



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church®

The Kedron Connection

Kedron United Methodist Church
6650 Kedron Church Road Smyrna, TN 37167
Phone: (615) 223-7858

Website: www.kedronumc.org
Facebook: Kedron UMC

Reverend Barry Culbertson, Pastor
Phone: (931) 217-8841 **Email: pastor-barry@KedronUMC.org**

Volume 19

December 2020

Issue 12

From Our Pastor

Isaiah 43:18 "Behold, I am doing a new thing....."
Revelation 21:5 "Behold, I make all things new...."

Just wondering if others have a heightened sense of the significance of events the past few months? First it was the impact of the pandemic of COVID 19. Then came the national election. And closer to home, a number of deaths of both family and friends.

I am not surprised that the anniversary of President Kennedy's 1963 assassination commemorated on November 22 has stayed with my thoughts more so this troubling 2020. As with many, I vividly remember the 7th grade classroom where I heard the announcement over the school PA. Now December 7 looms large as well. Pearl Harbor. Is war always possible? And a vaccine distribution is yet ahead. Months of unease still await us. What else is going to happen?!

Where is some good and/or encouraging news in all this? Once again, we, the Church, the Beloved Community, lift up our hearts to the promise of Advent. We will again say to each other, "Merry Christmas." The vision of Someone who has saved us and will save us appears and we are made glad. All is not lost. The Kingdom of God is "amongst us," "in our midst!" From time to time, it appears and we are encouraged knowing God will "make all things new" in God's timing.

And to hold to this requires faith which is trust in action. Which gets us to Christmas which is the joy of both giving and receiving! Who doesn't like receiving a gift and also the delight of giving to someone who lights up when your gift is shared?! New good things happen! These are the kind of "events" we look forward to and which sustain us in times of trouble and worry. Giving and receiving.

We cannot escape "events" which shape us. We can "live into" whatever appears on our horizons because God is already there making a way for us. Yes, both our beginning and end is in Christ Jesus. No "earth bound" event can change that. Thanks be to God~~+

Blessings as Advent season arrives and Christmas is coming!

Pastor Barry

Happy Birthday to:

Kristy Fraley	Dec. 6
Martha Fraley	Dec. 8
Marc Fraley	Dec. 11
Linda Pagello	Dec. 11
Alfred Rhodes	Dec. 12
Danny Fraley	Dec. 14

Bucket Offerings

In December, the bucket collections at Sunday morning worship will be donated to the Salvation Army.

Food Bank

You may bring food donations for the local food bank on the first and second Sundays of the month. Place the donations on the pew in the narthex. The food will be delivered to the food bank. The suggested items for December are sugar-free foods.

All non-perishable foods are accepted and appreciated. The need is great.

Resources Available

Resources for various kinds of help/support for you or someone you know that might benefit from counseling and/or spiritual support are listed below.

- Insight Counseling Center, Murfreesboro
615-383-2115 for in person or
Online/phone counseling
- Upper Room Prayer Ministry
615-340-7200
- Talkspace.com
Online/phone counseling

Methodist News Source www.umnews.org

Where are these words found?

“She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

-NRSV (hint book of Matthew)

Christmas Eve

At present a Christmas Eve Service is to be determined. An announcement will be made.

Christmas Cards

There will be no Christmas card exchange at Kedron this year. Please mail your cards personally.

Family Christmas Pictures

Please bring to church or email family Christmas pictures. You may email them to Pastor Barry or John Vance.

December Calendar

Saturday, Dec. 5	No Men's Breakfast
Sunday, Dec. 6	
2 nd Sunday of Advent	
8:45 a.m.	Sunday School
9:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Sunday, Dec. 13	
3 rd Sunday of Advent	
8:45 a.m.	Sunday School
9:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Sunday, Dec. 20	
4 th Sunday of Advent	
8:45 a.m.	Sunday School
9:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Thursday, Dec. 24	TBD Christmas Eve Service
Friday, Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Sunday, Dec. 27	
8:45 a.m.	Sunday School
9:30 a.m.	Worship Service
10:30 a.m.	Jan. 2021 newsletter info due
	call Fay
	615-459-2618 or
	lf_fraley@prodigy.net

Psalm 100:4-5 was the quotation in the November newsletter.

During the hardest moments of a particularly difficult year, Bible searches soared online, and a record number of people turned to Scripture for passages addressing fear, healing, and justice. The popular YouVersion Bible App saw searches increase by 80 percent in 2020, totaling nearly 600 million worldwide.

Isaiah 41:10 ranked as the most searched, read, and bookmarked verse on the app: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

From CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Ideas for Giving During A Limited Visitation Christmas Season-

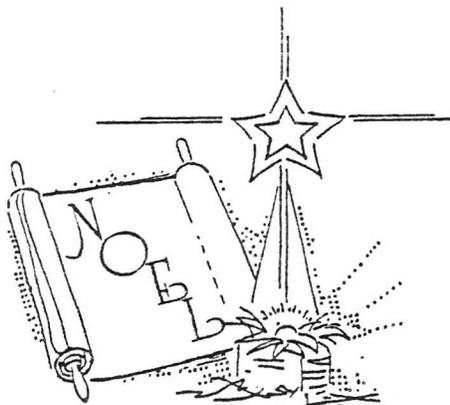
- Step up your food contributions to a local food bank in Smyrna or Murfreesboro
- Go through old photos, copy, and include in your Christmas cards to be sent.
- On the last three Mondays leading to Christmas, be like the Three Magi and give a gift to a local charity eg Salvation Army, PAWS, Journey Home, Green House Ministries, etc.
- Countdown to Christmas Dec 21-24 (M-Th) by contacting family on one of those days either the Oldest, the Youngest, the Furthestest Away, or those in College or Military.

