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E-mail: office@fumclvks.org

Office Hours—M-Th 9a-3p, Friday—9a-noon

 Or visit us at FUMCLVKS.ORG
Sunday services stream at either site.

December 2024

1 8:30 United Worship 9:45 am Sunday School 4:30 pm Bells	2	3 Blood Drive 10am Women's Bible Study	4 9:00 am Prayer 1:30 pm H & S 3:45pm WW 6:30pm Choir	5 8:30am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Women's Study	6 5:00 pm Art Gala	7 Community Christmas Concert 
8 Christmas music Sunday 8:30 & 11am Worship 9:45 am Sunday School 6 pm Youth	9	10 10am Women's Bible Study 1 pm Book Club	11 8:30 am MMO 9:00 am Prayer 1:30 pm H & S 5:00 pm Grief Share 3:45pm WW 6:30pm Choir	12 8:30am Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	13 5:00 pm Wingtips	14 Music Academy Recital
15 8:30 & 11am Worship 9:45 am Sunday School 12 pm Fusion 56 4:30 pm Bells 6 pm Youth	16	17 10 am Women's Bible Study 12 pm Let's Do Lunch @ Pullman 2 pm Grief Share	18 9:00 am Prayer 1:30 pm H & S 3:45pm WW 6:30pm Choir	19 8:30am Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	20 Cody Choraliers and Riversong concert 6:30 pm	21 Men's Prayer Breakfast
22 8:30 & 11am 9:45 am Sunday School 4 pm Bells 6pm Youth	23	24 5:30 & 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 	26 Youth Staycation	27 Youth Staycation	28 Youth Staycation 
29 8:30 am One Service	30	31	1 Church Office closed	2	3	4





*Think
on these
things...*



The Advent season is upon us as we get ready for the coming of the Lord. "Prepare the way for the Lord" came from the prophets' mouths long ago. We are still in the season of getting prepared for Jesus – remembering his first coming as Christmas and waiting for his second coming, too.

What do you do to get ready for the season? If you are like most people, you do or have done things like this: decorate your home or yard, put up lights, bring out special recipes to bake or cook, rehearse for community events like concerts or plays, write letters to old friends and family member, make travel plans – are we going to someone's home or is this the year they come to us? All these things are preparation!

Walmart had their Christmas stuff out the day after Halloween. I'm glad we follow the church calendar instead of the marketplace! For some of us, this season will be most difficult. The death or loss of someone near to us has made everything different this year. Old memories cause our hearts to break instead of bringing us joy and peace. We are lonely and sad waiting for the season to pass. The Lord is the only friend I can rely on in this transition of my life.

While you are buying special gifts and making lists to get done, I want to remind you to prepare yourself spiritually for the Lord's arrival. Getting your heart ready to receive the King involves slowing down, focusing on God's word, staying in touch with God through prayers, welcoming neighbors, and strangers into your presence, and reaching out to help others know they are loved through acts of kindness and generosity. Some people like to read Advent devotionals daily to stay mindful. Leisurely enjoy the holiday instead of trying to keep up the frantic pace of doing everything and forgetting the most important things – it's OK not to go to every party, concert, open house, or event. Allow time for waiting and watching in the stillness of the morning or the calm of the evening. Reach out to neighbors and old friends who need to be reminded they are not alone.

Finally, embody Jesus to all you encounter. Living out the Gospel will mean caring for the least of these, going to the forgotten of society especially the poor in spirit and material goods. Welcoming strangers on Christmas Eve or inviting others to attend worship is an act of relational hospitality that others are longing for. Be a blessing as you focus on Jesus instead of all of the commotion around the season. *Pastor Dave*

Music Notes

The music ensembles here at First UMC having been working hard since October to create meaningful, worshipful music for the season. Music is such an integral part of the Advent season, and it is our hope that what is prepared provides you with a worshipful experience, sparks joy, and brings memories (both old and new). Each Sunday, I have selected hymns that are appropriate for the theme and hopefully favorites of the season. On Dec 7 & 8, we will be showcasing our theme for advent this year: "Rejoice!" Our community concert, "Sounds of the Season", will be held on Dec. 7 at 2:00 and will begin with the children's program "A Crazy Night in Bethlehem". The children really wanted to do something that was more like a play this year, so Nancy Shade and I created a Nativity Story specifically for our kids! They have been working really hard and are excited to present it. On Sunday, December 8, we will continue with "Sounds and Stories of the Season", our advent music service, featuring the music ensembles of our church. We will be exploring the story of Jesus's birth and the people who played a part: Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and eventually the whole world! It will be the same liturgy at both the 8:30 and 11:00 services. The handbells will be playing on December 22 to continue the musical rejoicing. And then on Christmas Eve we will have two identical services at 5:30 and 7:00, ending with the traditional candle lighting to "Silent Night". In between the services, the Leavenworth Brass Ensemble will again be playing some holiday favorites for us from 6:30-7:00. We look forward to seeing you and rejoining with you this Advent season! – *Kathy McKinley*



