

ROBINSON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2017

# THE HERALD

LISTENING TO GOD'S HEART FROM THE HEART OF THE CITY



GOOD TIDINGS  
COMFORT &  
JOY

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

One of the songs we sing around this time of year is "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" (Worship & Song, #3052). I love the refrain that echoes in my brain: "O tidings of comfort and joy..." It's an apt theme for The Herald during the month of December. It says something about the joy-filled message that we are tuning our lives toward during this time of watching and waiting. It says something about the church's mission and witness - to tell others these tidings of great joy in as many ways as possible. It says something about the church's ministries to bring comfort and joy to people.

On the cover of this edition, you'll see a picture of a gift I've recently received. Many of you provided notes and gifts during Pastor Appreciation month, for which I'm grateful - they were certainly tidings that brought comfort and joy to my life. One of your gifts to me was a set of gift cards to Isabel Bloom, a Davenport, Iowa-based artist who specialized in concrete art. When I received those cards, I knew immediately what I would choose - a nativity setting. Hopefully, you'll note that there are pieces that demonstrate comfort, and pieces that demonstrate joy.

As you read through the pages of this edition of The Herald, there will be opportunities for you to participate in giving and receiving this refrain - tidings of comfort and joy. Consider picking up a bag from the NOW giving tree in the education building entryway, and bringing some joy to a child's life. Think about going caroling to our area nursing and retirement facilities to spread news of great joy. Perhaps you'll discover other ways that you might provide comfort to someone during this holiday season. Know that our Advent worship series, based on Handel's Messiah, our Christmas Eve services, and special New Year's Eve services designed by our worship committee, will also be opportunities for you to receive comfort and joy.

Singing with you this season,

**PASTOR JAY**



### **Sing Glad Tidings!**

The Crawford County United Methodist churches are hitting to road to sing glad tidings! If you are interested in going caroling with us this year, please mark these dates on your calendars: Tuesday, December 19 (4-6 pm) and Thursday, December 21 (4-6 pm). We will be taking the bus (and hopefully have so many people that we need to carpool as well) and going to all of our nursing and retirements centers in Crawford County on those two days. We hope you'll join us!

### **Spread Good Cheer!**

Ordinarily, we offer a mitten tree for the NOW Program. The good news is that, last year, people donated so many hats, mittens and gloves that we do not need to collect any this year. Instead, we will be offering a giving tree for NOW students. All you have to do is stop by the giving tree in the education wing entryway, pick up a bag (with a shopping list attached), purchase the items listed, and return the bag to the tree by December 14. Bags and lists are color-coded for girls and boys at each school. Please limit your bag contents to \$15. What a fun way for us to brighten up the lives of some of our underserved students!

### **Fellowship of Christian Athletes**

Our Robinson High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes will be gathering at First UMC on Wednesday, December 13. As always, these student athletes appreciate our hospitality and nurture by providing a place to meet, as well as food. If you're interested in bringing some comfort to stressed high school students, please sign up at the welcome center!



### **Holiday Gathering**

All young adults and those young at heart are invited to a social gathering at Gary and Janelle Oxford's home, on Sunday, December 10. We'll be meeting after the evening worship service at 7:00 pm. Please bring something to share. Everyone is welcome!

### **Lend a Hand of Comfort and a Word of Joy**

As we prepare for 2018, know that part of our first impression to visitors happens from the moment they walk in the door. If you're willing to help us make that positive first impression by serving as a greeter or an usher, please contact the church office. Likewise, if you have an interest in serving as a liturgist, Kirbie would love to add you to the list!

