



THE SPIRIT

FOUNTAIN CITY UMC
DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

A Different Tune

As I write this, we have volunteers in our hallways working enthusiastically as they set up everything that will make our Bethlehem event and Advent activities visually special and spiritually meaningful. I am so thankful for their passion and good work. It really is a remarkable sight! Advent is frequently a season of increased activity in the church, in our community, and in our spiritual and social lives. This all makes sense given the powerful story we carry, and especially as this story intersects with the deep hunger for hope, peace, joy and love in our world. I feel we all have a responsibility to channel our inner Christmas shepherd and joyfully tell others about the wonderful news! Emmanuel! God is with us!



Yet before we get to Christmas, we have Advent. Advent is a season of waiting and spiritually preparing for the return of Christ. It is a season speckled with persistence in retelling the story for the next generation of those who will follow. Even the ears of the spiritual skeptics seem a little more eager to listen to matters of faith at this time of year.

Have you ever wondered what Advent song our actions sing to our neighbors? What do their ears hear by what they see? If the only song people hear us sing during Advent is a melody of business and hurry, then we are out of tune with the deeper notes of Christmas. One often-overlooked theme of the Nativity is how it proclaims the goodness of God to a weary and wounded world.

I share this to remind you to take the pressure off. No holiday preparation is perfect, and no gathering is free from spills and emotional stains. What you have is enough because you are enough. Jesus didn't come to save the person you wish that you were. Jesus came to save you, as you are. Take the pressure off. Give yourself permission to rest. Breathe in the mystery of a silent night and breathe out the business of a sin-sick world. Come, O Come Emmanuel!

In Christian Love and Hope,
Pastor Don

To End Strong, We Need Just A Little More Help This December

As of the printing of this newsletter, we are encouraged by the strong response we have received to our 2024 Say YES campaign! Your commitment allows us to have a good sense of what the offerings will be in the coming year, which in turn helps us be more effective in strategic planning for ministry.

Your commitments and gifts make everything this church does possible. Thank you for saying YES to dreaming big dreams, investing in the next generation, and saying yes to how God can work through you!

However, we still have a gap in our 2023 budget. We are just over \$60,000 behind in our giving to expenses. Typically, this means that some people will gladly help make a final push to help us end the year in the black and start the next year strong. We need your help and encourage you to prayerfully consider if you are able to help close the gap so we can end 2023 in the black. You can drop your gift in the mail, by the office, in worship, or give online.

Your giving matters to God and is essential to making ministry happen at Fountain City United Methodist Church! Thank you so much!

Pastors

Rev. Don Hanshew, Senior Pastor
Rev. Chase Crickenberger, Associate Pastor

Email: pastor.don@fountaincityumc.org
pastor.chase@fountaincityumc.org
Pastor On Call: text or call 865-888-0192
(After Hours & Weekends)

Sunday Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Service (Sanctuary)
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday Morning Discipleship
- 11:00 a.m. Journey Contemporary Service (Gym)
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Service (Sanctuary)

Childcare & children's ministry is provided from 8:30 a.m. through the conclusion of the 11:00 a.m. worship services.

PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, SERVICE, AND WITNESS

OUR GIFTS:

WEEKLY OFFERING

Oct 23-29	\$39,482.25
Oct 30-Nov 5	\$17,661.63
Nov 6-12	\$21,023.38
Nov 13-19	\$81,326.78

FAITH PROMISE

Faith Promise Sunday is December 24. Visit fountaincityumc.org, and select the **GIVE** tab, then select the **Faith Promise for Missions** box.

WAYS TO GIVE



In Person
or Mail In



Online/Mobile
Banking

Your Giving Matters!

Ashley Garren, Financial Assistant
ashley.garren@fountaincityumc.org • (865) 689-5175

Fountain City Connect

December 17, 2023 • 12:15 p.m.



We invite everyone to stop by Wesley Hall to enjoy some snacks and discover your next steps in growing in faith and connecting with others. Whether you are a first-time visitor or a long-time member, you will find this gathering a landing place to start your journey in calling FCUMC home. We hope to see you there!

