

THE TIE THAT BINDS

Rocky Mount United Methodist Church
35 North Main Street, Rocky Mount, VA 24151
Phone: 540-483-5338 Fax: 540-484-1698

E-mail: admin@rm-umc.org

Website: www.rm-umc.org

Our Mission: "To Know Jesus and Share His Love"



Will Waller, Pastor

December 2018/January 2019

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT RMUMC



Tuesday, December 4

6:30 p.m., Little Lambs Christian Preschool will present "Star of Wonder."

Friday, December 7

5:30 p.m., Our UM Men will sell their world-famous chili at the annual "Come Home to a Franklin County Christmas" on Franklin Street. Little Lambs Christian Preschool will be selling holiday goodies alongside them.

Saturday, December 8

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., dress rehearsal for children's Christmas play. Note: children will give a "preview" of their play as they sing a selection during morning worship on December 9.

Sunday, December 9

6:30 p.m., The children will present their musical "The Christmas Express."

Sunday, December 16

10:55 a.m., our Chancel Choir will present their annual cantata. This year, it's entitled, "On This Very Night."

Following worship, we will be having a Christmas party for the special needs adults in our community. Everyone is welcome to come! Please bring two side dishes and/or dessert to share. A meat and drinks will be provided.

Monday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)

7:00 p.m., Candlelight Christmas Eve Service - Bring your visiting family and friends with you to church for worship. This is a traditional time for families to be together and share in Holy Communion.



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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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To Know Jesus And To Share His Love

Dear RMUMC,

This month, I read that Las Vegas has become one of **THE HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS**. The famous Bellagio fountains will be dancing to the tunes of “Silent Night” and “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” If you like seeing the Christmas displayed on the world’s largest video screen, you’ll be able to gaze in wonder as Mary and Joseph traverse it at the Freemont Street Experience. You can even take in the lights at the Holiday Cactus Garden - the desert’s own display of holiday cheer using their local arid flora. All of it sounds like a lot.

Christmas in 2018 is a wild time to be a Christian. Figuring out which ugly Christmas sweater to wear and impress your friends, discovering the next trendy treat on Pinterest to bring to the office Christmas party, and trying to steal a deal on Black Friday or Cyber Monday - it’s exhausting. Somewhere, lodged between hours perusing Amazon for just the right gift and eating ourselves into oblivion, there’s a simple story.

This Advent, our sermon series will look at that simple story. It’s not gaudy. It’s not flashy. It’s not even that long in the Bible. It doesn’t clamor for attention. It exists, beautiful in its simplicity.

Love came to earth. Light shone in the darkness. Hope entered into hopeless frustration and consternation. And the world changed. Forever.

Vegas is going to have their fun. And we’ll have parties too. Yet, in the midst of it, breathe and hear again of the Divine who made a way for us to have life and life abundantly by sending His Son to be born in that “Little Town of Bethlehem.”

In Christ,
Pastor Will



Again this year during the season of Advent, you will be given the opportunity to select an Advent Friend. Envelopes will be available on Sunday, December 2, containing the name of a church family member, "an Advent Friend," who is either shut-in or in need of some special care during the Advent season. You will be asked to pray for this person and extend other kindnesses such as a personal call, a greeting card, or other special treats.



Special Needs **Christmas Party**

For as long back as we can remember, Rocky Mount UMC has partnered with the group homes in the area to provide a special Christmas. The youth group has led the charge, regularly buying for these residents from the donations given by the congregation. It has been such a delight to see the residents' faces light up when they're given gifts specific to them. We're looking forward to another year of serving our neighbors, with some pretty neat changes this year.

The Special Needs Luncheon and Christmas Party is being planned for December 16 right after worship service. Bring a side to share - a meat and drinks will be provided. Join the festivities as gifts are given and fellowship shared.

