



As I sat and thought about what to say about Christmas I decided to think about all of the recent Christmases that we have celebrated together. This is now the 7th Christmas that I have celebrated with my Rittman church family! It doesn't seem possible that time has flown by so fast, but I have been blessed by all of you through these years in so many ways. I have appreciated the emphasis that you place on Christ and on Christ's ministry in your lives and especially at this time of year.

We are just beginning the work on the Christmas Baskets, and the feeling of love for the people of this community is in the air. So many of the community have asked this year how they can help, and the food & toy donations already seem to be overflowing, too. Thank you for the more than 45 years of organizing this ministry for the community!

When looking through my Christmas related book resources I came to one authored by Rev. Mike Slaughter, a United Methodist pastor who has worked to mature disciples for many years. His book is Christmas Is Not Your Birthday. This struck me as I have been hearing and seeing so many ads about material things that can be given for Christmas this year. Over the years this holiday has exploded into a big gift giving party for people and many have totally forgotten why the holiday has been celebrated. We give so many material things to others in our families that everyone can feel like it is a huge birthday party just for them.

Let's make a real effort this year to remember Jesus' birth and the true meaning and reason for Christmas as we gather together with family and friends this year! Read the Christmas story from Luke 1:26b-56 & 2:1-20 before gifts are given, wish Jesus a Happy Birthday, maybe have a birthday cake for Him too. More than anything, take time to talk about this special time in the history of our faith with those you are with at this wonderful time. Help each one know/remember that "There is NO Christmas without Christ!" The giving of gifts comes from the remembrance of the gifts given by the Magi to Jesus in honor of His birth. We honor Jesus through our giving of gifts to our loved ones and also to others. Give in that spirit!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!
Pastor Ruthie Trigg

Christmas Baskets:

*Call ins for Christmas Baskets begins Monday, Nov. 29th - Friday, Dec. 3rd
9am - 11am & Monday, Dec. 6th - Friday, Dec. 10th, 9am - 11am.*

The number to call is 330-925-4015.

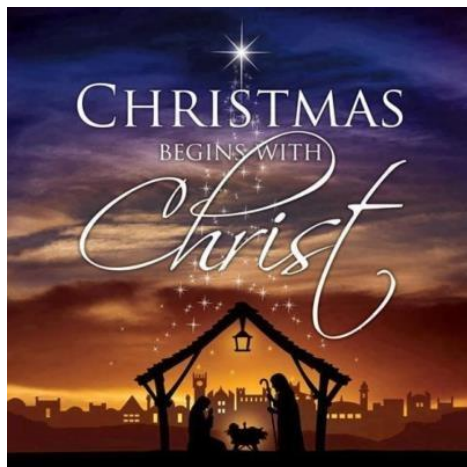
Here is a list of days & times we need volunteers:

- *Toy Wrapping: Monday, Dec. 13th, 7pm - 9pm. (Bring scissors, wrapping paper, scotch tape).*
- *Assemble boxes: Tuesday, Dec. 14th, 6pm.*
- *Prepare boxes for distribution w/items from IGA: Saturday, Dec. 18th, 7:15am - 9am.*
- *Help carry boxes to cars: Saturday, Dec. 18th, 9am - 12pm. (We need about 6-8 strong people at this time).*

EVERYTHING TAKES PLACE AT RITTMAN UMC



We found Him in a manger, help in the virgin's arms
With promise from the Father that He would soon be ours.
His Son, and our blessed Savior, came here for us to die,
Then never, never leave us, His Word is ever nigh.
But more than this He reigns supreme, the heir to David's throne,
To rule in sovereign majesty a people called His own.
Forever is the Word that comes to never more expire-Our coming
King fast holds our hearts and lives as our desire.





Thank you all for the gifts and cards for Pastor's Appreciation!

They were all very nice! I appreciate you all very much!

Pastor Ruthie 



Joys

A successful Trunk or Treat with about 200 children coming through,
as many treats and some books were passed out

Brenda C. - doctor pleased with recovery

Keifers' cousins' baby, William Walter - will be released from

Katie Winkler married on October 23rd

Safe travels for many

Successful surgeries for Brenda C. & Nancy Mc.

