

ORACLE

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December, 2017



The Giver

Many Christian families struggle with what role – if any – Santa Claus should play in their Christmas celebrations. No matter what you decide, it's fascinating to know the history of the real-life St. Nicholas.

Born about 270 A.D., Nicholas was a bishop in Myra, or modern-day Turkey. In the year 325, he was part of the Council of Nicaea, which produced the Nicene Creed.

Nicholas, known for his generosity, often gave away his money anonymously. According to tradition, he secretly provided dowries for the three daughters of a bankrupt merchant. Nicholas threw

two bags of gold through open windows and placed the third in a stocking hanging by the fireplace to dry. Thus began the Christmas tradition of placing gifts in stockings.

St. Nicholas is quoted as saying, "The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic God's giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves."

The Perfect Gift

Do you stress about finding just the right gift for everyone on your Christmas list? Does it make the season more a hassle than a joy? Pastor Mike Slaughter reminds us that Christmas isn't about perfect presents for people, as if it were their birthday – or ours. Christmas is about the perfect presence of Immanuel, God with us, through the birth of Jesus; it's his birthday, after all!



(continued on next page)

In *Christmas Is Not Your Birthday* (Abingdon), Slaughter writes, “How funny that it can be so hard to find gifts that will please certain family members or friends – the people who seem to have everything – and yet it is so clear what the Lord of lords and King of kings wants for his birthday. God wants you -- your time, your talent and your treasure – used in service to others.”



- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3 Linda Shamell | 16 JoAnn Beever |
| Phil Gantt | Michael Bline |
| 14 Ula Walker | 24 Ellie Blue |
| Carson Butcher | |
| Barbara Young | |



- | |
|------------------------------|
| 6 Richard and Ina Heath |
| 10 Tom and Kathy Butcher |
| 26 David and Linda Shamell |
| 30 Rod and Debra Hornsby |
| 31 Erich and Angela Ramseyer |

You are to give him the name **JESUS**, because he **WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE** from their sins.
MATTHEW 1:21, NIV

We always thank GOD for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.

1 Thessalonians 1:2, NIV

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Rod & Debra Hornsby | Jean Hupp |
| Viola Wilson | Harold Lupher |
| Ray & JoAnn McCann | Diana Thomas |
| Rod Godfrey | Margaret Fawcett |
| Mindy Evans | Sharon Hunt |
| Mary Holobaugh | Ron Bruce |
| Marjorie Fawcett | Jerry Rosenbaum |
| Vicky Gruber | Robert T. Ramseyer |
| Daniel Stiers | Jennifer Anderson |
| Christopher Boling, Sr. | Mary Ellen Stovall |
| Kathy White | Margie Bukiewloz |
| Ashley Donaldson | Brad Rada |
| Tonia Richardson | Floyd Williams |
| John Stout | |
| Carter & the Morrison Family | |
| Tom Schooler's sister-in-law, Sarah | |

- “Jesus took his place in a manger so that we might have a home in heaven”

—Greg Laurie



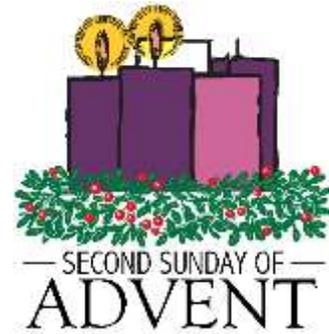
A Musical Celebration of Thanksgiving was held on Sunday, November 19. We thank our Musical Director JoAnn McCann for planning this program and for Ray and her doing such a good job of getting the word out about it. We also thank everyone that helped get ready for this program and for the Deacons for planning and serving the delicious refreshments following the program.



Christmas Walk Open House

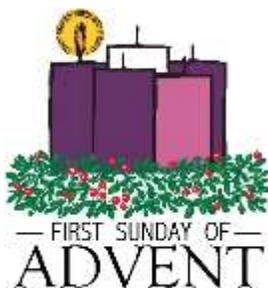
December 6 6-8 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to tour our church, enjoy Christmas music in the sanctuary, enjoy refreshments in our dining hall. We will also be giving away a Cookie Jar with cookie mixes as a door prize. Also check out our lovely Nativity Set on our altar and the front lawn.



