



# Messenger

## Uniondale United Methodist Church November - December 2021

5867 N. Main St.  
P. O. Box 115

Uniondale, IN 46791

Pastor Karen Ottjes  
260-228-3634

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 [UniondaleUnitedMethodistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/UniondaleUnitedMethodistChurch)

Sunday Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School – 10:15 a.m.

### Upcoming Events



#### November and December Birthdays and Anniversaries

##### November

8 – Jeff Espich  
17 – Alison Herstad  
23 – Karen Ottjes

##### December

8 – Jim Ottjes  
17 – Bob & Sandra Imel  
19 – Ed Bowley  
19 – Jeff & Sharon Espich  
25 – Jesus Christ our Savior

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Sunday, November 7 –           | Daylight Savings ends – fall back 1 hour<br>Communion Sunday and All Saints Sunday<br>Blessing Tree Angels available<br>Charge Conference at Markle UMC -2 PM<br>Cluster meeting 6:30 PM at Liberty Ctr UMC |
| Monday, November 8 –           | Veterans Day  |
| Thursday, November 11 –        |   |
| Sunday, November 21 –          | Food Bank Sunday-bring your food items  |
| <b>Thursday, November 25 –</b> | <b>Thanksgiving Day</b>   |
| <b>Friday, November 26 –</b>   | <b>Decorate Church for Christmas–6 PM</b>   |
| Sunday, November 28 –          | First Sunday of Advent, UM Student Offering<br>Kids Changing the World-bring your change-<br>last collection this year!<br>Pastor Karen on vacation, David Rabadueux,<br>Lay Servant speaking               |
| Saturday, December 4 –         | Faith Circle at 9 AM  |
| Sunday, December 5 –           | Communion Sunday<br>Last day to bring Blessing Tree gifts<br>Food Bank Sunday-bring your food items   |
| Friday, December 24 –          | Christmas Eve Candlelight service–7 PM  |
| <b>Saturday, December 25 –</b> | <b>Christmas Day!</b>   |
| Sunday, December 26 –          | No Sunday School  |
| <b>Saturday, January 1 –</b>   | <b>Happy New Year!</b>  |



#### **\*\*Don't forget\*\***

- \* Save your pop tabs and can tabs for Riley's Children's Hospital. Collection can at the back of the church.
- \* Save your change for Children Changing the World on the last Sunday of each month.
- \* To sign up for CHURCH DUTIES on sheets at back table.

## A Word from Our Pastor

Sunday morning, November 7th, or more likely Saturday evening before we go to bed, we'll be turning our clocks back one hour to Standard Time making the morning light appear earlier and the dark of evening come more quickly.

Sunday, November 7th is also the day we will celebrate as All Saints' Sunday, a time to remember those who have finished their work on earth and are now part of the church triumphant. We give thanks for the time we had with these loved ones and celebrate the memories we have that can never be taken away from us. All Saints also includes us who are living in relationship with Christ. Take time to reflect on the ways that God is working in your life and through you to touch others with His love.

When we think about November, Thanksgiving immediately comes to mind. It is the biggest family gathering day of the year. While the culture we live in looks at this holiday as the kick-off for Christmas shopping and parties, we need to be sure that we take time to give thanks to God for all that He has done for us. Spend some time this month reflecting on the blessings you've received in all areas of your life -- family and friends, health, job, activities and spiritually. Then thank God for all He's done for you and those you love. Before your Thanksgiving meal say a prayer of thanks for the harvest, for your family gathered and scattered, and for God's presence with you.

Before the end of November – Sunday, November 28th – we begin our Advent journey of 4 Sundays before Christmas to prepare our hearts to celebrate Jesus Christ, Son of God, coming to live among us as one of us.

Spend some time this month looking for the Lord's beauty around you. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind all the times that God sheltered you during life's challenges and struggles this year. Then meditate on the words of this hymn of harvest and praise.

