

The Messenger

Lifting Up Jesus In The Heart Of Jacksonville



Christmas Program is "God's Gift to Us"

Sunday, December 11 was the night of the Centenary Sunday School Christmas program. The program featured a funny and insightful play, kids, adult and combined choirs, prayer readings and a special visit from Santa Claus.

More photos inside

It has been 23 years since Y2K scared us into thinking the digital world was going to come to a crashing halt. Maybe you look at it like it is only 977 more years until we need to deal with it again! If we want to, we can find any number of issues to fret over. Worry seems to control our lives at times, partly because we give it free rein.

I am sure 2024 will give us plenty to worry about; but what does the Lord teach us about worry? *26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour*

to your life[a]? - Matthew 6:26-27.

Depending on my attitude on certain days, I read this passage as an order to not do anything; don't lift a finger, don't move a muscle, just lay around and allow God to wait upon me. God is not telling us to do nothing, if we watch the example of birds, they never stop doing. I agree, birds plant no crops, but they do more than simply exist.

Birds care for their young, they must seek the food they do eat, they must gather the twigs and leaves that God supplies and build their own nests. They must find climates that suit them and seek out water in which to live. God certainly provides them with all they need, but they have responsibility to put it all together for successful living.

Jesus is reminding the followers in the Sermon on the Mount that they should not live in anxiety about the basic needs of life. Being a part of God's family means more than worrying about food and clothing.

Constantly worrying about money means we are living under the control of money and that we worship the things that money can get for us. All of this kind of worrying distracts us from God and what God offers.

If we are going to serve God, we must have trust that we are not alone in finding what we need to survive. God is a good parent and provides for all the children, that is what God does. As those children, we

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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, January 1
Pennies For Hunger.....Sunday, January 22
UWF SundaySunday, January 29

COMMUNITY SERVICE

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

COMMUNICATIONS

Messenger DeadlineWed., Jan. 25, 9 am

BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday Morning
Bible Study.....Jan. 3, 17 & 31 9:30 am
In the Parlor

CHURCH MEETINGS

WorshipThurs., Jan. 5, 6 pm
MissionsWed., Jan. 18, 3:30 pm

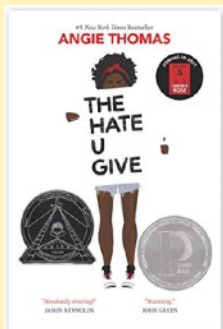
SMALL GROUPS

AlAnon MeetingWednesdays, 7:30 pm
Ladies Book Club.....Tues., Jan. 17, 6:30 pm

UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

UWF Business Mtg.....Tues., Jan. 3 6:30 pm
Spirit Circle..... Wed., Jan. 11, 6 pm (Mangia)
FHSWed., Jan. 11, 6:30 pm
Hope CircleThurs., Jan. 12, 11:30 (Luncheon)

Ladies Book Club



The next Ladies Book Club will meet on Tuesday, January 17, 6:30 pm in the Narthex.

The featured book will be "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas

Centenary Staff

Pastor

Mel Nielsen

Office Manager

Rachel Hinkle

Office Finance Manager

Teri Hall

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

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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



JANUARY ACOLYTES

- 1/1 - Otto and Clyde Zang
1/8 - Aspen Hayes and Max Hrynewych
1/15 - Molly and Delaney Ruyle
1/22 - Avery and Hudson Woodrum
1/29 - 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. A new sign up list can be found in the narthex.

January Lessons

- 1/8 ~ Magi Worship Jess
Matthew 2:1-12
1/15 ~ Nehemiah Returns to Jerusalem
Nehemiah 1:1-10
1/22 ~ God's People Rebuild Jerusalem's Wall
Nehemiah 4: 1-23; 6:1-15
1/29 ~ 5th Sunday Service Project

January Memory Verse

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." 1 John 1:19

5th Sunday Project

The next 5th Sunday service Project will be on January 29. The kids 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. A list of items they will accept is listed below. We will also be making valentines to accompany the UMF Love Visits.

Packed Purse Project Items:

Full or travel size toiletries: soap/body wash, shampoo, lotion, toothbrushes/toothpaste, deodorant, Combs/pics, Feminine hygiene products, New socks, Band-Aids, Bible tracts, Gloves, stocking hats, Purse size tissues, Chapstick Hand sanitizer, Monetary donations welcome. Checks made out to Packed Purse Project

Calendar changes

There was no children's Sunday School on December 25 or January 1.

