



Hebron United Methodist Church
9811 Main Street, P.O. Box 323, Hebron, IL 60034

Catch the Spirit!

www.hebronmethodist.org

DECEMBER 2022/JANUARY 2023

The Pastor Ponders...

...Is Jesus the Reason for the Season?

The angel said to Joseph, "Mary will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save the people from their sins." (Matthew 1: 21)

A couple years ago, my daughter gave me a sweatshirt that read The Season IS the Reason for Jesus. It was based on a pastor's column I had written several years before. So, yes, this article is a rerun, but now that we're back to shopping in person, I've discovered that there is still a great deal of truth in it.

Jesus is the Reason for the Season was emblazoned upon the sweatshirt of the woman standing behind me in line. "Oh, really!" I thought as I read it. She was breathing quite heavily, complaining to the person behind her how inconsiderate it was of the person in front of me not to have all the necessary cards, coupons, ID, etc. ready before getting in line, and generally making it clear that she was not pleased about having to wait in such a long line. "I'll be so happy when Christmas is over and things can get back to normal," she voiced. (This year I thought, "Why does everyone want things to (continued on page 2)



****Mark Your Calendar****

"Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Newborn King" - HUMC Kids Christmas Program

Sunday, Dec. 11th - 10:30 a.m.

Pizza Party to follow

Advent Choir Practice

Tuesdays 12/6, 12/13, 12/20 - 7:00 p.m.

"Faithful" Advent Study

Christmas through the eyes of Joseph

Wednesdays 12/7, 12/14, 12/21 - 9:30 a.m.

Zoom & in person

Rescheduled A1C Screening/Diabetes Clinic

Thursday, December 15th 2:30-6:15 p.m. at HUMC

Call to Register: 815-355-5554

Sunday, December 18th-Church Council 9:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 24th at 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 25th

10:30 a.m. in person

January 1st New Year's Day / Epiphany Sunday

Online Worship Service (no in person worship)

The Pastor Ponders (continued)

get back to normal?” since I don’t think normal was all that great.) “We have a long way to go since we haven’t even gotten to the first week in December,” I thought. (I have a tendency to be very critical when stuff like that happens.) The reality is that Jesus’s birth is not the reason we have Black Friday, Cyber Monday, Shop Local Saturday, stores open on Thanksgiving, and so forth. Jesus’ birth is not the reason we knock ourselves out decorating trees, hanging garland, baking cookies, planting reindeers all over our yards, and the like. And Jesus’ birth is definitely not why we spend extravagantly, desire inordinately, party ‘til we drop, or....whatever. But then I thought, maybe in today’s reality, it is. In Matthew’s gospel, an angel appeared to inform Joseph that Mary’s child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and that they were to name him Jesus because he would save the people from their sins. Throughout history, people have been plagued with the sins of pride, gluttony, and greed. Instead of realizing that we are “little less than God,” we think that we are God. Instead of sharing our abundance, we hoard it in “barns where moth and rust will destroy it.” Instead of caring for the earth as good stewards, we are determined to prove we are its masters. Instead of celebrating the diversity of God’s creatures, we put up walls and barriers and develop hierarchies. In fact, nothing seems to separate the “haves” from the “have nots,” the “ins” from the “outs.” or the “ups” from the “downs” more than the holidays.

Yet into the messiness of our world, God came to show us just how much God loves us, how much God forgives us, how much God accepts us. God came to show us that things can be different, we can make our world a better place, we, ourselves, can be better people. God came to tell us that, after that first Christmas, the world would never get back to normal again. Thanks be to God!

Instead of the hassle, I wonder what would happen if we trusted God to be who God is and rearranged our priorities. “The Christmas event is a time to ‘celebrate the HOPE (Jesus) brought, the LOVE he showed, the PEACE he promised, and the JOY of Emmanuel, God with us, forevermore!’”+ Just a thought ... perhaps I shall have a T-shirt made that reads The Season IS the Reason for Jesus. Wishing you God’s gift of hope, peace, joy and love this Advent/Christmas season.

Pastor Char

+ (Joel Raney in the forward to *A Thrill of Hope*)

Building Committee Update

Our progress continues on the Wesley Room. The insulation has been installed just in time for the cold weather! All electrical and ductwork is now complete, as is the framing for the pocket door between the Wesley Room and the kitchen. The drywall will be entirely finished in early December. The lift has been ordered and is scheduled for delivery in late January. Come see the progress!

**Looking Ahead
to the New Year:
Sunday,**

January 1, 2023

We will not have an in person worship service on January 1st. Instead we will be offering an online worship service.

A link to this worship service will be emailed out by December 31st.

Sunday,

January 29, 2023

after worship- lunch & film viewing of "For the Bible Tells Me So."

Sunday,

February 19, 2023

after worship -
Official in person vote date for affiliation with RMN & adoption of Welcoming Statement

****Please note: The next issue of Catch the Spirit will be distributed the first week in February 2023.****



N.O.W. - Nurture, Outreach, Witness

WARNING.....WARNING: ADVENT VIRUS Be on the alert for symptoms of inner Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to this virus and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. Some signs and symptoms of The Advent Virus:

A tendency to think and act spontaneously.