December BIRTHDAYS



1st	Karah Bryant	12th	Samantha Martin	22nd	Steve Wiegers
	Lindsay McKinley	14th	Gary Rader		Jim Yates
3rd	Matthew Weilbacher	16th	Daniel Watson	23rd	Ellie McNeill
	Michael Weilbacher	17th	Benjamin Coats	24th	Carol Russell
6th	Gary Beck	18th	Jonathan Coats	25th	Aurora Gray
7th	Marti Crow		Eleanor Embree		Lorene Richardson
	Forrest Holdeman	19th	Stacey Cole		Aniston Rolf
8th	Colton Lauber	20th	Rita Wood	27th	Verity Varnal
9th	Landon Stuhlsatz	21st	Karen Hooser		Merry Weeks
11th	Bob Atwell		Austin Wiley	29th	Nina McNeill
11th	Doug Hall		Emma Zeck		Rhonda Spencer
	Brian Wepking	22nd	Bob Seymour	31st	Tylor McNeill



December ANNIVERSARIES

7th	Lynn & Joyce Goss	28 years
14th	Rodney & Adriana Yates	22 years
21st	Mike & Martha Nielsen	39 years
27th	Rick & Robin Sanders	37 years
30th	Cape & Laurie Rust	30 years
	Jim & Judy Wolfe	44 years



Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Please help us update our records. Send an email with your current address, phone number and birthdays to swood@fumclvks.org.



December SPECIAL EVENTS

**LET'S
DO
Lunch**
TUES. DEC 17, 12:00 PM
PULLMAN PLACE RESTAURANT
230 CHEROKEE ST.

**MEN'S PRAYER & STUDY
BREAKFAST
DEC. 21
8:00 AM**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
MIKE MIX HAIRYMULE@GMAIL.COM
OR DAVE LANDIS DLANDIS@HUGHES.NET



Do you ever get childhood flashbacks out of the blue? I just had one. It was Christmas Eve, and I must have been a preschooler, maybe about four years old. I was super excited because we were going to the bus station in downtown Nashville (a big deal!) to pick up my Aunt Phil (my absolute favorite!). I loved Aunt Phil and was sure that I was her favorite too. Years later I learned that all of my cousins and siblings felt the same way. Oh, well. I can even remember what “we” gave her for Christmas, a little black velvet pouch with three lipsticks inside.

Seventy years later, as I reflect on that memory from an adult perspective, several unpleasant truths come to mind. Why was Aunt Phil spending Christmas with us? She had three children of her own, who were almost identical in ages to us. Who were they with? I know now that she was in the midst of a painful divorce, an event almost unheard of in the fifties South, which carried a huge stigma. When Uncle Buck had come back from the war, he “just wasn’t the same”. I’ll never know the details, but Aunt Phil, in her late twenties and with three children, having never held a job, was forced to leave her children with her mother-in-law in order to find employment and a place to live so that she could support them. It took her over a year, an event that her children never quite recovered from. The trauma of those years haunted them.

As we approach the Christmas season, remember that there are those of us who face it with heavy hearts. We recognize how devastating it is to cope with the death of a loved one, especially during the holidays. But let’s also remember our friends and family who suffer the agony of divorce. Their loss and sadness reflects the death of their marriage, the loss of their dreams and hopes, mingled with guilt and feelings of failure. Many times their incomes, friendships and family relationships suffer as well. The children, no matter what their ages, are forever affected (just ask an adult child of divorcing parents if it’s painful).

We can help by being supportive. Offer to have their kids over for a play date or a sleepover, giving the parent some much needed personal time. Cook a meal to take over, or invite them to your home. Model the missing father or mother parenting examples. Take the kids on an activity, such as fishing or to the zoo, or to youth group and church. And don’t treat the single parent like a pariah. They are just doing life the best they can, just like you.

