

# THE HERALD

Listening to God's Heart from the heart of the city.

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The date is November 14, 2023, and as I sat inside my office, I was able to glance outside and take in the most perfectly blue sky. I reached for my phone and checked the outside temperature, and it was 60 degrees. I peeked at my wall calendar and realized that this weekend the church will be deeply involved with the Hanging of the Greens celebrations. Then a few short days later it will be time to strap on the feed bag and dive into Thanksgiving. Where has the time gone?

Soon, we all will be busy rushing from one event to the next. Our free time will be occupied with shopping for the perfect gifts. Then in a very short time we all will be afforded the opportunity to remember and celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The season of Advent is commonly known as a time of preparations. We have prepared our Sanctuary. Many have rushed and decorated our homes.

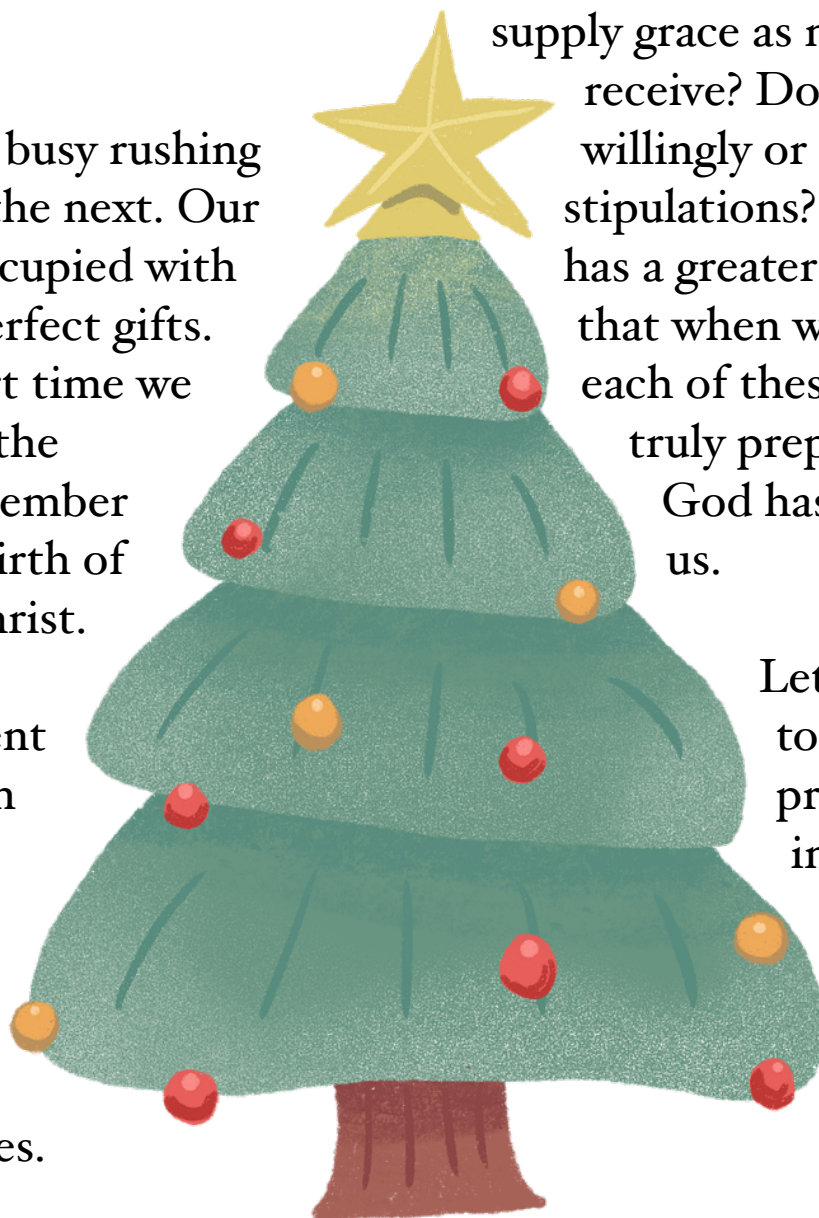
And yes, the busyness of the season is as hectic as a five-year-old, after drinking several cups of heavily caffeinated coffee. My question is this, are we truly inwardly prepared to celebrate the birth of the Messiah?