An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.

A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)

Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.

Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.

Frequent attacks of smiling.

An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.

An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Please send this warning out to all your friends. This virus can and has affected many systems. Some systems have been completely converted because of it.

May all of you experience the joy of this Advent virus. All of you have been a blessing to the Hebron United Methodist Church through your talents, your giving and your prayers.

Christmas blessings to all of you.

Shirlee and Alberta, Co-Chairs, Nurture

On Tuesday, November 22nd Alden UMC, Hebron UMC and St. John's Lutheran Churches came together at HUMC for a Community Thanksgiving Service. What a blessing to worship with our friends and neighbors! An offering was taken for the Hebron Community Food Pantry and after the service we enjoyed a dessert buffet. Thank you to all who came, all who gave, and all who baked!

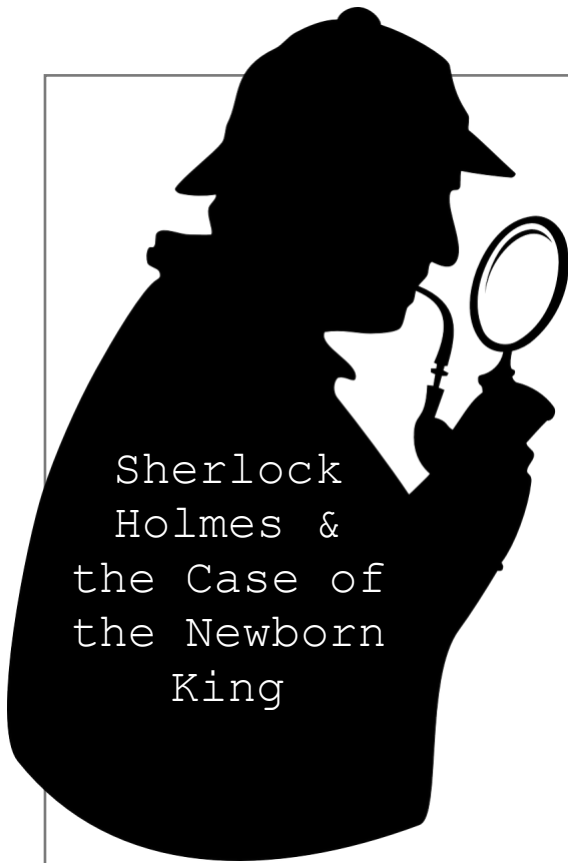


HUMC Kids

Join us on **Sunday, December 11, 2022** for our HUMC Kids Christmas Program "Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Newborn King." As is tradition at HUMC, we are exploring the story of Jesus' birth in a non-traditional way. This is a "walk-ins welcome" program during our 10:30 a.m. worship service so even if you are worshipping with us for the first time, you and your children can still join in on the fun. Kids are encouraged to come in a Sherlock Holmes inspired outfit or costume.

We will have Sunday School on December 4th, 11th, and 18th at 9:45 a.m. After that we will be on break - no Sunday School December 25th or January 1st. Also, in January, be on the look for an email from me or Pastor Char regarding confirmation. If you are interested in having your 7th grader (and up) join confirmation, contact us before January so we get you on the contact list.

See you Sunday! -Stephanie Claussen, Sunday School Teacher



Our Red Bird Mission Mitten Tree is up and ready for decorating! Please consider bringing new hats, gloves, scarves and of course, mittens for those in need this winter. We'll be collecting items for our mitten tree December 4th - 11th. Thank you!



November 13th was National Donor Sabbath / Organ & Tissue Sunday. Special thanks to Sharon Smith for her presentation on organ donation and to everyone who donated tissue products for the Hebron Community Food Pantry in November. If you haven't registered to become an organ donor, go to www.giftofhope.org and become a life-saving Superhero.





RMN Working Group

On October 16th and 23rd a Straw Vote was held at HUMC. The purpose of this vote was to gain a better understanding of how the HUMC congregation felt about the proposed Welcoming Statement and about becoming a Reconciling Church through affiliation with Reconciling Ministries Network. The RMN Working Group is thrilled to report that 100% of the ballots received indicated full support of the welcoming statement and affiliation with RMN! With this overwhelming show of support, we have set the date for the official vote, which will be done by a counting of hands, in person, on **February 19, 2023** after our morning worship service.

We would like to thank everyone who voted and who also provided us with additional feedback in the optional questions portion of the ballot. Our group is planning a series of educational opportunities for the 2023 year. We will kick off this series with a luncheon and a viewing of the film "For the Bible Tells Me So" on January 29, 2023 after worship. We look forward to continuing this journey together!