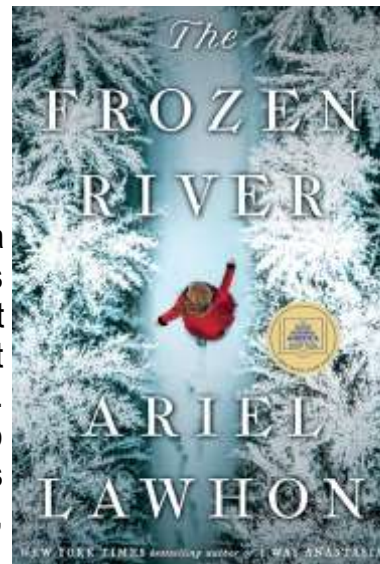
Some day, you may be pleasantly surprised when these children remember you with fondness and thank you for your help in getting them through a difficult time. Any seeds you plant now will reap a future harvest. Have a blessed Christmas.. *Marsha Gaffin*



January 7, 1:00 pm

January 7 at 1 pm the Book Club will discuss *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon. It’s a historical fiction based on the diary of Martha Ballard. As a midwife and healer, Martha’s diary is a record of every birth and death, crime and debacle that unfolds in the close-knit community. Martha documented an alleged rape committed by two of the town’s most respected gentlemen— later she investigates one of men who is found dead in the ice. When a local physician declares the death to be an accident, Martha is forced to investigate the murder on her own. As the trial nears, and whispers and prejudices mount, Martha pursues the truth. Her diary soon lands at the center of the scandal, implicating those she loves, and compelling Martha to decide where her own loyalties lie.

Clever, layered, and subversive, Ariel Lawhon’s newest offering introduces an unsung heroine who refused to accept anything less than justice at a time when women were considered best seen and not heard. *The Frozen River* is a thrilling, tense, and tender story about a remarkable woman who left an unparalleled legacy yet remains nearly forgotten to this day.



The youth group has had a busy few weeks. This fall, we have finished going through *The Good and Beautiful God* in youth group, which focuses on falling in love with the God that Jesus knows. It was a really great way to start off the school year. We took a break October 27 to serve at Trunk or Treat by leading games for the kids to play and we went to Red Barn Farm for fall festivities the week before.

In Sunday School, we are almost done working our way through the Book of Exodus and will move into Exodus in a couple weeks. I’m really excited because Exodus is probably my favorite narrative book in the Hebrew Bible. I just find Moses’ story and that of the Israelites to be so interesting. It has a lot to teach us!

In December, right after Christmas, the youth will be doing a Kansas City staycation to get out and serve at City Union Mission in the mornings, followed by playing around the metro area in the afternoons and evenings. We will be staying in a big house so that we can enjoy each others’ company and build relationships.

As we go into the new year, I’m excited for all of the things we will learn together in 2025. As always, thank you for sharing your students with me.



Our Christmas special offering is taking on a new recipient this year. In the past, Samaritans Buffet has been funded through these gifts. Our monthly community meal has blessed thousands of people over the years. Because SB has been so well funded, we’re able to expand our Christmas offering so the good news is reaching “to the ends of the earth.” Global Hope, our international mission partner, will receive some of the Christmas offering. They have children’s homes in Romania, Kenya and India. We have had FUMC representatives on mission trips for the past two years. Global Hope has been giving children a home for over twenty-five years and continue to serve as a guiding light. Here is their latest update with good news.

The school holiday at Spring Valley in Kenya is bustling with activity as Pastor Stanley and Teacher Alice have initiated the construction of brand-new, state-of-the-art classrooms for the students. The existing classrooms, which are over 20 years old, had become severely dilapidated, with parts of the structure at risk of collapsing.

Work is advancing rapidly and Pastor Stanley is aiming to complete the construction by Christmas. This way, when students start their new school year in January, they will be greeted with new classrooms! We will keep updating our website's news page with photos of the construction if you wish to track the progress.

Global Hope’s Christmas for Kids program is an important fundraiser that allows our partners to hold a Christmas celebration for the children, give them a wonderful Christmas gift, a special holiday meal and a set of new clothes – in Kenya, India and Romania. Your financial support will help each child feel included and enjoy this Christmas season. Thank you for joining us in making Christmas special for each of these kids.





