

The Messenger

Lifting Up Jesus In The Heart Of Jacksonville



Sunday School kids create 80 placemats for Doorbell Dinners

The fifth Sunday special project saw the Sunday School students with the help from teachers and volunteers, create 80 placemats to be used with Doorbell Dinners. Please see more pictures on Page 5.

“It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere you go.” That is the opening line in one of the most well known Christmas tunes we begin to hear around November. It is a true statement, the stores have already made room for the Christmas decorations and presents.



I don’t have a problem with starting the Christmas season early. Don’t we need more of Jesus, not less? It’s a common thought that Christians should be in the Christmas spirit all year long, at least their hearts should be. A heart that is praising God for sending Jesus to us. I understand that it is the secular acquisition

of the holiday that we balk at, not Jesus. Santa Claus has replaced our Savior as the one worshipped, especially every December. I do have a problem with that theology.

Still, we have a great opportunity to win back part of the season by being devoted followers of Jesus. The world does not need to hear one more complaint from ‘churchgoers’ about how upset they are about every little thing that upsets them. What the world needs to see is the opposite. The world needs to see the Lord’s disciples, the ones who truly worship Jesus – *truly worshipping Jesus*. They need to see us in the shopping centers and at the school programs or wherever we gather outside the church walls. They need to see us filled with joy and hope and peace and love, not negativity, the world has enough of that. If all you ever seek is negativity and darkness, you will find plenty of it. The world seems to have a never ending supply of this junk and it is willing to give us all we want.

One of the reasons God came into this world was to remove negativity and darkness. God came to show us the light which leads to the gate, and we need to share that light and help others find the same gate. Complaining about a hobby store’s Christmas decorations going up in September won’t help. Embracing the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

WEEKLY WORSHIP

Weekly Worship Service9:00 am
Sunday School for all ages.....10:15 am
Fellowship HourBefore and after Services

SPECIAL SUNDAY EVENTS

Holy Communion.....Sunday, December 4
New Members SundaySunday, December 11
Pennies For HungerSunday, December 25
Blue ChristmasSunday, December 18, 4 pm

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Donate Blood.....1st and 2nd Mondays, 11 - 6

COMMUNICATIONS

Messenger Deadline.....Tues., Dec. 20, 9 am

BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday Morning
Bible StudyDec. 6 & 20 9:30 am
In the Parlor
Advent Bible Study.....Mondays, 10:30 am

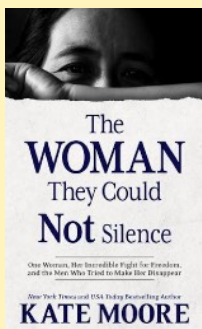
SMALL GROUPS

AlAnon MeetingWednesdays, 7:30 pm
Ladies Book Club.....Tues., Dec. 20, 6:30 pm
Prayer Meeting.....On Hold Until Spring

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Spirit Circle,
Christmas Brunch.....Sat., Dec. 3, 9:30 am
FHS.....Wed., Dec. 14, 6:30 pm
Hope CircleThur., Dec. 8, 1:30 pm

Ladies Book Club



The December Ladies Book Club will meet on Tuesday, December 20, 6:30 pm in the Narthex.

The featured book will be “*The Woman They Could Not Silence*” by Kate Moore

Centenary Staff

Pastor

Mel Nielsen

Office Manager

Rachel Hinkle

Office Finance Manager

TBD

Music Director

Terri Benz

Contemporary Worship Leader

Rachel Hinkle

Parish Visitor

Visitation Committee

Custodian

Patty Adcock

Nursery Attendant(s)

To Be Determined

How to contact us

331 E. State Street

P.O. Box 124

Jacksonville, IL 62651

Phone 217-245-8417

Email: office@jaxcentenary.org

Website: www.jaxcentenary.org

Centenary’s Missionaries

Mark and Rebecca Smallwood

Teachers at Redbird Mission

in Kentucky



DECEMBER ACOLYTES

12/4 Blake and Jayden Batty
12/11 Matthew and Mason Hinkle
12/18 Anabelle Hardy and Ashlynn Seymour
12/25 Jack and Noah Borgman

TEACHING SCHEDULE

Toddler/Pre-K classroom

Teacher: Diana Phillips

Assistant: [VOLUNTEER NEEDED](#)

Elementary Classroom

Teachers: Rusti Cummings and Nancy Hardy

Assistants:

1st Sunday - Jack Borgman

2nd Sunday - LuAnn Woodrum

3rd Sunday - [VOLUNTEER NEEDED](#)

Please see Diana Phillips.