January Birthdays

1	Debra Belzer Kelly Quigg
2	Melanie Refuerzo Pricilla Cook
3	Joshua Pritchett
6	Bradley Manker Alaina Windon
7	Kim Spangenberg
10	Reg Tribble Heather Gifford
12	Luke Craddock Barney Stock
19	Steven Woodrum Melissa Kindred Huston Spradlin
20	Lauren Stidham
21	LuAnne Woodrum
25	Terri Benz Sheryl Hanson
26	Alison Prosser
31	John Gotschall Ashley Pond

January Anniversaries

4	Charlie and Mary Tomlin Jim and Joan Quigg
6	Gerry and Bonnie Robinson
13	Bob and Rita Northrop
16	Richard and Diane Webster

Quote of the Month

"The will of God will not take us where
the grace of God cannot sustain us."
- Billy Graham

Upcoming Worship Schedule

The following is a tentative worship
schedule for January 2023

Readings & Message are subject to change.

January 1

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

January 8

Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Altar Color - White
Sermon Title: *Leading a Baptized Life*
Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:13-17

January 15

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
Altar Color - Green
Sermon Series: The Psalm Life
Sermon Title: *Receiving God's Blessings*
Scripture Reading: Psalm 40:1-11

January 22

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
Altar Color - Green
Sermon Series: The Psalm Life
Sermon Title: *Living Into God's Blessings*
Scripture Reading: Psalm 27: 1, 4-9

January 29

4th Sunday after the Epiphany
United Women of Faith Sunday
Altar Color - Green
Sermon Title: *Special Guest Speaker*

Missions

Thank You For sharing in the Christmas Spirit

Thank you to everyone who purchased gifts for Chaddock's Santa Express, shopped for Salvation Army Angel Tree gifts, rang bells for the Salvation Army, shopped for and delivered Christmas food, went Christmas Caroling, participated in or helped with our Children's Christmas program, or shared Christmas cheer in countless other ways. Your love brightened the Christmas season for others as you shared Christ's love.



Advent Offering

It's not too late to give a donation to our Advent Offering. The money from this offering will be donated locally to Prairieland United Way. Your contributions will be shared with two dozen not-for-profit-agencies in our west central area. Make checks to "Centenary UMC" with Advent in the memo line.

A Big Thank You!

Centenary owes a big thank you to Jan Adams and Brenda Lane who spent many hours sorting through old financial documents of the church. Many boxes of information have been sent off to be archived with the conference, other material, nearly 40 cartons, are to be burned, thanks to Mark Stiltz. The office staff appreciates your efforts.

MMDC Volunteers

Except for a small staff all the work at MMDC is done by volunteers. MMDC collects, sorts, and distributes supplies to those in need both in the United States and all over the world. In addition to needing donations for many different kits, MMDC also accepts donations of sewing machines and bicycles.

MMDC recycles everything possible including used wooden bleachers donated by schools that are installing new bleachers. The lumber in the bleachers is used to make simple teacher and/or student desks. (This is great volunteer opportunity for men!)

If you are interested in volunteering at MMDC, let Martha Vache know so we can schedule a date for a group from Centenary. Advance registration is required. Wearing masks and social distancing is required. Find out more about what MMDC does at their website: <http://www.midwestmission.org/>.



Human Relations Day

Human Relations Day will be on January 15. The special offering that day will support the ministry of Christ among those living on the margins of society. The offering will be used to nurture at-risk youth, strengthen communities' self-improvement efforts, and advocate for the oppressed. Make checks to "Centenary UMC" with Human Relations in the memo line.

United Women of Faith

UWF Christmas Brunch

The United Women of Faith Christmas Brunch was held at Centenary. Pictured below are members and friends of UWF who attended on Sat., Dec. 3.



UWF Business Meeting

Weather permitting, UWF officers will meet on Tuesday, January 3, in the parlor at 6:30 p.m. The group will finalize plans for UWF Sunday and other events in 2023. All UWF members are welcome to attend. Members may also participate on Zoom via their computer/tablet or by a phone call. Contact Martha Vaché to receive the log in information for Zoom.