Greetings and love to everyone that reads this incredible newsletter.

The Lord is alive at the First United Methodist Church of Leavenworth, Kansas. Financially we are holding steady, thank you everyone. 2024 was again a Kingdom building year. We provided tens of thousands of dollars and thousands of man-hours to serving our mission partners and the community as a whole. But 2024 is in the rearview and 2025 is our clear-view. "Bringing Kingdom" is still our continued focus for 2025. Born from our scriptural foundation of loving our Lord Jesus Christ first the foremost, and loving our neighbors as ourselves, we will continue to reach out and love the Leavenworth area driven by the Holy Spirit. The 2024 leadership

core value focus: prayer apostle's teaching, worship and sacraments, generosity and justice, and fellowship have forged a spiritual foundation to our collective building process. Out of these initiated collective practices we see the fruits to glorify God. In the garden God the Father created all living things and empowered them to be creative agents, to create fruit, to reproduce and grow – the plants, the animals and most importantly us. Jesus reinforced our creative purpose in the Gospel of John.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." John 15: 1-8 NIV

How are we manifesting our fruitfulness: physically fruitful, vocationally fruitful and ministerial fruitful?

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7 NIV

The fruit this congregation brings on a daily basis is serving ahead this coming year: feeding the hungry (Samaritan's Buffet, Leavenworth Mission Volunteers, Backpack Buddies), housing the homeless (Leavenworth Interfaith Community of Hope and Attainable Housing), and loving unconditionally on our neighbors not for individual/collective recognition but to bring glory to our Lord Jesus (Itch'n to Stitch, Grief Share, Deeper Windows, Youth Mission, Kids First Worship, Bible Study Groups, Sunday School, Scouts and Music). These are all opportunities for you to serve, love and be fruitful.

If you would like more information on these service ministries or you have an idea or other area where you believe we need to serve, please contact me at egarven@fumclvks.org.

If there are things you would like to see happen in 2025 in His church – ask. Your dedicated, focused, professional, and God loving staff is here to serve you.

in Christ, Ed



Itchin' to Stitch

November 10, we honored the Veterans listed below. Patriotic Quilts of Honor have been made by our Itchin' To Stitch ladies sewing group since 2015. As of today, they have presented 116 to the men and women who have and currently are serving our country. Join us in thanking them for their service.

RDML Sean Bailey	US Navy	1991 to Present
MAJ Sean Berry	US Army	2013 to Present
Chris Eckley	US Navy	9 Years
LTC Robert Garven	US Army	2004 to Present
SGT William Garven	US Army	2013 to Present
Elizabeth Hersey	US Army	7 Years
LTC Frederick Hersey	US Army	2006 to Present
LTC Nathan Moore	US Army	2002 to Present
CW4 Jeremy Newman	US Army	1997 to Present
Jerry Scheele	US Army	2 Years
Charles Ebbe	US Navy	6 Years



Dear Itchin' to Stitches,
Thank you so much for the wonderful baby quilts you make for my precious twin great nieces! Molly and Morgan live in Tennessee and I've seen pictures of them enjoying their beautiful quilts during tummy time, playtime and even as a backdrop for photos. The twins' family and I are grateful for your kindness and these keepsakes that will be treasured for many years to come! Love, Sherry Lauber

REJOICE!
SOUNDS OF THE SEASON
COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT
DECEMBER 7,
2:00 PM

Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
5:30 pm or 7:00 pm



Kids First Worship is for kids ages 3 years through 4th grade and meets during the 11:00 am service each Sunday on the lower floor of the Sanctuary building. We will be experiencing the way life was during the time that Jesus was born with a variety of hands-on Stations including grinding wheat, basket weaving, carpentry, taking a census, and taking care of sheep. The Stations will focus on the Story for the week.



- December 1: MARY - We will meet at 8:30 am
- December 8: JOSEPH
- December 15: BETHLEHEM
- December 22: SHEPHERDS
- December 29: We will meet at 8:30 am



Sunday School meets on Sunday mornings from 9:45 – 10:40 am. We will also be focusing on the Christmas Story, paying special attention to where it all took place and making a special keepsake ornament.

