

The Messenger

We are believers in Christ who gather to
PRAISE God, **GROW** and **SERVE**.

December 2020



Pastor's Corner

Pastor Mel Nielsen
pastormel1@hotmail.com
cell: 1-815-922-9161

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

– Isaiah 9:6-7 (N.I.V.)

Another Advent season is upon us. However, this Advent season is different than any we can remember. This preparation time leading up to Christmas is, like everything, mired in a pandemic.

Despite social distancing, Jesus will still come. Even if Jesus wears a face mask, we will recognize our Savior. Nothing will stop Christmas. There is no disease that can halt what Jesus will accomplish in this world. According to Isaiah, there will be no end to God's rule.

It is one thing to take precautions while navigating through this world; it is another to fear living. Mary and Joseph had reasons to worry for their lives: They could have been beaten and robbed along the journey; they could have caught a 'virus' while traveling; they could have experienced a medical emergency along the way, (one of the travelers was very pregnant).

They faced the same potential troubles any of us may face today when we venture out of our comfort zones. They knew, however, that the gift was greater.

Jesus was greater than any challenges the human world could throw at them. The two young parents pressed on with an inherent belief that everything would be all right.

I believe there was a gentle voice whispering to their spirits as they walked, "Do not fear, I am with you." I believe that same voice is here for us today. We also have an inherent belief that God is greater than our challenges.

The voice of God may be harder to hear when we are bombarded with medical news warning us not to go near our families, stay away from church and don't travel. I understand the reasoning behind these decisions, but I can also be frustrated by them.

I don't want to spend the Advent and Christmas season aggravated. I don't believe you do either. Let's remember that Christmas is one day, it signifies the birth of Jesus, but the peace that Jesus brings to earth on Christmas Day is forever.

PLEASE SEE 'PASTOR' ON PAGE 2

Centenary UMC

Church Staff

Pastor.....Mel Nielsen
Coordinator of Outreach
and Growth.....Kevin Hinkle
Church Secretary.....Christi Kennedy
Music Director.....Terri Benz
Contemporary Worship Leader.....Rachel Hinkle
Parish Visitor.....TBD
Custodian.....Patty Adcock
Nursery Attendant.....Kayleigh Dirden
Nursery Attendant.....Chloe McDannald

Centenary's Missionaries

Mark & Rebecca Smallwood - Teachers at Red Bird
Mission School in Kentucky

Church Information

331 E. State St., P.O. Box 124
Jacksonville, IL 62651
Phone: 217-245-8417

Email: office@jaxcentenary.org

Website: www.jaxcentenary.org

LaMoine District: www.lamoinedistrict.org

Illinois Great Rivers Conference Website: www.igrc.org

In Sympathy

Harriett Pearson.....November 26, 2020

Sunday Morning Schedule

Traditional Worship Service.....8:15 a.m.
 Sunday School (all ages)..Postponed until further notice
 Fellowship Hour.....Postponed until further notice
 Contemporary Worship Service.....10:45 a.m.

Bible/Book Studies

Blue Christmas Service.....Mon., Dec. 21, 6:00 p.m.

Special Worship Services

Holy Communion.....Sunday, Dec. 6

Special Offerings

Pennies for Hunger.....Sun., Dec. 27

Mission Opportunities

AlAnon Meeting.....every Wed., 7:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall
 Donate Blood.....Postponed until further notice

Leadership Opportunities

FinanceTBA
 Missions.....Wed., Dec. 9, 4 p.m.

Children's Ministries

Sunday School.....Postponed until further notice

Music Practices

Chancel Choir.....Postponed until further notice

Communications

Bulletin Deadline.....Postponed until further notice
 Messenger Deadline.....Tues., Dec. 22, 9 a.m.,

PASTOR**CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE**

We have a choice to take that peace and put it firmly in our hearts and allow it to have full reign, or we can allow the news of the day to cast a shadow on it. The news of the day is not forever, neither is the pandemic. These will pass. The peace that Jesus brings to us on Christmas and leaves with us after the crucifixion is permanent, forever and never ends.

Yes, Christmas 2020 may not look like any other Christmas we have ever had, yet the peace of Jesus is exactly the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Make a choice to be held within the loving peace of Jesus.

“Loving God, thank you for all the blessings of my life. Hold me close to you this Christmas season and remind me of your gracious peace. Strengthen me when I am weak and help me proclaim your hope by the way I go through each day. Allow me to go forth knowing that in a world that never stops changing, the hands that created me, protect me with their never changing love. Amen”

Merry Christmas
 – Pastor Mel

Budget Overview

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the most current numbers are not available for November. We hope to have those for you next month.