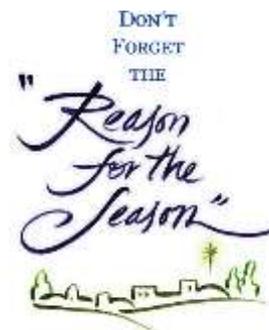
December 10

- 10:30 The Sunday School Children will be participating in the worship program.
- 11:30 Everyone is invited downstairs for **Jesus' Birthday Party**. We are asking for gifts for this party be items for our church such as tissues, trash bags 30 gal. & 13 gal., Pledge, Pinesol (not lemon), paper towels, toilet paper, hand soap, and toilet bowl cleaner.
- 12:30 Session Meeting



December 3

9:30 Sunday School
10:30 Worship—
Communion



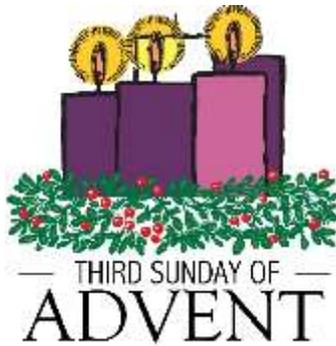


Monday, December 11
6:00 p.m.

All the ladies of the church are invited to attend. Please bring a dish to share. The meat and drinks will be furnished. Please bring a wrapped gift of boy's clothing size 8-12 such as shirts, pants, sweat shirts, sweaters, etc. (no underwear) to be donated to house of New Hope in St. Louisville.

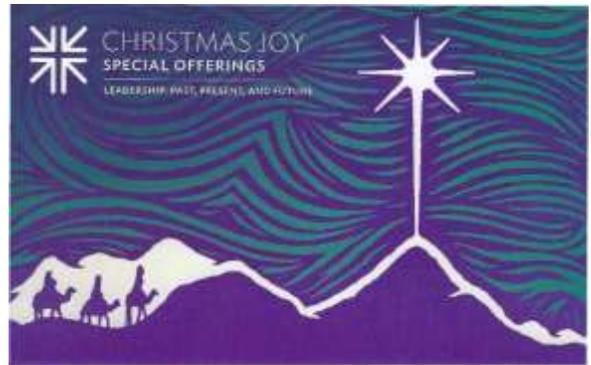


December 25



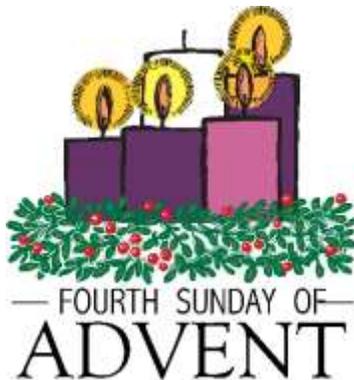
December 17

- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:30 Worship—Christmas Joy Offering will be received
- 11:30 Congregational Meeting—to elect 2018 church officers and to review the 2018 Budget



A Presbyterian tradition, the Christmas Joy Offering is designated to be distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to the National Ministries Division to support Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges.

Our offering will be taken up on Sunday, December 17. Please give generously. Envelopes will be available in the pews.



December 24

- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:30 Worship
- 7:30 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year



This is the season of Advent when we prepare ourselves for the birth of Baby Jesus, the only one who could save us from ourselves. I could write about the Peace, the Hope, the Love and the Grace brought to us by the birth story during Advent but then, I would be missing our part of this story. The human factor, COMMITMENT.

A look at Mary and Joseph and we see all the struggles that life could throw at us but yet they stay committed to God. Mary once she heard the news

from the angel Gabriel, she sang a song praising God showing the gladness and belief in God the Father and her commitment to him. Then there is Joseph, a young

man of standing who learns of her pregnancy and had every right to put her aside but never doubted God and his ability to bring this miracle about. Today so many people are easily swayed by public opinion and lack of commitment. The divorce rate has reached a staggering high while sports have replaced the commitment to God. There has been a movement to take the word CHRISTMAS out of the season and replace it with holiday. If it weren't for the birth of Jesus Christ we would have no need for the time of celebration and giving. I appalled those who refuse to make the change.

