THE CLARION

KENNEWICK 1ST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CORNER OF DAYTON ST AND KENNEWICK AVENUE, KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON



Christmas Eve Services

Please join our celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, during worship services on Christmas Eve!

At 10 AM on Sunday, December 24, we will rejoice together with a Christmas Carol Worship.

Our 4 PM service will be family-oriented featuring a Time with Young Disciples. Childcare will also be provided.

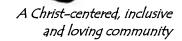
We will also offer a service at 7 PM. Come worship with us!

Luke 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.



Sunday School will not meet on December 24 and 31.





Kennewick First [Inited

Methodist
Church

2023

Carols by Candlelight

December 14 at 6 PM in the sanctuary



Come enjoy a musical celebration of the season of Christmas, with carols, hymns, and festive favorites performed by our many talented musicians, including our youth praise band! All are welcome – invite your friends!!





Children's Gingerbread House Building EXTRAVAGANZA!

Sunday, December 17, at 9 AM in Wesleyan Hall

Each child will get to assemble their own Christmas Cottage made from pop tarts, frosting and candy!!

Please bring a bag of candy to share with your friends!

All other supplies provided

(For children 5th grade and younger)



Ladies,

Our Women's Scripture Study continues to meet on Wednesday evenings

from 6 to 7 PM for a time of devotion, scripture, and prayer. This is a casual dropin gathering so feel free to come when you can.

We know everyone will be busy preparing for the upcoming holiday, and so we will meet on just two Wednesdays in December:

December 6
December 13—feel free to bring cookies to share if you wish.

If you have any questions, please contact Cynthia or Peggy.

Holly Daze Encore

Sunday, December 3

If you missed Holly Daze in
October or just want to pick up more
delicious baked goods, beautiful Christmas
decorations, or gifts, you'll have another
chance on December 3! Stop by the
Susanna Wesley room following the
10 AM worship service to see the variety of
goods available.

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A special thank you to the sweet Elves in our midst! I really appreciate those of you who baked cookies for, assembled, and deliv-

ered the Advent goodie bags to our church friends who may be less mobile. Such a fun time together! - *Cynthia*

KFUMC Single Senior Support Group



No Single Senior Coffee for December and January...leaning on the side of caution for road and sidewalk conditions!



Holiday Parade

The Downtown Kennewick Holiday Parade is Saturday, December 2, at 10 AM.

Kennewick First's bus will be

in the parade and we will also have some awesome families walking along and handing out candies. Bundle up, grab a seat on the parade route, and come cheer them on!



Jr. High Rock-a-Thon

Just a heads up! The Jr. High Rock-a-Thon is on January 13 and 14. The Jr. Highers will

start making their Rock-a-Thon calls at the end of December/beginning of January to ask for donations for the Jr. High youth program.



UMY Thanks You!

Thank you for supporting the UMY programs by



purchasing Butter Braids and Advent calendars! We appreciate your support in all of our fundraising efforts to help minimize program and trip costs. A special shout out to Jane Hunt who offered to sell Advent calendars out and about and at church one Sunday morning . . . Thank you, Jane!



Holly Daze by Golly. The members of UWF are jolly.

And they have several reasons to be so.

The encore to their terrific fall bazaar will be Sunday, December 3, after church services.

Co-chairs Susan Sandmeier and Darryl Vaughn ask that the wonderful bakers in our congregation bring in cookies and other treats on Saturday, December 2, between 9 AM and 1 PM.

Bags of the famous Pepiot Bean Soup will be available for holiday giving, along with great crafts.

The second reason for UWF to celebrate is their Christmas meeting Wednesday, December 13, at 10 AM in the Susanna Wesley Room. All women of the church and their friends are invited to share in the fun Christmas program led by Sherry Arnold.

In addition, UWF officers for 2024 will be installed. They are president, Kathy Wertman; secretary, Phyllis Koschik; treasurer, Kathy Harris; spiritual growth, Su Mayfield and Jennifer Davon; membership and outreach, Cheri Baker; education and interpretation, Micki Perry; social action, Lori Butler; program resources, Pat Walker; and sunshine/correspondent, Bonnie Taylor.

These board members will provide holiday treats, and the sharing gift will be the pastor's discretionary fund. Also, cans of beans – any kind – will be collected for the food bank.

To complete the December schedule, Joy Fellowship will meet at 7 PM Thursday, the 14th, at the home of Jane Foreman. The chair, Debie Britton, requests that those who can car pool do so, as parking is limited. If the weather is threatening, she also asks that you contact her or Dorothy Block to see if the get-together is cancelled.

By taking part in our UWF activities, women of our church assure that many compassionate services are supported, including missionaries, orphans in Africa, Grace Clinic, My Friend's Place, Second Harvest, Chaplaincy Heath Care, Tri-Cities Union Gospel Shelters, our church youth activities, Piecemakers, and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.



Church Book Club Announces Choice



Darryl Vaughn will host the new UWF Book Club at her home for a noon lunch Friday, December 15.

The book to be discussed is "Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants" by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

All are welcome, but let Darryl know you may attend so she can prepare for the special get together.