### **Extend Some Comfort and Joy**

As we move through Advent and approach the Christmas season, be sure to invite your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers to worship with us! Our services during Advent focus on Biblical texts used in Handel's Messiah, and our morning worship services will include arrangements of some of your favorite pieces from that work. On Christmas Eve, we will have two specially designed, and very different worship services. Our 9:00 am service will conclude our Messiah series, and our 6:00 pm service will include lessons, carols, communion, and candlelight. The worship committee has designed two worship services for New Year's Eve. The 9:00 am service will be a service of covenant renewal, and the 6:00 pm service will be a watchnight service (with potluck following). We hope you'll attend these important worship opportunities, and invite someone else to experience comfort and joy as well.



### **Cub Scout Christmas Wreaths Fundraiser**

On Sunday December 3rd, Libbi Fearday will have the wreaths after worship for everyone that has ordered and plenty of additional wreaths for sale \$30 for anyone that still would like to order. The proceeds will go to a scout in need for a camp scholarship.

### **New Website**

Within the next week, we will be updating our website! If you get a minute, check it out and share it with your friends! If you have any suggestions to make it better, send an email to Brennan at [brennansethtracy@gmail.com](mailto:brennansethtracy@gmail.com). Thank you!

### **Thank You!**

Thanks for our church family for their acts of kindness and words of comfort upon the passing of Leonard's mom, Hazel Goff.

*- Leonard & Debbie Goff*

We wanted to thank everyone that helped make our first Trunk or Treat such a success! Whether you had a trunk, brought in candy or came out to trick or treat, we appreciate you all so much!! We can't wait for next year!

*- Jennifer & Kirbie*

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# SECURITY CHANGES AND UPDATES

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As you all know, our world is ever changing. A vast number of these changes are not for the better. This leaves us wondering, will this ever happen to us? We, as a church family, need to seriously consider and put energy towards maintaining the safety of the church building and all that utilize it; ranging from our youngest babies to our wisest adults. This concept of making changes or additions for our church safety is going to take time, energy, and financial support. How do we go about this process of church safety?

The Trustees committee and Church Council have already been discussing the initial steps toward better security. The church went through the process of having new exterior keys made. All outside doors need to be checked to make sure they are closed and locked, then double checked. A new committee/team will soon be formed within the church to lead our safety/security steps. This new Safety/Security committee will work closely with the Trustees committee and Church Council to provide leadership of how this process needs to proceed into the future. The Trustees committee and Church Council have also discussed the addition of exterior cameras.

Several individuals might already be aware of the completion of having new exterior keys for the church. The more the Trustees committee and Church Council discussed this possibility, the less anyone knew about the previous keys. Who had keys? Who really needed keys because they utilized the church on a regular basis? How many keys were made? The questions were endless. Answers to these important questions could not be found. It was based upon these concerns and lack of knowledge that the decision was made, the church will have new keys made. There are a limited number of keys that were made. There is a reason for that. The Trustees committee and Church Council agreed the organizations that utilize the church regularly receive one key, each church employee received a key, and a few selected members for safety. It was during this process, the church learned of organizations that were utilizing our facility yet very few individuals were aware of these organizations having access to our church. We need to be more aware of who has access to our building, why they need to use it, and when the organization needs to use it. Without having a previous list of who had keys in the past, the process had a few bumps. There is a current list of who has been assigned what key. That list is now kept by Kirbie in the office and the Trustees committee co-chair members. Hopefully by now, those who genuinely need a key have a key. We appreciate those who were patient and understanding through the process. There are extra keys that can be checked out briefly by contacting Kirbie in the church office. Please take the few extra minutes and the responsibility to contact Kirbie if you need a key for a scheduled event. She is more than willing to help set that up and assign you a key for your event.

As we all do with our own homes, we check the doors to make sure all are secure before leaving. The church should not be any different, right? We can get into a hurry and forget to double check the doors, it happens. These mishaps need to be corrected though. Just this year, several exterior doors have been left open, wide open after events. There have been times when a door has been propped open as we leave a church service, Sunday School, or

after private/organizational activities. The church garage door has been found open or unlocked numerous times as well. We need to make a serious effort and be diligent about keeping the church and garage doors closed and locked for our safety. This is one of the easiest steps we, as a congregation, can help with each and every time we enter and exit the church facilities. A few of you know, those that do not will now learn, one of the times the church garage was left unlocked an item was stolen. This happened just this summer, a few months ago. The item that was stolen was a stained-glass panel that had been saved from the old church. Please double check to make sure all doors are closed and locked before leaving the church or church garage, whichever you happen to be utilizing.