Wanted: UWF Members

All women are invited to be members of Centenary's United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women). Being a member of Centenary United Methodist Church is NOT a required to be a member of UWF. UWF membership is open to any woman who wants to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. Members may participate in a circle or as a member-at-large. Our UWF unit sponsors activities such as Love Visits, a Garage Sale, Mother's Day Banquet, and Christmas Brunch. Circles meet monthly for study, spiritual growth, fellowship, and service. For more information contact any of the circle leader or Jarice Crenshaw, UWF Membership Chr.

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE CIRCLE

2nd Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

FHS has traditionally sponsored an annual Cookie Walk and breakfast fund raisers. Their most recent project was planning and promoting Centenary's new bell tower project to celebrate Centenary's 200th anniversary. They have occasional day trips. Co-leaders: Terri Benz and LuAnne Woodrum

HOPE CIRCLE

2nd Thursday during the day for lunch or at 1:30 pm; often in the church parlor.

Hope Circle has a variety of activities, shared meals, book sharing, programs, visits to Centenary friends, a service project, Christmas Caroling, and a semi-annual Garden Walk. Leader: Martha Vaché

RUTH CIRCLE

Ruth Circle has no regular meetings but keep in touch with each other via phone calls and cards.

SPIRIT CIRCLE

2nd Wednesday at 6:00 pm at various restaurants.

Spirit Circle sponsors a variety of activities that are usually related to children. They plan to do mission activities such as volunteering at Midwest Mission Distribution Center and helping with VBS.

Leader: Rusti Cummings

United Women of Faith

UWF Sunday

On Sunday, January 29 as part of our United Women in Faith Sunday celebration, we will welcome Brooke Watson, Associate Director of Development at Cunningham Children's Home, as our speaker. The title of her message is "Biblical Truths as Evidenced in the Lives of Cunningham Youth." Centenary UWF members will help with the service, Pat Pennell, our LaMoine District UWF Shepherdess, will install our new officers, and the 2023 UWF Mission Woman of the Year will be announced. There will be a special offering for Cunningham Children's Home. Make checks "Centenary UMC" with Cunningham in the memo line.

During the service we will celebrate the fact that United Methodist Women is now called United Women in Faith. This new name will more accurately reflect that fact that membership in UWF is not limited to women who belong to the United Methodist Church. However, the name on our bank account has not changed so checks should still be written to Centenary UMW.

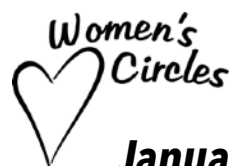
Over 128 years, Cunningham has evolved from an orphanage and deaconess home, into an exemplary child welfare and educational services agency, that specializes in residential treatment for DCFS youth, special education, and community-based counseling services. Their staff use a trauma informed care approach to work with young people who have severe behavioral and emotional challenges, which is often the result of abuse and neglect at the hands of a caregiver.

Last year Cunningham served 807 children, youth, and families, who experienced difficult life situations. 95% of those they served came from within a two-hour radius of Champaign-Urbana. Brooke's message, "Biblical Truths Evidenced in the Lives of Cunningham Youth," will explore the definition of a biblical truth and share stories about how they have been demonstrated in the lives of youth that live at Cunningham today.

UWF Caroling

A small group of UMW carolers sang to members of our Centenary family in their homes on Wednesday, December 14. What a wonderful time of sharing our love!

Pictured below are, L-R: Rita Northrop, Alaina Windon and Rusti Cummings.



*New members
always welcome!*

January Circle Meetings

For Heaven Sake Circle:

Wednesday, January 11, 6:30 pm,
Hostess: Linda Tribble

Hope Circle:

Thursday, January 12, 11:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall,
Soup Luncheon
Hostess: Pat Baptist

Program: Prayer and Self Denial - Jane Masters

Spirit Circle:

Wed. Jan. 11 at 6:00 pm, at Mangia

United Women of Faith

UMW Reading Program

Books that our unit has purchased will be noted by ~ CUMC

Those available at the Jacksonville Public Library or through their system will be noted by ~ JPL

Education for Mission

Being Sheela: The Life of an Immigration Lawyer, by Adithi Rao

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek, by Kim Michele Richardson (JPL)

How Far Do You Love Me?, by Lulu Delacre (JPL) Suitable for children

“I Am Man” Chief Standing Bear’s Journey for Justice, by Joe Starita (JPL)

Pachinko, by Min Jin Lee (JPL)