***NOTE: 5th & 6th graders join with Kristen Howell in the Youth Room for Sunday school.**

Fusion 56 (our special group for 5th and 6th graders), meets from 12:00 – 1:30 pm every first and third Sunday (unless otherwise noted). Each meeting we will have lunch, a Bible lesson and FUN! Contact Nancy to get the schedule for the year. Friends are always welcome!

In December we will only meet December 15 for our Christmas party.



Mother's Morning Out: December 11, 8:30 – 11:30 am. Our theme for December is "Christmas." There are three groups: Nursery, Toddlers and Preschool. Space is limited, so register now by going to: FUMCLVKS.ORG/MMO

Wonderful Wednesday is a fantastic way to remind children that God is not just for Sunday, he is for EVERY day. Designed for kids ages 3 years through 6th grade, we will meet in the Education Building from 3:45 – 5:30 pm during the school year. We will be taking a break from the book of Genesis to focus on Advent.

NOTE: We won't meet on December 25 and January 1 – Christmas Break. We will resume on January 8.



Crazy Night in Bethlehem – Children's Christmas Program

Dress Rehearsal will be Sunday, December 1 from 2:00 – 3:30 pm. The performance will be part of our Christmas Community Concert on Saturday, December 7 at 2:00 pm.



Holiday Happenings



The Cody Choralliers Presents:
2024 Holiday Dinner and Show



Yuletide Harmonies

Special Guests:
St. Joseph Riversong Chorus and Staff Party Quartet

December 20, 2024 6:30 pm

Leavenworth Heritage Center, 109 Delaware



Adults \$30



Children \$15

Call 682-2122 or 651-7464 for tickets

Dear Pastor York,

Thank you for your heartwarming sermon in which you related how well you knew and understood Tim (Yenney). Lynn and I appreciated what everyone shared and realized how much he had touched their lives. I must admit I actually laughed out loud at some.

Thank you for all you have done to support Sarah, Tim and Bea. May the Lord continue to bless you. May you continue your special ways of supporting each other and your outreach to other communities. Lord's peace be with you all, Lynn and Karla

Dear Nurture and Care Committee,

Thank you for surprising us with the bag of goodies in honor of Bill's 80th birthday earlier this summer. The detailed sunflower cookies and the cute butterfly bag of candy were fun and tasty. Your creativity was delightful. You brightened our day.

Sincerely, Bill and Pam Bay **Thank You!**

Dear Itchin' to Stitch,

Thank you for the beautiful quilt. I did not expect it. Thank all the other people that were involved in making quilts. God bless all of you. Jerry Scheele

Thank you!

LEAVENWORTH COUNTY ARTISTS ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

Rollin' Down the River

HOLIDAY GALA

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH | 5PM - 8PM

HERITAGE CENTER, 109 DELAWARE ST.

RICHARD ALLEN CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TEA

DEC 8 4-6 PM

RIVERFRONT COMMUNITY CENTER
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8th
4-6pm
Callfortickets 913-682-8772

\$20 ADULTS
\$10 CHILD

Loving Our Neighbors

By Therese Horvat - Republished from *The Leaven*

A Sister of Charity of Leavenworth, a veteran who has experienced homelessness and addiction and a single mother of three share ties across the common bond of affordable, attainable and sustainable housing. Their backgrounds and lifestyles are different. Yet, their goals overlap and their stories are interwoven through the mission and efforts of Depaul USA-Leavenworth Attainable Housing (LAH), a program dedicated to helping individuals with housing insecurities become and remain successfully housed.

Sister Amy Willcott, of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCL), literally grew up in the neighborhood in which most of the rental properties currently owned or managed by LAH are located. "This is my neighborhood," she said "I loved growing up here." Since last April when she became the LAH program director, Sister Amy has developed new ties with the neighborhood and the surrounding community. She's had to learn the lingo of housing, real estate and construction. But with a background in social work and administration, she has worked with persons of all ages and developed programs and services to help them.

"I know the people part," she said. "And I don't mind asking for dollars from different sources to fund our program. I'm becoming much more familiar with housing needs." Plus, Sister Amy had a great mentor in the person of Sister Vickie Perkins, also a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth who founded LAH. Sister Amy identified housing as a basic human need. "People need a place to live and grow into their potential. We have opportunities and the responsibility to help them. The Gospel tells us the work we're called to — not only as Christians, but as human beings."



of the Heartland managing a supportive housing program in Leavenworth for nine years. In February 2023, he began his job as housing support specialist with LAH. He not only had practical work experience; he had the lived experience of homelessness.

