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GOOD NEWS

from MOUNT OLIVET
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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I am sitting here in the Greensboro Coliseum listening to Tran Siberian Orchestra (TSO) sharing a story of ones who have lost something special in their lives, having

in one way or another lost the spirit of Christmas. Two of the reasons I find TSO so fascinating is that as progressive rock musicians they want people to understand that “rockers can be excellent musicians” and they seek to bring classical music themes alive to new audiences on instruments and in facilities most people would never associate with classical genre.

Yet sitting and listening to the music and seeing the brilliant flashes of lighting within this show, I experience the sharing of a theme touching the hearts and lives of so many, not just in this audience, but around our culture. A theme revolving around wanting and needing the comfort of warmth and acceptance of a place called home especially during this season of Christmas.

As the second Christmas season since the passing of my father, I perceive anew the brokenness and loneliness within people’s hearts as we journey through this thing called life. My own awareness of the frailty of life has helped me experience some of the reasons that many people really become church attendees on “Christmas and Easter.” There is something special about Christmas with memories of wonderful people, smells that rekindle our imaginations, lights and sounds that transport us to earlier times and places, and in the midst of it all we find comfort and community.

As Christians, God offers us the opportunity to share with others, both within and without our four walls, a comfort not just in the biological family but belonging to a much larger family announced to us through the birth of a baby placed in a manger. With that birth, our own families grew exponentially as we realize that God has brought us into His family, a joint communion of faith, koinonia, touching the very depth of the loneliness and brokenness previously experienced.

In some ways the Greek Orthodox may have it right as of first importance, the profound experience of the in-breaking of God into our world and lives through the birth of this baby. Yet the Protestant within me recognizes the power of a whole story of life: birth, teaching, crucifixion, and resurrection

In John 14, Jesus speaks to his disciples while preparing them for his approaching death and separation from them, “I will come back again to you and bring you to myself that where I am you shall be also.” Then in verse 18, Jesus reminds us that the loneliness and brokenness our culture feels is only temporary as he says, “I will not leave you orphaned.”

How many in our world need to hear Christians share the Good News, God’s Christmas story? How many people have a desire, a heartfelt need to find out that within the loneliness and brokenness experienced that God has another plan in mind for us? That Jesus loves each of us so much that He came just for us!

God is offering His Church another opportunity to share the Good News of His gift to the world. May we be full participants sharing the hope we have found!
MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Dr. John

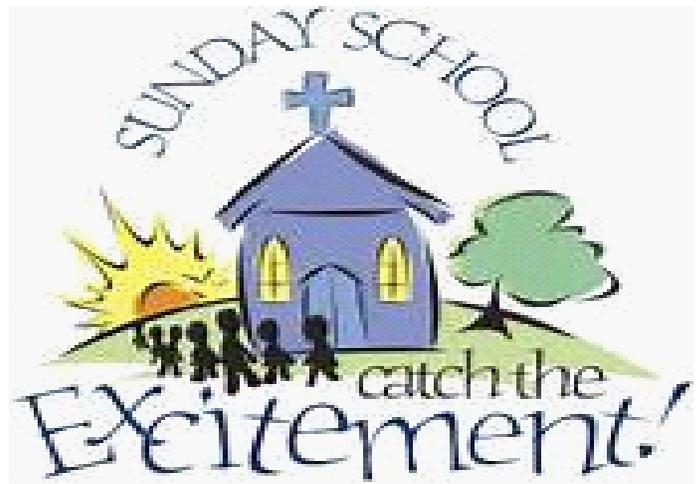
To pause in the Advent season and listen for the voice of God speaking through Scripture may be a way to prepare our hearts for Christmas. Join us for “**Christmas Scripture Readings;**” a time of quiet on Wednesdays, December 6, 13 & 20 from 10-11 AM in the Mount Olivet UMC Sanctuary. No preparation is needed, just come with an open heart. Led by Sarah & Rodney Benson.

“This Advent, let’s go to Bethlehem and find our kneeling places.” All are welcome.

(See page 5 for the rest of December’s Events and Services!)

Children's Ministry

SAVE THE DATE: Handbells Performance December 3 during both services and our Children's Musical Performance December 3 at 5PM.



Sunday School

Don't forget to explore the Deep Blue in our Sunday School class right after handbells.



A Night in Bethlehem

"A Night in Bethlehem" will be held on December 9th from 12-4 at

Mount Olivet. Be transported back in time to the marketplace in Bethlehem, where the citizens can't stop talking about Jesus' birth. Experience hands-on multisensory activities as you visit the Bakery, Metal Shop, Scribes Tent, Pottery Shed, Carpentry Shop, Painter's Hut, and the Stable where Jesus was born. Don't miss this exciting journey that reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas! This event is open to families and children both young and old.