Phoebe: A Story – Novel, by Paula Gooder (CUMC)

Stamped (For Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You, by Jason Reynolds (JPL) Suitable for Youth

Super Cilantro Girl, by Juan Felipe Herrera Suitable for Children

Susan Angeline Collins: With a Hallelujah Heart, by Janis Bennington Van Buren Bonus Book

Leadership Development

All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis, by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson Bonus Book

Change Sings: A Children’s Anthem, by Amanda Gorman (JPL) Suitable for Children

Ida B. The Queen: The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Ida B. Wells, by Michelle Duster (CUMC)

A Knock at Midnight: A Story of Hope, Justice and Freedom, by Brittany K. Barnett (JPL)

Miosotis Flores Never Forgets, by Hilda Eunice Burgos Suitable for Children

On the Come up ~ Novel, by Angie Thomas (JPL) Suitable for Youth

Pioneer Black Clergywomen: Stories of Black Clergywomen of the Untied Methodist Church 1974-2016, by Rev. Dr. Josephine Whitely-Fields Spiritual Leadership, by J. Oswald Sanders

Nurturing for Community

The Barber’s Cutting Edge, by Gwendolyn Battle-Lavert Suitable for Children

Eyes That Kiss in the Corners, by Joanna Ho (CUMC) Suitable for Children

Firekeepers Daughter, by Angeline Boulley (JPL) Suitable for Youth

The Land is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery, by Sarah Augustine Bonus Book

Magic Like That, by Samara Cole Doyon Suitable for Children

Nevertheless: American Methodists and Women’s Rights, by Ashley Boggan Dreff (CUMC)

The Prodigal Prophet: Jonah and the Mystery fo God’s Mercy, Timothy Keller

Stay This Way Forever, by Linsey Davis Suitable for Children

Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World, by Vivek H. Murthy (JPL)

Vail’s Tales, by Vail Johnson Suitable for Children

White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism, by Robin Diangelo (JPL)

World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments, by Aimee Nezhukumatathil

Social Action

Black Was the Ink – Novel, by Michelle Coles Suitable for Youth

Bright Star, by Yuyi Morales (JPL)

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents, by Isabel Wilkerson (JPL) Bonus Book

Cousins: Connected Through Slavery, A Black Woman and a White Woman Discover Their Past – and Each Other, by Betty Kilby Baldwin and Phoebe Kilby (CUMC)

The Four Winds – Novel, by Kristin Hannah (JPL)

The Green New Deal, by Jeremy Rifkin

United Women of Faith

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The New American: A Novel, by Michéle Aharonian Marcom

Nibi's Water Song, by Sunshine Tenasco
Suitable for Children

What Can I Do?: My Path From Climate
Despair to action, by Jane Fonda

Spiritual Growth

The Big Deal of Taking Small Steps to Move
Closer to God, by Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie

Community in the Midst of Challenging Times:
A Biblical exploration of Luke 13, by Kenya
Cummings Suitable for Youth Bonus Book

Daughter of Cana, by Angela Hunt (JPL)
Freedom We Sing, by Amrya Leon Suitable for
Children

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made
for Whiteness, by Austin Channing Brown (JPL)

Isaiah and the Worry Pack: Learning to Trust
God with All Our Fears, by Ruth Goring Suitable
for Children

Our Growing Tree – From Self-love to the
Beloved community and All of God's Creation: A
Biblical Exploration of Luke 13, by Ilka Vega
Suitable for Children Bonus Book

Until Unity, by Rev. Francis Chan (CUMC)
What Is God Like? By Rachel Held Evans
Suitable for Children

Who Can We Be Together? A Biblical
Exploration of Luke 13, by Candance Simpson
Bonus Book

PLEASE NOTE:

Anyone who has read for the UMF reading
program, please send the list of books read
sometime before the end of January. If you have
only read 1-2 books, please send them to me.

–Diana Phillips

Future UWF Dates

UWF Business Meeting: Tues. Jan. 3, 6:00 p.m.
in the parlor or on Zoom.

UWF Sunday: Sun. Jan. 29

UWF Love Visits: Wed. Feb. 8, 9:00 am in the
Parlor, bring 2 dozen cookies to share



A Christmas Picture

Following worship services on December 18, after almost all had left the sanctuary, I was struck by how beautiful the Chancel area looked. I snapped a picture for those of you who may not have been able to attend during Advent to see the wonderful decorating.