"Braiding Sweetgrass" offers insights into the relationship between humans and the Earth at this time of growing concerns about climate change, deforestation, and the depletion of our natural resources.



Letters from Santa

By Cynthia Bement

Each December when we were small children, my brother, sister, and I received letters from Santa. The "REAL" Santa from the North Pole. You can always tell it's from the real one, because of the postmark and return address . . . 101 St. Nicholas Dr., North Pole, Alaska 99705. Yup, that's his address! Santa knew our names and whether we had been naughty or nice...and thankfully, we were always on the "nice" list (which meant that, unlike God, Santa may not have received all the information needed to make that judgment call . . . for which I was always thankful). Receiving a letter from Santa was special. Not many of my friends received one. As I grew

older and the mystery unfolded, the letters ended, but the memory always held a special place in my heart. When I became a mother . . . the letters began to arrive for my children, and they too loved receiving them and enjoyed the reminder of how "nice" they had been! And again, the letters became treasures that were saved and reread many times, until Brian and Joc, too, grew older and the mystery for them was revealed and the letters no longer came. And now I am a grandmother (Yaya to my granddaughters) and it is their turn to receive letters from Santa! Oh, the joy in seeing their faces light up upon reading their names on the "nice" list! Three generations have known the joy of being remembered, receiving confirmation of their "niceness".

I will always be thankful for those in my family who put the effort in to help me "believe", not just in the make-believe part of Christmas, but also in the "real" mystery of Christmas, the Birth of the Savior of the world. Christmas in our family begins with attending Christmas Eve service and hearing the truth found in the scriptures, lighting candles, and singing "Joy to the World". I love being a part of a community where we encourage each other to read in the Bible how much we are loved and valued by God. Instead of a man in a red suit writing a letter to us, we place our trust in the red letters found in the Bible that were spoken by a man in humble attire. It may seem silly, but Santa may have helped me to believe in Jesus. There is so much joy in celebrating the mystery surrounding the birth of Jesus and what that birth means to each of us personally. How beautiful to read the scriptures and be reminded of how loved we are by the same one who sent His Son into the world for us to have life ever after. All we must do is to read the red letters. The words remind us our names are not just on a "nice" list, but are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. We are loved and valued; all we must do is to "Believe" and the "gift" is delivered, not to our mailbox or door, but to our hearts.

ADVENT MEANINGS

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.

Message from your Lay Leader

God says, "I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you". (Isaiah 46:4)

The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!". He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. (Luke 8:24)

Cory and I recently vacationed in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Arriving on Sunday, the ocean waves were bigger and closer to shore than we remembered from many other prior trips to Cabo. One staff member told us a storm was coming, maybe on Wednesday. Well, on Wednesday the waves were getting worse, so I checked the weather radar website and saw that Hurricane Norma was heading right for us! Nobody said that a hurricane was coming! My former self would have started to panic and worry, probably thinking of leaving and returning home to safety, but we had only just arrived. Now that my faith is so strong, I knew that we would be just fine. We actually looked forward to experiencing our first hurricane.

Each morning we woke to bigger waves and more wind and rain. The resort notified us that the hurricane was going to make landfall in Cabo by Friday afternoon, and that the airport was going to be closed for three days. In walking around the resort that morning, we noticed several families hectically preparing to leave before the airport closed, hoping to catch a flight out Thursday. We sat on our 6th floor balcony and eagerly watched the activity below us.

Staff members were preparing the resort for the hurricane. Since hurricane season is June through November, the staff is very familiar with the procedures, as each year they deal with at least one hurricane. Since they were so calm and unhurried, we did not worry about the upcoming storm. We marveled at their efficiency. By the end of Thursday, all pool chairs, tables, cushions, and umbrellas were stored safely away. The pool bars and outdoor restaurants were emptied and closed. Most of the exterior doors were all boarded up, save the main one to let staff and guests in until that night.

After a good night's sleep, we woke up Friday to the storm. The skies were dark gray, and the wind and rain were quite heavy. The resort notified us that the restaurants with indoor areas were open, but all outdoor areas and activities were closed. The resort posted messages throughout the day on what to expect and advised guests to stay in their rooms or the indoor public areas. We were assured that, although the resort was short-staffed due to the storm, someone would be available anytime if we needed anything. We felt well taken care of.

What we didn't realize was that many roads would be closed. By the end of Friday, food and beverage supplies were already dwindling, as no deliveries could be made. We were greatly impressed with the staffs' resourcefulness in creating palatable buffet meals with what they had available. They all remained upbeat and continued to provide excellent service. Other than dinners, we stayed safely in the comfort of our room, watching the storm through our balcony glass sliding doors. Sometimes, we did venture out onto balcony to feel the force of the storm. Saturday, the storm was fierce.

Sunday, we awoke to a minor storm, and the airport re-opened by noon. By the time we had to check out at 1 PM to move to our next resort, the staff had most of the resort all put back together, with much of the storm debris cleanup well underway. We survived our first, and hopefully last, hurricane! We felt God with us the entire time.



