

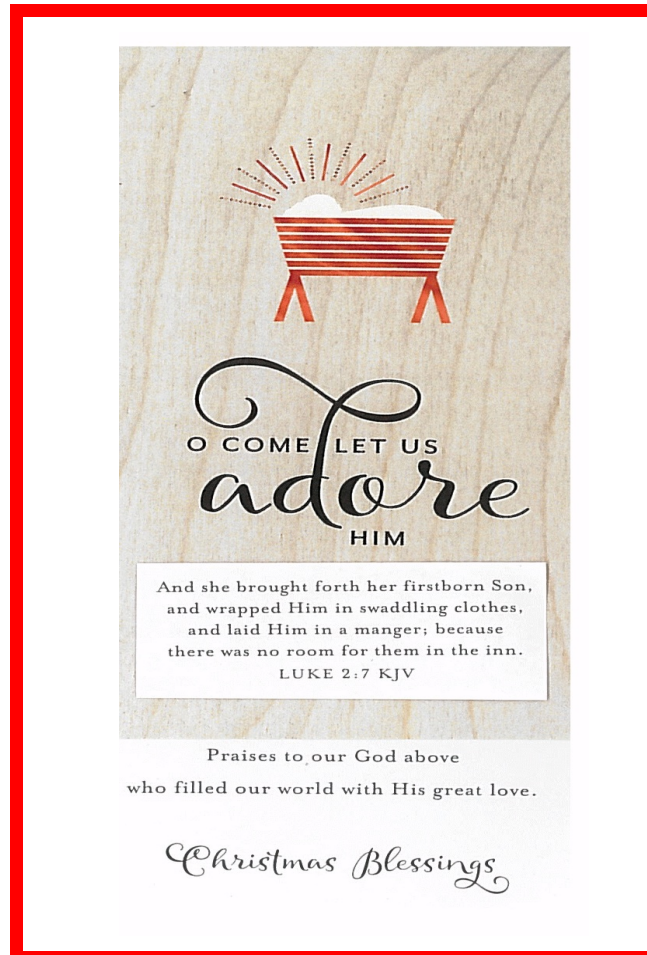


The Methodist Messenger
JANUARY 2020
Whiteville United Methodist Church



Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Communion Service - 6:00 p.m.

FOR YOU, THE STALLSWORTHS' ADVENT/CHRISTMAS GREETING



Advent/Christmas 2019

Dear Family/Friends:

A blessed Season of Advent to you. Let's be truthful.

It is an extraordinarily challenging time -- in the Church, in politics, in civic life, in family life. Lines from William Butler Yeats' poem "The Second Coming" (1919) describe the depth of our challenge: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,/The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere/The ceremony of innocence is drowned;/The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity."

Then: "Surely some revelation is at hand;/Surely the Second Coming is at hand."

Between the First Coming of the Messiah (which includes His birth in Bethlehem) and the Second (which we await), God gives us time. Time to learn, and time to teach. Time to be humble, and time to be bold. Time to rest, and time to be active. Time to love our opponents and enemies, and time to encourage our friends. But at the end of our efforts, is yearning for the Lord's return in glory.

We hope that, through it all, you and yours are well and doing good. The Stallsworth family is doing well -- and still recovering from Kansas State's football win over Oklahoma.

A grace-filled, glorious Christmass to you and yours.

In Christ,

Marsha and Paul Stallsworth/902 Pinckney Street/Whiteville, NC 28472/910.207.6389

BISHOP TIM WHITAKER ON THE CHURCH

Back on November 15, Bishop Tim Whitaker spoke on the topic of "The Gospel Truth about Christ's Church for United Methodists." As noted in last month's newsletter, Dr. Warren Smith of Duke Divinity School responded to Bp. Whitaker's presentation. All of this took place in front of a crowd of all kinds of United Methodists at First United Methodist Church in Wilson, NC.

Bp. Whitaker's talk is challenging: The United Methodist Church has an identity crisis, not a unity problem. It is interesting: Methodism seems to have done whatever it took to become popular in American society (by adopting Revivalism in the 1800s) and remain popular (by morphing into Liberal Protestantism in the 1900s and beyond). It is wide-ranging: from the Israel of the Bible to the United Methodism of our day. It is bracing: it calls for a deep reformation of the church, so that "the church [will be] the people called to live as Israel in the world, to be a distinctive people who live an alternate way of life." The bottom line for Bp. Whitaker: The United Methodist Church can and should live in a way that is based on God's revelation, which is received by the People of God; therefore, the church's identity is given by God. Because of that reality, The United Methodist Church does not have to make up itself -- its faith, life, and mission -- as it goes along. Instead, the church's task is simply to trust, and obey, the Lord of all the Church.

