

THE MESSENGER

December 2024

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

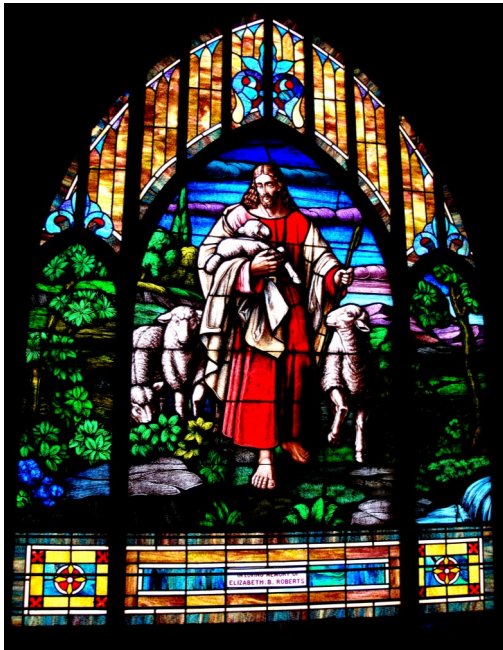
23 N. Seneca Avenue, P.O. Box 579

Newcastle, WY 82701

Office 307-746-4119

REVEREND CALVIN HILL

Our mission statement: *Passion for Christ, Compassion for all.*



PASTOR'S MESSAGE: REFLECTION

Pastor Calvin Hill

In the heart of the Christmas holiday, life does get busy; it feels overwhelming and sometimes disconnected. Yet, Psalm 46:10 encourages us to pause, *“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

Taking a few moments to be still and focus on God's faithfulness can transform our perspective. The time of pausing gives us moments to recognize God's presence and to rest there.

In the busyness of this season, it is easy to become consumed with preparations and plans. Yet, God calls us to pause and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas—the arrival of Jesus our Savior.

Take a moment to breathe deeply and consider the wonder of the nativity. Jesus, born in humble surroundings, came to bring peace to a weary world. His birth is not just an historical event, but it is a living reminder of God's love through Jesus the Son for each of us.

During this Christmas season, I encourage each of you to set aside a few moments each day to reflect on Jesus. Light a candle, read Luke chapter two, maybe read other nativity stories, or offer prayers of gratitude for the hope and salvation Jesus has given. Let His presence fill your heart with joy, just as it did for the innkeeper, shepherds, and wise men long ago.

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

(Continued)

As God's people, let's encourage one another to take time to pause this season. Let's remember Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and we are in need of that peace. Remember, Jesus is the Light of this world. As we pause to engage, may His light shine through us and bless all those we encounter this season.

Take the time to pause, for we know, *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* (Isaiah 9:6) Have a blessed Christmas!



CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY TEA

"The Birth of Jesus"

**Friday, December 6
Mormon Church
11am—1pm**

Finger sandwiches and cookies will be provided by area churches. Everyone is invited to participate in this time of Christian fellowship!

Merry Christmas!

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

The Sunday School classroom has been a busy place, as usual! The kids are memorizing the 23rd Psalm, and they will present it to the congregation in the future. Our kids made cards for the Shoebox project, and they are making cards to accompany the UMW gifts for the Manor and Mondell Heights residents. Currently, the kids are prepping for a Christmas Pageant for the congregation.



Lessons presented in Sunday School included Samson and Delilah, the Widow and Elijah, and revisiting David and Goliath. We have discussed David's roles as the Psalmist and the King of Israel.

Our children and youth continue to learn and grow and serve the church. Several of them have become so reliable ringing the bell and performing the Acolytes' duties that we almost take that participation for granted! Please remember to thank the youth who perform these tasks for our worship service.

We are so fortunate to have Bette Sample lead such a diverse group in a relaxed setting for all!

PHOTO: Sunday School students engage the congregation in a sing-a-long of "This Little Light of Mine."

SHOEBOX PROJECT SUCCESSFUL

Submitted by Phyl Sundstrom

Members of First UMC, Newcastle participated in Operation Christmas Child this year by filling 18 shoeboxes for distribution around the world. On November 18, the shoeboxes and \$180 shipping contribution were delivered to the Gateway Fellowship collection site.