John Harden	1-Dec
Wyatt York	1-Dec
Angelica Amegashie	1-Dec
Margaret Beesley	2-Dec
James Marquardt	7-Dec
Noelia Haberling	7-Dec
Valiant Alderson	9-Dec
Betty Baumann	10-Dec
Annika Noel Tenney	11-Dec
Audrey Manley	12-Dec
Holli Simmellink	13-Dec
Erica Ewing	13-Dec
Ty Haberling	14-Dec
Thomas Yount	14-Dec
Joseph Buchholz	14-Dec
Carol Kerkow	15-Dec
Sean Holloway	17-Dec
Robert Kuch	18-Dec
Claressa Elvik	18-Dec
Ron Baker	23-Dec
Kathleen Bryson	23-Dec
Mike Thien	23-Dec
Claire Phillips	26-Dec
Marie Duncan	29-Dec



Pete Baumann	4-Jan
Karen Alley	5-Jan
Deana Harden	5-Jan
Marilyn Hockaday	6-Jan
Dick Nelson	6-Jan



"A birthday is a time to count our blessings."

– Leroy Brownlow



Please pray for those in need of healing, comfort, and encouragement and for those who

are grieving the passing of loved ones . . .

Aggie Mowry, Lloyd Leathers, Dorothy Lyle, Larry and Karen Barcot, Eddie Kenoyer, Tim Anderson, Jaime Hildman, Joyce Norman, Ron Baker, Diana Sundvik, Rita McElroy, Joan Osborne, Jennifer Bateman, Buddy Fish, Peggy Snyder, Etta Ballard, Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, and our District Superintendent, Rev. Daniel Miranda.

During November, we said "goodbye for now" to three dear saints who graced us with their love and service for many, many years. We have been blessed to have known them and thank God for the witness of their faithful lives.

Kara Morris passed peacefully on November 8, surrounded by her family. She was preceded in death by her husband, Hollis.

Dean Mitchell also died peacefully on November 8, with his family at his side. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Helen.

Pat Phillips entered into life everlasting on November 11. As with our other muchloved saints, her family was with her.



Claressa and Brandon Elvik welcomed baby Elizabeth Rain on Friday, November 17. Elizabeth joins big

brother, Anakin. Congratulations to this wonderful little family!

Kayla Sue and Jake Ebberts are thrilled to welcome baby **Cameron Jett**, who was born on November 13. The family is living in Bitburg, Germany, where Jake is currently stationed. We celebrate with them and ask for prayers as Cameron is experiencing some health challenges.

Our God of Hope

Near the end of a long bout with cancer, Washington Post columnist Michael Gerson realized that hope for recovery wasn't credible. The year before he died, he wrote a Christmas message from "the antiseptic wonderland of the holiday hospital ward," asking, "What sustains hope when there is scant reason for it?"

The answer, Gerson said, is found in our "God of hope," who became vulnerable, "cloaked in blood and bone and destined for human suffering." Rather than fulfill our deepest earthly wishes, God offers eternal security: "He promises a transformation of the heart in which we release the burden of our desires, and live in expectation of God's unfolding purposes, until all his mercies stand revealed."

That hope-filled message echoes Gerson's 2012 Christmas column, written in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook shooting. "The point of Christmas is not a sentimental optimism about the human condition or even a teaching about the will of God," he wrote. "It is an assertion that God came to our

rescue, and holds our hand, and becomes, at the worst moments, our brokenhearted brother. It is preposterous, unless it is true. And then it would be everything."



Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

-2 Corinthians 9:15



Articles for the January 2024 Clarion will be due **December 20.** Thank you for your timely submissions!

Kennewick 1st United Methodist Church

2 South Dayton Office: 421 W. Kennewick Avenue Kennewick, Washington 99336 (509) 582-2163

Sunday Morning Schedule

Nursery Provided Children and Youth Sunday School at 9 AM Chapel Worship at 9 AM Sanctuary Worship at 10 AM

Church Office Hours

Monday—Thursday 8 AM to Noon and 1 to 4 PM Friday—8 AM to Noon

www.kennewickfirst.com facebook.com/KennewickFirstUMC



UMY December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						2 Downtown Kennewick Holiday Paradecome down and join us! Meet at the church at 9:30 am
3 Sunday School at 9 am Praise Band 2:30-4:00 Holiday Progressive Dinner 4-7:00 pm	DINNER	5	6	7	8	9
Praise Band 3-4:00 Laser Tag 4:00-6 pm \$10 first UMY'er—\$5 each additional sibling.	11	12		I4 Praise Band 5 pm Carols by Candlelight 6 pm Come hear the youth praise team!	15	16
17 Sunday School at 9 am Jr UMY Rock-a-Thon parent & youth meeting 4:30— packets to be given out!	18	19		21	22	23
Christmas Party & Dinner 5-7 pm bring- \$10 gift to exchangeno candy! Wear an "ugly" Christmas sweater	4444					
24 No Sunday School Christmas Eve Services 10 am Family Candlelight at 4:00 pm Candlelight at 7:00 pm	25 Movy Christmas	26	27	28	unto US a is BORN	hild
31 No Sunday School Worship at 10:00 am					us a	YON is GIVEN