FAITH Friends

Join us for Faith Friends on Sundays from 5-7pm as we continue our adventures together exploring our sanctuary, accomplishing missions and participating in our music program. We welcome grades Kindergarten – 5th.

Children's Church

Join us for Children's Church at 8:30/11:00 as we continue working on our Prayer Wall. We are also learning about being an usher and offerings.



Handbells

Interested in your child playing Handbells? All they need to know is their colors and they can join the Handbell class. Practices are held every Sunday mornings at 9:40 upstairs in the Children's Church classroom. We will perform handbells December 3 for both services.



Children's Musical

It's that time of year again! Our Children's Musical practices are taking place during Faith Friends. Come be a part of the fun as we sing and practice dramatic plays.



As November ends and December begins, for most, calendars begin to fill with a variety of holiday activities and events. Before December's schedule pulls us in different directions we wanted to take a moment to be thankful and celebrate the many wonderful lessons we have learned together over the fall. Lessons on checking our pulse and being truly alive in Christ; growing our faith and sharing that faith with others; and searching out the parables and stories in scripture and applying their lessons to our daily lives; have all been a wonderful part of discussion and fun during the Fall. We challenge each student to "Give thanks in all circumstances;..." 1 Thessalonians 5:18a, and to continue to nurture your faith and watch it grow daily. We are truly thankful for this past Fall together and are eagerly looking forward to December and the opportunities for worship and fun.

Parents and students, who registered for Winterfest, please be on the lookout for an email about the upcoming trip. We will be leaving on Saturday, Dec. 30 and returning on Monday, January 1st after ringing in the New Year together during the Winterfest worship concert.

December schedule

Friday, Dec. 1 6:00 PM until? – Students join Ms. Lee downtown Manteo as members of Mount Olivet hand out Brunswick Stew during the Downtown Manteo Christmas Tree Lighting

Wednesday High School Bible Study will meet Dec. 6th and 13th and then resume January 3rd.

Thursday morning youth breakfast will meet each Thursday morning school is in session, Dec. 6th and 13th, and resumes January 3rd.

Sunday School each Sunday at The Cove (9:30- 10:30).

Sunday night Youth Group

December 3rd 4:00 – 6:30 / 6:45 PM*

Students will have an opportunity to meet together at 4:00 pm for our weekly lesson and game. At 5:00 we will walk over together and watch the Children's Ministry Christmas program "The Colors of Christmas" followed by a birthday party for Jesus. *If students would like to bring a small child's gift for this program it will be given to a local outreach in Dare County.

December 10th 5:00 – 7:00 PM - Youth Sunday Night end of year Christmas Party Middle School Students please bring a drink or dessert

High School Students please bring a side dish / appetizer item

Youth Sunday Nights will not meet Dec. 17th – 31st and will resume on Sunday night, Jan. 7th!



2017 Fall Schedule

Wednesday High School Bible Study, 7:30-9:00 pm at The Cove. This Bible study is open to all 9th-12th grade students. We will discuss topics that are of interest to our students, study the Scriptures and pray together. This Bible Study is ongoing, please join us each Wednesday night. Want to receive a text reminder when they are sent. Text your number to Jan Culpepper at 757-373-4155 with a request for Wed. Night Bible Study!

Thursday morning youth breakfast, 7:00 -7:40 am each Thursday morning school is in session; come out for a great hot breakfast and a guest speaker each week. Transportation is provided to Manteo Middle School and Manteo High School after breakfast. This event meets in "Room B" inside the main church building.

Sunday School each Sunday at The Cove (9:30-10:30).

Sunday night Youth Group 5:00 - 7:00 pm. This is a time for students to grow in their love for God and their love for one another as they fellowship through the sharing of heavy snacks, playing games, and studying Scripture together.

*Jesus is the
reason for the season!*

Music Ministry



Ephesians 5:19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,

Our chancel choir leads worship each Sunday morning for the 11:00 AM service. We would love to have you join us! If you are interested in singing with the choir, we meet on Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM in the choir room. Contact me for more information or stop by a rehearsal to join.



The Resounding Praise team leads worship for the 8:30 AM service each Sunday. If you are interested in joining, then stop in at a rehearsal on Thursday evenings at 6:00 PM or contact me for more information. We would love to see you there.



If you are in 6 – 12th grade and are looking for a great time to worship with your peers and prepare to lead, then come and join us. Youth Praise meets on Sunday evenings at 7:00 PM. We would love to have you commit to share your talents with the Youth Praise team and the church. In December we are leading worship on Sunday, December 17.



“Arrival”

The season of Christmas is a time of anticipation. We are celebrating and anticipating the birth of Jesus Christ. As we prepare for the holiday, buy gifts and decorate trees remember that we are celebrating the birth of Jesus, the same Jesus that died for us on the cross. I love the words for the song “Arrival.” They remind us that Jesus is our hope and the light of the world.