New this year: you'll have the opportunity to purchase for a member of our community, wrap the gift, and bring it that day for them. In the past, wrangling all the items has been a logistical challenge for the youth group. Rather than accept monetary donations, this year, the youth group is

asking you to take a name and the list of their needs starting the first part of December. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



In December and January, our church is in charge of serving lunch at Stepping Stone Soup Kitchen the following days:

Thursday, December 27

Tuesday, January 22

Thursday, January 24

Please sign-up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board located at the steps going down to the preschool. Thanks!



United Methodist **Men**

UMM

(Mark Newbill,
President)

The United Methodist Men will again be selling their "locally famous" chili along with hot chocolate and coffee for the "Come Home to a Franklin County Christmas" in downtown Rocky Mount on December 7.

The next scheduled breakfast meeting will be on December 16 at 8:45 a.m.

We will have dinner at Ippy's on January 20, 2019.

"Into this world, this demented inn in which there is absolutely no room for him ... Christ comes uninvited."
—Thomas Merton



United Methodist
Women
(Linda Walters,
President)

The UMW met on Monday, November 5. Our speaker was Donna Proctor from the Franklin County Free Clinic. This program was followed by the blessing of our Thank Bank offering.

The UMW Christmas luncheon is Monday, December 3 in the Atrium at 11:15 a.m. We will be treated to a delicious lunch catered by Center Stage Catering followed by a musical program given by GQ, a barbershop quartet affiliated with The Harmonizers of Smith Mountain Lake.

Our first meeting of 2019 is Monday, January 7 at 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room. In an effort to shorten our meetings this year, this will be a business meeting only followed by lunch. We invite all women of the church to join us.

The 2018-19 UMW Reading Program has begun. You may check out any of the books on the bottom shelf labeled UMW Reading Program in the Assembly Room. Please take a brochure to keep track of your reading. Simply sign each book out in the yellow folder and sign it in when you return it. 2019 titles as well as titles from 2014-2018 are eligible. If you take the children's books, please keep track of the names of the children to whom you read. Children count as readers too!

The UMW will continue to collect Boxtops for Education, soda can tabs, stamps, and coloring books and crayons for the Sheriff's Department. The box for the coloring books and crayons is in the Assembly Room. The box for the other collections is in the hall to the left of the Narthex on the windowsill near the mailboxes.

Our #1 goal for 2019-2020 is to continue increasing membership. We welcome all women of the church to join us the first Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room. If you cannot attend daytime meetings, but would like to be a member, Linda will be happy to communicate all meeting and project information to you by e-mail. We are willing to explore the possibility of an evening or Sunday afternoon meeting for those who work during the week as well. Please contact Linda Walters (540-346-2004, lindaw@shentel.net) or any other United Methodist Woman if you are interested or have questions.

Flower Chart

The flower chart for 2019 is here. Reserve your "special Sunday"



now to provide altar flowers during the worship service. Also, remember that the piano is available for an arrangement should there be two individuals interested in the same date. You will be responsible for ordering the flowers. Call the church office or stop by the chart on the bulletin board that is located at the steps that go down to the preschool to reserve your special date.

2019 Offering Envelopes

The 2019 offering envelopes will be available December 16 for pickup on a table in the Atrium. If you are interested in using envelopes and do not have one assigned, please call the church office. Likewise, notify the office if you were assigned envelopes and will not be using them. Thank you.



Snow Closing Schedule

It's getting close to "that" time of year when winter-weather may have an impact on the church being open. For weekday church ministries, we will copy the school-closing schedule for Franklin County Public Schools (i.e., if the schools are closed, all daytime/nighttime ministries and programs at the church will be cancelled). As far as Sunday worship when there is inclement weather, an announcement will be posted on the church's answering machine, website and local television stations by 9:00 a.m. concerning Sunday school and worship. In all cases, please let safety and safe-driving guide your individual decisions about traveling to the church.



I cannot express how grateful I am that you all "adopted" my school. From the help with the beautification, to donations of clothing, food, essentials, to the volunteers and the latest extremely generous donation from the yard sale; your generosity is overwhelming. It is truly appreciated.

