



The Bethlehem Star



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Bethlehem United Methodist Church ~ November 30, 2011

Our Mission

*Growing as Christians,
Reaching out to others*

Our Vision

We seek to be a passionate, serving church to the community and beyond. We are inspired through our worship of Jesus Christ: a home for learning where all are empowered, where children, youth and adults grow spiritually and are in ministry to the community and the world; a sanctuary for all.

Our Church Staff

Pastor

Ryan Bennett

Children & Adult Ministries

Rebecca Little, Director

Music & Arts

Harry Robinson, Director
Bryan Ward, Associate Director

Youth Ministries

Jason Sansbury, Director
Candice Fisher, Intern

Executive Administrative

Assistant

Pat Smith

Bookkeeper

Marcia Rudd

Maintenance

Carl Wolhaupter
James Melrose, Assistant

Bethlehem Preschool

Sissie Hargreaves, Director

Sunday Worship Times

8:15 & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School

9:30 a.m.



Thoughts . . .

Mike Slaughter is a United Methodist Pastor who has recently authored a book entitled Christmas Is Not Your Birthday. In the book, he talks about all of the things we usually do on our birthday (i.e. — get to pick where we want to eat, get all kinds of presents given to us, do whatever we want to do, etc). He then turns toward Christmas and makes the point that too often we try to do the same things at Christmas. In other words, we try to make Christmas be about us. He concludes that on your birthday do whatever it is you want and enjoy having people bring you gifts and presents but on Christmas, Jesus' birthday, we should all focus and do those things that Jesus wants us to do.

It is an interesting point. Jesus is the most selfless person to ever walk on this earth. The best way any of us could celebrate his birth would be to do things that make him happy. In other words we should be focusing on serving and helping others. That can be lived out in a million different ways, but the point is for us to fully embrace Christmas we need to move beyond the self-centered, consumeristic culture that is today's Christmas celebration.

So let me issue a challenge to all of Bethlehem to seek to make Christmas special this year by focusing on doing things that the birthday boy himself would want us to do: caring for those who are lonely, hurting, hungry, or in need in some way. It could be as simple as going and spending time at a nursing home (one of the loneliest places I know of) or writing letters to persons who could use a little pick me up. It might be getting involved in Room in the Inn or volunteering with Feed America First. There are countless ways we can help someone in a way that honors Jesus and his birth. . . and the funny thing is that when we do this we find we too have a gift given to us by Jesus himself — we find our day is a little more fulfilling, our hearts have more joy in them, and our lives have more clarity and sense of call. I think that is part of God's plan, too, that even on Jesus' birthday as we try to give to him, he gives so much more back to us.

Blessings,

Ryan

Advent Sermon Series

The Advent Sermon Series is entitled "Christmas FULL Filled." Below are the sermon titles for each week:

December 4 – Empty Tables

December 11 – Empty Houses

8:15 Service will have Choir Cantata

10:45 Service will be normal service

4:00 Church-wide Christmas Program — Sanctuary

5:00 Happy Birthday Jesus Party — Banquet Hall

December 18 – Empty Stockings

December 24 – Empty Lives

4:30 Children's Service

6:00 Traditional Service (Communion and Candlelight)

8:00 Contemporary Service (Communion and Candlelight)

11:00 Acoustic Service (Communion and Candlelight)

December 25 – Empty Songs

Only one worship service at 10:00 a.m. informal and "come as you are."

No other activities — **NO** Sunday School or afternoon programming

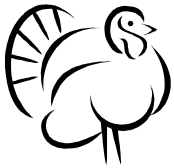


Monthly Mission

The December monthly mission will be **Sunday, December 11**. The items to be collected for December are **beans and rice**. If you normally sit on the **pulpit side**, please bring **dried or canned beans**. If you normally sit on the **lectern side**, please bring **bags/boxes of rice**. All donations will be given to Feed America First.



“Share the Feast” Update



Once again the love and compassion of this congregation provided \$4,755.36 for Feed America First to purchase turkeys that provided families a Thanksgiving meal. All who participated had fun and fellowship while sorting and packing boxes of food items to supplement the turkeys. Many thanks to all who helped make this such a huge success!

College Student Thank You Notes

Please see the Church Family bulletin board in the main hallway for thank you notes from the college students who received a care package. If you need an address for a college student to stay in touch with them, please contact the church office for that information — **Pat Smith**, psmith@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721.



Room in the Inn Needs

Room in the Inn has several openings for the month of December. Here is a weekly list of help needed:

- ◆ December 3 — 1 overnight host (men only)
- ◆ December 10 — 1 overnight host (men only)
- ◆ December 24 — 2 overnight hosts (men only)
 - Driver (Saturday night and/or Sunday morning)
 - Can be 1 person or 2 (prefer men)
 - Person to do laundry (pick up on Sunday morning and return before following Saturday night)

If we are unable to fill the overnight host positions, we will have to call the Room in the Inn program and tell them we can **NOT** be a host church for the night. If you have questions, please contact **Lisa McIntyre**. Sign-up sheets are in the Gathering Space.