4th Sunday - Amy Stidham

Middle School

Rachael Borgman, Mary Tomlin and Pat Baptist.

High School

Pastor Mel Nielsen

Kids' Church

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to assist in Kid's Church. It is very much appreciated. It will soon be time to start signing up for January and February 2023!

December Lessons

12/4 ~ John the Baptist is Born

Luke 1: 1-25; 57-80

12/11~ An Angel Visits Mary

Luke 1: 26-56

12/18~ Jesus is Born

Luke 2: 1-20

12-25~ No Sunday School

December Memory Verse

"I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born..." Luke 2: 10-11

Coming Event

The Sunday School Christmas program will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 4 pm, followed by a light supper in the Fellowship Hall. We will practice on Saturday, December 10 at 10 am.

Our next 5th Sunday service Project will be on January 29. We will be working with the Packed Purse Project to fill backpacks for the homeless and others who are in need of personal care products.

The Packed Purse project originated in Greene County, but now serves several other counties, including Morgan. We will soon be providing a list of acceptable items that may be donated to help our Sunday School kids help others.

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11

4:00 p.m.

Light Supper to follow in the fellowship Hall

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 |
| 10 | Rev. Janice Foulk |
| 14 | Jake Kindred |
| 16 | Morgan Kindred |
| 17 | Kathie Alderman |
| 19 | Mary Ruth McArtor Mary Dalton Maza Eilers |
| 20 | Mallory Selby Jayden Batty |
| 21 | Jack Borgman Gabe Pratt Adela Stocker |
| 22 | Patricia O'Neal |
| 24 | Kelsey Deeder |
| 25 | Steve Gray |
| 30 | Marilyn Denney Gary Hayes Larry Crenshaw |

December Anniversaries

| | |
|----|-------------------------|
| 4 | Bryce and Patti Adcock |
| 5 | Gary and Janet Heyen |
| 19 | Jr and Barb Crouse |
| 29 | David and Jan Adams |
| 31 | Mark and Monica Grounds |

Upcoming Worship Schedule

The following is a tentative worship schedule for Dec. 2022 - Jan. 2023

Readings & Message are subject to change.

December 4

2nd Sunday of Advent
Altar Color - Purple
Holy Communion Sunday
Sermon Series: God Still Believes. . .
Sermon Title: *In Peace*
Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:2-11

December 11

3rd Sunday of Advent
Altar Color - Purple
Sermon Series: God Still Believes. . .
Sermon Title: *In Joy*
Scripture Reading: Matthew 11:2-11

December 18

4th Sunday of Advent
Altar Color - Purple
Sermon Series: God Still Believes. . .
Sermon Title: *In Love*
Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

December 25

Christmas Day
Altar Color - White
Sermon Series: God Still Believes. . .
Sermon Title: *In Transformation*
Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-14;15-20

January 1

Epiphany Sunday
Altar Color - White
Holy Communion Sunday
Sermon Title: *Happy New Year*
Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

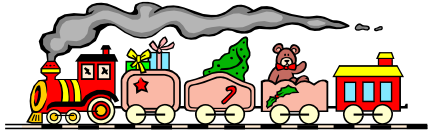
Placemats
Continued from Page 1

Thanks to all who helped make all the beautiful placemats.

**CHRISTMAS SPIRIT SHINES
DURING HANGING OF THE GREENS**



Missions



Chaddock Thank You

Thank you to everyone who provided gifts for Chaddock's Santa Express. Chaddock plans to pick up these unwrapped gifts on December 2.