Third Week of Advent

"Shout for joy, daughter Zion! . . . The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst" (Zep 3:14, 15).

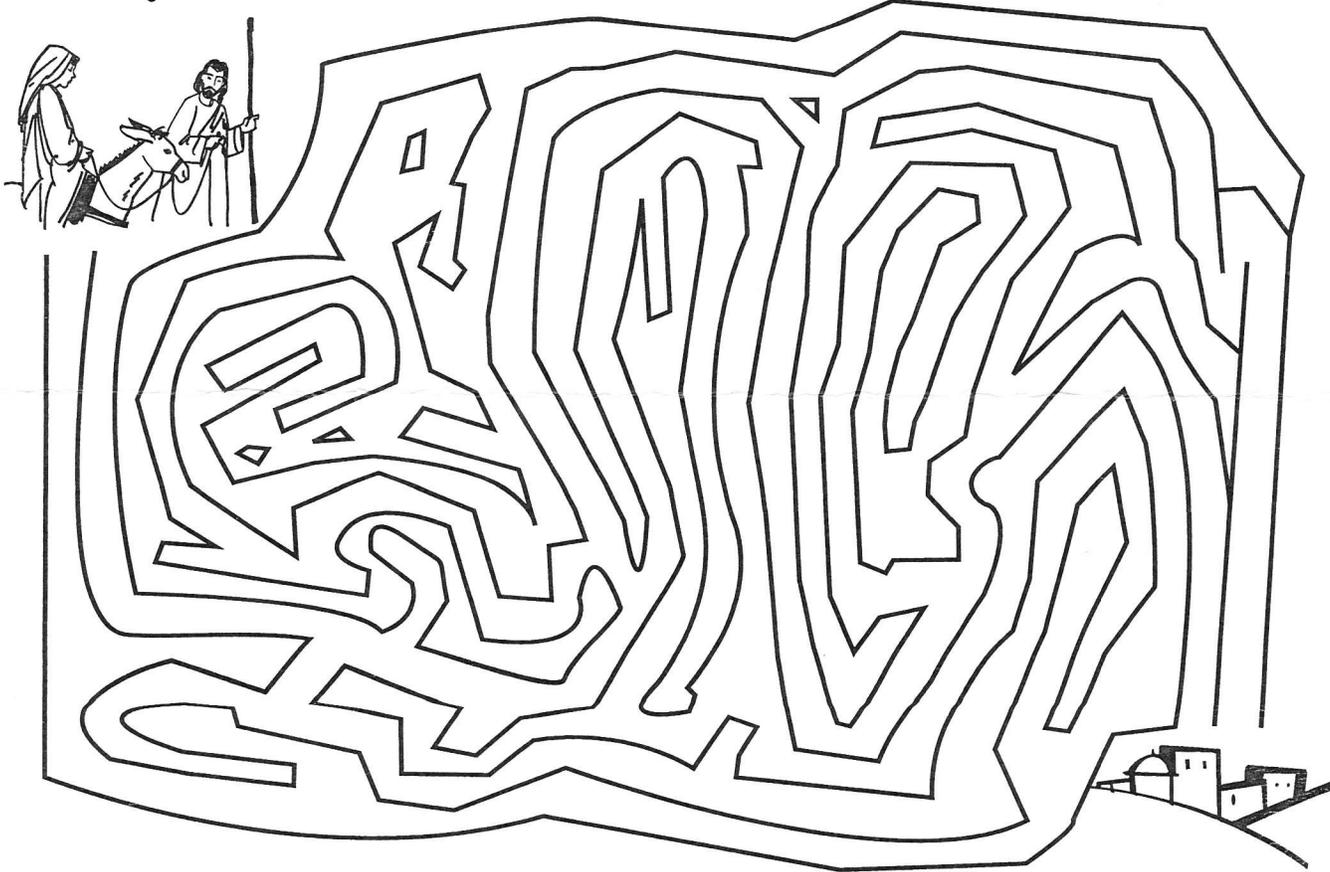
This is Gaudete Sunday, the day we rejoice in the closeness of the Lord's coming. "Do not be discouraged!" says Zephaniah. Judgment has been removed from us, our enemies turned away. How do we understand that? How often do we hear a prayer for peace in the world and respond to ourselves, "Yeah, as if that's possible"? Or see the need for justice or human rights in places that beg for them and think, Fat chance?

This week, let us practice offering our prayers of petition as God asks, "full of gratitude," recognizing that what appears impossible to us is always possible for God. We are in the season of impossible good news: God comes to us! While you are standing in line this week, do a rundown of your prayer requests and complete each one with a simple "thank you." That's it. Just "thank you."



Finding Bethlehem

Can you help Joseph and Mary find the way to Bethlehem?



"Isn't there anyone who can tell me what Christmas is all about?"