"So many people helped me," he said. "Now, I can help others. This gives me purpose in life." In his job with LAH, Leach has found residents open and forthcoming during weekly appointments about problems they may be having. He addresses issues with them ranging from housing to physical health, mental health or food. He has helped residents complete food stamp applications and picked up items for them at a food pantry. He also assists with basic home repairs. Leach also connects residents with resources such as workforce development. He is quite knowledgeable about housing and active with the Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition. "Homelessness is everybody's problem," Leach said. "It affects us all."

Leaving an abusive marriage and becoming a single mom of three, Tay Denson faced enough challenges. Magnifying the situation were worries associated with living in rental properties that weren't properly maintained. One landlord refused to fix anything. Denson had no refrigerator and had problems with mold, mice, and the electricity. An earlier landlord sold the property out from under her without prior notification, forcing her and her children to move. It was a godsend when Denson's aunt learned that Leavenworth Attainable Housing was looking for someone to rent a property that was being renovated.



Chris Leach has been there, done that. He was born in Wyandotte County and attended high school and later college in St. Joseph, Missouri. He served in the Army for three years followed by 10 years dealing with addiction, mental health issues and homelessness. Leach eventually received treatment through the Veterans Affairs domiciliary program in Leavenworth. He left that program on a HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher for veterans experiencing homelessness. Through VASH, Leach had housing with case management services for two years. He eventually took a job with Mental Health America



Scouts Helping Others

For about the last 10 years the Scout Troops have taken the time to become aware of the homeless situation in the greater KC area, to include here, in Leavenworth County. The evening began with a soup supper much like Samaritan's Buffet but real soup and cookies for dessert. The mood is somber, not partying.

Leavenworth Deputy Sheriff Shaw spoke to the Scouts and family members about homelessness with a focus on youth. Things like couch surfing, cleanliness, family situations, abuse, drugs and alcohol and loss of jobs. To broaden the experience the Scouts slept outside with only a sleeping bag and a makeshift shelter. The weather was perfect for this event. The adult leaders stayed up to keep the Scouts safe.

The next morning, after cleaning up the grass field and education building, the Scouts increased their awareness of those in need by working with the Samaritan's Buffet volunteers. As you can imagine, by 1 pm, all of the Scouts and leaders were exhausted.

Rounding out the month before Thanksgiving, the Scouting Ministry participated in the Veteran's Day Parade. It has been years since we have had such perfect weather. If you were at the parade, perhaps you were touched by the solemn TAPS ceremony. If I heard correctly there were 3 different buglers playing Echo Taps. The crowd was transfixed. May your Thanksgiving be blessed. *Bill Kuhn*



Trinity Lutheran Church's 2024 Community Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner

Trinity Lutheran Church is inviting everyone in need of fellowship and dinner to join us on this most joyous of days! We are serving a full Christmas dinner in the fellowship hall of Trinity Lutheran Church, in Leavenworth.

Where: 2101 10th Ave Leavenworth, KS 66048

When: Christmas Day, December 25th, 2024

Hours: Food will be provided from 11:00 to 2:00



We are not taking reservations
No delivery service provided
Dine in is encouraged

Love Your Neighbor

For 18 years, Maryann McAfee has organized the Community Center Blood Drive at our church. Maryann knows the importance of having a safe and full blood supply. She was a flight nurse for the Air Force Reserves for 27 years and she worked at the VA hospital for 37 years. She helped open the coronary care unit of the ICU at the VA in the 1970s and she facilitated the nurses who were going into cardiac intensive care. She has logged 3,000 flight hours, mostly from training exercises and the 3 years of active duty when she flew patients who had been wounded in Vietnam from the hospital in Japan to home.

Maryann knows that the Community Blood Center needs to collect 580 pints of blood every day and over 200,000 pints of blood annually to serve our local hospitals. In the Kansas City Metro area, someone needs a blood transfusion every 4 minutes. Red blood cells only last 42 days and platelets must be used within 5 days, so the need for blood donors never stops. The holidays are especially important for blood drives because people get busy and don't give. But it is also a heavy travel time which means there are more car accidents and trauma patients can use up to 50 pints of blood.

Maryann took over leadership of the blood drive from Donna Ramsey who started the blood drive in 2002. Both Donna and Maryann see the blood drive, not only as important for the physical health of our community, but also as a way to show hospitality and Christian love.