December 2023 Calendar of Events

- December 3: Come Home To Bethlehem
- December 10: Come, Celebrate Christmas! Concert 3 PM
- December 11: Come, Celebrate Christmas! Concert 7:30 PM
- December 13: Youth Christmas Party
- December 17: Fountain City Connect
- December 24: Christmas Eve Worship Services
- December 25: Merry Christmas!
- December 26: Church Office Closed
- December 31: New Years Eve Worship Services

Altar Flowers

Want a special way to honor or remember a loved one? Altar flowers are a great way to do just that and will enrich our Sanctuary! Any color will do. Contact the church office to sign up for December 24. We also have a flower fund for times when we do not have a dedicated arrangement. Contributions are appreciated.

Fountain City United Methodist Church
212 Hotel Road, Knoxville, TN 37918
Office Hours: M-F, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Phone: 865-689-5175

Email: spirit@fountaincityumc.org
Website: www.fountaincityumc.org
Social Media: [@fountaincityumc](https://www.facebook.com/fountaincityumc)

STEPHEN MINISTRY
Gail Clift 865-922-9408

INTERCESSORY PRAYER
Tim Brown 865-599-3429
Tom Harrington 865-687-9460
prayer@fountaincityumc.org

Calling All December Graduates!

Will you be graduating in December this year? As a church, we are proud of you and want to recognize you in worship on December 10 in the service you normally attend. Please submit your name, school, degree(s), and service you will attend, to the church office by December 6. Congratulations!

Christmas Schedule of Events



Join us for our annual Christmas experience Come Home To Bethlehem. It will feature live music, games, soup and corn bread, a Christmas photo booth, and of course the town of Bethlehem. Admittance will be timed entry allowing everyone to enjoy each station sufficiently. Doors will open at 5:15 p.m. Walk in registrations will be accepted at the door. Admission is free but donations will be gladly accepted. This is a community favorite!

Come Home to Bethlehem Volunteer Walk Through December 2 • 10 a.m.

All participants, join us for a prayer walk and station walk through. This will take less than one hour. We will meet in Gym at 10 a.m. Enter through the church office door from the parking lot.

A very special thank you to all those who have worked for weeks preparing decorations, trees and scenery for Come Home to Bethlehem. Many amazing volunteers said **YES** to create a very special atmosphere inside and outside of our lovely church this season.



The Chancel Choir, Tollers, and Fountain Voices will present this year's Christmas concerts, a longstanding tradition, and one that is sure to bless all who attend. Our choirs and accompanists will be joined by a full orchestra, and our worship through music together will fill your hearts. Please, come! Celebrate Christmas in song.



Sunday, December 24 • Christmas Eve Schedule

Christmas Eve is on Sunday this year. Make plans now for you, your family, and your friends to join us on this special holy day!

Sunday School

Adult Sunday School classes: Check with your leader to determine if you will meet.

Children and Youth: No Sunday activities.

Sunday, December 24 • Christmas Eve Services

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

A traditional Advent worship service, with music from our Chancel Choir.

11:00 a.m. Student & Family Worship

A family-friendly worship service in the Sanctuary.

6:30 p.m. Contemporary Candlelight Worship

This candlelight Holy Communion service will be in the Gym and will include contemporary Christian music.

11:00 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Worship

This candlelight Holy Communion service in the Sanctuary will include traditional hymns.

Sunday, December 31 • New Year's Eve Schedule

Sunday School

Adult Sunday School classes: Check with your leader to determine if you will meet.

Children and Youth: No Sunday activities.

Sunday, December 31

New Year's Eve Worship Services

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

A Traditional service with traditional hymns.

11:00 a.m. Combined Worship

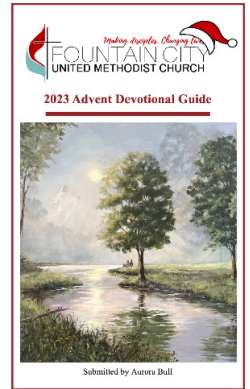
A family-friendly service in the Sanctuary with a combination of traditional music and acoustic guitar.

Homegrown Advent Devotional Booklet

Have you heard that a group of dedicated FCUMC volunteers have put together an Advent devotional using words and art by people in our church and community?