Christmas Cards Available

A number of years ago, the Missions Committee sold Christmas cards with pictures of our beautiful old sanctuary. The remaining cards are available in the Narthex in packets of ten. Take what you can use. The cards are FREE. If you chose to make a donation the money will be used for missions.

Bell Ringers Needed

We still have a few open times for volunteers to ring bells for the Salvation Army at Midland Farm and Home on Friday, December 9 and Wednesday, December 21. If you can help ring, sign the sheet in the Narthex.



Salvation Army Angel Tree

There are still a few tags available on Centenary's Salvation Army Angel tree. Choose a gift tag containing the child's name, age, and gift suggestions from the small Christmas tree in the narthex. Put your *unwrapped* gifts in a sack with the Angel Tree tag attached. Put them under the Christmas trees near the entrance to the sanctuary by **Wednesday, December 14th**.

Food Drive Thanks

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Fall Food Drive for the Jacksonville Area Food Center. The total donated was 216 pounds.



Christmas Food Baskets

The Missions Committee will once again prepare Christmas food baskets for local families that are recommended by members of our church family. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving food, contact Rachel Hinkle in the church office. Donations of non-perishable food are welcome. The food will be delivered sometime the week before Christmas. Let Martha Vaché know if you would like to help deliver the food.

Advent Offering

This year's Advent Offering will go to Prairieland United Way. The money that Prairieland raises is used to support more than 25 agencies in the Jacksonville area. Many of you may already contribute to United Way at work or individually. So why is Centenary's Advent Offering going to Prairieland?

The Missions Committee chose to designate Prairieland United Way as the recipient of this year's Advent Offering because Pastor Mel and other local clergy have been working to coordinate their efforts in helping those in need in Jacksonville. Rather than having each church try to provide help as we have done in the past. The churches will coordinate with Prairieland by referring individuals to them and possibly helping in other ways. Find out more about Prairieland United Way on their website at <https://www.prairielandunitedway.org/>

A special envelope for donations will be included with the bulletin on Sunday, December 4. Donations can be put in the offering plate or in a basket in the Narthex. Make checks to Centenary UMC with "Advent" in the memo line.

PASTOR

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

love of God that came to us on the first Christmas will accomplish so much more for the earthly realm of God.

Towards the end of that popular secular song is this line, *“It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, soon the bells will start. And the thing that'll make 'em ring is the carol that you sing, right within your heart.”*

This secular song actually invites us to sing a carol, which is a Christmas tune focused on God. Now, If I can find a Christian invitation within a secular song, then perhaps I can find a Christmas invitation within a secular store. It's possible, because God is everywhere we go.

Isn't it ironic that this same secular song says it looks like Christmas everywhere 'we' go might actually mean something more than decorations and trimmings. Maybe there is another meaning. Maybe the song is telling us that it looks like Christmas everywhere 'we' go because 'we' are there, and God is with us.

Let's embrace the Christmas early decorations and allow them to fill us with the spirit of Christmas as we go about fulfilling the promises we made to God when we first said yes to Jesus.

The best way to be a disciple is to forgo the negativity and darkness and allow the light of God into your heart to find the blessings of Jesus everywhere we go.

Merry Christmas and God Bless
Pastor Mel

Blue Christmas

A Blue Christmas service is scheduled for Sunday, December 18, 4:00 p.m. The Rev. Becky Williams, from Wesley Chapel will be sharing the Word, while Centenary provides the music and location.

Blue Christmas

Sunday, December 18th - 4:00pm

Centenary UMC
331 E. State St. Jacksonville, IL 62650

United Methodist Women

UMW Reading Program

The book, Rise!: From Caged Bird to Poet of the People, Maya Angelou by Bethany Hegedus is a Bonus Book (worth 2) and a book that is suitable for youth. Writer, activist, trolley car conductor, dancer, and humanitarian – Maya Angelou’s life was marked by transformation and perseverance.