This year people had the option of donating various items to be used for the shoeboxes, as well as actually packing a shoebox. Most chose to donate items such as school supplies, socks and underwear, toothbrushes and toys or games. Two packed shoeboxes were also brought in. Monetary donations of \$130 were used to purchase items for filling 16 shoeboxes. The United Methodist Women contributed to this project by providing the suggested \$10 shipping per shoebox.



Pastor Ron blessed the shoeboxes during the worship service on November 17 so all in the congregation could participate in this global mission project. A big thank you to all who contributed items or funds for the shoeboxes.

UMW HAD BUSY MONTH

Submitted by Chris French

The United Methodist Women (UMW) met on Wednesday, November 6, with thirteen women in attendance. Judi Wackerbarth gave the devotion before the business meeting. At the meeting, members:

- Signed Thanksgiving cards for church members
- Finalized plans for the “Christmas in Wyoming” bazaar
- Decided on what gift to give to Weston County Manor and Mondell Heights residents
- Got volunteers to provide finger sandwiches, cookies, and a centerpiece for the Christmas Tea on Friday, December 6, at the Mormon Church
- Agreed to donate cookies for the Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 8
- Voted to donate \$250 for Kid’s Shopping

All women of the church are invited to our next meeting on Wednesday, December 4, at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

“CHRISTMAS IN WYOMING” BAZAAR REPORT

Submitted by Bazaar Committee

The 2024 “Christmas in Wyoming” bazaar was a wonderful event for our church family and community. A heartfelt “thank you” is extended to the members of our faith community who helped make this a successful event—those who helped with setup/cleanup, those who prepared the delicious soups and pies, those who contributed items to the various booths, those who volunteered their time to work at the bazaar, and those who purchased items and drawing tickets. The United Methodist Women, along with the Bazaar Committee, truly appreciate everyone working together on this event.

BOOTH INCOME:

Sewing	1,110.50
Cards/Dishcloths	271.00
Plants	188.50
Holiday	913.00
Baked Goods	1,478.00
New 2 You	390.00
Lunch	985.50
Silent Auction Baskets	935.00
Drawings	346.00
Total	\$6,617.50

SILENT AUCTION BASKET WINNERS:

Towels by the Month (\$125)	Barb Gould
Pampering Fun (\$80)	Sandy Martin
Teen Talk (\$75)	Sandy Martin
Gifts for the Holidays (\$95)	Sandy Martin
Baking for the Holidays (\$75)	Sandy Martin
G'Day Mate (\$75)	Sandy Martin
Someone's in the Kitchen (\$60)	Sandy Martin
Handcrafted Cards (\$100)	Dana Tysdal
Nativity Picture (\$50)	Laura Oney
Children's Activities (\$100)	Josiah Popma
Let It Snow (\$35)	Anna Logan
It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas (\$65)	Rowan Johnson

DRAWING WINNERS:

Groceries at Decker's: Michele Smith

Groceries at Woody's: Stephanie Cohee

Exercise Bike: Linda Engle

Wooden Cross: Jake Shook



UMW, and the Bazaar Committee Members, extend a special thanks to the youth who helped where needed, served food and drinks, and bussed tables. Your help was very much appreciated!

TRUSTEES KEEP BUSY

Submitted by Carl Sundstom

The Board of Trustees met November 5 with Carl Sundstrom, Lavonne Roberts, Sharon Roness, Melvin Costa, Adam McFarlin, and Reverend Hill in attendance at the meeting. Reverend Hill offered an opening prayer, and Carl offered a motivational thought: "What preps do we need to do for winter?"

The Cross and Flame project is moving along. Reverend Hill reported that he is prepping the Cross and Flame for painting. Carl estimated the materials cost to replace the doors at \$350. Carl will pick up the approved siding as soon as it is available because it appears to be difficult to acquire.

It was reported that the sprinkler system was winterized October 21. We have been blessed with just enough precipitation to keep the grass looking good since then!

A sample of the lighting for the cross has been received and will be set up for the Trustees approval.

Sharon updated the committee on upgrades to the audio/video system. She has made progress with the technology to install digital monitors in place of the projector.