The FCUMC Advent Devotional Guide spans the four weeks of Advent to help us remember that our God is always with us every time, even in the most unlikely of places. We hope you find it will help prepare your hearts for Christmas and increase your appreciation for the meaning of the season.

Pick up your copy on Sundays in December or download it here >>



The Advent season brings us the opportunity to continue our Fountain City UMC tradition of honoring loved ones with poinsettia dedications. You are invited to make a dedication in honor or memory of family and friends.

For \$11 per dedication, your loved one will be honored or memorialized in our bulletin. For inclusion in the dedication list, please submit all requests by Monday, December 4, 2023. Thank you! Request a dedication >>



Thank you church family for embracing our churchwide mission of adopting seniors from Beverly Park Place!

Return gift bags on Sunday, December 10 before or after any worship service in the hallway outside the church office, or contact Becky Ripley at 865-789-5621 to make other arrangements.

Don't forget, there were specific wrapping instructions given out with each senior's information when you selected your angel.

Thank you for your support of the missions of Fountain City United Methodist Church!

ADULT MINISTRIES

Save the Date for Jubilation 2024 "Grace Happens" April 15-17, 2024 at Black Fox Lodge in Pigeon Forge, TN

It's time to register for "Grace Happens" Jubilation 2024 with popular singer, storyteller, and folk-theologian Ed Kilbourne, known for his quirky humor, moving music and insightful monologues. Ed's wife, Rev. Kathleen Kilbourne will join him as retreat leader/Christian educator. Details available on the Holston conference website. Deadline to register is March 1, 2024.

Register >>



PRESCHOOL

PRESCHOOL PAJAMA DRIVE

November 13-December 8

In Support of
Fountain City Ministry Center
and Norris Academy



FCUMC Preschool is once again collecting pajamas for children experiencing uncertainty. Join us as we collect new pajamas in sizes from infant to adult. Our pajama drive will culminate in a preschool-wide Pajama Day on Wednesday, December 6 and Thursday, December 7. Donation boxes are located outside the Preschool and at the missions donation area.

This year, our pajamas will be donated to Fountain City Ministry Center, and to Norris Academy, a residential facility for children and youth with neurodevelopmental diagnoses.

FOUNTAIN KIDS & FOUNTAIN LITTLES MINISTRY

Communion Sunday • December 4, 2023

Students in K-5th grades will attend worship services with their families at 11 a.m.

Children, Student and Family Christmas Eve Service • 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Children should be in Wesley Hall at 10:00 a.m. to don their costumes.

YOUTH MINISTRY



Resurrection 2024 • January 19-21

Resurrection is an annual event of worship and spiritual growth for youth and youth mentors. This special weekend is hosted by the youth ministry of the Holston Conference and is full of faith and relationship-building opportunities.

Glorious (GLO) Foreman, the leader of the Worship band *FRVR FREE*, will be the guest speaker. GLO has been a worship leader with *FRVR FREE* since 2017. For years, through worship leading, songwriting and speaking, Glo has revealed Jesus to thousands.

We will leave on Friday afternoon, January 19 and will head to Timber Top Cabin, our accommodations for the weekend. We will return on January 21. We are incredibly excited for Resurrection to see how God works through our time together. **Resurrection registration opens on Monday, December 4.** Register >>



Youth Group Christmas Party • December 13 at 6:30 PM • Old Fellowship Hall

Join us for our Christmas party! We will have pizza, snacks, as well as hot chocolate. We will also watch a Christmas movie and play Christmas-themed games! This will be our last Wednesday night of the year together and we can't wait to celebrate the Christmas season!

A Look Ahead at Spring Semester of Fountain City Fellowship

Check out the classes available on Wednesday nights for Fountain City Fellowship beginning January 10, 2024. We will share more details and registration information in upcoming Friday News Flashes and the January edition of The Spirit Newsletter.



Starting Point: January 10-March 6

This 8-week class is designed to walk you through the questions you have about faith in small-group discussions.

Candler Foundry: TBA

We are excited to announce that we will continue our partnership with the Candler School of Theology. Candler Foundry is offering seminary-level courses at our church taught by leading experts, theologians, and pastors. More information coming soon.