The church opens up the Fellowship Hall to the Community Blood Center who brings in specialized medical personnel to do all the screening and collecting. Our church has 4 teams of 3 volunteers that work an hour and a half. They greet donors and provide snacks for people after they give blood and help the blood center team as needed.

If you had been restricted from giving blood in the past because you lived in Germany in the 80s and 90s, you are now eligible to donate. People restricted because they lived in the UK are still restricted. If you have any questions about your eligibility, you can call 1-800-688-0900.

The goal for the blood drive is 50 units. It is usually busiest from 11 am to 12:30 pm. You can walk in, but they prefer appointments. Make an appointment at savealifenow.org/group and enter the code BD. If you have questions, you can reach Maryann at (913) 683-0208 or mbmcafee@outlook.com. Won't you consider giving the gift of life this Christmas by donating blood?



BLOOD DRIVE 
December 3
First United Methodist church
422 Chestnut
MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AT
SAVEALIFENOW.ORG

Each Christmas Eve, we deliver bags of cookies to those faithful first responders that spend the holidays working for the community instead of celebrating with their families. This year as you bake your favorite holiday treat, make a couple dozen extra and bring them to the church office. We'll compile all the goodies into bags on Dec. 18 at 1pm. They will be available for church members to drop off at police stations, fire stations, and hospitals on your way home from the Christmas Eve service. It is a simple and delicious way to share love at Christmas.



First Responder Christmas Cookies
Bring cookies to church by Dec. 18,
1 pm to be packed. Then help
deliver after Christmas Eve service.

Since December 2022, the Denson family has been at home in a two-story, three-bedroom house. At 36 years young, Denson has a new lease of life. "Everybody is really friendly and respectful," said Denson. "No matter what your situation, there's no judgment, and you are treated with respect, which makes you feel welcomed, loved — appreciated for just being yourself."

Denson values her weekly appointments with Chris Leach, housing support specialist. She's set goals and shares progress updates. With tools she's learned from financial education, Denson has raised her credit score and is working to build credit. Her goal is to someday own her own house. But there is time for that. "At the end of the day, being able to provide shelter for our families in a positive way is priceless," she said. "I will be forever grateful for this opportunity."

Begun in mid-2021, LAH strives to provide housing that is affordable, attainable and sustainable for persons who are currently homeless or on the verge of homelessness. LAH minimizes barriers to allow residents to access and maintain housing. No deposit is required and utilities are covered by monthly rent that is capped at 30% of household income. Supportive services include weekly individual appointments with the housing specialist to identify and resolve challenges and discuss opportunities.

LAH currently owns or manages 19 housing units. Fourteen of the units — most of which are houses — are occupied. Other units are being rehabbed for occupancy over the next several months. LAH secures



housing in several ways. The program has used grant funding to purchase and rehab or build the houses and duplexes it owns. Leavenworth churches and individuals have invited LAH to manage houses they own. LAH does the rehab and receives the rent which helps support the program's goal of getting people housed. LAH has also accepted donations of property. Financial support for LAH comes from rental income, grants, fundraising, churches that regularly support the program and individual donors.

If you are a widow, you are invited to a special Wingtips Christmas party on December 13 at 5:30 pm. You will enjoy a dinner provided by the Leavenworth chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc & Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Wingtips was started by Elaine Belardo, who is a widow herself. She wanted to find ways to engage the spouse who survived in ways that promote community, action, activity, support & hope. So every other month, this group meets here at our church.

Holidays are especially hard for widows. It is open to any widow, so please share this invitation with friends or family. Just please RSVP to the church office, (913) 682-5374 so we can plan accordingly. Many attendees also bring a food donation for Trinity House.



You're invited to
WINGTIPS 
Widows Igniting New Growth
Through Inspirational Peer Support
December 13 
5:30 pm
Wingtips Mission:
Engage the spouse who survived in ways that
promote community, action, activity, support & hope.
First United Methodist Church
422 Chestnut

LEARNING @ FUMC



Whether you're a child, or an adult, there are many opportunities to learn here at FUMC. Pictured above and below are the Ladies Bible Studies and the Men's Prayer Breakfast. To the left are some of this teachers and kids in our Children's ministry To the right are photos taken at the teacher appreciation lunch at Nettie Hartnett and Anthony Elementary.

