

THE HILLSIDE

“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). Advent is the season of expectation and hope. The time between the end of the Old Testament and the New Testament is called the dark ages; a prophet was not heard from, and no miracles were performed. Great powers were taking over the world, wars were raging, and Israel was caught in the middle. The Jewish people had something that no one else had, a promise from God. The Messiah, the Savior of the world. The Jewish people were full of hope when everyone else had no hope. Because of this hope, the Jewish people had the drive to keep being the people of God. They did not like being oppressed by the world governments but believed that it would end one day.

Then on a night in a small town in a small place, a small person was born. To the praises of angels, he came into the world just like any other person. However, this baby would change the world; on this Christmas night, Jesus Christ was born to save the entire world from sin.

Today in 2022 we are in the Advent season. We too have a season of expectation and hope. We have the eternal hope of home with Jesus, a hope not too far from the Jews in the days leading up to Jesus. We seem to be living in the dark ages, and we are. “And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper” (Romans 1:28). People in the world today have no fear of God whatsoever. They live their lives just that way. There is confusion being taught, and chaos is now the

norm. But for those who have been adopted into the family of God, we know that this is all temporary. Our hope is knowing that Jesus has already conquered this world and is coming to bring us home. But until that day, we are responsible for working and praying that God’s Kingdom is here on earth just as it is in heaven and God’s will be done.

Merry Christmas!!!!
Bro. Dwayne

Know Your Pastor

In the gospels, we are told that when the shepherds came to see Jesus. They told Mary and Joseph about what had happened in the field. The gospels tell us that after hearing this, Mary took these things into her heart. The Christmas season is a funny time in our lives, and we seem to get wrapped up in the excitement and the pressure of the season. I wonder what it is we have taken into our hearts?

This time of year is hard for many people; some have suffered great life loss. The loss can be recent or may be decades old. The loss is there regardless, and it is in the heart. The heart is the place where we hold our treasures and where we bury our hurts. The heart is fertile ground, and whatever is planted there will grow. Now when Jesus was born, there were no store-bought gifts brought to him, just praises and worship. I ask you this Christmas season to take it to your heart that there are people who need to hear the praise and a reminder of the hope that

comes from Jesus. Please mark your calendar for December 21st at 6:00 pm for the Blue Christmas Service at the Church.

Link Updates

Beginning in January, The Family Altar prayer list will be deleted, and a new one will be created. If you have prayer requests that you would like included on this list, please include the name, reason for prayer, and your name on the “Prayer Request” lists placed around the church. If you are not able to sign the list at church, please text your prayer requests to Deedra at 601-695-1184 or send an email to johnstonchapel2@gmail.com.

Beginning in January, we will renew our mailing list of those who receive the Link. If you would like a Link mailed to your home or to a loved one, please sign the “The Link” lists placed around the church. If you are unable to sign the list, please message Deedra at 601-695-1184 or send an email to johnstonchapel2@gmail.com.

Copies of the Link will also be placed on the table beside the office if would like to pick one up instead of having the Link mailed to you. This will also help save money on mailing costs.



Ushers: Robert Walker, James Church, Lana Burkett, Tony Scroggs

Greeter: Robert Walker



UMW will not meet in December.

"We are women of purpose, vision, faith and mission. Through our work and financial support, we make a positive difference for many individuals in our hometowns and communities all around the globe. We invite you to explore how you can share your gifts, compassion, interests and abilities with those in need through membership in the United Methodist Women of Mississippi." (copied)

All ladies are invited to come and join us.



The United Methodist Men will not meet in December or January.

Bible Study

Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 we meet for Bible study in the fellowship hall. We are studying the book of **Mark**. Bro. Dwayne is our leader, and we would like to invite anyone interested. We serve coffee, or you can bring your favorite cola.

Church Meeting

There will be an informational meeting on December 11th at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary to discuss Paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline. You may see Bro. Dwayne if you have any questions.

Real Joy

What is Christmas without Jesus Christ?
It's a holiday full of stuff.
Money and stress, teaching kids greed,
Some people are saying "Enough!"

"Love one another," our Savior said.
It's all about love, not things.
Let's teach our children to serve, and create
The real joy the true Christmas brings.