Concerns

Missionaries in Haiti still held hostage

Safe travels

Our country & area communities

Health

Rae K. - shoulder replacement recovery

Lovell, Bruce L's sister - cancer

Debbie B. (& her husband, Rev. David B.) - stroke recovery & cancer

Chris B. (& Steve) - back pain

Anita (& Don V.) - nerve damage in leg

Pastor Joyce Williams (& Jack) - cancer

Butch & Nancy Mc.

Dick & Dorothy G.

Harry & Nancy B.

Pat M. & Robin K.

Pauline R.

Rae S.

Annibale & Mohr families, Mary Lynn

Surgery

Pam Hartman - Dec. 10th at 11:30am

Our sympathy to the family & friends of:

Dr. William Knapic

Laurie Halliwell

15 oz. baby of friends of the Britton family

Nina, Dan Hartman's mother-in-law

Fireside Chat



Dear Church Family,

As I write this in mid-November we had our financial updates at the November Admin. Council meeting the second Tues. of the month. I am happy to tell you we felt confident that our finances are strong enough that we told our treasurer to send in the remainder of the Conference Apportionments that are due by the end of the year as early in the month of December as she can so we don't have to rush to make sure they reach the Conference Treasurer by the end of the year. This is the first time in a number of years that we have not had to rush to make the deadline or miss the deadline. We have climbed a financial hill this year and the view from the top is beautiful.

This does not mean, however, that we can sit back for a month and not remember the Church needs. There will be monthly apportionments to be paid next year and property taxes on the parsonage will be due in the middle of February and there will be higher gas bills because of winter heating and maybe even unexpected repairs...you know how it goes. Our church home is like our own home and seems like a money pit at times. If we can continue our strong giving next year we should be able to sit at the top of the hill and rest a bit and dream about what more we can do for the Lord until He comes again.

In the meantime, have a blessed Christmas. I'll be back in my chair next year.

Martha Baillis, Financial Chair

Trustee's Corner



Items since last month:

- Per boiler inspection, Bruce & Schar installed ceramic fiber boards in back of boilers # 1 & 3; \$278 charge.
- Fogged S.S. wing & basement to eliminate wolf spiders.
- Test fired boilers & zone pumps before recent cold snap.
- Despite roof repairs, leak persists in west preschool room.
- Trustee's plan to remove entryway trees which are not looking good. Weather and scheduling issues dictate timing.

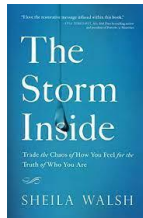


Men's Bible Study

will be meeting on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm led by Pastor Don Trigg. They are currently studying the Book of John. Come and join in.

Women's Bible Study

There is always room for more! Join us for a great chance to learn more about God's Word and a wonderful time of fellowship! We are pleased to have new members from the Sterling UMC. There is always room for more!



The Storm Inside:

Trade the Chaos of How You Feel for the Truth of Who You Are
By Sheila Walsh

Meeting on Thursdays: 10:00am in person led by Pastor Ruthie,
& at 6:30pm one led by Sara Ullman and Betty Winchell.
Contact Pastor Ruthie or Betty, if you need a book.



December

3rd - Mark Turnbow
7th - Joe Emerson

4th - Judy Berold
9th - Sue Baker
Matt Hutton
Debbie Knapic

14th - Pam Chipps
17th - Pastor Ruthie
27th - Rita Blough

15th - Matt McClain
18th - Zachary Baillis



Dear Precious Friends of RUMC:

Thank you for your healing prayers for Niles when he was with us. I believe our prayers were answered: he is healed and with Jesus. Praise God!

Also thank you for prayers for our family as we struggle to understand it all. Our sincere thanks to each one of you

