

# First Things

Issue No. 46

A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

November 22, 2020

## Church-Wide Advent Study Coming

Beginning Sunday evening, November 29, at 7:30 p.m., Rev. Chris Black will lead a four week Advent Study on Rev. Adam Hamilton's book *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*. Chris hopes you will join him each week on Zoom for a great discussion and a time to be in virtual fellowship, study, and prayer together as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Look for the Zoom link to the class on our website ([fumcor.org](http://fumcor.org)) under the virtual chapel tab. We hope to see you there.

### About the book:

"His parents gave him the name Jesus. But the prophets, the shepherds, the wise men, and the angels addressed him by other names. They called him Lord, Messiah, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, and Word Made Flesh. In *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*, Pastor Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers, exploring the historical and personal significance of his birth. Now, more than ever, we invite you to reflect upon the significance of the Christ-child for our lives and world today!"

## Thanksgiving Store-bought Pies

Store-bought pies are needed for the drive-thru Community Meal on Wednesday, November 25. We cannot distribute homemade desserts due to COVID-19. Please bring to the church starting Monday, November 23. Contact the church office (483.4357) if you have questions. Thank you for helping all to find something to feel thankful for.

## Advent-in-a-Box For Our Young Families

What is Advent-in-a-Box? The **Advent-in-a-Box** will contain a calendar and four activities, one for each week of **Advent**. These activities will be low stress for busy families, encourage family connection, and help prepare for Christmas. They can be done in the Zoom Sunday school class or on your own. To reserve yours, email Megan Alden ([malden@fumcor.org](mailto:malden@fumcor.org)) **by November 23**, with the number of kids in your family and their ages.

## Welcome New Members!

We are so very happy to welcome Lorraine and Jamie Wright to our church family. Lorraine and Jamie have been online over the last several months, appreciate our efforts to be in ministry in spite of the pandemic, and wish to be a part of our congregation. Jamie is already participating in our GIFT Sunday school class. Welcome to First UMC!

## Help Create a Christmas Float for the "Reverse" Parade

The Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a "reverse" Christmas parade on Saturday, December 12, 6:00-8:00 p.m. In a "reverse" parade, the floats are stationary, and attendees drive the parade route. Parade floats will line the northbound lane of Lafayette Drive, and spectators will drive on the southbound lane. If you would like to help plan an FUMC float, contact Rev. Mark Flynn ([mflynn@fumcor.org](mailto:mflynn@fumcor.org)).

## A Conversation Over the UMC "Cross and Flame"

The United Methodist Church is having a conversation regarding its "Cross and Flame" logo. Adopted in 1971, the graphical representation was intended to symbolize Christ's sacrifice (Cross) and the Holy Spirit's guiding presence (Flame). Unfortunately, when people who have no affiliation with the denomination are surveyed, many assume the symbol, which they perceive as a burning cross, is associated with the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacy. A racist message, but a growing awareness of those unplanned consequences is causing denominational leaders to discuss how best to move forward.

Rev. Edlen Cowley and the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church have put forth legislation for the 2021 General Conference, calling for the removal and replacement of the Cross and Flame insignia. Many across the denomination see this as a powerful and Christ-like opportunity to reframe our association to an insignia that, however unintentional, communicates hate, racism, and white supremacy.

UMC congregations are not required to use the Cross and Flame logo. Many churches in our Annual Conference use other images already, including some of the largest in our region: Christ UMC, Chattanooga; Cokesbury UMC; Concord UMC; First Centenary UMC; First Farragut UMC; etc. While most of these churches did not change their insignia over an unintended message of racism, changing logos is a common practice.

The GIFT Sunday school class, has submitted a resolution to our Church Council to denounce the unintended ramifications of the "Cross and Flame" logo and to begin the process of selecting a new insignia for First United Methodist Church.

## Thanksgiving and Christmas Shoppes

**Thanksgiving:** Thanks to you and your generous contributions, we're ready for distribution. We pray that these 50 families in need will enjoy having a tasty Thanksgiving meal, some household supplies, and a few basics for their children.

