

Weekly Newsletter

DECEMBER 21, 2023



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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

"Let the little children come!" Luke 18:16

My mother used to tell the story of her family lighting the candles on their Christmas tree on Christmas Eve when she was young, and then journeying down the road to little white church in their rural community to a simple, candlelight service of prayers and praise. (you all are still thinking about those unsupervised burning candles on their tree, aren't you? That's not what this is about, so stay with me.)

The story of Jesus' birth has been celebrated with great pomp and circumstance, gold and glitter. It has also been celebrated in simplicity with a burning candle and a sung prayer. Celebrating God's greatest gift to us of the Christ Child can take many forms, but what is important is that we make room in our busy schedules to stop, remember, and savor the gift. And to teach our children.

If we do not, can we trust social media to teach them about the sacred beauty and sacrifice of God coming to earth as a precious child, Emmanuel, God with us? During the commercial season of Christmas, much of what I see all around me has little to do with the real reason for the season. As people of faith, we need to be explicit and intentional about sharing the story of Jesus with our children.

This year, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve falls on Sundays. We invite you to please come to Jesus.

12/21	Early Christmas Worship	7:30pm	<i>Led by our Mountain Service Band, this service gives folks a chance to gather with their church if they are unable to come on Christmas Eve.</i>
12/24	Christmas Eve Family Service	10:30am	<i>Led by our children and the Mountain Service Band. Includes Holy Communion.</i>
	Christmas Eve Traditional Service	7:30pm	<i>Scriptures and Carols, candlelight, a message and Holy Communion.</i>
12/31	New Year's Eve Cafe	10:30am	<i>Casual worship with message and music in Fellowship Hall. Bring treats to share.</i>

Bring your children to experience the wonder, beauty, and joy of God's Greatest Gift.

Grace & Peace +
PASTOR SHARON



PRAYER CONCERNS

Please Pray For

Margo Petracek, Louis Stuart (Seira Stuart's grandfather); Ayanna & Zechariah (Carolyn Redmore); Randy Turman (Lettie Morse); holiday travelers; and world peace.

Baby It's Going to be Cold Out There!



The weather has been unusually mild recently, but we know the chill of winter is coming. We are collecting clean gently used coats of all sizes for distribution to those in need by our friends

at InExcelsis, to those living on the streets.

Place your contribution in the bin at the Elevator Foyer Door. Can you share the the gift of warmth this winter?





PICTURES OF

Baptism



Emma Ballam
with Family



***The Leslie Family lit
our fourth candle of
the Advent Wreath,
the light of Love.
O Come, O Come,
Emmanuel***

***Picture of the
Chancel Choir
performing the
Christmas Cantata
on December 17.***