Sing to the Lord of harvest, Sing songs of love and praise; With joyful hearts and voices Your alleluias raise. By Him the rolling seasons In fruitful order move; Sing to the Lord of harvest, A joyous song of love.

Bring to His sacred altar The gifts His goodness gave, The golden sheaves of harvest, The souls Christ died to save. Your hearts lay down before Him When at His feet you fall, And with your lives adore Him, Who gave His life for all.

-- John S.B. Monsell, 1866, in *Sing Joyfully* #593.

Shalom,  
Pastor Karen <><



## Committee News

### Faith Circle

The Faith Circle Christmas Breakfast will be held on December 4 at 9 AM. The Men's Group will have their own fellowship breakfast at the same time. As always, all are welcome!

### SPRC (Staff Parish Relations Committee)

The SPRC met on October 4 to discuss 2022 salaries and other staff issues. Pastor Karen has agreed to stay contingent on her good health. Salary increases for 2022 were discussed for our paid employees, those being Pastor Karen, Erin (custodian), and Samuel (musician). Sharon reported about a walk-through of the parsonage. A couple of issues came to light including a needed repair to the porch, a new kitchen fire extinguisher is needed and new smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in the home. Trustees will take care of these issues. It has been brought to the members of the SPRC about not knowing the songs sung during worship. Pastor Karen will have melodies played before we sing a new song. She will also try to incorporate more common songs we know.

### Trustees

Continued thanks to those helping to keep the grass cut and things cleaned up around the church. The required inspection of the parsonage was completed and a few issues needing attention were identified. Repairs to the porch have been completed, and painting will be done weather permitting. A mold inspection has been completed and results are pending. Temporary repairs to the church boiler have been completed, and we are hopeful they will prevent further leaks for a few more years. Siding replacement projects will be started soon on the northeast corner of the church and the back porch of the parsonage.

### Wells County Cluster

The Cluster distributed popsicles during the Bluffton Street Fair on Saturday, September 25 in the afternoon. The next Cluster meeting is scheduled to be held on Monday, November 8, 2021, at Liberty Center UMC at 6:30 PM.



\*\*Please remember\*\*

Barb Cook  
100 Caylor Blvd. Apt. #100  
Bluffton, IN 46714

Gary Cook  
Markle Health & Rehabilitation  
170 N. Tracy Street  
Markle, IN 46770

Jeanette Gilbert  
Golden Apple Unit  
Christian Care  
720 East Dustman Rd.  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
Or Mail to: c/o Jill Martin  
2172 E US 224  
Ossian, IN 46777

Margaret Hasler  
37446 Carson  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331

September 2021 Budget Summary	September Actual	September Budget	September Variance	Year to date Actual	Year to date Budget	Year to date Variance
TOTAL INCOME	2,972.81	4,208.67	(1,235.86)	34,709.20	37,878.03	(3,168.83)
TOTAL BUDGET EXPENSES	2,284.30	3,791.99	1,507.69	28,367.15	34,544.58	1,476.87
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>688.51</b>	<b>416.68</b>		<b>6,342.05</b>	<b>3,333.45</b>	

# Five things you may not know about Christmas

We know the stories in the Bible, attend Advent and Christmas Eve worship each year, listen to tons of Christmas carols, and have seen just about every Christmas movie and special. We United Methodists know a lot about Christmas, but like most things there is always more to learn. Here are a few lesser-known tidbits.

## John Wesley never published a Christmas sermon



*John Wesley was a prolific writer, but he never published a Christmas sermon. Photo illustration by Kathryn Price, United Methodist Communications.*

If you search for Christmas sermons by John Wesley, you won't find any. He never published one.

One reason may be that when the Puritans rose to power in mid-1600s England, Christmas fell out of favor. Authorities passed laws attempting to prohibit the celebration of Christmas. On Christmas Eve, some towns even sent criers to call out, "No Christmas! No Christmas!"