Love, Rita and Family

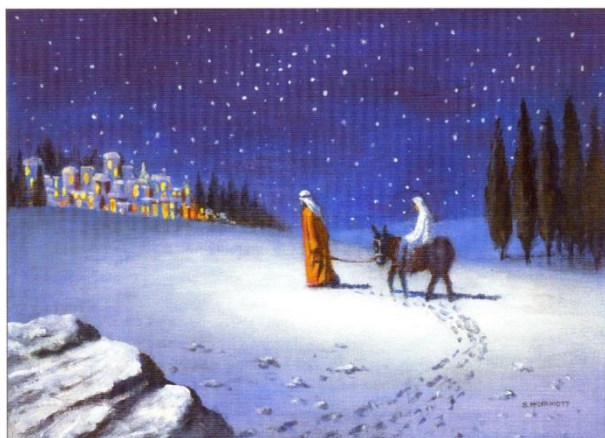
Mary's Meanderings – December 2021

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:1-7

We probably have heard this story over and over through the years in one way or another. And yet each year we are another year older with new experiences and insights. I know the story came to life for me when I was pregnant during the Christmas season and could not picture myself being close to delivery and yet traveling on a donkey, not to mention giving birth in a barn with animals all around. When we do God's will, we are not guaranteed a comfortable life. But we are promised that everything, even our discomfort has meaning in God's plan. That lesson was really brought home to our Women's Bible Study Group in some of the studies we've done the past year. God's plan may not be what we desire but it is always done in what is in the best interest of our spiritual life.

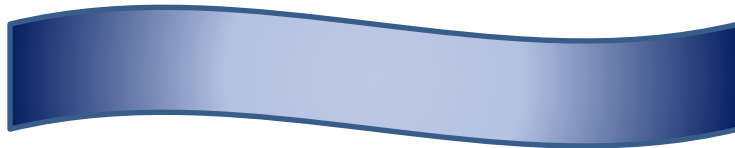
God's greatest gift to us was His son offered for the forgiveness of our sins. Rick Warren said in Open Doors, A Year of Daily Devotions that "God's gift to you is unlike anything you'll open this Christmas. God's gift is personal; He came to earth with you in mind. It's practical; He gives you everything you need to live a life that pleases Him. It's forever; it will last throughout eternity and it will never wear out. And most importantly, it's priceless: Jesus Christ paid for it with His own life...An unopened gift, no matter how wonderful, is a worthless gift. When you fully understand how wonderful God's gift is to you--how incredible, how magnificent, and how mind-blowing it is--there is only one logical response. Don't wait another moment to open His gift today!"

As you are planning, shopping, wrapping and giving and receiving gifts this Christmas, take some time to really ponder the sacrificial gift of God our father in the birth and death of His son, Jesus Christ and resulting Holy Spirit alive in and all around us today. The Christmas season is really about so much more than what our culture has made it to be. Let us never forget the true meaning and do all we can to pass along and share that true meaning with everyone we come in contact with. Blessings of the season to you and yours.





Thank you to everyone who continues to support the funding & volunteering for the food pantry. We had 24 families (6 new), 74 people and 35 sets of bags given out at our November Food Pantry/Community Dinner. This was our Thanksgiving Community Dinner, a big thank you to Martha, Marsha, Robin, Heather, Shirley, Betty, Lori, Herb, Dawn, Lisa, Sue, Cindy, Mark, Lynn, Pastor Ruthie, Joanna, who worked to provide the Thanksgiving Food Pantry meal. There is no Food Pantry in December because of the Christmas Basket Program. The next Food Pantry/Community Dinner will be 1/19/2022.



This past month, we added two new children to our preschool program. With the addition of these children, we now have 12 children enrolled. We continue to work on letter recognition and letter sounds, sorting objects by size and shape, writing names, patterning, and working our fine motor skills.

We introduced the children to Psalm 127:1, Genesis 1:3-4, Philippians 4:13 and 2 Corinthians 9:8. Throughout each week, we review the Bible verse along with our other planned learning activities with the children. To help the children share the message of the week with their families, each child receives a paper bracelet and a coloring sheet with the Bible verse on it. By sending the verse home on two separate days and in two separate forms, our goal is to get the children excited about the word of God,

During the month of December, we will be focusing on the birth of Jesus with the children. We will only be in session until the 9th, but have a lot of wonderful activities planned in that short period of time. We will also be having the children make a gift for their families.

*“Christmas! The very word brings joy to our hearts.
No matter how we may dread the rush, the long
Christmas lists for gifts and cards to be bought
and given – when Christmas Day comes there is
still the same warm feeling we had as children,
the same warmth that enfold our hearts & our homes.”*

~Joan Winmill Brown



**“For God so loved the world – that he gave his only
begotten son.”**

John 3:16

God’s Gift of Love:

God: the greatest love.
So loved: the greatest degree
The world: the greatest company.
That he gave: the greatest act.
That whosoever: the greatest opportunity.
Believeth: the greatest simplicity
In him: the greatest attraction
Should not perish: the greatest promise
But: the greatest difference
Have: the greatest certainty
eternal life: the greatest possession