By: Joanna Fuchs

Live Nativity



Our Live Nativity will be held on December 9th and 10th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. First, please be in prayer for this ministry. Pray for God to bless this ministry, all the volunteers, and especially those who come through. Pray that God will be glorified in everything.

We need everyone to help spread the word. Invite your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. There are fliers available if you are willing to give them out for us. **All those involved in scenes should be at the church by 5:15 each evening. Please don't be late.**

We will also have a float publicizing our Live Nativity in the Summit Christmas parade on December 5th. The parade begins at 6:30.

Thank you for all you do to make this ministry possible each year.



Donuts with the Shepherd

All children and their parents are invited to attend this special story time with the shepherd on December 10th at 10:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Please join us and invite a friend.

Christmas Cantata

Please join us on December 18th at 6:00 p.m. for our Christmas cantata *Waiting for Christmas*. We will have a time of fellowship following the cantata. Please bring a snack, finger food, or dessert to share.

Blue Christmas Service

A Blue Christmas Service will be held on December 21st at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. The purpose of this service is to remember the loved ones we have lost, to celebrate their lives, and to bring hope in all areas of loss. Please invite those outside the church to attend with you.



Christmas Eve Communion

Our Christmas Eve Communion Service will be held on December 24th at 6:00 p.m. Please bring your families and join us for Holy Communion as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

YOUTH NEWS

The end of October and November were busy and fun. The Jr. High had a fun time hanging out with Willow. We have been studying Daniel, and we have dared each other to be like Daniel. Dare to be different and set apart from the world. We are trying to live so others will see that we are different than others in the world. We don't mind standing up for what's right. We want to be fair where we dared each other to be a Daniel. Then, we talked about it over supper. We also went to judgement house where we were reminded that we have to accept Jesus to get to Heaven. It is great that you do good things in life, but it won't get you to Heaven.

In December we will continue daring each other to be a Daniel. We will help with the Live Nativity, have a Christmas party, and are planning a trip to Columbia to ice skate and then come back to a lock-in in the gym. Dates will be announced in the bulletin.

CHILDREN

The children have had a great time too. The Burketts and Weems tried hard this year in the Great Pumpkin Race, but the Abdul Hadi's came out on top. Abby's rolling pumpkin also gave us a little scare that it would beat us!!! Can't wait until next year!!!

In December, the children will help with the Live Nativity and will have a children's only trip to do something fun and see the lights. More info will be in the bulletin so keep watching. The children have enjoyed Wednesday night Devo with Keith and playing in the gym before the big kids come in to play!! Can't wait to tell you about all the things we did in December!!! See you next year!!!



"The youth have been great volunteers.
Plus, they work for donuts!"



MISSIONS UPDATE

May we be reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 25:40, "I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"

I am so proud of the way the people of Johnston Chapel UMC fulfill this Scripture. Throughout the year, the various mission projects involving helping those in need in which you all participate is the fulfilling of this Scripture. Thanks for giving.

GIFTS FOR A NEEDY FAMILY – On December 4th, 11th, and 18th, we will have a Christmas tree available for you to "pin" your gifts for a local needy family (selected by the UMW). So please be as generous as you can, as the Lord leads you – another way to fulfill the Scripture above. Bring your gifts on these dates and pin them to our tree. Thanks for your participation in this act of love at this special time of year.

THE WESLEY FOUNDATION – We have just completed our second annual dessert auction in which funds were raised to help with the ministry of the Wesley Foundation at Southwest

Community College. Thanks to all of you who participated in donating desserts and to those who attended. At this writing I do not have the results of the auction, but our pastor will be sharing that information with us in church.

UMCOR Shoeboxes – I will be ordering the remaining items we need to pack our 5th set of 50 boxes. We do plan to pack this 50 before the end of the year. We'll have a time and date for you as soon as I receive my orders from Amazon. This will give us a total of 261 boxes this year (or since we began this ministry). Watch the church bulletin for the packing date.