It wasn't until the mid-1800s, that Christmas had a resurgence in England. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were of German background, and popularized the Christmas tree tradition in England. The popularity of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* published in 1843 may also account for the holiday's resurgence.

John Wesley's Methodist movement began in England during those 200 years of Christmas suppression. As a result, there is no evidence they celebrated Christmas other than with a special worship service.

Many of the English emigrants to America at this time were also Puritans who were suspicious of Christmas celebrations. In 1600s Boston, they passed a law under

which people were to be fined 5 shillings for not working on Christmas. It was not until 1870 that Christmas became a national holiday in the U.S.

Some speculate the Methodist preachers may have chosen to begin the founding conference of The Methodist Episcopal Church on Christmas Eve 1784 because they were all available. Methodists would later refer to that gathering as the Christmas Conference.

## Charles Wesley wrote a popular Christmas song

John Wesley never published a Christmas sermon, but his hymn-writing brother Charles wrote songs for the season from the very beginning. The first Methodist hymnbook, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), includes Charles' "Hymn for Christmas-Day." The song begins, "Hark how all the welkin rings, 'Glory to the King of kings.'" Another Methodist preacher would change the opening line to words we know much better, "Hark! the Herald Angel Sings."

In a later publication, *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord*, Wesley published 18 more hymns for the season. We still sing one of the songs in that collection, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus." The words in our United Methodist Hymnal today are almost exactly as Charles wrote them in 1745.

One wonders if Charles was the bigger fan of Christmas because his birthday is exactly a week before, December 18, 1707.



*The open arms of Jesus in many Nativity scenes are a symbolic invitation to salvation. Photo by Kathryn Price, United Methodist Communications.*

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### **Nativities are filled with symbolism**

What our nativities lack in historical accuracy is often due to the inclusion of powerful symbolism. For example, the baby Jesus figurine sometimes has outstretched arms, despite the angels' words to the shepherds that they would find him "swaddled and lying in a manger." The open arms are a sign of welcome, an invitation to receive the salvation we know in Christ. Other elements like animals, trees, and wells also have symbolic significance. Read "Nativity scenes: More than meets the eye" to learn more about your nativity set.

Many United Methodists also participate in Las Posadas, a symbolic representation of the Nativity journey from the tradition of Latin American Christians. Each of the nine nights before Christmas, "commemorating the nine months Mary carried the infant Jesus in her womb and emphasizing his coming again," explains *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, the people travel together to a home where a host family is prepared for a celebration. When the procession arrives, they knock on the door and follow a liturgy that uses Scripture to remind everyone of the one who offered Mary and Joseph a place to stay the night Jesus was born, and our need to welcome Jesus into our lives. After the liturgy there is a piñata and food.



*Joseph and Mary traveled some difficult roads as the earthly parents of Jesus. Photo courtesy of Beliefnet.com.*

### **Joseph and Mary's journey**

It may surprise even those who have been Christians for years, to learn how little we know about the man who raised Jesus. Joseph is only mentioned in 16 verses in the Bible and none of his words are recorded. The Bible tells us only two things definitively. His dad's name was Jacob, and he worked as a craftsman, probably a woodworker.

Everything else we know about Joseph, we infer from how he responds to the news that an angel visited Mary, his betrothed, and told her she will give birth to Jesus. This could not have been easy news to hear, but even in

this moment, Joseph acts nobly and faithfully. He does all he can to protect his new family and follow God wherever he leads.

One of the roads Joseph and Mary are called to travel is one from Nazareth to Bethlehem where Jesus is born. The approximate 100-mile journey on foot, with possible help from a donkey, took an estimated nine or ten days. In a *Get Your Spirit in Shape* podcast episode, the Rev. Adam Hamilton shares the response he received from a mom who was 9 months pregnant, "There's no way Joseph was getting me on a donkey, if that was me."