The One we're waiting for
Will fin'ly come fin'ly come
The Saviour we adore
Is near to us near to us
Hope for humankind
Light for all the world
We welcome You all for You
We're making room for Your arrival
Announce the night fill the sky
Our hearts alive for Your arrival
With open arms You gave
The gift of God the gift of God
Sinners will find their way
And saints applaud saints applaud
Come let us adore Him come let us adore Him
Come let us adore Him

Come and support the children of Mount Olivet as we present our musical The Colors of Christmas on December 3 at 5:00 PM. Join us as we hear about the colors we associate with Christmas and celebrate the birth of Jesus through this musical presentation. Please bring a gift to donate to local children who are in need this year. We will have a Birthday Party for Jesus directly following in the fellowship hall.

This year we will be presenting our Christmas cantata God with Us! on December 10 at 10:00am. Please note this service time change on your calendar and join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

*Blessings,
Nathan Schierer*

Worship



The Advent Season is fast approaching. Dec 3rd is the first Sunday of Advent.

There will be a “Hanging of the Greens” service at both morning Worship services.

If you ordered poinsettias or had one ordered in your honor, they may be picked up from the church after the 11:00 service on Dec. 24th.

Also, please note the following Advent events for December at Mt. Olivet.

Dec. 3 8:30 and 11:00 Hanging of the Greens

Dec. 3 5:00 Children’s Christmas Play

Dec.10 8:30 am Coffee; 8:45 am Sunday School

10:00 am Combined Morning Services - Christmas Cantata

Dec. 24 Regular Morning Services. (8:30 & 11:00)

4:00 Open Communion

6:00 Traditional Christmas Eve Communion Service

11:30 Christmas Eve Communion

Dec. 31 Regular morning services

Sarah Wise & Kathy Seawell, Worship Committee



December Volunteers

| Date | 8:30 Service | Sunday School | 11:00 Service |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------|-------------------------------|
| December 3 Dana | Jackie Hart 473-6579 | | Tiffany Martin 423-2323 |
| December 10 Dana | Christmas Cantata Combined Service 10 am Kelly Ennis 216-6794 | | |
| December 17 Angie | Paula Oliver 473-2944 | | Jennifer Phillips 473-5269 |
| December 24 Dana | Valerie Wheeler 473-5595 | | Lynnette Crews 473-3295 |
| December 31 Angie | Lee Swain Petty 216-6310 | | Joyce Edwards 473-3845 |

Thank you all for your dedication and service in the nursery this year. This is such an important ministry to our young families.

Elizabeth

December Events/Services Continued from Page 1

December 3

8:30 & 11:00 AM Hanging of the Greens

5:00 PM Children’s Christmas Drama: “The Colors of Christmas” with a Birthday Party for Jesus following.

December 9

Noon – 4:00 PM A Night in Bethlehem

See the Children’s Ministry Page for complete information on this event

December 10

8:45 AM Sunday School

10:00 AM Christmas Cantata: “God with Us!”

December 24

8:30 & 11:00 AM

Sunday Services

4:00 – 5:00 PM

Open Communion

6:00 – 7:30 PM

Candlelight Communion Service

11:30 PM - Midnight

Candlelight Communion Service



2017 HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jenna Frank
- 2 Karen Walker, Gena Terry, Casey Howell
- 3 Mike Ellis, Lindsay Mitchell, Chuck Edwards, Tess Harrell, Elizabeth Hodgson
- 4 Kenneth Wells, Chris Edwards, Sarah Pritchard
- 5 Horace Midgett, Patrick Waters, Zack Hodges
- 6 Lynda Midgett, Stacie Allen, Courtney Herrera
- 7 Becky Evans, Michelle Johnson
- 8 Pauline Rock, Ward Blanchard
- 9 Dana Thomason, Eugene Dever
- 10 Katherine Bottjen, Edward Williams, Katherine Moore
- 11 Tucker Walker
- 12 Joe Willis, Meldine Lee, Jennifer Phillips, Corrina Wescott
- 13 Geneva Ward, Denise Trevino
- 14 Cindi Griffith, David Hook
- 15 Sammy Midgett, Rebecca Boyce
- 16 Dan Otte', John Dutton, Scarlett Clarke, Lauren Garza, Mya Erpelding
- 17 Col. Jim Davis, Patty Dutton, Ruby Beasley
- 18 Jan Krauss, Michele Barnes, Hillary Harrison, Aaron Fauth, Sophia Farrow
- 19 Don Jones, Pam Harrison, Travis Jones, Dana Davenport
- 20 Mabel Clupper, Steve Basnight III
- 21 Paul Rock, Ann Payne, Lee Stell
- 23 Joanne Braine, Carroll Harrell, Kathy Seawell
- 23 Meris Duprey
- 26 Clarence Skinner, Mole Clark, Chris Basnight, Alex Updike, Spencer Twiford
- 27 Coy Tillett Jr., Wendy Kelly, Kim Hunt
- 28 Scott Fawcett, Rex Tillett, Brian Horne

