

St. Mark's Remarks

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“Live your life in such a way that those who know you but don't know God will know God because they know you”

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Rev. Jolinne Balentine-Downey



A Season of Joy

My heart gets happy just thinking about Christmas. The music, the TV specials, the food, the lights, yearly gatherings with friends and family ... the weeks leading up to Christmas seem like one big party. But what is it, really, that we celebrate?

When we were kids, there might have been the hope of getting some really special gift from Santa. But as an adult...? Let's be honest, if there is something we really want, we just go get it. So, if we are not eagerly awaiting a stocking filled with goodies, what is it that makes Christmas “the most wonderful time of the year”?

John Mason Neale spelled it out in his classic Christmas hymn, “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”:

He hath opened heaven's door, and ye are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

The birth of Jesus makes heaven a possibility for all of us. I can't think of any better reason to celebrate! We will look more at our reasons for rejoicing during this, our first Advent season together. We will begin this Season of Joy with a Hanging of the Greens service on Sunday, Nov. 29. On Dec. 6, I will begin an Advent sermon series on Joy, and the choir will present “Rejoice Believers,” a Christmas cantata, on Dec. 13.

This month, we are also offering two additional opportunities for worship. On Wednesday, Dec. 16, we will have a Blue Christmas service, which will be specially designed for those who have a difficult time during the holidays. Perhaps you or someone you know is grieving the death of a loved one, or missing family, or wrestling with stress and anxiety or guilt during this holiday season. My hope is that the Blue Christmas service will bring comfort, healing and peace to those who really need it.

And then we will celebrate the birth of the Messiah with Candlelight Communion on Dec. 24 at 6 pm. I hope you will make plans to be here.

You can also help to spread holiday cheer. Members of our church will travel to Graceland Manor on Dec. 10 to sing carols, serve punch and cookies, pray and play with about 30 residents at the home. If you would like to go, call Beverly Hardin for carpool information, and Bonnie Carter for cookie info. Our caravan will leave St. Mark's at 1 pm and return around 4 pm.

May the joy of Christmas fill your heart and keep you warm all year long.

Grace, peace & joy!

Pastor Jo

Happy Birthday!



Reitae Chenault	12/01
Linda Bazzinotti	12/12
Teresa Hink	12/13
Leesa Henderson	12/14
Sheila Donaldson	12/18
Linda Reid	12/18
Wanda Huffstetler	12/20
Mary Britt	12/27
Richard Donaldson	12/18

Visitors in October

Hazel Conar	Reilly Burge
Savannah Hardin	Gena Johnson
Rebecca Downey	Mike Johnson
Kathleen Pou	Darren Moore

October Average Attendance

Sunday School	16
Morning Worship	60

Dear Faithful Friends,

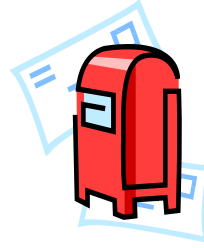
I wanted to extend my warmest and sincere "Thank You" to you all who shared your time with us preparing the 2015 Wesley Family Christmas mailing. Your support helped to ensure a productive morning.

Kristi Owen
Golden Cross

UMC #Giving Tuesday 2015

United Methodists will once again come together to support the work of Advance projects and missionaries on UMC#Giving Tuesday. And once again, every gift made online through The Advance at www.umcmmission.org/give on Dec. 1, 2015 will be matched up to \$1 million. To participate, use this link (www.umcmmission.org/give) to make your donation on Dec. 1. Global Ministries will allocate matching funds dollar for dollar up to the first \$1 million. A maximum of \$2,500 per individual gift to a project will be dispersed as matching funds. A project may receive a maximum of \$25,000 in matching funds. For more information, go to <http://www.umcmmission.org/Giving-Tuesday#sthash.zi2OsaFi.dpuf>

UMW Christmas Post Office



What is the Christmas Post Office?

Each year we love to receive Christmas greetings but the cost of postage is getting higher and higher. If you would like to send a Christmas greeting to someone in our church, drop it off at the church, we'll sort and deliver it before or after worship service. If you wish to make a donation to missions instead of US postage stamp, we'll gladly accept it and put it to good use. A donation is not required. The main thing is to spread Christmas cheer and joy. If the person is not at church, we will deliver to them the next time they are at church. Drop off dates for cards are

Sunday December 6th and December 13th.

Delivery on Sunday, December 20th.