Please do not forget your end of year giving. This has been a special tradition of the Centenary family to make one final generous donation to your church.

This year has been especially difficult for the Centenary's finances. If you are able to give an additional gift before the end of the year, it would be most appreciated.

Once again COVID-19 is altering our church calendar. In-Person worship has been canceled for December 6 and December 13.

Further dates may be listed depending on the severity of the spread of the virus.

Please stay tuned to Facebook, the church website and your email for further information.

Blue Christmas will be combined this year with Wesley-Chapel

Pastor Mel of Centenary and the Rev. Becky Williams of Wesley-Chapel are planning to hold a combined Blue Christmas service on Monday, Dec. 21 at 6:00 p.m. This service will be available on Facebook.

Anyone who is feeling 'blue' this Christmas season is welcome to tune and participate. There will be a time to light a candle from your home. They ask that you have a candle ready for that part of the service.

K.I.C.K.S.

Sunday School Update

Sunday School lessons have been offered on Facebook for a few months. You can find them in the private Facebook page Centenary Kids. If you have a child in our SS program, your name is already there as a member. For the last month, e-mails have been sent after the lesson with resources you can use as follow up activities.

In December, the Facebook live lessons will continue. However, we are going to provide the resources in a different manner, as e-mail attachments limit us somewhat. We have been preparing packets for each child. The resources will be clipped together with the date for use. Included will be parent notes, coloring pages, and crafts. We will provide as much as we can such as construction paper, paper bags, googly eyes, etc. We are having a distribution of packets on Sunday, 11/29 from 3-4 at the south Narthex doors. We hope that everyone can make it and pick up your packets.

We are also planning a distribution of Christmas gift/treat bags. More information coming.

Upcoming Worship Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule for December 2020 worship.

(Readings & message may change without notice.)

December 6

2nd Sunday of Advent
Holy Communion
Altar Color - Purple
"Paviors"
Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

December 13

3rd Sunday of Advent
Holy Communion
Altar Color - Purple
"Light Bearers and Sock Menders"
Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20

4th Sunday of Advent
Altar Color - Purple
"Mary's Favor"
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

December 27

1st Sunday after Christmas Day
Altar Color - White
"A Christmas Bucket List"
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

January 3

Epiphany Sunday
Altar Color - White
"The Magi Come Calling"
Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

January 10

Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Altar Color - White
"Baptism"
Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

To Centenary family

After listening to information from our Bishop, our District Superintendent, our Governor, our Mayor and our Morgan County Health Dept. Administrator, The decision has been made to cancel in person services for at least the next 4 weeks.

The COVID-19 numbers are at their highest in our area since the pandemic began. No, I did not want to cancel in person worship services, but we are part of a bigger team of people all working for the health concerns of all citizens.

Recently I said we need to take personal responsibility, well this decision is part of my personal responsibility, which is to act with integrity as part of a community. My heart breaks to make this call, but it also breaks when I hear a section of our community, our health care workers, pleading for our help not to overload the hospital system.

We all need to do our part. Please watch Centenary's Website and Facebook pages for up to date information. The church office will also be closed for at least to the end of November. Please watch our services online until we are all back together.

Pastor Mel

Thank You

Pastor Mel and Debbie would like to thank all who came out to help us move into the new parsonage. Your efforts were very much appreciated.

Pastor Mel and Debbie Nielsen

Thank You

I would like to thank all who sent cards in October for Pastor Appreciation Month. I was touched by all your kinds words. This has been a difficult year, but a strong church family has made the darkness a little more bright.

God Bless
PMel

We're still here

We know how hard it is to be away from your church family. By now, this pandemic and all of the stresses that come along with it are wearing on everyone in a heavy way. In times like this, our church family would lean on each other. We still can. Pick up the phone and call the person who sits next to you in worship just to check on them. Send an email or a message through social media to someone you served communion with. Send a greeting card and note to someone you miss seeing every week at worship. Those are just a few ideas.

We may not be meeting in person and the church office may be closed for a couple weeks, but please know we are still here. If you need or want to chat, have a pastoral need, or just want to check in, please don't hesitate to reach out by phone or email. Contact information is below. The church voicemail is also checked periodically.

The Centenary staff is missing you all. We are working from home and will still have worship available for you on Facebook. We pray you find strength and hope to endure these difficult days. Stay well, stay safe.

Blessings to each of you,
Centenary Staff and Leadership

Pastor Mel
815-922-9161
pastormel1@hotmail.com

Kevin Hinkle
kevinh@jaxcentenary.org
217-414-2787

Church office:
office@jaxcentenary.org
217-245-8417

Quote of the Month

The present is never our goal; the past and present are our means: the future alone is our goal. Thus, we never live but we hope to live; and always hoping to be happy, it is inevitable that we will never be so.

— Blaise Pascal

Mission News

Salvation Angel Tree has new procedures for 2020

Those who want to purchase Angel Tree gifts for children and youth may shop online this year. Arrangements have been made with Walmart and Amazon so that individuals can choose designated gifts and have them delivered directly to the Salvation Army citadel. Purchases can be made from either wish list. Below are the instructions from Major Katie Pinkston.

To purchase from Walmart, go to walmart.com

1. On the left side top are some lines and will open when you place your mouse there.

2. Scroll down past the section of Walmart categories (right under Art and crafts) to REGISTRY.

3. Click on registry and you will see the Registry for Good and click on that

4. Look for Angel Tree of Jacksonville, IL and enjoy browsing and purchasing this season.

To purchase from the Amazon.com Wish List, click on this link <https://a.co/bdi2CCI>. You will see the Blue Cross Blue Shield wish list and to the left you will need to click on the angel tree Jacksonville 2020 list.

The toys and clothing need to be delivered to the Salvation Army by December 9. If you have any questions, contact Martha Vaché, Mission Chair or Major Katie Pinkston at the Jacksonville Salvation Army at (217) 245-7124.

MMDC volunteers

The Midwest Mission Distribution Center is once again accepting volunteers who register in advance. Check with Martha Vaché if you are interested in volunteering. The center has been busy distributing COVID supplies. Donations can be made by a check to Centenary or by going to the MMDC website: <http://www.midwestmission.org/>.

Christmas Baskets

Our Centenary family will once again prepare Christmas food baskets for local families. These will be delivered on Saturday morning, December 19. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving food, contact the church office. Let Martha Vaché know if you can help deliver the food.

Advent Offering

This year's Advent Offering will be given to Pastor Mel's Helping Hand Fund. The pandemic has created financial problems for many families and individuals in our local community. These funds will allow Pastor Mel to help some of those in need. Make checks to "Centenary UMC" with Advent in the memo line.

Bell ringers needed

Centenary is scheduled to ring bells for the Jacksonville Salvation Army on Saturday, December 5 at Midland Farm and Home from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. If you can help call the church office or contact Martha Vache. The Missions Committee only committed to have Centenary cover one day this year because we weren't sure how many individuals would be willing to volunteer.

If you can help at other dates and times, sign up online at Registertoring.com. Donations can also be given to the Red Kettle Campaign at Registertoring.com. The Salvation Army especially needs our help this year.

Results of the food drive

Centenary's October food drive netted 186 pounds of food worth \$233 for the Jacksonville Area Food Center. In addition to the food, our Centenary family donated \$355 in cash. Thank you to everyone for their support.

Ceryl TerHark, Food Center Representative

Community collection for personal needs pantry

The Personal Needs Pantry, hosted at First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, helps low income families in our community obtain basic hygiene and household cleaning items during difficult times. The Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches is proud to be partnering with this project during the months of October thru December 2020.

The Conference of Churches encourages the community and member churches to collect items, and deliver them to the Pantry at First Baptist Church located at 1701 Mound in Jacksonville. Staff is available Mon-Fri, 9 -11 am, or by appointment. The Pantry then distributes the items to those in our community who need help, especially those affected by the Covid event.

A complete list of needs can be found on page 7 of this Messenger.



**JACKSONVILLE AREA
CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES**

You can help make a difference!

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

Providing
Household &
Personal Care

The Personal Needs Pantry helps low income families in our community obtain basic hygiene and household cleaning items during difficult times. The Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches is proud to be partnering with this project of the First Baptist Church during the months of

October thru December 2020.



Collect items, and deliver them to the pantry
at First Baptist Church at 1701 Mound in Jacksonville.
Staff is available Mon-Fri, 9 -11 am, or by appointment

<p>HOUSEHOLD CLEANING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laundry Detergent Household Cleaners Dish Detergent <p>PAPER PRODUCTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toilet Paper Paper Towels Facial Tissues 	<p>BABY ITEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shampoo Lotion Powder <p>ORAL CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toothpaste Toothbrushes Denture Cleaner 	<p>PERSONAL HYGIENE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shampoo Bar Soap or Hand Soap Lotion and Deodorant Shaving Cream/Razors Bandages/Peroxide Feminine Products Combs and/or Brushes
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UMW News

UMW Reading Program

Reminder:

Please send me the list of books you completed by the beginning of January so that I can forward them on to the District Program Resources chairman.

Some News and reminders:

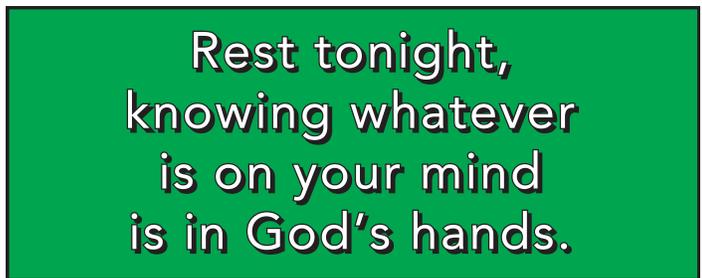
1. Something new! The reading program has always been a 1 year program, but starting in January 2021 it will be a 2 year program! !
2. I did some research on the list of new books for 2021-2022 and found that 16 of them are available through the Jacksonville Public Library either at their site or through interlibrary loan. In the January Messenger, I will list the books on the new program and note which ones will be in our library and which are available from the Jacksonville Library.
3. Completion Report forms will be available on the library shelves in the Parlor.
4. Reminder: some books are bonus books and count as 2 and there are youth books that count towards your program goal. I will also not those on the list in December.

“It cannot be that the people should grow in grace unless they give themselves to reading. A reading people will be a knowing people.” John Wesley

UMW pledges

Ellen Dixon has been invited to bring the message to Centenary on Sunday, January, 31, for both the 8:15 and 10:45 a.m. services. She will be filling the pulpit for United Methodist Women Sunday.

Dixon is a lay speaker in the Sangamon River District and is very active in UMW. She serves on the Cunningham Children’s Home Board. She will be the leader of the IGRC UMW’s Virtual Spiritual Growth Retreat on February 27.



December Communing with God

Activity – Bring in evergreen cuttings to use as holiday decorations.

Scripture – Psalm 148:7-9 – Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightening and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars.

Song – What Shall We Give? by Mack Wilberg
Terri Benz, Education and Interpretation

Saladless Salad Luncheon

UMW members would like to say a special thank you to everyone who donated to Centenary’s UMW’s Saladless Salad Luncheon. We received \$827. Your generosity allowed us to pay our district pledge and give donations to Cunningham Children’s Home and Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood house. We also sent a love gift to the missionaries that we support, Mark and Becky Smallwood. They are teachers at Red Bird Christian School in the mountains of Kentucky.

UMW Business Meeting

The next UMW business meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 5 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. We will be finalizing plans for UMW Sunday on Sunday, January 31 and planning for the new year. A former Centenary member, Ellen Dixon, will be our guest speaker for UMW Sunday. All UMW members are welcome to attend the meeting.



THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT MESSENGER IS TUESDAY, DEC. 22, 9 A.M.

December Birthdays

- 2.....Josephine Meyer
- 3.....Erin Spangenberg
Shanli Spradlin
Mary Lane
- 4.....Carolyn Beddingfield
Patty Adcock
- 5.....Jan Adams
Barbara Ferreira
- 6.....David Adams
Brennan Slater
- 8.....Dillon Pennell
- 9.....Jacqueline Wilham
- 10.....Rev. Janice Foulk
Katie O'Neil
- 14.....Jake Kindred
- 16.....Morgan Kindred
- 17.....Kathie Alderman
- 19.....Mary Ruth McArtor
Mary Dalton
Maza Eilers

- 20.....Tom Baptist
Mallory Selby
Jayden Batty
- 21.....Jack Borgman
Gabe Pratt
Adela Stocker
- 22.....Patricia O'Neal
- 24.....Kelsey Deeder
- 25.....Steve Gray
- 27.....Glenn Neff
- 30.....Marilyn Denney
Gary Hayes
Larry Crenshaw

December Anniversaries

- 4Bryce and Patti Adcock
- 5.....Gary and Janet Heyen
- 19.....Jr and Barb Crouse
- 27.....Dale and Barbara Wooldridge
- 29.....David and Jan Adams
- 31.....Mark and Monica Grounds





Moving Day

November 12, 2020

Martha Vaché snapped some pictures of some of the volunteers who helped Pastor Mel and Debbie move into the new parsonage.