Our preparations are not called for shopping for the perfect gifts or rushing from as many numerous events we can in a few weeks' time. Our preparations must include pondering self-evaluations. Have I been willing to supply grace as much as I am to receive? Do I provide forgiveness willingly or does it come with stipulations? Do I accept that God has a greater plan for my life? I feel that when we can honestly answer each of these questions we are truly prepared to receive what God has in store for each of us.

Let us prepare our hearts to receive all that God is providing for the faithful in 2024.

Peace and Grace,

- Pastor Terry



## NOW

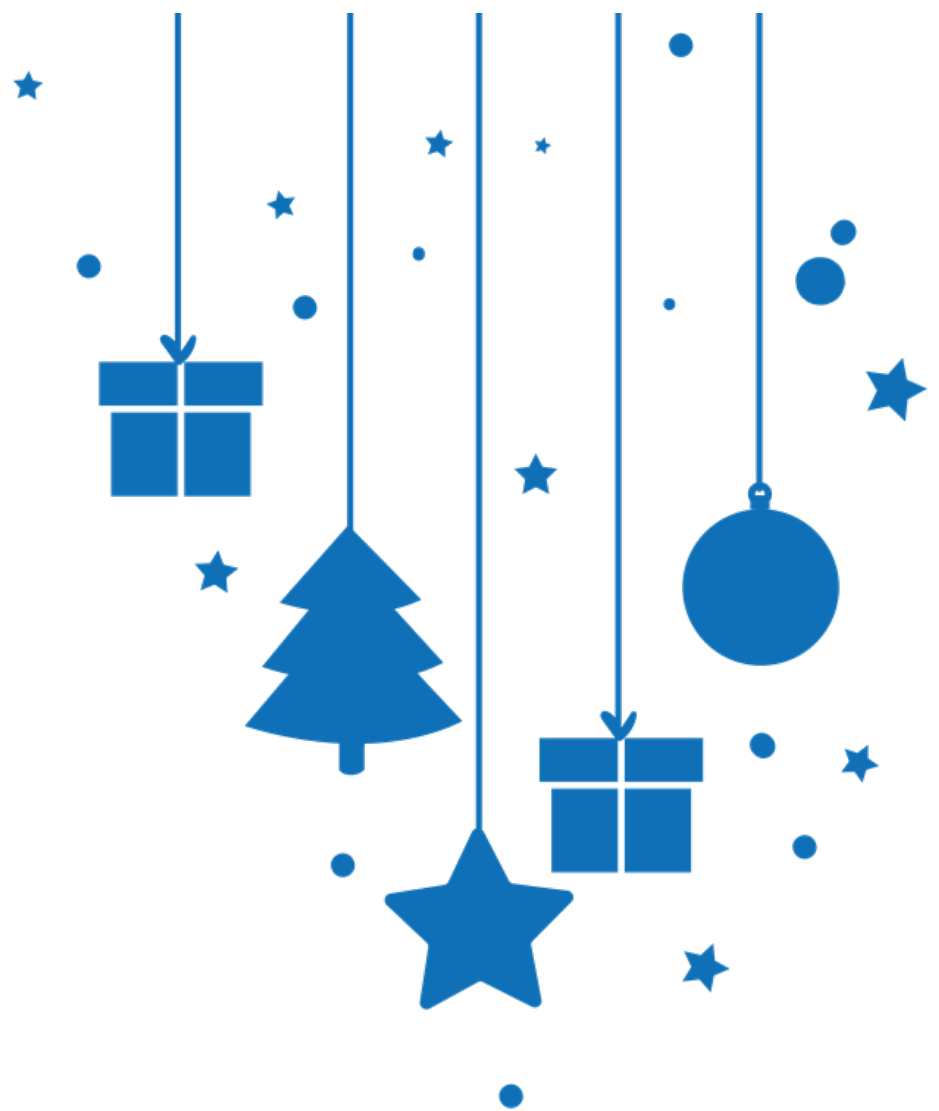
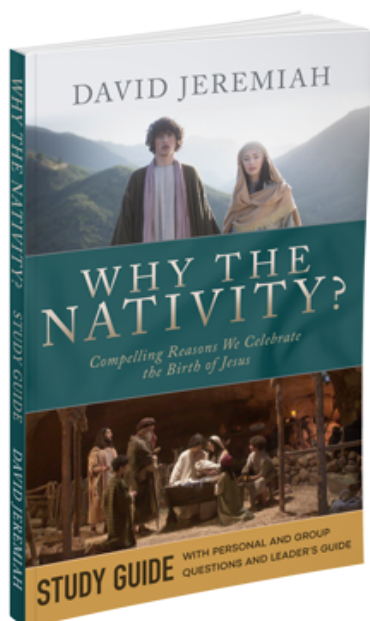
The NOW Christmas bags are now available to pick up. They need to be returned Friday, December 15th. Each string bag will have a label attached to it with gender and age of a student, there will also be a list of suggested items. Everyone deserves a Merry Christmas so please help make one for our NOW students!