Also needed for this ministry are **NEW stocking caps** and **NEW cotton jersey work gloves**. Warm men’s clothing is also needed for our guests. Collection bins are in the Gathering Space.

Altar Flowers



Sign-up sheets for placing flowers in the 2012 Sunday worship services are available at the Welcome and Information Center, church office, Adult Sunday School class folders or by contacting **Pat Smith** at 794-6721 or psmith@bethlehemumc.com.

Stephen Ministers Info

If you're moving through a particularly difficult place in life perhaps a Stephen Minister could help. For more information, please contact Rev. Ryan Bennett at 794-6721.



December 2011

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>November 11</p> <table style="font-size: small; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>January 12</p> <table style="font-size: small; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1</p> <p>9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 3:15 PM FCA Basketball Practice/Gym 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Life Bridge</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">2</p> <p>40 Days Prayer for Government Officials Staff Christmas Party 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Yoga/Old Sanctuary 2:00 PM FCA Basketball Practice or Game/Gym 3:00 PM FHS Project Graduation/Banquet Hall</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">3</p> <p>7:00 AM FHS Project Graduation/Banquet Hall 6:00 PM Room in the Inn</p>
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<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">4</p> <p>8:15 AM & 10:45 AM Worship 9:15 & 10:15 AM Gathering and Fellowship 9:30 AM Sunday School 12:00 PM Children's Listening Session/Banquet Hall 4:00 PM Bluegrass Band 4:30 PM Children's Choir Chimes 5:00 PM Ladies' Ensemble 5:00 PM Youth Choir 5:30 PM Children's C</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">5</p> <p>3:00 PM - 6:00 PM FCA Basketball Practice/Gym 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pack 298 Meeting/Banquet Hall & 4 Classrooms 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study/CLC 208 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 444 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study/CLC 205</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">6</p> <p>6:30 AM Men's Devotional 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 10:00 AM Staff Devotion and Meeting 1:15 PM Bible Study 6:00 PM Stephen Ministers/Conference Room 6:15 PM Women's Bible Study/Upper Banquet Hall 6:30 PM Trustees Meeting/CLC 208</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">7</p> <p>9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 3:15 PM - 4:45 PM FCA Basketball Practice/Gym 5:30 PM Middle School Youth 6:15 PM Adult Handbells 6:30 PM Youth Dinner 6:50 PM Youth Worship 7:00 PM Choir 7:15 PM Senior High Youth 8:15 PM Praise Band</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">8</p> <p>9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 3:15 PM - 8:30 PM FCA Basketball Games/Gym</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">9</p> <p>9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Yoga/Old Sanctuary 2:00 PM FCA Basketball Practice or Game/Gym</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">10</p> <p>6:00 PM Room in the Inn</p>																																																																																				
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">11</p> <p>Monthly Mission 8:15 AM & 10:45 AM Worship 9:15 & 10:15 AM Gathering and Fellowship 9:30 AM Sunday School 4:00 PM All Church Christmas Music Program 6:30 PM Open Basketball</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">12</p> <p>Newsletter Week 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM FCA Basketball Practice/Gym 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pack 298 Meeting/Banquet Hall & 4 Classrooms 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Girl Scout Service Unit 175 CPR/Old Sanctuary 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study/CLC 208 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Girl Scout Service Unit 172/Old Sanctuary</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">13</p> <p>6:30 AM Men's Devotional 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 10:00 AM Staff Devotion and Meeting 1:15 PM Bible Study 6:00 PM FCA Board Meeting/CLC 205 6:15 PM Women's Bible Study/Upper Banquet Hall 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Basketball/Alton</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">14</p> <p>9:30 AM - 2:30 PM Preschool 3:15 PM - 4:45 PM FCA Basketball Practice/Gym 5:30 PM Middle School Youth 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Girl Scout Service Unit 175 CPR/Old Sanctuary 6:15 PM Adult Handbells 6:30 PM Youth Dinner 6:50 PM Youth Worship 7:00 PM Choir 8:15 PM Praise Band</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">15</p> <p>10:30 AM Preschool Christmas Program/Sanctuary 12:15 PM Ruth Circle/Offsite 3:15 PM - 8:30 PM FCA Basketball Games/Gym 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Life Bridge</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">16</p> <p>9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Yoga/Old Sanctuary 2:00 PM FCA Basketball Practice or Game/Gym</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">17</p> <p>6:00 PM Room in the Inn</p>																																																																																				
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<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">25</p> <p> Christmas Day 10:00 AM Worship Service</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">26</p> <p> Church Closed</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">27</p> <p> Church Closed 6:30 AM Men's Devotional</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">28</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">29</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">30</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">31</p> <p>6:00 PM Room in the Inn</p>																																																																																				