*The kettles and bells of The Salvation Army have been part of the Christmas collection for many years. Photo public domain via The Library of Congress.*

### **Red kettles have United Methodist links**

When Christmas shopping, many encounter the red kettles and ringing bells of The Salvation Army. Not all will know that the Salvation Army has Methodist roots. William Booth, a Methodist minister, started The Salvation Army in London in 1865. His passion for reaching the poor, homeless, and hungry with the gospel of Jesus Christ led him to open a mission to meet people's physical needs. That mission continues to grow today.

Goodwill Industries is a similar organization with United Methodist ties. Methodist minister the Rev. Edgar J. Helms founded the organization in Boston in 1902. He hired and trained people in need of a job, to repair and resell donations he collected.

*\*Joe Iovino works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. Contact him by email.*

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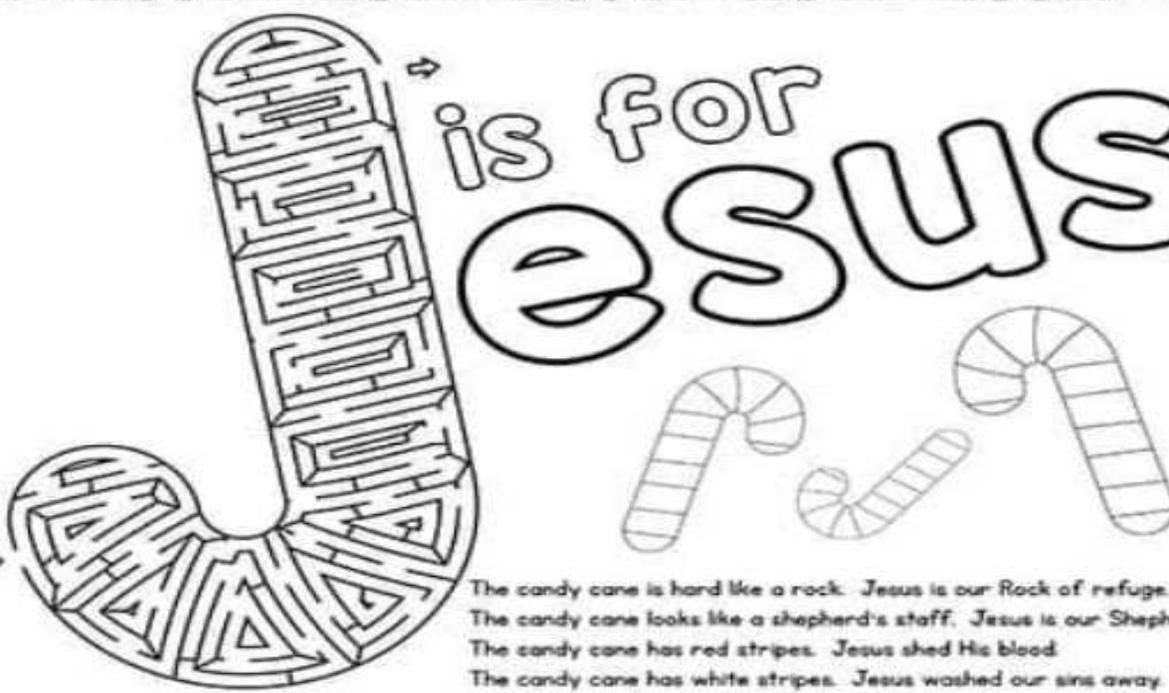
**I am Thankful for...**



A	_____	N	_____
B	_____	O	_____
C	_____	P	_____
D	_____	Q	_____
E	_____	R	_____
F	_____	S	_____
G	_____	T	_____
H	_____	U	_____
I	_____	V	_____
J	_____	W	_____
K	_____	X	_____
L	_____	Y	_____
M	_____	Z	_____



is for **esus**



The candy cane is hard like a rock. Jesus is our Rock of refuge.  
The candy cane looks like a shepherd's staff. Jesus is our Shepherd.  
The candy cane has red stripes. Jesus shed His blood.  
The candy cane has white stripes. Jesus washed our sins away.

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