Paper copies of Bp. Whitaker's excellent presentation are available on the tables across from the Church Office. Take as many as you need. Also, the presentation is available online at www.lifewatch.org/uploads/9/9/6/3/99632932/special_report_-_december_2019.pdf.

N.T. WRIGHT ON LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE

On October 28, N.T. Wright delivered the 2019 Erasmus Lecture at the Union League Club in New York City.

Having served as the Bishop of Durham (Church of England), Wright now chairs New Testament and Early Christianity at the School of Divinity at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. More than that, he is now one of the great teachers of the entire Church. It could be reasonably claimed that N.T. Wright actually functions like a Protestant Pope.

Initiated in 1985, the annual Erasmus Lecture is sponsored by First Things. Its past lecturers form quite a list of notables. Here are several: Joseph Ratzinger (later Benedict XVI), Mary Ann Glendon (Harvard Law School), Wolfhart Pannenberg (1928-2014, German systematic theologian), Timothy Dolan (Archbishop of New York), Timothy George (Beeson Divinity School), Robert George (Princeton), and Robert Louis Wilken (University of Virginia). N.T. Wright was the thirty-second lecturer in the series.

The title of Wright's lecture was "Loving to Know." The point of Wright's lecture can be stated like so: while the modern world believes that "objectivity" is the best way to knowledge, the Church's faith and natural law contend that loving a subject leads to the deepest knowing of that subject. Throughout his lecture, Wright pokes fun at the

Enlightenment, a style of thinking that minimizes or eliminates the place and power of God in the world.

Wright's lecture can be viewed in its entirety by going to this Internet address: www.firstthings.com/media/loving-to-know-1. Be warned: Have a cup of coffee and your dictionary close by. N.T. Wright offers high-test thought.

GEORGE WEIGEL ON NATIONAL INTEREST AND PURPOSE

One more suggestion.

George Weigel -- who wrote *The Book on the life, ministry, and thought of John Paul II (Witness to Hope, 1999)* -- delivered the 2019 Diane Knippers Memorial Lecture on "The National Interest and the National Purpose." This lecture was delivered on November 21 at the headquarters of the Institute on Religion and Democracy in Washington, DC. Since so many corrupted political considerations have been in the nation (and about the nation) these days, on the political left and on the political right, George Weigel's speech was (and remains) especially timely. Furthermore, Weigel's historical review highlights things that were slightly or seldom covered by network news; and his stated principles are very thoughtful.

Weigel's entire lecture, including an interesting question-and-answer period, can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC7Hqsc1aQ4.

MEMORABLE

Theodor Haecker wrote *Journal in the Night* (1950) to clarify the truths upon which he based his opposition to the German National Socialism of the 1930s and 1940s. In this book, Haecker noted: "Christ also died for 'barbarians,' but he did not become man as a barbarian, nor did he live among them, or choose his disciples among them. The relapse of civilized nations into barbarism is moreover not possible unless they first abandon Christianity." (*First Things*, December 2019, p. 68)

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study will resume on January 8 and will probably end on January 22. A new study on Genesis 34-50, which begins with Jacob's first encounter with Rachael and concludes with the dramatic rescue of Jacob's family, will begin on January 29, at 9:30 a.m. Study guides will be about \$10. Please contact Florence Marlowe, 642-4714, or the Church Office, 642-3376, to order a book. All are welcome.

FREE COMPUTER TRAINING COURSE

Southeastern Community College is offering a free computer training course on Tuesdays, beginning January 14, in the WUMC Fellowship Hall. The course will end on May 6. This course covers Windows 10 and Word 2016 as well as an overview of technology. All equipment is provided.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

During the month of December, so many people faithfully contributed to our worship services. A sincere thank you to Suzanne Hall and other volunteers who assembled the Nativity Scene as the Christmas story was shared with the congregation and to the Altar Committee and to those persons who served as greeters and acolytes.

WUMC has certainly been blessed with a variety of beautiful music once again! Thank you Gus and Nan for your leadership as the Jane Wyche Schulken Handbell Choir and the Chancel Choir, with special selections from Wanda and Darryl Diefes, Gus Cothorn, and guest musicians Diana Matthews, Allison Sontag, and Heather LaMora, as a "Service of Lessons and Carols" was presented. Scripture readings by Rev. Stallworth, Elizabeth High, and Maggie High helped to make this service so meaningful and inspirational. The beautiful voices and playing of instruments are truly gifts from God, and we appreciate you sharing them with us.

The Worship Committee will meet February 10, 2020, in the Pastor's Study at 5:00 p.m. At this time, we will discuss our responsibilities for the upcoming Carolyn T. High Preaching Mission and those services associated with Lent and Easter.