### Christian Book Exchange

In our culture today, it is common for people to forget the true meaning of Christmas - and its significance. The celebration of Christmas is much bigger than a secularized holiday. Christmas is about God's plan of salvation, which He set in motion before time began.

In *Why the Nativity?*, we will discover how the most minute details of Christ's coming were foretold in Old Testament prophecies. We will see that from the Davidic lineage of Jesus and His Virgin birth, to the worship by angelic hosts, common shepherds and wise men, that God was pointing us to the birth of the Messiah.

Join Dr. Jeremiah now as we explore this intricate and beautiful story of just how and why God sent Jesus to be born as a child. You will come away seeing that it was for the redemption of man and for the submission of sin, and that it was all for the glory of God.



### Laundry Day

The Outreach Committee is still collecting quarters for the upcoming laundry day on Tuesday, December 5th. We will be putting bags together on Sunday, December 3rd. Just drop those quarters in the jar at the welcome desk in the Narthex to help provide loads of love to our community.

### FUMC Shirts

We are ordering Robinson FUMC shirts! The t-shirts are \$14 and the sweatshirts are \$21.

If you would like them, fill out the form on the next page and bring it to the church. There are also order forms in the office or at the welcome center. **Orders are due December 10th.** Money is due when you drop off the form. You can pay by cash or check. Checks payable to Jasco.

# First United Methodist Order Form

Item	YM	YL	YXL	AS	AM	AL	AXL	A2XL	A3XL	A4XL
Gildan Softstyle Tshirt \$14.00										
Gildan Hooded Sweatshirt \$21.00										



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# This Holiday Season, Offer the Gift of Remembering to Those Who Are Grieving

by Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D.



**W**ith the holidays quickly approaching, a season that's normally a time for celebration may have a more somber tone for some—particularly those who have lost loved ones in the past year or so. Someone who would have been there to share the Thanksgiving meal, help hang the Christmas lights, or ring in the New Year is gone, with each event a reminder of their absence. The painful feelings that come as a result, especially when it seems everyone else is celebrating, can make the holidays a very difficult time.

In addition to all this, people often avoid those who are grieving, uncertain what to say or do. But there's a simple, powerful way anyone can offer care: giving the gift of remembering the grieving person's loved one with them.

## Say the Loved One's Name

The gift of remembering begins with being willing to say the loved one's name.

One of the most common misconceptions about grief is that talking about a person's loss or saying the name of the deceased will only cause more pain. But the reality is just the opposite—people *want* to talk about the loved one they've lost. During the research for my book *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart*, people I spoke with expressed that

sentiment almost universally. One shared, "Mentioning my wife's name after she died was so hard for some people. It was almost as if she never existed. But I want them to remember her."

That's why it's important to say the loved one's name. Doing so acknowledges the loss and communicates that you're safe to talk to, that you won't shy away or abandon them because of their grief. In other words, it lets the grieving person know that you're with them in their grief and invites them to talk about what they're going through.

You don't have to say a lot. Some brief, compassionate words are often enough—for example, "The holidays must be hard for you without [name]" or "I remember the time when [name] . . ."



*"Mentioning my wife's name after she died was so hard for some people. It was almost as if she never existed. But I want them to remember her."*

So, don't be afraid to mention the name of the deceased loved one, because saying



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their name opens the door to the gift of remembering.