Merry Christmas from St. Mark's UMW

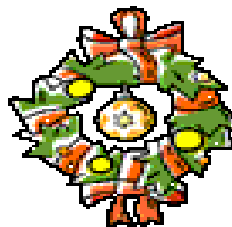
UMM Fundraiser Continues!



Delicious Mammoth Pecan Halves
\$10.00 per bag
Dark Chocolate Covered Pecans
\$10.00 per bag

Chocolate Covered Pecans \$10.00 per bag
Cinnamon Glazed Pecans \$10.00 per bag

These make great gifts and/or stocking stuffers plus being an essential ingredient for those Holiday desserts!



Thanks to everyone who gave so generously of their time in decorating the church for the Christmas season.



St. Mark's United Methodist Women

The UMW has scheduled our Christmas Luncheon for Saturday, Dec. 5th, at the Royal Panda in Germantown at

11:30 a.m. No gifts needed, but we want everyone to join us for this wonderful fellowship. Also in December we will be collecting Christmas cards at the UMW Post Office on Dec. 6 and 13. They will be delivered on Sunday, Dec. 20. Save yourself time and postage by sending your Christmas cards to church members through us. All we ask is that you make a small donation to UMW to be used for missions. Please don't forget our ongoing projects: the First Sunday luncheon, the Food Pantry, and The Golden Cross baskets! If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact Barbara Jenkins at: (901)378-7990 or jenkinsba3@gmail.com.

Christmas Luncheon - Dec. 5

First Sunday Luncheon - Dec. 6

UMW Post Office (collection) – Dec. 6

UMW Post Office (collection) – Dec. 13

Deliver Christmas Cards – Dec. 20

Giving Thanks

Just a reminder to those who may not have turned in your pledge cards that they can be turned in to the church office.



**Annual UMM
Christmas Dinner
Tuesday,
December 8th
6:00 p.m.
Fields Hall**



St. Mark's United Methodist Men

Always a great event, our church wide Christmas Steak Dinner will be Tuesday, December 8th, at 6:30. Friends and family are invited – single ladies who are members and regular attendees at St. Mark's eat free! There will be door prizes! Mark your calendars and make plans to attend. Please make your reservations by calling Terry Draughon at 901-359-7342 or the church office by Thursday morning, Dec. 3rd.

The UMM is selling pecans again this year. The cost is \$10.00 per bag. We have Pecan Halves, Chocolate Covered Pecans, Dark Chocolate Covered Pecans, and Cinnamon Glazed Pecans – so keep us in mind as you begin your holiday cooking!



Poinsettias will be beautifying the sanctuary on Sunday, December 13th and Sunday, December 20th. If you have not placed an order for a poinsettia in memory of or in honor of a friend, family member or loved one, you still have time! December 6th will be the last day for placing an order. Order forms can be found in the narthex or call the church office (901 754 8185). Cost will be \$8.00 each.

**Visit our website at
www.stmarksmemphis.org**

Wedding Bells Ring

You are cordially invited to the Wedding of Marie Joiner and Daniel Gabriel, Saturday, December 19th at 3:00 p.m., at Emmanuel UMC, 2405 Kirby Rd. and to the reception following at the church.

Blessings,
Rev. Dr. Brad Gabriel

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 7:00a Emmaus	3 6:00p Yoga	4	5 9:00a Yoga 10-12:30 Cub Scouts 11:30 UMW Christmas lunch at Royal Panda
6 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service Children's Choir 11:30a First Sunday Lunch	7 6-7:30p Boy Scouts	8 6-8:00p Weight Watchers 6:30p UMM Christmas Dinner	9 7:00a Emmaus	10 2:00p Golden Cross Christmas Program at Graceland Manor 6:00p Yoga	11	12 9:00a Yoga 10-12:30 Cub Scouts
13 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service Choir Cantata	14 6-7:30p Boy Scouts	15 6-8:00p Weight Watchers 6:00p Yoga	16 7:00a Emmaus 7:00p Blue Christmas Service	17 6:00p Yoga	18	19 9:00a Yoga 10-12:30 Cub Scouts
20 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service	21 6-7:30p Boy Scouts	22 6-8:00p Weight Watchers	23 7:00a Emmaus	24 6:00p Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion	25	26 9:00a Yoga 10-12:30 Cub Scouts
27 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service	28 6-7:30p Boy Scouts	29 6-8:00p Weight Watchers 6:00p Yoga	30 7:00a Emmaus	31 New Year's Eve		