Betty Gray, Chair

SETTING A GOAL FOR GIVING

'Tis the season – for setting goals for the year 2020. As the year ends, I find myself looking forward to the next year and contemplating what has been working for my spiritual, physical, mental and emotional growth and what needs to change. I am taking an inventory and setting goals. This year I will put my goals in writing as a reminder and a challenge to myself. So many NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, noble ideas at the time, simply disappeared from memory and vanished in years past. But when I have something in writing, I have committed to it, and I find I usually accomplish my objective. I have a written pledge to myself.

The Church Council and Finance Committee have presented a written goal to our congregation in the form of the budget. We know where we hope to be in continuing the ministries of Whiteville United Methodist Church in 2020. We are now asking the congregation to set a personal goal to giving financial support to our church. The pledge cards you have received or can request from the Church Office are simply a way to put a goal in writing. The church does indeed need your financial support, so I encourage all of you to reflect on the many, many blessings you enjoy and set a personal goal- in writing - toward giving what you are able, willing and prayerfully led to do.

Love in Christ,

Darryl Diefes, Stewardship Chair, Co-Lay Leader

Many, many thanks for all the Christmas kindnesses shown during the month of December. The prayers, the music (vocal and instrumental), the cards and notes, the food, and the gifts are all very much appreciated. Thank you for making this very special Seasons of Advent and Christmas. We are grateful for you.
– Marsha and Paul

MISSION-TRIP INVITATION

Red Bird Mission Work Camp is located in Clay County, Kentucky. Due to the closing of the coal mines, it is the poorest county in the United States. Families live without water, plumbing, food, clothing and adequate housing due to the poverty level. The Red Bird Conference of The United Methodist Church is a missional conference doing what it can in the area. Red Bird Mission offers many support ministries to the area families. The Work Camp and Community Store are only a couple of them.

To support not only the UM families but all families, mission teams from all over the United States go to the Work Camp and volunteer in the many ministries. Due to the many disasters across the country, the number of teams helping has declined and the Work Camp needs help.

Jesus told the disciples to go into the whole world and help. There is much to be done in North Carolina, but we also have to help outside our immediate area. Helping Red Bird Mission Work Camp is a way of fulfilling Jesus' command.

On March 22-28, 2020, I am taking a team to Red Bird that will work on housing needs and in the Community Store. When we go, we take a large trailer load of clothes, household goods and furniture for the Community Store. (We also take loads throughout the year.) This store is where the families do the majority of their shopping.

The cost of the trip is \$550 plus any personal expenses as we travel. There is something for everyone to do regardless of your skill set or age. The trip is a life-changing, God-filled experience.

If you are interested in becoming a member of this spirit filled mission opportunity or donating items for the Community Store, email me for an application at dcribb@nccumc.org or call me at 910.234.0682. Also, I take a team in October if March doesn't work for your schedule. The fall trip is October 25-31, 2020.

The teams that I take to Red Bird are not just from the UMC. We are God's children who come from various church denominations and from North and South Carolina and from any other location where individuals have a desire to serve. Please consider joining this or future teams, and share this information with your friends. Keep the ministries of the Red Bird Mission in your prayers as the families of Clay County, Kentucky depend on them. God bless you as you serve wherever God plants your feet.

Rev. Dalma Cribb
Matthew 10:8

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

4 th	Florence Marlowe	17 th	Sabra Allen
5 th	Grant Merritt	18 th	Carol Worrell
9 th	Alan Pait	19 th	Mary Smith
10 th	Hannah Deans	22 nd	Kyle Hood
14 th	Greg Williamson	27 th	Carly High
		31 st	JoAnne Biser



Whiteville United
Methodist Church
902 Pinckney Street
Whiteville, NC 28472

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Mrs. Kathy Graham, Administrative Assistant
Monday-Thursday/8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Layton Dowless, Custodian
Monday-Friday/7:30-11:30 a.m.

Ms. Tammie Anderson, Treasurer
Friday/4:00-6:00 p.m. (or later)

Rev. Paul T. Stallsworth, Pastor

Whiteville United Methodist Church
email: wumc@whitevilleumc.org
mail: 902 Pinckney Street/Whiteville, NC 28472
telephone: (910) 642-3376
website: www.whitevilleumc.org

Our Service of Worship is broadcast on WTXY 1540 AM and 103.9 FM from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Also it is available online at www.Kool1039radio.com. Click on the “Web Audio Player” applet. To listen to the entire service, go to: <https://lynx.prostreaming.net:2199/start/unitedmethodist/> and click on the Web Audio Player applet. For either choice, you may need to enable Adobe Flash. There is now a link to the radio station on our church webpage www.whitevilleumc.org. Click on “Stream Live Service Sundays at 10:00 a.m.”

Mission Statement of Whiteville United Methodist Church

As people of the body of Christ, we will gather for and be strengthened by Word and Sacraments, participate in loving fellowship, grow in discipleship, and serve our community and the world in Christ’s name.