One of the priorities this fall that the Trustees committee and Church Council have been focusing on is the development of the Security/Safety committee and exterior cameras. The purpose of this committee is to focus on furthering the steps toward safety that have already been put in place and to continue to find ways to improve our security at all times. As several have known since the rebuilding process, we already have numerous interior cameras that were installed a few years ago. The idea behind additional exterior cameras is to allow ourselves to have access to what is happening outside at all times. The church has never had that capability. The Trustees committee and Church Council are trying to find creative ways to help fund these large expenses that come with providing more safety for us all.

As this important update is wrapped up, we want you to keep in mind the reason for this information. We are not trying to scare church members, future members, and organizations away. It is our responsibility as a church family to face the facts and events in today's world. We have to be as proactive as possible. The question arises again, will this ever happen to us? The answer is yes, it did five years ago. We all remember how it felt when we heard the news about our fire on Christmas night. It was devastating in so many ways to us all. We cried and mourned the loss of something we held so near and dear to our hearts. We have been fortunate that no one has been injured through the acts that have happened in the past. We need to take the necessary steps to eliminate or minimize those possibilities and educate ourselves in the process. We ask that you do a few simple tasks as we come to an end for 2017 and move forward into 2018. Please understand why the church went through the process of having new exterior keys made, it is for our safety. Please take a few extra minutes before you leave the church or church garage to make sure all is secure, it is for our safety. Please consider how you can help with the next steps toward security, it is for our safety.

There will be a discussion time about church safety immediately following the Sunday service at 10:00 am on December 3rd in the sanctuary. All are welcome and asked to please stay to further understand or ask questions about our steps toward safety.

We wish you a safe and Merry Christmas!

**Garrett Graham**, Church Council Chair

**Jerry Devonshire**, Trustees Committee Co-Chair

**Melinda Harmon**, Trustees Committee Co-Chair

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/5	Joy Anderson, Sherri Murrell
12/7	Tyler Devonshire
12/9	Kate Imhoff, Sandra Hale
12/11	Stacie McMillan, Wesley Parker
12/12	Nancy Brigham
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	Jean Decker, Nita Bradbury
12/24	Ken Mattsey
12/25	Susan inboden, Karen Marchand
12/26	Suzanne Wallace
12/28	Kay Albin, Nancy McCracken, Kristy Veenstra
12/30	Kirtina Carter, Elliott Veenstra
12/31	Rita Diel, Joyce Maurer