Gail Brendle
Sontag Elementary School

I want to express my appreciation for your generosity in support of Sontag Elementary. Your personal commitment was incredibly helpful and will allow us to serve several families. Your assistance means so much to me but even more to our Sontag families. Thank you from all of us.

With gratitude,
Sontag Faculty and Staff

We are humbly grateful for your generous donation of \$700 given to our Lee M. Waid students on behalf of the youth ministry's fundraising efforts. The money was deposited in our school's Bono Fund, which provides access to our staff to purchase shoes, clothing, hygiene products, and other essential elements that we often take for granted. When students are given what they need, they are able to concentrate on their mission...learning.

We could not have done any of this without you, and we thank you for demonstrating to our students that they are loved by members of their community.

Anitra Holland
Principal
Sheree Thomas
Guidance Counselor

A merry balance

In Luke 10:38-42, Martha gets a bad rap. After all, we need Marthas to get things done and to show hospitality. (Note that Martha is the one who opens up her home to Jesus in the first place!)

Marthas are needed in December, but holiday preparations shouldn't shift our focus from the reason for the season. When we become "worried and distracted" as Martha did (v. 41, NRSV), we're tempted to trade God's "one thing" (v. 42) for the world's many worthless things. Yet if we're only like Mary, we may forget to let the world know who we're celebrating!

So this Christmas, keep a proper balance between your inner Mary and your inner Martha. Take time to "be Mary," kneeling at the manger, so that all the merry things you do as Martha have meaning and serve the newborn king.



Vital Congregation Statistics for October

I. Finances—Church Operating Budget

Amount Brought Forward From 2017	\$39,986	
Transferred to Building Fund 4/30/18	<\$10,000>	
Budgeted Offerings Expected to Receive through 10/31/18		\$241,930
Actual Offerings Received through 10/31/18	\$224,791	
Budgeted Expenses Expected to Spend through 10/31/18		\$242,230
Actual Expenses Paid through 10/31/18	<\$203,065>	
Ending Balance, 10/31/18	\$51,712	

II. Average Worship Attendance = 130

Average Sunday School Attendance = 32



Little Lambs in the News

(Jan Mohler, Director)

Mark your calendars! A host of adorable stars are making their way to Rocky Mount for Little Lamb's version of "Star of Wonder." The show is Tuesday, December 4 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Our school continues to learn about serving others. The four-year-old class made cards for Veteran's Day and sent them to the American Legion Post 6 here in Rocky Mount. In December, we are partnering with the church by collecting canned soup for Heavenly Manna. We will also be partnering with the Sheriff's Department by collecting canned goods for their Operation Christmas Tree Initiative. We are so blessed to be able to foster a love of serving in our young students.

We will be taking a much-needed break beginning December 20. School will resume January 3.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Jan

Empowered

The One who calls you to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is the One who by your consent, goes into all the world and preaches the Gospel to every creature through you!

—W. Ian Thomas



(Lynn Meeks, Director of Music Ministries)

December is full of music! The children will have a dress rehearsal for the Christmas play on Saturday, December 8 at 11:00 a.m. We will meet upstairs and rehearse in the Wonderful Wednesday area. The children should be finished by noon. They will give us a “preview” of their play as they sing a selection during morning worship on December 9. (Parents, we will meet upstairs at 10:45 a.m.) At 6:30 p.m. that evening, the children’s choirs will present their musical “The Christmas Express” (All children should be dressed and in the church parlor by 6:00 p.m.) All aboard the Christmas Express! Join Mr. Davis and his students as they travel to Bethlehem, PA for the annual Christmas Eve pageant. You’ll meet the Conductor, a waitress, a rich businessman, and a mysterious traveler. Come join the excitement and experience the power of what it means to revel in God’s love, grow in our faith, and share His everlasting truth with others at 6:30 p.m. on December 9. You will surely be blessed.