MICA – This is another of our year round ministries of giving to those in need. Please remember those helped through the MICA program throughout the year. A helpful thing to keep in mind is as you shop and see items on sale, you may want to take advantage of the opportunity to save money with your gifts to MICA. The folks at the MICA headquarters do a great job of keeping the items organized as they receive them and are happy to receive whatever items you bring. Thanks again for giving. And, thanks to Robert Walker for taking our gifts to MICA each week.

Carolyn Butler

WHAT IS THAT SONG?

December is here, the month we celebrate our Savior's birth. My favorite part of Christmas IS that celebration, the rest of it, not so much. I am not a "Scrooge" by any means, but the busyness of this season overwhelms me and I'm not sure why I feel this way.

The message that Dwayne gave on October 23rd made me think about how I just enjoy being in God's company during this and any time of year. It also reminded me of a song on Toby Mac's latest album which perfectly describes this feeling. Toby was interviewed regarding this song and he is quoted as saying, "It wasn't supposed to be a song. It was supposed to be a short interlude just reminding people that taking it easy, even a Sabbath Day, is important to stop and put your phone aside and breathe in and stop for a second. It reminds us that sometimes we just gotta slow down, breathe in, talk to God, and let Him talk to us."

Rest

by TobyMac, Terrian, & Gabe Real

I woke up to this
"God's a safe house for the battered
A sanctuary during bad times
The moment you arrive, you relax
You're never sorry you knocked"

CHORUS

Rest, take a breath
Push aside the noise and feel the air
inside your chest
Blessed, my child, you're blessed
Fall into the arms of God and rest your
weary head
Just rest, rest

I went to sleep to this
"God keeps in perfect peace
Those whose mind is stayed on Him"

REPEAT CHORUS

Fall into the arms of God and rest
your weary head
Just rest

I said to myself, "Relax and rest
Soul, you've been rescued from death
Eye, you've been rescued from tears
Relax and rest"

Written by: Dave Lubben & Toby McKeehan

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:14-16

Peace be with you. Merry Christmas!
Yvonne Church

OUR FAMILY ALTAR

Church & Its Ministries Children & Youth
Our Nation Unspoken World, Caregivers Homeless

Rev. Dwayne & Teri Scoggins

President Biden, Governors, Mayors, All in Leadership

All of the First Responders, Doctors, Nurses, Hospitals, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Custodians, Everyone affected by Covid

Shut- Ins/Nursing Home

In Military or Working away from Home

Jonathan Young – Serving on the USS George W. Bush in Norfolk, VA
J.J. Boshart – Race Willoughby's Brother-In-Law – Kuwait
Nick Mercer—Fort Stewart, GA

In Institution

Bridget Dillon, Chris Yawn, Landon Burrough

Working Away From Home

Paul Allred (Kansas), Mitchell Leon (Gulf of Mexico), Brett Stockton (Texas), Shane Williams (Saudi Arabia)

In Hospital/ Sick at Home/Need Our Prayers

Marvin Adams – Health
Bella – heart condition – 8 yr. old neighbor of Ms. Eva Nell Green
Tammy Beard – Health
Danney Bullock – Diagnosed with Merkel cell carcinoma - chemo treatments
Kathy Capral - Treatable but incurable cancer - Aunt of Yvonne Church
Chuck – Phil Caudill's associate – A non-believer and dealing with health issues
Duane Church – foot infection
Braxton Cutrer – Health
Carolyn Deer – Health
Destiny Dillon – hairline fracture in her ankle

