral Bells

***DOXOLOGY “Christmas Doxology”**
“Glory be to God the Father, glory be to Christ the Son.
Glory to the Holy Spirit, glory to the Three-in-One.
Here we offer to you gladly, all the gifts that you impart,
As we glory in your presence, giving from a grateful heart.”

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKS**

Gracious God, you work miracles. Nothing can hinder your purposes. Your love shines forth in your living Word. We pray that the world will reflect your Word. Use these offerings to create small miracles of transformation in our communities. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER HYMN No. 219 “What Child Is This”
The Altar is open during the hymn.

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. AMEN

SERMON SCRIPTURE (NRSV) 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

SERMON

***HYMN OF PARTING No. 240 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

***BENEDICTION**

***MUSIC OF PARTING “O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

***Those who are able, please stand.**

THIS WEEK AT OUR CHURCH

Today, Sunday, December 14

3rd Sunday of Advent

Coffee Hour

8:00 Prayer Time
8:15 Worship
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship
No FISH & CHIPS
4:00 Temple Bells
4:45 SonShiners
7:00 Irwin Male Chorus Concert

Monday, December 15

7:00 Dartball All Star Games -A

Tuesday, December 16

6:15 TOPS
6:30 Good Grief
7:30 NA

Wednesday, December 17

7:00 Yoga

Thursday, December 18

6:15 C Bells
7:00 Disciple
7:15 Choir

Friday, December 19

1:00 Happy Methodist Group at
Lakeview Lounge in Greensburg

Saturday, December 20

6:00 Alternative Worship

Next Sunday, December 21

4th Sunday of Advent

8:00 Prayer Time
8:15 Worship
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship
2:00 FISH & CHIPS
4:00 Temple Bells
4:45 SonShiners
6:30 Blue Christmas Service

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHILDREN’S COLLECTION this week will be given to the “*Westmoreland Churches Committee for Emergency Aid.*” This organization, based out of Level Green Presbyterian Church, was started to help people who are poor, elderly, or disadvantaged and fall through the cracks of our caring and helping systems in Westmoreland County. While we still have our Pastor’s Discretionary Fund (PDF) to help those in our church, this organization allows Pastor David to refer those who are disadvantaged in our community to a caring organization to help them with their needs.

“Westmoreland Churches Committee for Emergency Aid.”: 12/7 - \$278.50

Today - Gifts from the Talents Sale!

On Sunday, November 16th you were encouraged to take “seed money” from the altar and to use your talents/gifts to increase its value with a goal of returning it to the church. We will be having a sale outside the pastor’s office today where you can sell or purchase some homemade gifts or ideas that you’ve created. (You may want to do some Christmas shopping that day!) Members of the Finance Committee will be available to help with this sale following both services. Pray about how you and your family can participate this day by using the talents that God has given you!

CONNECTIONAL APPORTIONMENT: Enclosed you will find a Special Offering Envelope to use for giving to our Connectional Apportionment for 2014. In order to get closer to our apportioned goal, the Finance Committee has suggested collecting this additional offering the second Sunday of each month. What is Connectional Apportionment...and how are these monies used? Some of you may remember when it was called “Mission Share”. One of the unique and defining factors of the UM Church is that we are connectional! It shares its resources across all levels of the denomination to improve the lives of many through mission and justice. UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) are often on the front lines when disaster strikes in faraway places. Each local church – no matter its size – is engaged in ministry locally, regionally and globally. The monies are divided between: ministerial support, general & jurisdictional apportionments, general & administrative, conference benevolences, conference sessions, Council on Finance & Administration, and the Board of Trustees.

We are encouraged to make payments to Apportionments. It is as important to pay this obligation of Connectionism as it is to pay the local church bills, tithes, utilities, salaries and other financial obligations. Without everyone doing

Offering Envelope enclosed in the bulletin the second Sunday of each month. Please pray about any additional offering you can give to First United Methodist Church of Irwin Connectional Apportionment for 2014 and 2015.

ANGEL TREE: The Outreach committee is sponsoring our Angel tree and food bags. Please take an Angel from the tree and sign up on our food list to bring in something to help these families for Christmas dinner. The Angels have suggestions for items to buy with a limit of \$25.00 for toys. *The angels & gifts need to be returned no later than Dec. 16th, wrapped with the Angel taped to the outside. The food items need to be returned by Dec.21st. Please put refrigerated items put in Coffee Room fridge.*

CHANCEL CHOIR CANTATA: On Sunday, December 28 the Chancel Choir will present the Cantata, "Let Earth Receive Her King" at the 10:45 A.M. worship service. It has been many years since we have had a Christmas cantata. Please come and support the choir and extend the joy of the Christmas season.

HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PARTY: All youth, High School and Middle School, are invited to a Christmas party this Fri., Dec. 19th, at 7:30 at the Halza's house. Youth & leaders, please bring a wrapped \$10 grab bag gift. Friends & family are also invited! Hope to see you!

THE IRWIN MALE CHORUS will be presenting their 2014 Christmas Concert at our church tonight at 7:00 PM. There is no admission fee. An offering will be collected to defray chorus expenses. Please invite everyone you know to attend. There will be a reception following the concert. Cookies are needed. You may bring cookies Sunday morning or Sunday evening. Please mark hem "Male Chorus" and take them to the kitchen.

THE HAPPY METHODIST GROUP will hold their Christmas lunch on Friday, December 19th at 1:00 PM at Lakeview Lounge in Greensburg.

**LONGEST NIGHT/ BLUE CHRISTMAS
WORSHIP SERVICE
DECEMBER 21, 2014**



A *Longest Night/Blue Christmas Worship Service* will be held in our sanctuary on Sunday, December 21 at 6:30 PM. This is the longest night of the year. Following this date, daylight seems to be returning for more and more of each day. In the long, dark winter nights, memories of past experiences and the pain of present experiences and situations can become overwhelming. On this night, we remember those for whom the holidays are not joyful; they are lonely, in mourning, feeling alienated and cast apart from family celebrations; they are experiencing depression and sadness and yet are often compelled to "put on a happy face" for others, denying their true feelings. People who are not having a very merry Christmas and friends who support them are invited to come and sit with one another in a liturgy that speaks of the love of God for the grieving.

In this service, we invite you to listen. We invite you to pray. We invite you to sing. We invite you to meditate upon the pain and anguish you may bring – and we invite you to offer your pain to the Christ child. And we trust that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT: Each year, the Staff Parish Relations Committee collects contributions from our congregation toward Christmas bonuses for our dedicated Church Staff. Please join the SPRC in showing our appreciation for their work by contributing. Envelopes marked "Staff Christmas" are on the table in the Narthex. Thank you in advance for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

BASKETS: Baskets are still available in the assembly room outside Pastor David's office for a self-service sale. Envelopes are provided for payment which may be placed in the office door mail slot. Proceeds will be divided between the Rick Simms Mission Work Trip, Outreach, and Mission share. **Why not do "double good" and purchase an item for the Angel Tree?** Thank you for helping us