**Christmas:** Thank you for giving us a terrific start on this collection for another 50 families.

**Focus this week:** We still have children to sponsor. Contacts: Nancy Kile ([fnpkile@comcast.net](mailto:fnpkile@comcast.net)) and Vicki Hinkel ([vhinkel@comcast.net](mailto:vhinkel@comcast.net) or 865.482.3931).

We need potholders, dishcloths, and kitchen towel sets.

Please deliver all Christmas items no later than November 30. Check the website ([fumcor.org](http://fumcor.org)) for drop-off details. Again, thank you for making these collections happen. You're helping to make life a little better and easier for 100 local families.

## Hospitalized

Discharged: Margaret Pryor

## Our Gifts

Offering this Week \$40,509  
2020 Year to Date \$1,198,713  
2019 Year to Date \$1,181,808  
Special Monthly Offering \$1,415

## Special Monthly Offering: ADFAC Reaching Out to Our Community in Need

Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties (ADFAC) has been a vital local ecumenical effort, assisting impoverished families since 1987, when FUMC member Kathy Stimpson recognized the need and had the desire and vision to establish the organization. ADFAC serves the broad needs of the low-income community and has been answering more requests than ever during the pandemic. "Whether hours or positions have been cut or reduced or someone in the home has been ill or in quarantine, the result is the same; less income means more difficulty paying regular expenses," said Annie Cachiero, ADFAC's executive director. Please consider donating to help ADFAC help our neighbors in need. Make checks payable to FUMC (memo: ADFAC).

## Pastors

Mark Flynn, lead pastor  
Chris Black, associate pastor  
Jenny Caughman, spiritual care

## Contact Information

865.483.4357  
www.fumcor.org  
Pastor on call: 865.272.9862



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## Recovery Help Is Available this Holiday Season

As we enter this holiday season, those struggling with addiction and substance use disorders need to know that recovery is possible and behavioral health services (like treatment) can enable them to live healthy and rewarding lives. They need to experience the truth that *Jesus heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds* (Psalm 147:3). We, as a church, also want to shed light on the resources available in our community. There are opportunities for recovery assessment, screenings, case management, recovery support, etc.

The Tennessee Dept of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provides Lifeline representatives, who are professionals with lived experience in addiction recovery, to connect individuals and families with resources. In Anderson County, our Lifeline representative is Ashley Crouse of the Metro Drug Coalition, (410.9527, acrouse@metrodrug.org).

You can also contact FUMC member, Caroline Beidler, with the Oak Ridge Addiction Recovery Coalition (608.977.0673, oakridgeaddictionrecovery@gmail.com) to learn more about recovery initiatives in Oak Ridge.

We have all been impacted by the current state of the world, from divisive politics to the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with normal, everyday stressors, many are facing job loss, social isolation, disrupted routines, and stress from working at home (often while overseeing a child's virtual education). Mental health experts are warning us about the negative physical and psychological effects of these stressors.

It is estimated that one in three American families is impacted by addiction (and this was before the pandemic). Addiction rates are only increasing and there has been an unprecedented increase in drug overdose fatalities in our country, including in East Tennessee, since March.

## Rina Cristy Memorial

Daughter-in-law of Stephen and  
Lou Ann Cristy

A family memorial service will be recorded and broadcast on YouTube at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, November 21, from New York. After the live broadcast, a recorded version will be available within 48 hours and be viewable for about a month. In lieu of flowers, please donate to ameliorate the pandemic.

Thank you,  
Sam Cristy

To read the obituary, visit  
matthewfuneralhome.com.

To view the memorial live or later, use these links:

[youtu.be/7jQKsQzd1r4](https://youtu.be/7jQKsQzd1r4)  
[youtu.be/UHYVv2152-c](https://youtu.be/UHYVv2152-c)

## It is With Sad News...

It is with sad news that we announce the death of former organist, Danny Flemming. We found out that Danny passed away early Monday morning, November 16 in his home in Kingsport. He was currently serving as the organist and church administrator at Colonial Heights UMC.