- 28 Jeff Bliven, Aaron Hopkins, Jordan Gutshall
- 29 Metta Austin, Peg Landreth, Peyton Snell, Caleb Noone
- 30 Jennifer Warth, Judith Fearing, Jen Meekins, Traci Nissley
- 31 David Forrer, William Spence, Kathryn Fearing, Anna Strawser, Alex Martin



HAPPY ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Kenny & Maggie Sexton: 19 yrs.
- 7 Bob & Karen Hewett: 54 yrs.
- 9 Bryan & Elizabeth DeHart: 17 yrs.
- 11 Lee & Sarah Wise: 23 yrs.
- 15 Ronnie & Carol Meekins: 60 yrs.
- 15 Gary & Carol Setzer: 28 yrs.
- 18 Olin & Dotsy Davis: 41 yrs.
- 22 Jim & Barbara Brown: 61 yrs.
- 22 Walter & Barbara Holton: 46 yrs.
- 23 Clarence & Ruth Lewis: 43 yrs.
- 28 Edison & Reda Midgett: 69 yrs.
- 28 Paul & CeCe Miller: 42 yrs.
- 29 Buddy & Erin McCown: 16 yrs.

Thanks!

Heartfelt thanks to Mt Olivet for the love and support shown to the Charleston Recovery Center. The donated kitchen items, sheets, blankets, etc have been a blessing to us. And, we can ALL sit down at the same time, thanks to the chairs you sent! May God bless you richly.

Ronnie Beyers, Director

Evangelism

Christmas is upon us and we are scurrying about getting ready for this festive holiday. Trees to decorate, packages to wrap, lights to hang and caroling to do. When we go caroling, the best part is always getting the opportunity to spend time with our shut-ins. This year, with many items filling our scheduled caroling night, we decided to let people enjoy the fun of caroling at times of their own choosing. We ask that you sign-up for one or more homes that you and a few friends will visit & maybe even sing a Carol or two to let each one know Mt. Olivet loves them. Pick your own time between Dec 10 & 24 to be the ambassador of Jesus to our shut-ins. We want to make sure every shut-in is visited so make sure you call the church office to sign up.



We want to thank everyone that participated in the 1st Friday Christmas celebration of making, preparing, and handing out the delicious Brunswick Stew, to all who attended the Christmas Tree Lighting. We all felt the spirit of giving is so much more than receiving. Thank you so much for your gracious support.

In January we will be holding a covered dish dinner followed by a 2017 New Member Recognition service. Ice cream will be served after the service. We hope you ALL will come out to meet the new members of our church family and to fellowship one with another. Look for the upcoming date in the church bulletins.

Here's wishing our church family a very Merry Christmas!!

The Evangelism Committee
Lynda Midgett
Deloris Harrell
Le Hook
Reha Otte'
Gib Harrison
Stephen Stetson
Nathan Schierer

Missions



2017 has been a great year for Missions and we are very grateful to those who have partnered with us through your pledges and gifts. It has been said many times, but always bears repeating; Mt Olivet is BLESSED to have a separate Missions Program. Many churches do not have this and we are able to partner with local, national and international missions that are the hands and feet of Christ. We know we cannot physically be everywhere but by partnering with those on the frontlines' we are there with financial support and prayer support. We are also able to help fund members of our church who feel led to be part of mission projects around the world as well.

We hope if you have not already made our pledge to Missions for 2018; that you will prayerfully consider making this step of faith with this commitment.

Our Mission outreach this Christmas will be making BLESSING BAGS for the Homeless. They will be distributed in NC and VA. Our goal is to make 100 of these filled with items helpful to someone on the streets.

We have purchased backpacks, Stainless Water Bottles, and Mylar Blankets that we are asking you to purchase for \$10 and then fill it with other items and return it to church for distribution.

Below is a list of suggested items; all are not necessary:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| gloves | protein bars |
| beanie | peanut butter nabs |
| socks | Band-aids |
| small package of wipes | dry shampoo |
| cough drops | razors |
| gum | hand sanitizer |
| mints | toothbrush and toothpaste |
| a devotional | comb / brush |
| flashlight w/batteries | clippers |
| chapstick | |

We will also have the needs of some local children that gifts will need to be purchased but not wrapped and returned to the church by Dec 17.

We also purchase gift cards for Gas and Groceries to be distributed via the Pastor's Discretion.