The Trustees have decided to use the most recent Supplemental Giving funds to retrofit the most frequently used fluorescent lights with LED's. The Parlor and Kitchen will be the first rooms done. The Trustees will investigate a grant to help facilitate this project.

A lever type doorknob will be installed on the handicapped access restroom to meet ADA recommendations,

Disposal of some surplus church property was discussed.

The committee was briefed on the People Portal project currently being developed by the conference for streamlining the reporting procedures. The conference has not yet set up the People Portal for the Trustees.

The Trustees voted to replace all the toilets in the church with new ones. The consensus of the Trustees was to reimburse Adam when the total amount is known. Adam McFarlin has completed the work.

The Trustees have rescheduled a workday for cleaning and sorting the workroom to one of the last two Saturdays in January with the date to be finalized at the December meeting. A previously scheduled workday for this purpose was spent on outside projects because the weather was perfect for those activities.

The Trustees will meet on December 3 in the church parlor at 6pm.



POINSETTIA SUNDAY

December 22

Submitted by JoAnn Fassbender

The church will be decorated with poinsettias during Advent. If anyone would like to designate one of the artificial poinsettias in memory or in honor of family members and friends, please call the church office at 746-4119 to have the names listed on an insert in the Sunday bulletin for Poinsettia Sunday, December 22.

A donation is made for the person/ persons being honored. Checks are payable to FUMC with the word "flowers" in the memo line. Donations are used to help maintain the church yard.



VETERANS HONORED



On Sunday, November 10, Veterans Homer Hastings, Carl Sundstrom, Marge Ruff, and Glenn Zerbst were honored for their military service.

Merry Christmas

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

December 24th, 7 pm
First United Methodist Church

COME & JOIN US!

We Invite you to celebrate the most beautiful time of the year with us! Come and enjoy good music and christmas ambiance and make this christmas unforgettable!

For unto us
a savior
is born

23 N SENECA, NEWCASTLE
WWW.FUMCNEWCASTLE.COM

SPECIAL OFFERING

The Finance Committee thanks everyone who donated generously to the weekly special offering in November, which was designated for the local Ministerial Association. A total of \$343 was collected for this special offering.

For December, the weekly special offering is designated for pastor and staff gifts.

Everyone is encouraged to show appreciation for our pastors and church staff by giving generously to this special offering.

Merry
Christmas



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 1: Advent Begins
- 3: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am
Church Parlor
- 3: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 4: Gigi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 4: UMW Meeting, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 6: Christmas Community Tea, 11am-1pm
Mormon Church
- 8: Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30am
Church Parlor
- 8: Christmas Cantata & Bell Choirs, 2pm
Crouch Auditorium
- 10: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am
Church Parlor
- 11: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 14: Kid's Shopping, 9am-1pm
Senior Center
- 17: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am
Church Parlor
- 18: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 22: Poinsettia Sunday
- 22: Sunday School Christmas Pageant
during Church Service
- 24: Christmas Eve Service, 7pm
- 25: Christmas Day
- 25-
31: Office Closed
- 31: New Year's Eve

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES*

- 2: Barb Riggs
Elaine Wilcomb
- 7: Connie Hyatt
- 11: Geoff Knight
- 13: Paul Sharpes
- 14: *Rod and Betty Petranek
Marina McIlvain
- 18: Joan Borgialli
Kara Lenardson
- 19: Tyler Bartlett
Gary Clarke
- 20: Ayonna Hunter
Tracy Ragland
- 23: Glenn Zerbst
- 24: Mike Johnson
*Paul and Amanda Sharpes
- 25: Brenda Clarke
Aurora Hunter
- 26: *Tim and Pam Bertsch
- 28: Julie Day-Sharpes

CHURCH INFO

Office Hours:
8am-noon M-TH

Pastor Calvin Hill:
406-845-8135
rev.chill.dine@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:
Audrey Knight
307-746-4119
fumc@fumcnewcastle.com
admin@fumcnewcastle.com

Web: www.fumcnewcastle.com

Facebook: @FUMCNewcastleWY

Radio: Sunday Service at 10am on KASL