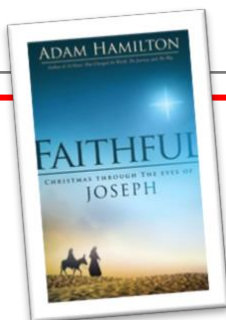
Opportunities to Give

Thank you to those who gave so generously to missions in November and to those who are participating in the A-H Secret Santa Program! We collected many items for Hebron Community Food Pantry during Organ and Tissue Sunday. With Alden UMC, we collected \$429.00 at the Thanksgiving Community Service for the Hebron Pantry. We raised \$60 for our Mission Links Mission for Larry and Jane Kies and \$30 for UM Students. Here are ways you can give this month:

- 1) Red Bird Mission - Hats, Scarves, Mittens, etc. for our Mitten Tree now through Dec. 11th
- 2) Local Giving - A-H Secret Santa Program - For those participating, you should already have your Secret Santa list - be sure to wrap your gifts this year and bring them to the church by Dec. 11th
- 3) Local Giving - Hebron Community Food Pantry (place items in baskets at back of church)

More information on our [2022 Mission Program](https://www.hebronmethodist.org/2022-Mission-Program) check out our website at www.hebronmethodist.org.

[Click here](#) to give to any of these missions through HUMC.



It's not too late to join our Advent Study "*Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph*" on Wednesdays 12/7, 12/14, and 12/21 at 9:30 a.m. in person at HUMC or through Zoom. This study explores the book by Adam Hamilton, discussion, video, reflection and prayer. Carve out some time this season and join us!

November 27th was the first Sunday in Advent. We held a special Hanging of the Greens Service followed by more decorating and a luncheon! Thank you to all who pitched in for this fun Advent Season kick-off!



Happy Birthday!

Kim Garrett 12/8
 Mary Beth Wilson 12/10
 Debbie Arnold 12/11
 Isela Elverman 12/13
 Marge Lopeman 12/19
 Olivia Barios 12/19
 Natalie Elverman 12/22
 Kris Bottlemey 12/24
 Oliver Schaid 12/26
 Glen Walker 12/27
 Travis Garrett 12/28
 Grant Johnson 12/29
 Jim Wilson 12/29

Happy Anniversary!

Debbie & Jeff Arnold 12/5



Our A1C Screening/Diabetes Clinic was postponed in November due to the weather. We have rescheduled this health event for Thursday, December 15, 2022 at the HUMC Fellowship Hall from 2:30 - 6:15 p.m. For those previously registered, you should have received a call regarding this new date. If you haven't yet registered and would like to participate, please call 815-355-5554 to reserve your time slot.



Dear Lord, please hear our prayer for the following...



MaryBeth Wilson, experiencing health problems
April & Paul Lucas' daughter, Ashley, on her
upcoming surgery
Marge O'Halleran diagnosed with cancer
Kris Bottlemey's Aunt Kip
Chela Johnson recovering from a broken wrist
Marge Lopeman, now in assisted living
***Anyone wishing to send a card see next page
Dr. Dan and Denise Staten and Dan's friend,
Victor
Erin Engelhardt's nephew, Jordan, experiencing
health problems
James Hampton and his family members
experiencing health problems
Former Pastor Kay Dillard, diagnosed with lung
cancer
Karen Vipond's nephew, Mark, diagnosed with
cancer
Kris Bottlemey's brother, Jon, experiencing health
problems
Alberta Austin
Gordie & Alice Johnson
Harold & Juanita Bailey and their sister-in-law,
Marilyn, experiencing health problems
Dick & Jeneil Border and their friend, Holly,
diagnosed with cancer
Dave Dickey
Joan O'Halleran
Katelyn Winter Sampson
Pastor Char & Glenn's daughter-in-law, Julie, and
her family, as they deal with the effects of MS
Nora Winn at Fair Oaks Nursing Facility ***
Anyone wishing to send a card see next page for
address
Luke Moore
Our former Pastor Jim & Char
Our former Pastor Paul & Lynn
Dorothy Peterson
Betty Garrett

We pray for all who have suffered as the result of
natural disasters.

We pray for protection and safety for all those
who defend and protect us

We pray for peace between Ukraine and
Russia. Surround those affected by this and all
conflicts with your precious love.

We pray for the victims and families of all who
have been affected by and from violence.

We pray for the return of goodwill and unity
among all people.

We pray for all those affected by illness; and we
pray for the safety of all medical staff and
personnel during the care of all patients.

We pray for our church, the Village of Hebron,
and all leaders - local, state and national; our
church leaders in Hebron, our Prairie Central
District Sup't., our Bishop and the entire UMC.

We pray for the names in our hearts that they will
be kept safe from harm. God bless us all. Amen

*If you wish to have someone added to our Prayer
List please contact Shirlee on our Nurture Team
at (815) 648-5009 or at offcqueen@aol.com.*

*During a mental health crisis, anyone can call
the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
at 1-800-273-8255. Veterans crisis line is 800-
273-7255.*

***Nora Winn
c/o Fair Oak Health Care Ctr.
471 W. Terra Cotta Ave.
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

***Marge Lopeman
c/o Linda Lopeman
2728 SE 52nd Ave., Apt. A
Portland, OR 97206

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS AT 10:30 A.M.

We livestream our Scripture Lesson and Sermon on most Sundays around 11:00 a.m. on Facebook @9811MainStreet

You are warmly invited to join us this Advent Season!



"Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Newborn King"

HUMC Kids Christmas Program

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Saturday, December 24th at 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 25th 10:30 A.M.



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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE