



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

Catch the Spirit!

www.hebronmethodist.org

DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024

The Pastor Ponders...

...What's your favorite Christmas tradition?

Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.
Luke 2: 10-11

I hadn't expected to be sidelined with COVID. After all, between vax, and mask, and all the other precautions, I'd managed to avoid it for almost 4 years. But, when you least expect it ... Fortunately, the symptoms are extremely mild and so I've been able to use this time of quarantine for a wonderful reflection on the coming season of Advent and the celebration of Christmas.

The Hanging of the Greens service is a time of discovering why we have some of the traditions we have. I've finished writing that service for the first Sunday in Advent – December 3. I've also written the scripts for lighting all the Advent candles from now until Christmas Eve. (The special "word" for the 4th Advent candle this year is "Let it be," and I'm seriously reflecting on what a sermon with that theme would look like. When the angel came to Mary and told her what God had in store for her, she replied, "Let it be." What are your thoughts on this?).

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Mark your Calendars

Friday, December 1st 6:00 p.m.
Hebron Holiday Lighting at the Park

Sunday, December 3rd - 1st Sunday in Advent
9:00 a.m. Christmas Program rehearsal
Hanging of the Greens Worship 10:30 a.m.
Light Potluck following service
*Red Bird Mitten Tree will go up for donations

Wednesdays, December 6th, 13th, 20th 7:00 p.m.
Advent Choir Practice/Praise & Worship

Sunday, December 10th - 2nd Sunday in Advent
9:00 a.m. HUMC Kids/Youth Dress Rehearsal
10:30 a.m. *A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem*
Christmas Program during Worship
Cookie Sale after worship

Thursday, December 14th - during school hours
Secret Santa Gift Drop off at A-H Grade School

Sunday, December 17th - 3rd Sunday in Advent
9:00 a.m. Church Council & Church Works
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Sunday, December 24th
9:00 a.m. Church Works
4th Sunday in Advent - Worship 10:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - 7:30 p.m.

Monday, December 25th - Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 31st - Noisy Can Mission

The Pastor Ponders (continued)

I've been researching scripts and the history and traditions surrounding a Las Posadas service for December 17. I think it would be fun to experience a different Christmas tradition and way of telling that part of Jesus' story. I think it is also relevant as daily we are challenged with the current situations of the migrants coming to our country.

While I was growing up, my family's tradition was to attend worship on Christmas Eve, to go home, gather around the tree, and drink cocoa, eat cookies, and open the presents that Santa had dropped off while we were in church. Christmas Day was so busy with events including the larger family and friends that my parents chose to make "our time" Christmas Eve. I was in 3rd grade when I received my very own Bible. My parents decided that it would be really good if, before we opened the presents, I read the story of Jesus' birth from my new Bible. I painstakingly found the book of Luke and started to read. For a young reader, words like Quirinius and Caesar Augustus did not come easily to my tongue, no matter how familiar the story was, and I'm sure it took an interminable amount of time to get through those 20 verses, but to me it was holy time. This was a holy book and I was reading the holy story on my own for the very first time. I was hooked! 60+ years later, I still am hooked on telling that story, whether it be a special worship service, a sermon, or a Christmas Pageant. To me, there is something intriguing, attracting, mysterious, and heart-warming about the story of God sending our Savior to live with us on earth – a story I feel compelled to tell, and to hear, over and over again. (I look forward to hearing it in a "whole new way" on December 10 at our Children's Christmas Program.)

Many Christmases have passed since those early years and many Christmas pageants have been laid (thankfully!) to rest, but there is still something intriguing, attracting, mysterious, and heart-warming about the story of our Savior's birth. I am bringing you good news of great joy ... to you is born this day a Savior, Christ the Lord! Who wouldn't want to receive, and to share, such good news over and over again?

May you receive new joy in hearing, and in telling, the old, old story again this year.

Advent blessings, *Pastor Char*



**Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year!**



Important Dates January

Sunday, January 14th - Human Relations Day

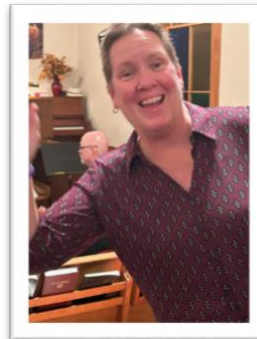
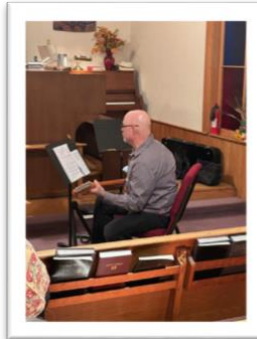
Monday, January 22nd - Zoom meeting with
RMN Leadership (see Stephanie for info)

Sunday, January 28th - RMN Book Club

Our next newsletter will be issued February 1st.



Thank you to Alden UMC for hosting a beautiful community thanksgiving worship service on November 21st for Alden UMC, HUMC, and St. John's Lutheran. What a blessing to come together in worship, song, and prayer in gratitude for all God had given to us and our community. A special thank you also to those who provided the delicious pies, cookies and treats after the service!



Cultivating Health Ministries

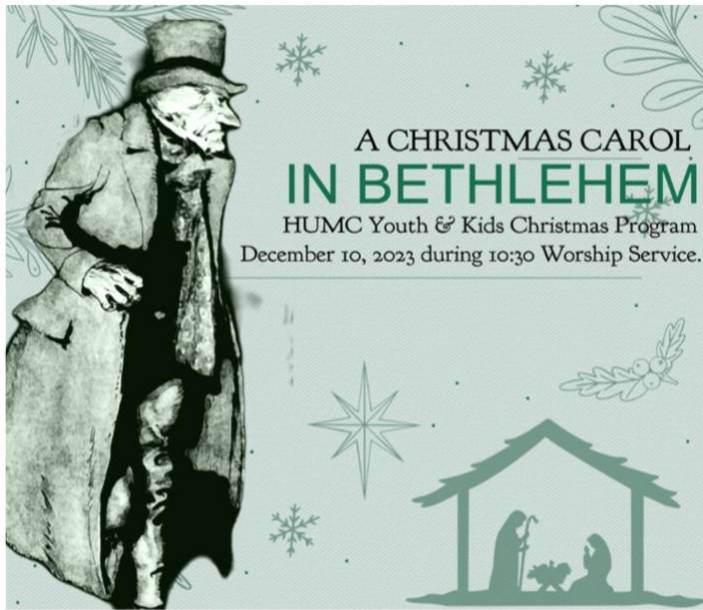
We celebrated the program completion for our Productive Aging *Matter of Balance* course! Congratulations to all our participants! We were so blessed to have Lynda Rohe of the Harvard Senior Center lead us through this fun and meaningful 8-week session on Fall Prevention education and exercises. We will continue Productive Aging again in 2024! Please check back on our website for the next health events coming in the new year!



We were happy to welcome Rev. Jeffry Bross to our church for our 2023 Charge Conference on November 12th. We prayed, sang hymns, completed church business, and we heard Rev. Bross give a message on how we must aim to not only survive, but thrive as a church community. We also watched a video that recapped the 2023 year and all the wonderful ways we have been at work and worship here at HUMC! If you want to check out that video, head to our website www.hebronmethodist.org.



HUMC Youth & Kids



Mark your calendars for Sunday December 10th at 10:30 a.m.

Our HUMC Kids & Youth will be presenting

“A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem”
A Dickens-inspired retelling of the birth of Christ the King

HUMC Youth & Kids will host a cookie sale after worship on December 10th. Proceeds will go to Pets for Vets as part of our “All God’s Creatures” 2023-24 mission program.

Bakers and Buyers are greatly appreciated!



Rehearsal Schedule:

December 3rd at 9:00 a.m. HUMC YOUTH (HUMC Kids optional)

December 10 at 9:00 a.m. HUMC KIDS & YOUTH Dress Rehearsal



Have fun singing with us this season! Choir/Praise & Worship will meet on Wednesdays in the month of December from 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Our Mitten Tree will be up for the first 2 weeks of December. Bring new hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, etc. and hang them on our tree for the Red Bird Mission.



Secret Santa gifts wrapped and marked with Family name/Boy or Girl/Age are due to the A-H grade school by December 14th. We are also gifting popcorn tins to the Secret Santa families. Any donations to go toward popcorn tins are appreciated!



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



Chuck Dexter, Lay Servant Ministry, in final stages of cancer
Alberta Austin; and her son, Donny, experiencing health problems
Erin Englehardt's friend, Dan and his wife Beth, as he deals with the effects of Parkinson's; co-worker, Pat Kerney, diagnosed with esophageal cancer
Marge O'Halleran in recovery from cancer
James Hampton and his family as they make a decision re their mother's well being
Karen Vipond's nephew, Mark, recovering from cancer; John Button, experiencing health problems; Olga Marie, experiencing health problems
Roy Bailey; his Uncle Wayne Bailey recovering from a severe infection and Aunt Regina Bailey
Harold and Juanita Bailey; their daughter in law, Tami who's hospitalized
Dave Dickey experiencing health problems
Joan O'Halleran; and her niece, Heidi, recovering from back surgery; her sister, Shelly Walczak, diagnosed with cancer
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 below
Luke Moore
Our former Pastor Jim & Char and their daughter, MaryBeth
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; and Israel during this trying time of war. Surround those affected by these 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 all children who have been victims of abuse.

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS AT 10:30 A.M
Sunday School during Worship/Confirmation and Youth meet at 9:00 a.m.



Opportunities to Give

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously and worked so hard to support our missions in the month of November! We received monetary donations and supplies for the Hebron Community Food Pantry throughout the month. Thank you! Here are the upcoming ways you can give this month:

- 1) December 10th after Worship - HUMC Kids/Youth Cookie Sale for Pets for Vets
- 2) Red Bird Mission Mitten Tree - donate new hats, scarves, gloves, mittens to Red Bird
- 3) Local Giving - A-H Secret Santa donations for Popcorn Tins
- 4) Local Giving - Hebron Community Food Pantry (baskets in Wesley Room)
- 5) December 31st - Noisy Can Mission for United Voices for Children (bring your coins)

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



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