**Centenary United Methodist
Memorial/Honorarium Gift Form**

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

For the following special occasion:

- ___ *Birthday* ___ *Mother's Day*
- ___ *Anniversary* ___ *Father's Day*
- ___ *Wedding* ___ *Veteran's Day*
- ___ *Christmas* ___ *Other* _____

Please use this gift of \$ _____ for:

- ___ Centenary - General Fund
- ___ Centenary - Building and Grounds Upkeep
- ___ Centenary - Missions
- ___ Designated Projects (*See back side.*)

Make checks payable to: Centenary UMC

Date of donation: _____ Check # _____

Donated by: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Please send a gift card to the following honoree:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Put in newsletter ___ Do NOT put in newsletter ___

CENTENARY	GIFT GIVEN TO	AMOUNT
Bell Tower/Steeple Fund		
Children's Activities		
Elevator Upkeep Fund		
FUSION/Youth Fund		
Music Fund		
Pavilion Fund		
Organ Reservoirs Fund		
JACKSONVILLE		
A Cup of Cold Water (Local Emergency needs)		
H.E.L.P.S. Ministry Outreach		
JACIL		
Jacksonville Area Food Center		
Jacksonville Salvation Army		
Jubilee Habitat for Humanity		
New Directions Warming/Cooling Center		
MIDWEST		
Baby Fold, The (Normal)		
Chaddock (Quincy)		
Cunningham Children's Home (Urbana)		
Lessie Bates Neighborhood House (E.St. Louis)		
Midwest Mission Distribution Center (Chatham)		
Red Bird Mission (Kentucky)		
Volunteers in Mission		
INTERNATIONAL		
Church World Service/CROP		
Heifer Project		
UMCOR (United Methodist Com. on Relief)		
MISSIONARIES		
Mark & Rebecca Smallwood/Red Bird School		
OTHER		
Name:		

D E C E M B E R 2 0 2 0

	Tues., Dec. 1	Wed., Dec. 2	Thurs., Dec. 3	Fri., Dec. 4	Sat., Dec. 5
		7:30 pm - Al-Anon (O)			
Sun., Dec. 6	Mon., Dec. 7 10 am - Staff Mtg.	Wed., Dec. 9 4 pm Missions (O) 7:30 pm - Al-Anon (O)	Thurs., Dec. 10	Fri., Dec. 11	Sat., Dec. 12
Holy Communion					
Sun., Dec. 13	Mon., Dec. 14 10 am - Staff Mtg.	Wed., Dec. 16 7:30 pm - Al-Anon (O)	Thurs., Dec. 17	Fri., Dec. 18	Sat., Dec. 19
Sun., Dec. 20 Pennies for Hunger	Mon., Dec. 21 10 am - Staff Mtg.	Wed., Dec. 23 7:30 pm - Al-Anon (O)	Thurs., Dec. 24	Fri., Dec. 25	Sat., Dec. 26
					
Sun., Dec. 27	Mon., Dec. 28 10 am - Staff Mtg.	Wed., Dec. 30	Thurs., Dec. 31		
				<p>NOTICE: Due to the pandemic all scheduled meetings and events in December are subject to change. PLEASE NOTE: The church is asking for help keeping everyone safe. Please wipe down tables, door handles, etc. after each small group or meeting. Supplies will be provided.</p>	
				<p><u>Abbreviations</u> (F) Fellowship Hall (P) Parlor (S) Adult SS Room (N) Narthex (O) Online</p>	

Centenary United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 124
331 East State Street
Jacksonville, IL 62651

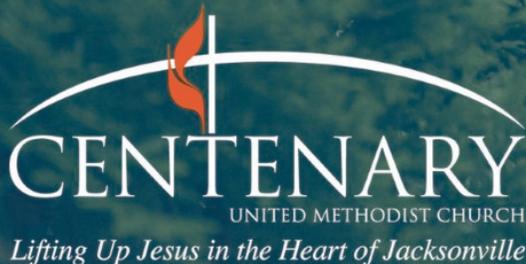
Return Service Requested

Non Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Jacksonville, IL
Permit #141

December 2020

Drive-Thru Christmas Program and Live Nativity

Friday, December 11th 6pm-7:30pm
Saturday, December 12th 6pm-7:30pm



331 E. State St.

*Begin on E.State heading East