



Group Membership Sunday

Are you interested in joining the church but have been putting it off? Perhaps you feel more comfortable joining with a group rather than joining alone.

If this describes your situation, mark your calendars for the second Sunday in Advent, December 10. We will be having "Group Membership Sunday" in all services. Contact Pastor Denna at dhornby@fumcor.org for more information.

Ugly Sweater Sunday!

Get festive and join us on December 10 in all services that day! The youth ministry is excited to invite you to be a part of our Advent fun by wearing your most outrageous, over-the-top ugly Christmas sweater. Let's bring the joy and laughter of the holiday season to our congregation as we celebrate together. From the whimsical to the tacky, there's no limit to the creativity and fun we can have with our festive attire. Our youth kids are eagerly looking forward to seeing us all decked out in our holiday garb. So, mark your calendars, dust off those ugly sweaters, and let's make this Sunday a memorable event! For more information, feel free to contact Pastor Denna at dhornby@fumcor.org.

Hanging of the Greens Worship Service

Join us for a special worship service on the first Sunday of Advent, December 3. The Hanging of the Greens Worship service allows us to embrace the spirit of Advent, a time of anticipation for the arrival of Christ. This service helps us understand the significance of trees and wreaths and prepares us for the coming of Jesus.

On December 2, Pat Wilson will lead a fun greenery making event for the children and youth. We will create bundles of greenery to hang on the altar rails in preparation for the Hanging of the Greens worship service the following Sunday morning. Children will have the opportunity to participate in the service by carrying in the greenery.

Please RSVP to dhornby@fumcor.org or sfowler@fumcor.org by November 29 if you plan to attend the greenery making event. We will start at 10:00 in the fellowship hall. After creating the greenery, we will celebrate with hot chocolate and treats!

Let's come together to usher in the Advent season.

It's a Wonderful Life

Don't forget to join us on Monday, December 4, at 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for this holiday classic. Our Adult Ministries Committee will provide snacks; you bring the holiday good cheer!

Extra! Extra! First Things Magazine Coming in December

Our congregation has long grappled with a communications dilemma. Often, we have more articles than can fit into our one-page paper newsletter. Adding a second page would accommodate more articles, but it would increase printing and mailing costs and may lead to having too few articles. Thankfully, this issue does not affect our electronic newsletter. We can publish as many or as few articles as we have each week.

Another communication challenge we face is that many people would like their ministry articles to run for multiple weeks. This is a common concern among churches nationwide. However, surveys indicate that when readers see an article for the second time, they tend to think, "I already know this," and move on. If repeated articles become frequent, readers may lose confidence in the publication's timeliness.

It's worth noting that First Church is the only medium to large congregation in the Tennessee Valley District that continues to produce and mail paper newsletters. Our sister churches rely solely on electronic versions, which they email and make available on their websites. However, a few churches create a monthly "magazine" that provides information on upcoming events and programs. The magazine format allows for more photos and feature articles that are often too large for a paper newsletter. These churches make the magazine available on their website and distribute printed copies to the homebound and anyone who visits the building throughout the month.

In September, our Church Council reviewed various communication options and made the following decisions:

- 1) We will continue to provide a weekly electronic newsletter, maintaining our current publication standards.
- 2) We will create a 16-page, monthly color magazine that offers an overview of all activities, services, and programs for the upcoming month.
- 3) This monthly magazine will be available on our website and throughout the church building.
- 4) We will mail or personally deliver copies of the magazine to our homebound members.

To ease the transition to this new communication pattern, the Council voted to continue mailing printed newsletters as we currently do until the end of the year. We will also produce the first edition of our 16-page magazine for December. This gives us a month to find volunteers willing to deliver magazines to our homebound friends. Keep an

Pastoral Acts

We celebrate that on Sunday, November 26, Matthew and Fern Pruss' twin daughters, Margaret Day and Molly Mae were baptized during the 8:45 a.m. service of worship! Big sister Lila was present to support them on this important step in their faith journey.

In the Hospital:

Dick Schreiber (MMC)

Our Giving:

Weekly offering

(Nov. 20-26, 2023):

\$ 14,458.00

2023 YTD offering:

\$ 1,192,642

2022 YTD offering:

\$ 1,200,845

Monthly Mission Special Offering:

\$ 1,390.00

Worship for December 3

First Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Romans 15:1-7

Sermon: See With New Eyes: Hope

8:45 & 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship - Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship - Multipurpose Room

Preaching: Rev. Mark Flynn



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Earn. Save. Give. Campaign Update

The Finance Committee is pleased to announce that our 2024 Earn. Save. Give. financial stewardship campaign has received 192 estimates, or 76% of our 250 estimate goal totaling \$1,017,813, or 84% of our \$1,210,000 goal. We would like to express our gratitude to all who have already turned in their estimates. For those who have not yet returned their estimates, we encourage you to please do so as soon as possible.

Have you made your estimate of giving yet? Visit our website at fumcor.org/give. Questions? Contact Linda Bowen at lbowen@fumcor.org for more information.

Community Assistance Fund Collection

Each time we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion, as we will this Sunday, December 3, worship participants have an opportunity to contribute to our Community Assistance Fund. Our pastoral staff draws on this designated fund to help families in our area who have received a utility cut-off notice. Home heating bills will only increase as the weather cools, forcing families to spend more on utilities. If you have any disposable income and would like to contribute to this worthy cause, please consider making a contribution this Sunday.

Sponsor a Child's Christmas Today!

The sign-up portal for sponsoring children through our Christmas Shoppe is now open and can be found on the front page of our website. Despite the busy week we had last week, we still have over 25 unsponsored children on the list (we added 20 on Monday). If you need assistance with navigating the sign-up portal, our volunteers will be available in the Welcome Center on Sunday morning.

We kindly ask that sponsors spend \$75.00-\$100 per child. However, we gladly accept donations of any amount, and we will handle the shopping for you! Additionally, we welcome donations of socks and underwear in all sizes, stuffed animals, wrapping paper, and full-size personal hygiene items such as shampoo.

Please return all unwrapped gifts and other donations to the Church by Sunday, December 13. Thank you for making a tremendous difference in the lives of so many!

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Our community and congregation are invited to a Service of Lessons and Carols. This joyful service will take place on Sunday, December 3, at 7:00 p.m. in the Nave. We will alternate between traditional Advent scripture readings and congregational carols, along with Christmas music performed by instrumentalists and vocalists.

Pastors Mark Flynn, lead • Jenny Caughman, spiritual care • Denna Hornby, associate