### Listening to and Sharing Memories

Once you've opened the door to remembering, be ready to listen to the grieving person's memories. Sharing memories is a way for them to express their love for the deceased, feel closer to their lost loved one, and experience comfort.

Although a grieving person can certainly reflect and remember on their own, there's something special about sharing memories with someone who will listen and care. Whether they're sharing happy memories, sad stories about the deceased's final days, funny anecdotes, or somber reflections, your being there to listen sends a clear message: *You are not alone.*

Each conversation is different. Some people may want to talk and talk, while others may be eager to hear *your* recollections about their loved one. It varies by individual, so follow the other person's lead. Stay focused on their needs, and you'll be on the right track to providing meaningful care.

### Embracing Every Emotion

One reason people often hesitate to bring up someone's loss is because they're worried about how the grieving person might respond. Memories of a loved one may bring strong emotions—anger, sadness, loneliness, regret—as well as the tears that often come with such feelings. It can be uncomfortable to encounter these strong feelings because we don't know what to say or do.

But here's a secret: Usually, the best response is simply to listen and embrace whatever emotions might come. You don't have to say exactly the right thing; in fact, trying to find the perfect words often leads to clichés, platitudes, or other unhelpful responses. In contrast, listening to, accepting, and validating a grieving person's emotions brings comfort.

Of course, it isn't always easy to listen as someone cries, expresses anger, or shares how lonely they feel. But when you set aside your discomfort and focus on being present with the other person, you'll be providing exactly the kind of care they need.

### Making the Holidays a Little Easier

Grief has no expiration date. Whether it's been a year, two years, or longer since someone lost a loved one, consider offering the gift of remembering to them, too. No matter how long it's been, listening and reminiscing together is a wonderful way to bring comfort, deepen relationships, offer care, and bring Christ's healing love to those who are hurting during the holidays.

Doing that can make a difficult holiday season a little easier.

Kenneth C. Haugk is the founder and Executive Director of Stephen Ministries, an international Christian educational organization based in St. Louis, Missouri. A pastor and clinical psychologist, Dr. Haugk has authored numerous books on caregiving topics, including *Journeying through Grief* and *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart*. To learn more about Stephen Ministries, visit [stephenministries.org](http://stephenministries.org) or call (314) 428-2600.



## December Birthdays

- 12/5 Joy Anderson, Sherri Murrell  
12/7 Tyler Devonshire  
12/9 Sandra Hale  
12/11 Stacie McMillan; Bailey Knight  
12/13 Nick Ippolito  
12/15 Jim Wallace  
12/16 Grant Oxford, Katie Odom,  
Mary Etta Whitmer, Andrew Hays  
12/18 Julia Albin  
12/19 Bonnie Wright  
12/23 Nita Bradbury  
12/24 Ken Mattsey  
12/25 Susan Inboden, Greg Harbison  
12/26 Suzanne Wallace  
12/28 Kay Albin, Nancy McCracken,  
Kristy Veenstra  
12/29 Lois Ulrey  
12/30 Kirtina Carter, Elliott Veenstra,  
Alex Lornes  
12/31 Rita Diel

## December Anniversaries

- 12/13 Phil & Marnie Inboden  
12/18 Jon & Joy Anderson  
12/22 Don & Alice Taylor,  
Tom & Pam Cooper  
12/23 Dave & Sharon Freeland  
Amy & Mark DeDoming  
12/28 Mike & Mary Jane Parker

## Blast from the Past

Hello Friends! As the year winds down, so does my blasts from the past. I'm down to my last postcard, so for the month of December, we'll finish with a different view of the church building. I hope you've found these as interesting as I have.