Foundations: Methodist History: January 10-March 6

Join Pastor Chase for this 8-week course where we will explore together the fundamental question, “what does it mean to be a United Methodist?”

Saving Grace: January 10-February 21

Walden Buttram will lead this 6-week course designed by pastors and financial advisors in the United Methodist Church to help our laity and clergy alike align their finances both with the Kingdom of God and with a brighter financial future in mind.

Finding Jesus in the Psalms: A Lenten Journey: February 21-March 27

This 5-week Lenten course led by Jerry Mitchell will engage the season of Lent with the Psalms using the book of the same name by Barb Roose.

Revelating Revelation: March 27-April 17

Yes, we know, revelating is not a word. But this exciting 5-week Bible study led by Pastor Chase will explore the themes of Revelation, including the demythologizing of the text.

Hello Church Family,

I am so excited to have been given the opportunity to be the new Facilities Manager at Fountain City United Methodist Church. I moved from Nashville to Knoxville in April of 2019 to take a position as the outreach worker for a group recovery home. I attended Crosspoint Church in Nashville and was baptized there in December of 2018. I was growing in my faith, so it was important for me to find a church home in Knoxville. I prayed and asked God to help me find a church, and he led me straight to FCUMC.

I felt so comfortable and welcomed from the first time I walked through the church doors that I knew this was the right place for me. I have been attending Celebrate Recovery and The Journey services for the last two and a half years and have completed three step studies. I joined several small groups and have formed some of the most beautiful friendships with the people I have met here.

A few things you may not know about me are that I love to garden and to fish. I also play guitar and love to read. I am so excited to continue my spiritual journey and to grow into the person Christ created me to be by serving at Fountain City United Methodist Church.

In Christ,
Prudence Spencer,
FCUMC Facilities Manager



**OUR PRESENCE
CELEBRATING WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

Our church family continues to grow! Please join us in celebrating the following blessings!

The birth of Jovie Ann Whittaker on November 2, 2023. Proud parents are Maria and Brody Whittaker. Grandparrents are Chris and Ann Marie Hurst. Congratulations!

The birth of Wyatt and Ansley Bullard on October 30, 2023. Parents are Alex & Kristyn Bullard. Great-grandfather is Ted Parolari Sr.

The Baptism of Amber Stanley on October 29, 2023.

The Baptism of Chad Farley on November 12, 2023.

The Baptism of Chris Johnson on November 12, 2023.

The Baptism of David Cooper on November 12, 2023.

The Baptism of Liam Stinnet on November 12, 2023. Grandmother is Dixie Bopp.



The Baptism of Maggie and Mary Ruth Walton, daughters of Paige and Brandon Walton on November 12, 2023.



IN MEMORY & IN HONOR

GENERAL FUND

In Memory of Carol Chamberlain by Tom & Emily Cloud, the Wood-Mulligan Family, and Ronald, Tascha & Abrahm Asgood

In Memory of Kathy Harrington by Larry & Alta Huskey, and Dolores Smith

CHOIR FUND

In Memory of Kathy Harrington by Chris & Betsy Castleberry, Ken & Sandy Failing, Conrad & Wanda Majors, Pairs & Spares SS Class, Bill & Martha Routh, Kurt & Lori Wiberly, and Pat Satterfield
In Memory of Sherman Morton by Polly Kelly

SLOAN SCHOLARSHIP

In Memory of Kathy Harrington by Mark Biagi

We Offer Our Sympathy To

Mark Oliver and Rogan Oliver in the death of their mother, Virginia "Ginny" Sheddan, on November 2, 2023.

Chad Chamberlain and his wife, Alice, Cara Trent, and Wes Chamberlain and family in the death of their mother, Carol Chamberlain, on November 14, 2023.



**Stephen Ministry Training
Beginning January 7, 2024**

We have a great group for our upcoming Stephen Ministry training but would love to have a few more people. This ministry provides a caring, Christian listener to those enduring difficult or life-changing times. If you would like to be a part of this caring ministry. please contact Gail Clift at 865-207-6791 or via email at jclift123@aol.com.