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

12/18	Jon & Joy Anderson
12/22	Don & Alice Taylor

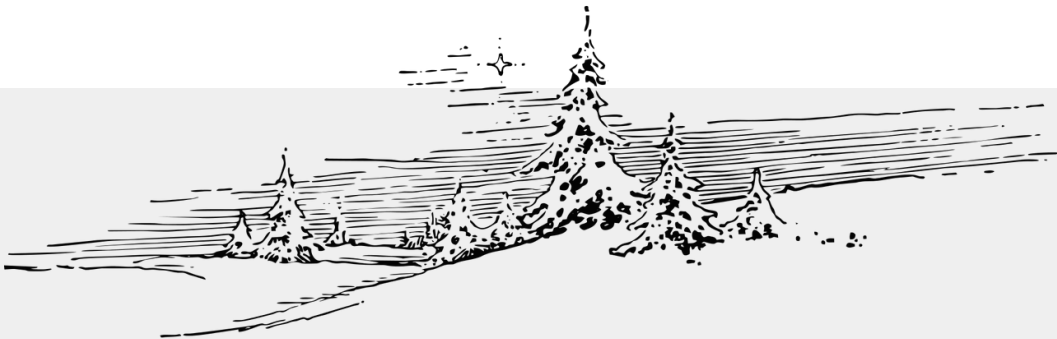


## PRAYER CONCERNS

Peg, John, Jeremy, and Greg Markello; Ken Martin; Carol Wolf; Lois McConnell; Carl and Helen Blanton; Judy Wilson Wall; Michael Brady; Gary Albin; Patty Steele; Marty Attaway; Cathy Thomas; Judson Richardson; Jerry Adkins; Susan Polgar; Jay Holtzhouser; Janna Coonce; Jennifer Newlin; Kaye Parrott Weger; Jennifer Null; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Bob Duzan; Janey Branson; Kate Dale; Shirley Treadway; Neema Mutayoba; Mary Kay Jurcin; Barb Myers; Michael Keene; John Larrabee; Myrtle Garrard; Larry Nichol; Floyd Brinkman Sr; Janet & Charley Clark; Allen Summers; Nicole Young; Bev Turkal; Vicki Vinson Farris; Evan Pahl; Sidney Iubelt; Ray Dotson; Bev Arrington Campbell; Mike Richards; Rick Koester; Margie Moore McNamara; Richard Youngs; Kay Blanchard; Kay Young; John Poland; Bob Berty; Joan Fulling; Nancy Young; Doris Prier; Unchanging Grace; Dorothy Fasig; Jackson Barry; John Mosher; Lisa Schaefer; The Family of Maurice Barrett; Rhea Glenn; Families traveling for the holiday



# DECEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <b>5:30 pm</b> Bethlehem Village at City Park
3 <b>8:00 am</b> Handbell Choir Rehearsal <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:00 am</b> Sunday School <b>11:00 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>6:00 pm</b> Evening Worship	4	5 <b>10:30 am</b> MATS <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple IV	6 <b>6:30 am</b> Refresh Wednesday <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club	7 <b>9:30 pm</b> Disciple IV <b>4:00 pm</b> NOW Bagging <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry	8	9
10 <b>8 &amp; 11 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:00 am</b> Sunday School <b>11:00 pm</b> Chancel Choir <b>2:30 pm</b> Heritage Health Service <b>6:00 pm</b> Evening Worship <b>7:00 pm</b> Young Adult Party at Oxford's Home	11	12 <b>10:30 am</b> MATS <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple IV	13 <b>6:30 am</b> Refresh Wednesday <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club <b>4:00 pm</b> NOW Bagging <b>7:30 pm</b> FCA Meeting	14 <b>9:30 am</b> Disciple IV <b>4:00 pm</b> NOW Bagging <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry	15	16
17 <b>8:15 am</b> Kids' Chimes Rehearsal <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:00 am</b> Sunday School <b>11:00 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>6:00 pm</b> Evening Worship	18 <b>4:00 pm</b> NOW Bagging	19 <b>10:30 am</b> MATS <b>4:00 pm</b> Christmas Caroling <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple IV	20 <b>6:30 am</b> Refresh Wednesday <b>6:00 pm</b> Committee Meetings <b>7:00 pm</b> Church Council Meeting	21 <b>9:30 am</b> Disciple IV <b>4:00 pm</b> Christmas Caroling <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry	22	23
24 <b>8:00 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:00 am</b> Sunday School <b>6:00 pm</b> Christmas Eve Worship	25 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> Christmas Day	26	27	28 <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry	29	30
31 <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:00 am</b> Sunday School <b>6:00 pm</b> New Year's Eve Worship						

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Organist/Pianist: Brenda Graham

[doubleg@mediacombb.net](mailto:doubleg@mediacombb.net)

Custodian: Amy DeDoming

Nursery Staff: Jennifer Boatman, Danielle Stuller,  
Tiffany Beard