-Robert Quick

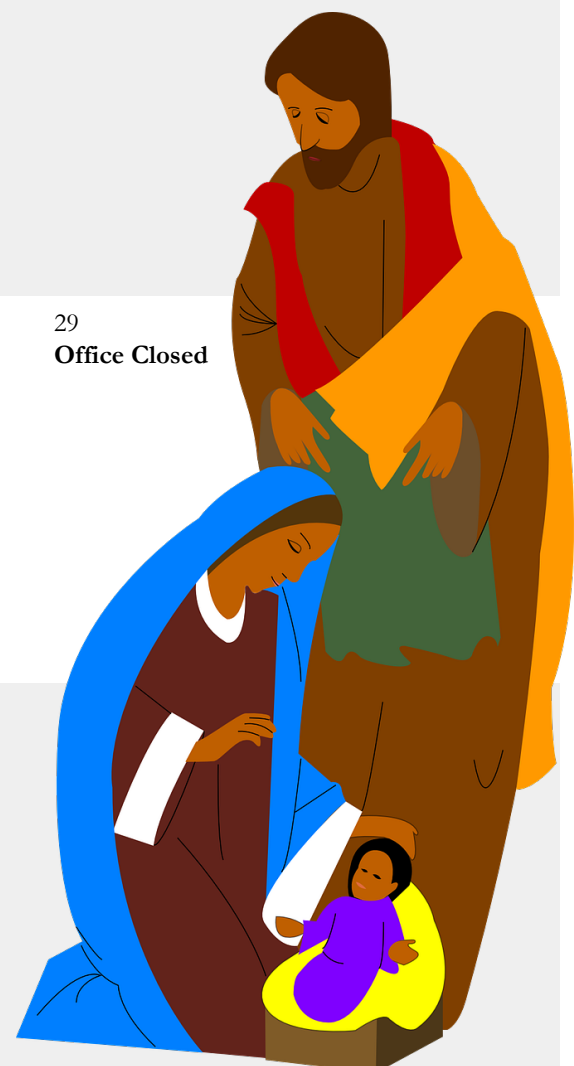
## Prayer Requests

Carol Wolf; Carl Blanton; Michael Brady; Cathy Thomas; Judson Richardson; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Michael Keene; Lisa Schaefer; Nicole Young; Evan Prah; Richard Youngs; Kay Young; Vonnetta Shipman; Thelma Gifford; Bernie Limper; Melinda Wehrle; Blain Loll; Miranda Waddell; Ruth Fiscus; Ray & Nelda Dotson; Margaret Beaman; Alexander Forrey; Ninette Faith; Lou Bonnell; Claudette Mejean; Laurie Vaugh; Susan Rodgers; Adrian Hays; Rachel Tracy; Randy Butcher; Stephen Ministers; Care Receivers; Doug Finkbiner; Clem Aydt; Annette Leighty; Spencer Meagher; KJ Reid, Tricia Anderson; Jon & Joy Anderson; Alex Townsend; Brad Harris; Andy Limper; Karen Villalobos; Dason Douglas, Lora Simmons; Mary Etta Whitmer; Rhonda Moade; Barbara Bell; Jocelyn Ramsey; Leth and Jeff Stanford; Becky & Donna Beabout; Roger Hamilton; Bennett Smith; Breanna & Melissa Young; Jimmy Vinson; Sarah Valdez; Rhea Hayden; Kirtrina Carter; Judy Rice; Sharon Miller; Stephenie Townsend; Tim Aydt; Sue Trimble; Linda Stewart; Clayton Avery; Debbie Goff; The family of Chris Fulling; Leanne Harp; Family of Nancy McCracken; Family of Bob Inboden; Glynn Legg; Paige Gower



# DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	-				1 Office Closed	2 9:00 am Home for the Holidays Festival
3 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School - Making Laundry Day Bags	4 5:30 pm - SPRC	5 10:00 am - Laundry Day	6	7 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm - NOW Weekend Bagging 6:30 pm - Glory Handbell Rehearsal	8 Office Closing at 1:00 pm	9 5:30 pm Staff Appreciation Party
10 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 3:00 pm - Christmas Caroling	11	12	13 6:30 pm - Stephen Ministry	14 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm NOW Bagging 5:45 pm - Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm - Glory Handbell Rehearsal	15 Office Closing at 1:00 pm	16
17 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School	18 4:00 pm - NOW Bagging	19	20	21 9:00 am - CHEW 5:45 pm - Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:00 pm - SPY 6:30 pm - Glory Handbell Rehearsal	22 Office Closed	23
24 8:00 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am - Worship 6:00 pm - Candlelight Service	25 Merry Christmas!  Office Closed	26	27	28 9:00 am - CHEW	29 Office Closed	
31 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School						



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Director of Christian Education: Nina Davis

Communications Coordinator: Brennan Seth Tracy

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Nursery Staff: Marnie Inboden

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