Calendar Overflow Events

Calendar Overflow Information



On the December calendar on page 3 (previous page), there are some dates with a small arrow in the lower right hand corner, that means there are more activities than will fit in that box. Below is the information that is the “overflow” so you may have all the events for the month:

Date	Time	Event Description
4	5:00 PM	YUMmies & World Changers
	5:30 PM	Children’s Choirs
	6:30 PM	Junior Handbells
	6:30 PM	Open Basketball
6	6:30 PM	Basketball/Alton
	7:30 PM	Basketball/Palk
12	6:30 PM	Girl Scout Service Unit 172
	7:00 PM	Boy Scout Troop 444
13	7:30 PM	Basketball/Palk
14	7:15 PM	Senior High Youth
	8:15 PM	Praise Band

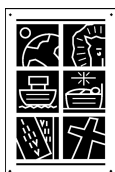
Yoga Class

The Friday yoga class will meet the following Fridays in **December: 2, 9 and 16**. For more information, see the flyer on the bulletin board in the main hallway.



Behind the Scenes

We want to thank **Jan Speer** and **Margo Woodruff** for all the time and effort they spent making sure the church was decorated for Advent and getting volunteers to help with the Hanging of the Greens. There were many people who helped them on Monday, November 21 and Sunday, November 27 and we are thankful for all that help as well. Next time you see Jan or Margo, please tell them “thanks” for a job well done.



Keep the Church Informed of Your Changes

If you move, change your phone number, change email address, have a name change, move your membership to another church or experience any kind of changes in your life, please keep the church informed. The church is responsible for keeping track of its members and your help is greatly appreciated. For any changes, please contact **Pat Smith** at psmith@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721.



Youth Poinsettia Sale

The youth are selling poinsettias again this year as a fundraiser. Please see the blue insert in the bulletin to place a poinsettia in honor of/memory of someone. Poinsettias will be placed in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 18 and can be taken home following the Christmas Eve worship services. Cost is \$15.00 per plant, please use a separate order form for each plant you wish to order. Deadline to order is **Monday, December 12**. If you have questions or need more information, please contact **Jason Sansbury**, Director of Youth Ministries, jsansbury@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721.



Building Lives Warehouse Christmas Sale

Christ United Methodist Church’s Building Lives program supports homeless veterans. An annual fundraiser is the Warehouse Sale of Christmas gift wrappings, small gifts and toys. The sale is **Tuesday, November 29 until Saturday, December 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** each day at 1725 Columbia Pike (Lasko building). For more information, please contact **Bobby Dodd** at 714-5507 or rtdewd@me.com.



Alarm System

Please be aware that the security alarm is turned on during times when no one is at the church. If you come by the church to pick up or drop off something and the main entrance — door by the sanctuary — is locked, the alarm is **ON**. If you then start trying doors and find an unlocked door, **DO NOT** enter the building.

Since the holiday season is upcoming, there will be days that the church is closed and the alarm will be on those days. Please contact a church staff member if you need to be at the church during a time when the church is not open. Otherwise, the police will be notified when the alarm goes off. If you come by and find a door unlocked, contact **Pat Smith** church office, 794-6721 (leave a message if necessary) to let her know what door is unlocked.



If you have any questions, please contact **Pat Smith** at 794-6721 or psmith@bethlehemumc.com

Children's News

Rebecca Little, Director of Children's Ministries



Nursery subs – Occasionally there is a need for someone to help in the nursery for an hour or two. If you would like to be a part of this ministry to God's youngest children, contact **Rebecca Little** at rlittle@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721.

Gifts for the Manger

On **Sunday, December 4** beginning at 9:30, the children (preschoolers through fifth graders) will parade through the church until they arrive at the manger. We encourage each child to bring a new gift that they would like to receive. The gifts will be delivered to the Graceworks Manger in Franklin. The Manger allows needy parents to know the joy of choosing a special gift to delight their child. It allows our children to know the joy of sharing with others. Gifts should be **unwrapped**.

If you would like to contribute to the Manger, you can leave a check in the offering plate designated for "Manger" or bring a gift on Sunday. For a list of suggested gifts for teens and seniors, check out the church website (www.bethlehemumc.com) and follow the link to the Graceworks website.