We as Christians are committed as ever to everything that God has brought to us. For us, Christmas will remain just as Joseph refused to give into the pressures of the world, so shall we. Thanks to all those who made the church so beautiful for this season.

Pastor Terry

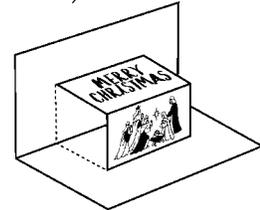


POP-UP CARD

Share the good news of Jesus' birth with this creative Christmas card.

What you need:

- Construction paper (two pieces, including one white)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Pens
- Glue stick



What you do:

1. Neatly fold the white paper in half, short side to short side.
2. Draw two parallel lines (at least 2 inches apart) from the fold to about halfway to the edge. Cut along the lines.
3. Fold the cut section back and forth so it pops up.
4. Push the section up so it pops up inside the folded paper. Draw a nativity scene on the pop-up box.
5. Fold the colored paper in half, short side to short side. Place the white paper inside it and glue the white paper down, being careful not to glue the pop-up box.
6. Write a Christmas message and give or send the card to someone.



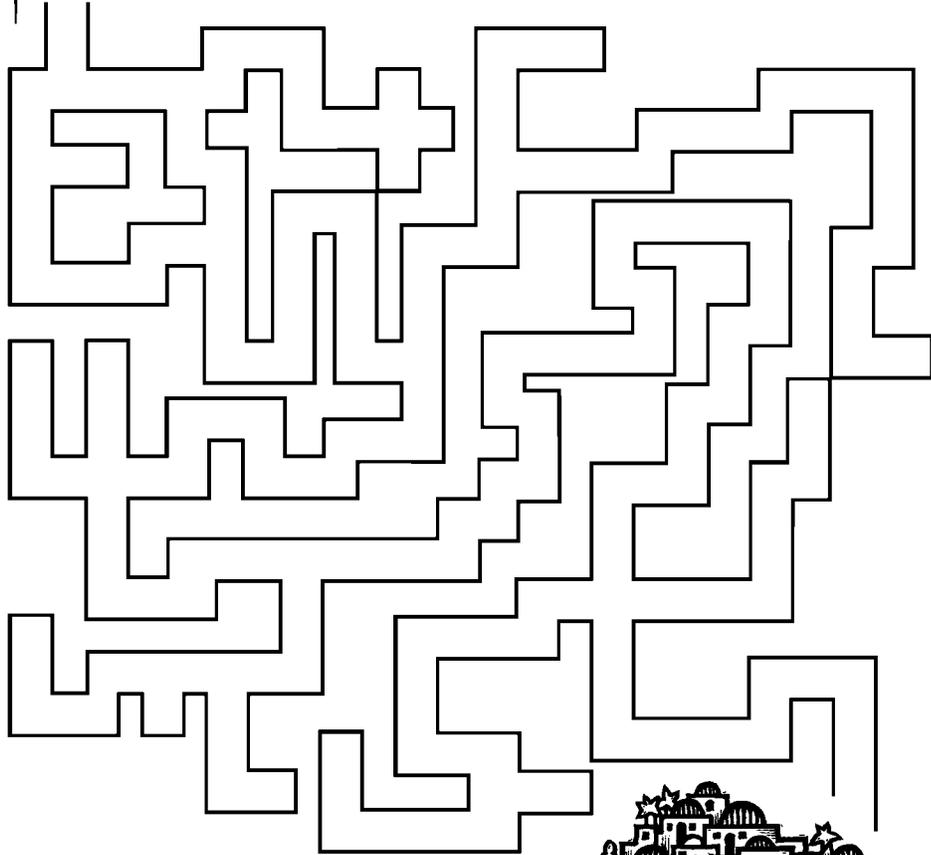
JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

In the Christmas story in Luke 2, an angel tells some shepherds to go see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.



START

Directions: Follow the maze to arrive in Bethlehem.



BETHLEHEM