The Jubilant Ringers will play a beautiful medley of familiar Christmas Carols during worship on December 16 and don’t miss the Chancel Choir along with handbells, dancers, narration and beautiful piano accompaniment, as we present the musical **“On This Very Night” during worship on December 16.** All of the mystery, the awe, and the palpable excitement of that night are imaginatively captured in a Christmas mosaic that combines fragments of familiar carols with original music. “On this very night...the night the ancient prophecies were fulfilled;

the night of the angelic announcement of the heavenly birth as the star shone brightly above, leading others to witness this incredible gift of love for God in human form-Jesus, the babe.”

And finally, join us on December 24 at 7:00 p.m., for our annual Christmas Eve Service. Trumpet music will greet you as you arrive, we’ll have special solos and instrumentalists, and of course “Silent Night.”

Mike, the girls, and I thank you for another wonderful year together. Each one of you means so much to us. We wish you a joyous holiday season and many, many blessings in the new year!

January Music Notes...

Wonderful Wednesday will take a break and resume on January 9. I will be making up the volunteer schedule for the rest of the school year to be circulated by the first of January. If you are a volunteer and don’t receive a list, please check in the Wonderful Wednesday area on the fourth floor for extra copies. If you would like to be a new volunteer, please let me know. We can always use more help!

Chancel Choir will resume rehearsals on January 2 and handbells will begin the New Year with practice on January 8. If you are thinking about joining any of our choirs, January is a great time to start. We can always use more singers and ringers!

Remember if Franklin County Public Schools are closed or dismiss early on a choir practice day due to bad weather, we will not meet. When in doubt, call me (483-9799).

Love and Peace,
Lynn



Kendra Creasey Dean is one of the foremost authors, thinkers and do-ers in youth ministry. In the book, *OMG: A Youth Ministry Handbook*,

Dean shares signs of a fruit-bearing youth. They are demonstrators of a personal spirituality, believers that God is present in the world, committed and faithful followers, possessors of a positive and hopeful spirit, service-filled people, and moral persons. This list could be for adults as well.

As we evaluate the youth program at RMUMC, we can use Dean's list. It is important in the life of a disciple to evaluate how it is with the soul. Similarly, we can evaluate the group by asking the same question. One should make personal and group examination a regular practice in order to celebrate success and seek to grow where there are weaknesses.

For the disciple who follows Jesus Christ, they have a hunger to grow in knowing him, and deepening their relationship with our Savior. What has begun can and should grow. My dream is that we all, not just youth, will see to want to be doing what the disciples are already doing. That we all serve in mission, that we all live a moral life, that we all be active with God's people.

Youth group is a blast, and the people in it are the kind of people I want to spend my time with. They are funny, personable, kind, and courageous. What we need are more - more youth and more adults willing to serve. If you want to be a person who joins with these youth and see them flourish on all these levels, please do contact Pastor Will.



Prayer Concerns:

Our country, those serving in our armed forces, and our church; Brenda Wright; Jean Hodges; Sam Cook; Tim Funk; Ben & Chris Angle; Kim Easter; John Cooper; Jeanette Singleton; Reva Rash; George Perdue; Heather Mackenzie; Donna Dillon; Hannah Bain; Debbie Ford; David Ferguson; Shelley Bird; DJ Snider; Ann Davis; Joanne Patterson; Shirley Funk; Dennis Holland; Jennifer Tatum; Tiffanee Anderson; Martha Williams; Lorrie Williams; Mark Singleton; Jennifer Cooper; Kathy Cunningham; and Don Applegarth.

Forget-Me-Nots:

Marion Higgins; Margaret Linkous; and Ann Robinson.



Rebecca Goransson and Family in the death of her mother, Audrey Williams

Ina Clements and Family in the death of her brother, Blanton Wayne Cooper

Family of Mildred Dillon who died on November 24

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**ROCKY
MOUNT**
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Open Hearts...

Open Minds...

Open Doors...

The People of the United Methodist Church

CHURCH STAFF

Reverend Will Waller, Pastor
Lynn M. Meeks, Director of Music Ministries
Jeanne Banks, Music Accompanist
Valerie Latimer, Administrative Assistant
Jennifer Ardis, Nursery Attendant

(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.)



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:55 a.m. Worship