The Christmas Tree was adorned with pretty lights and the special 200th anniversary ornaments. These particular ornaments were sold to those who wanted to remember someone who is no longer with us. Those names were printed on the back of each ornament sold.

–Pastor Mel

Thank You

Mary Dalton and family want to thank everyone for their cards, visits, phone calls and prayers during her recent hospital stay

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone when my son Ryan passed away for the prayers, cards, gifts, lunch after the Memorial Service, Pastor Mel for the special Memorial Service and Terri and Phil for the wonderful Music at the Memorial Service.

God Bless you all,
Barb Fernandes

Sunday School Program

Continued from front page

The costumes were elegant, the set design was wonderful, the kids were excited, the teachers were prepared, and the Holy Spirit was present to help bring about a great night of worship.





New Members Sunday

Seven new members were welcomed into the Centenary congregation on Sunday, December 11.

Pictured from left is Pastor Mel Nielsen, and new members, Steve Turner, Terry Northrop, Elaine Gauges, Lynn Seymour and Barb Keehner. Not pictured, but also joining is Linda Massey and Gary Embree.

PASTOR

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

are to gather what God supplies and be good stewards of all we have received.

If God is willing to provide birds with all their daily needs, how much more will God give to us? Instead of living in anxiety about these basic needs, Jesus urges His followers to trust God to provide what is needed in the right amounts and at the right time.

I believe this passage makes point about something we miss in our prayer time. Jesus is reminding us that God's plans for us are not always what we prefer. Jesus is telling us that God will provide what we 'need' in order to fully obey God's will.

Maybe what we think we need is not what God thinks we need. The true life that God offers goes so far beyond the material 'needs' of this world. Surrendering our worrying over worldly needs will clear a lot of space in our bloated inventory and allow God room to work on us connecting our needs with God's will.

Let's aim at having a great 2023.
God Bless
Pastor Mel



Greetings from Ladies Book Club

The Ladies Book Club wanted to share a Merry Christmas with the church. They wanted to remind any women of the church that they are welcome to attend.

The group selects a new book, then they meet for a lively discussion of the material once each month.



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.

JANUARY 2023

SUN., JAN. 1	MON., JAN. 2	TUES., JAN. 3	WED., JAN. 4	THUR., JAN. 5	FRI., JAN. 6	SAT., JAN. 7
9 am Worship in Sanctuary Holy Communion 10:15 Sunday school		6:30 pm - UWF Business meeting (P) or (Z) 9:30 am - Tuesday Morning Bible Study	7:30 pm - AIAnon (N)	6 pm - Worship Committee Mtg. (N)		
	OFFICE CLOSED					
SUN., JAN. 8	MON., JAN. 9	TUES., JAN. 10	WED., JAN. 11	THUR., JAN. 12	FRI., JAN. 13	SAT., JAN. 14
9 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 Sunday school	9:30 am - Unmet Needs Meeting (P) 7 pm - Choir		6 pm - Spirit Circle at Mangia 6:30 pm - FHS Circle 7:30 pm - AIAnon (N)	11:30 am - Hope Circle Luncheon (F)		
SUN., JAN. 15	MON., JAN. 16	TUES., JAN. 17	WED., JAN. 18	THUR., JAN. 19	FRI., JAN. 20	SAT., JAN. 21
9 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 Sunday school Human Relations Sunday	7 pm - Choir	9:30 am - Tuesday Morning Bible Study 6:30 pm - Women's Book Club (N)	3:30 pm - Missions Meeting (P) 7:30 pm - AIAnon (P)			
SUN., JAN. 22	MON., JAN. 23	TUES., JAN. 24	WED., JAN. 25	THUR., JAN. 26	FRI., JAN. 27	SAT., JAN. 28
9 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 Sunday school Pennies For Hunger	7 pm - Choir		7:30 pm - AIAnon (N)			
SUN., JAN. 29	MON., JAN. 30	TUES., JAN. 31	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE			
9 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 Sunday school United Women in Faith Sunday	7 pm - Choir	9:30 am - Tuesday Morning Bible Study				
MEETING LOCATION KEY						
S - Sunday school room N - Narthex F - Fellowship Hall P - Parlor O - Pavilion C - Chapel X - Online						