Kaylee Dunaway – On medication for Hashimoto – Carolyn Butler's granddaughter
Shannon Dunaway – Health
Curtis Edmonds - Health
Peter & Sonya Francis – Health, their new home in Scotland
Phyllis Freeman – Health
Brenda Green – Health
Dale Green - Health
Eva Nell Green – Health
Kalie Green – Mental Health
Kari Guille – recovering from surgery – Kim Burkett's sister
Tony Handberry – Amy Campbell's Father - Stage 4 Cancer
Willene Harper – Recovering from surgery
Irma Newell Hart – Arm amputated – lung cancer – friend of Carolyn Butler
Gerald Howell – Health
Bobby Johnson – Deborah Johnson's uncle – Health
Deborah Johnson- Health and upcoming surgery
Thomas Johnston – Health – MS more advanced
Darius Kalil – Chemo treatments – cousin of Yvonne Church
Joseph Kalil - Rare cancer (reoccurrence) – recovering from surgery – Cousin of Yvonne Church
Tammie Jones – Health
Tyler Jones – Recovering from thyroid surgery
Lucy Lofton – Cancer Survivor
Family of Donna Maples – Brenda Green's sister
Kathy Martin – Health
Patrick McCaffery – mass on his lung – Nancy's Friend
Craig Moak – Recovering from a kidney transplant
Jackie Moak - Health
June Moak – Health
Susan Montgomery – Health – Barbara Rogers's Friend
Kim's Aunt Nelvia – stomach cancer – very painful
W.B. Netterville – Health
Rachel Newman – Fell & broke her arm – Teri's mom
Francis Pace – Hospice – Carolyn Butler's sister-in-Law
Alma Partin – Liver cancer – Linda Roberts's mom
Robert Pennington – Stage 3 Small Cell Carcinoma
Donna Reeves – Cancer

Mike Richard – Back Pain

Tony Ritter – Health

Clayton & Mary Roberts – Health

David Roberts

Jane Roberts – recovering from surgery

Lamar & Sharon Roberts – Health

Robin Roberts – Health

Mary Jo Robinette – Complications from vehicle accident – Brenda Green

Jill Robinson – ALS

Teri Scoggins – more tests on eyes

Jack Seale – Immunotherapy treatments for Cancer

Kinley Smith – On meds for seizures –

2 year old great niece of Dale & Brenda Green

Snuffy Smith – Health – Brenda Green

Sue Smith – Recovering from surgery – Brenda Green's sister

Betty Speaks – Mental & physical health – aunt of James Church

Jean Spring – Breast Cancer – Chemo & Radiation

Landon Stamps – Cancerous tumor in his abdomen

Charles Stepter – Father of one of Kim's students

Amanda Stockton – Health

Dwight Stockton – Health

Connie & Maxine Stoddard – Health

Dawn Sumrall – Stage 4 cancer

Mattie Taylor – Aggressive form of lymphoma – Pam Dixon's friend's granddaughter

Robert Walker & Marilyn Stutzman – Health

Deborah Tarver – Health – one of our former Custodians

Charles & Annie Waguespack – Health

Chase Wallace – lost home in fire

John Paul Wallace – Having seizures

Priscilla Wallace – Chemo treatments – Eva Nell's neighbor

Carson Wallace – Cancer – Eva Nell's neighbor

Linda West – Recovering from surgery on right leg – Brenda Green

Renae Woods – Crohn's – Health issues

Joy Yawn – Health

December Birthdays

03 – Jane Roberts

05 – Danney Bullock

07 – Ryan Williams

09 – Cael Yawn

10 – Deanna McKenzie

12 – Tyler Howell

14 – Jacob Cash

16 – Amanda Roberts

David Roberts

17 – Grayce Bales

18 – Darrell Boyd

Cindy Weems

Charles Waguespack

20 – Wyatt Roberts

21 – Pat Freeman

Marty Bigner

Chelsea Bates

25 – The Christ Child

26 – Connie Stoddard

Kim Burkett

Mackenzie Stockton

27 – Chris Yawn

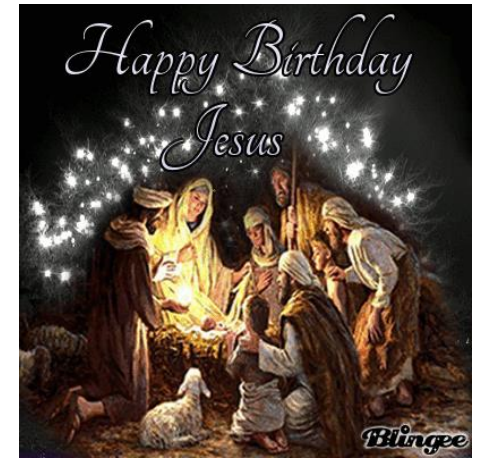
28 – Donna Bales

29 – Kamiah Williams

30 – Jackie Boyd

Kylee Farmer

Thomas Johnston



“And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people; for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11

**Merry
Christmas!**