This comprehensive and beautifully illustrated picture-book geared towards older youth readers traces Maya’s life from her early days, through her work as a freedoms fighter, and triumphant rise as a poet of the people. This book is the category of Leadership Development as is available through interlibrary loan with the Jacksonville Public Library.

A Spiritual Growth selection is Right Here Right Now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness by Amy G. Oden. Many Christians practice mindfulness outside of church and believe it does not belong to our faith tradition. However, Christians have always practiced mindfulness. This book reveals the Christian roots of mindfulness and the actual practices that, when reclaimed, deepen the life of faith and the power of our mission of love in the world. This book may also be procured through interlibrary loan with the Jacksonville Public Library.

Christmas Brunch

All ladies are invited to the UMW Christmas Brunch sponsored by Spirit Circle on Saturday, December 3 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Their theme is “Angels”. They have invited the ladies from Grace UMW to join us. In return, Grace UMW has invited our ladies to their Christmas Brunch on Saturday, December 10 at 9:30 am. There are sign-up sheets in the narthex for both events. Guests are welcome.

UMW Has A New Name

National United Methodist Women has been rebranded as “United Women in Faith”. We will start using the new name of Centenary United Women in Faith in 2023. However, our legal name is still UMW so it will still be used for financial purposes.

United Women in Faith Sunday

Centenary UMW officers met in early November to plan for 2023. United Women in Faith (formerly UMW) Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, January 29.

The message will be given by a member of the staff of Cunningham Children’s Home in Urbana. Centenary’s UWF members will help with the worship service that day and our new officers will be installed.



If you visit Centenary’s Facebook page, be sure to ‘like’ or ‘share’ with others as this really helps to get our information out to others.
– Thanks for your help.



*New members
are always welcome!*

December Circle Meetings

For Heaven Sake Circle:

Wednesday, December 14, 6:30 pm,
Hostess: Debbie Nielsen at the Parsonage

Hope Circle:

Thursday, December 8, 1:30 pm in the parlor,
then Christmas Caroling

Spirit Circle:

Christmas Brunch, Saturday, December 3

United Methodist Women

Need Contact Information

Centenary UMW is in the process of electing new UWF officers and updating the UWF information for our 2023 program books. We welcome new members of circles or as members-at-large. Contact Jarice Crenshaw, Membership, Nurture, and Outreach Coordinator or any UMW officer if you are interested.

In addition, the UMW needs to know if anyone has changed their contact information. Please let one of the circle leaders, Jarice Crenshaw, or Brenda Lane know as soon as possible so the new books can be printed.

Update on Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle has decided to continue as a circle. They are no longer able to participate in all the activities that they used to enjoy and help with but they value their membership in UMW and want to keep in contact with their fellow circle members.

March to the Manger is Dec. 18

December 18 is the special Sunday called March to the Manger. This Sunday provides an opportunity for members and friends to make a 'second mile' offering to assist the church in supporting the 2022 Mission and Ministry budget. All gifts are appreciated. Special Envelopes will be available in the bulletin on Sunday, December 11. Please put "March to the Manger" on memo line. Come on December 18 to see Mary and Joseph!

Upcoming UMW Dates

For Heaven's Sake Circle will hold their Christmas meeting on December 14 at 6:30 pm. Debbie Nielsen is the hostess. FHS has lovely Christmas ornaments and mugs for sale in the Narthex and in the church office. These would make lovely Christmas presents.

Hope Circle will meet in the parlor on Thursday, December 8 at 1:30 pm for snacks and fellowship before going Christmas caroling.

Spirit Circle has been busy preparing to host the annual UMW Christmas brunch on Saturday, December 3 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Their theme is "Angels". All ladies are invited and guests are welcome.