Children's Sunday Schedule

Children's schedule for **Sunday, December 4**

12:00 Noon — World Changers (3rd - 5th graders) go Christmas shopping for Angel Tree gifts. **Bring money for lunch.**

4:30 — Children's Choir Chimes

Youth Choir will practice from 4:30-5:30

5:00 - 5:30 — YUMmies & World Changers

5:30 - 6:00 — Children's Choir practice (may go until 6:15)

6:30 — Junior Handbells



CHILDREN'S SCHEDULE

Schedule for **Sunday, December 11**

4:00 — Church-wide Christmas program begins.

(Music leaders will let children know what time to be at the church.)

5:00 — Happy Birthday Jesus party in the Banquet Hall. (Could you bring a 13x9x2 birthday cake for Jesus? Let Rebecca know, rlittle@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721)

NO YUMmies, World Changers or choirs on December 18, December 25 or January 1. Everything begins again on January 8 at regular times.

Angel Tree

The Bethlehem Angel Tree is in the Gathering Space. Please be sure to sign the log book when you take an angel from the tree. Gifts are due back to the church by **Sunday, December 18**. Please contact **Lisa McIntyre** if you have questions or need more information.



Children's Ministry Transition Team

The Children's Ministry Search Team wants you to be a part of the process as we "Re-Imagine the Possibilities" of new leadership for our Children's Ministry. We encourage anyone interested to come to the last listening session on Sunday, **December 4** at 12:00 noon in the Banquet Hall. Lunch and childcare will be provided. This is where you can share your thoughts of our current programs and express your vision for the next generation! The results of this session as well as the previous meetings will play an important role in determining our goals as we seek our new Children's Minister.



Please feel free to contact **Betty Hawkins** or **Shelley McCoy** if you have any questions about the meeting or to make a reservation for Sunday so there will be enough food.

Operation Christmas Child

BUMC youth recently filled 61 shoe boxes that will be sent to children in need all around the world through Operation Christmas Child. After filling the shoeboxes, the youth gathered around the boxes and prayed for the children who will be receiving the gifts. For many of these children, it will be the only Christmas present they will receive. Special thanks to everyone who contributed shoe boxes, wrapping paper and gifts. You are not only providing these children with gift items but also with the gift of Christ's love.



Bethlehem Music and Arts
Presents Christmas at Bethlehem:

The Surprising Christmas Pageant

by Dennis Harfin



A humorous and loving tale of the Nativity
Featuring the Children's Choirs, Hand Bells
and members of the Bethlehem Players

**Sunday December 11 at 4:00 p.m.
in the Sanctuary**



Stewardship as of November 20, 2011



Worship Attendance		
11/06/11		270
11/13/11		303
11/20/11		254
Sunday School Attendance		
11/06/11		119
11/13/11		138
11/20/11		112

Operating Weekly Offering		
11/06/11	\$	20,252.10
11/13/11	\$	6,806.79
11/20/11	\$	7,969.00

2011 Weekly Operating Needs	\$	14,807.75
2011 YTD Operating Income	\$	562,682.66
2011 YTD Operating Budget Needs	\$	695,964.25
2011 YTD Building Fund Income	\$	57,130.91
2011 YTD Building Fund Expenses	\$	91,070.43

Year End Contributions

For contributions to be counted in the 2011 year, all gifts (checks or cash) must be **in the church office on or before Friday, December 30**. The church office will be open that day 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Checks that are placed in the offering plate the first Sunday of 2012 will NOT be counted toward 2011 giving even if the check is dated 2011 or was actually written in 2011. Checks that are **postmarked by December 31** that are actually received in the church office in 2012 will be considered a 2011 contribution. If you wish to give stock to the church, please allow time for the transaction to clear in order for it to be considered a 2011 contribution.



Please contact **Marcia Rudd**, mrudd@bethlehemumc.com or 794-6721, if you wish to donate stock or have questions about making sure your contribution is considered a 2011 gift.

Mark Your Calendar for These Upcoming Events



- December 4 • Council of Stewards
- December 11 • Church-wide Christmas Music Program
- December 23 • NO Yoga
- December 24 • Christmas Eve Services
4:30, 6:00, 8:00 & 11:00
- December 25 • Christmas Day
One Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
- December 26 - 27 • Church Office Closed
- December 30 • NO Yoga
• Last Day to have 2011 Contributions in Church Office
- December 31 • Last Day to mail 2011 Contributions
- January 1 • New Year's Day
One Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
- January 2 • Church Office Closed
- January 6 • Epiphany
- January 16 • Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Church Office Closed

Council of Stewards Meeting

The Council of Stewards will meet on **Sunday, December 4** at 6:30. All members of the Council are encouraged to attend this meeting. The 2012 budget will be presented for approval. All church members may attend, only Council members can vote. If you have questions, please contact **Dave Speer**, Presiding Steward.



Bethlehem United Methodist Church

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Franklin, TN 37069
615-794-6721

Pastoral Emergency: 260-8412
www.bethlehemumc.com

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Return Service Requested