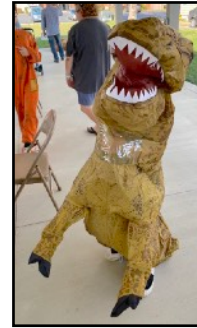
Christmas Quotes

"All the Christmas presents in the world are worth nothing without the presence of Christ." –David Jeremiah

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."
–Mother Teresa

"The story of Christmas is the story of God's relentless love for us." – Max Lucado

"The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God." – C.S. Lewis



Trunk or Treat held October 23

13 trunks from Centenary and Grace UMC's helped make a wonderful day for local Trick or Treaters. There were also plenty of games to be played and hot dogs and BBQ sandwiches to be had. Thanks for all who helped make this event possible.

Thanksgiving, Veteran's Day Service held at Centenary

Sunday, November 13 saw Christians from several local denominations gather at Centenary for a service to honor Veterans and give thanks. Pastor Jonathan Warren, from First Presbyterian preached, Barbara Wooldridge from Centenary, lead the services. One special moment was to hear the combined choir perform a few pieces.



Annual UMW Cookie Walk held

On Saturday, November 19, bakers from the UMW For Heaven Sake displayed hundreds of beautiful cookies in the Narthex to be sold as a fundraiser for missions and church projects. Thanks to those who baked, helped set up and especially those who purchased the treats.



DECEMBER 2022

| | THUR., DEC. 1 | FRI., DEC. 2 | SAT., DEC. 3 |
|---|---|--|---|
| MEETING LOCATION KEY S - Sunday school room N - Narthex F - Fellowship Hall P - Parlor O - Pavilion C - Chapel X - Online | 6 pm - Finance (P) | | 9:30 am - UMW Christmas Brunch (F) |
| SUN., DEC. 4 | THUR., DEC. 8 | FRI., DEC. 9 | SAT., DEC. 10 |
| 9 am Worship in Sanctuary Holy Communion 10:15 Sunday school | 1:30 pm - Hope Circle (P) followed by Caroling | Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Midland | 10 am - Christmas Program Practice |
| SUN., DEC. 11 | WED., DEC. 7 | THUR., DEC. 15 | SAT., DEC. 17 |
| 9 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 Sunday school 4 pm - Christmas Program | 6:30 pm - Fox Trust (P) 7:30 pm - AIAnon (N) | 5 pm - JACC Meeting (N) 6:30 pm - FHS Christmas Party at Parsonage 7:30 pm - AIAnon (P) Angel Tree Deadline | Christmas Baskets Fellowship Hall Reserved |
| SUN., DEC. 18 | TUES., DEC. 6 | WED., DEC. 21 | SAT., DEC. 24 |
| 9 am Worship in Sanctuary March to the Manger 10:15 Sunday school 4 pm - Blue Christmas | 9:30 am - Tuesday Morning Bible Study | 7:30 pm - AIAnon (N) Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Midland | 6:30 Christmas Eve Service |
| SUN., DEC. 25 | MON., DEC. 5 | TUES., DEC. 27 | FRI., DEC. 30 |
| 9 am Worship in Sanctuary Pennies For Hunger | 10:30 am Advent Study [Ⓞ] 1 pm - Unmet Needs Meeting (P) 7 pm - Choir | NEWSLETTER DEADLINE | |
| | MON., DEC. 12 | MON., DEC. 26 | SAT., DEC. 31 |
| | 10:30 am Advent Study (P) 7 pm - Choir Poinsettia Deadline | OFFICE CLOSED DEC. 26 OFFICE CLOSED JAN. 2 | |
| | TUES., DEC. 13 | TUES., DEC. 20 | THUR., DEC. 29 |
| | 9 am - LaMoine River District UMW (F) | 9:30 am - Tuesday Morning Bible Study | |
| | WED., DEC. 14 | WED., DEC. 28 | FRI., DEC. 30 |
| | 7:30 pm - AIAnon (N) | 7:30 pm - AIAnon (N) | |
| | THUR., DEC. 15 | THUR., DEC. 22 | SAT., DEC. 31 |
| | 1:30 pm - Hope Circle (P) followed by Caroling | | |
| | OFFICE CLOSED | OFFICE CLOSED | OFFICE CLOSED |