

# THE MESSENGER

The newsletter of Leesburg United Methodist Church

## December 2019

Volume 32—Issue 12 (published 11/26/19)



### Message from Pastor Jim: Courageous Hope

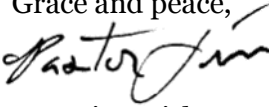
Max Lucado reminds us that “The ‘manger’ dares us to believe that the best is yet to be.”<sup>1</sup> We dare to believe because the incarnation of God in Jesus leads us to the reconciling atonement of God in Jesus that we remember during Holy Week. And, while that week ends in death, the week that follows begins with resurrection! The manger is where we begin the retelling of this story; the remembering of the message; the renewing of life and hope. “The best is yet to be”<sup>2</sup>!

Through the story of the manger, God calls to us, inviting us to immerse ourselves in hope. The hope of our Christian faith is not “wishful fancy.” In faith we dare to believe that God, who brought forth the miracle of Christ in the manger, continues through history the work of redemption and reconciliation – bringing forgiveness and cleansing of sin, and authentic welcoming community. Biblical hope is courageous hope. Hope that dares to believe despite the circumstances. Hope that dares to believe despite our doubts. Hope that dares to dream again despite our disappointments. Hope that dares to believe that God through Christ will bridge the divisions that separate us.

Advent is a time for courageous hope, the strengthening of faith, the persevering work of God’s shalom (peace, wholeness, harmony, reconciliation) in and by God’s people. So, look to the manger! Count down the days of labor to the joy of delivery! Live with courageous hope!

“and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us!”<sup>3</sup>

This week, I was in a middle school and overheard a 7th grader softly singing a Christmas carol. I asked if she was looking forward to Christmas. She smiled brightly and said, “You bet! Thanksgiving is coming soon and Christmas is just around the corner!” I hummed her tune the rest of the day, because I, too, am looking forward to Christmas! I invite you to look inside for ways to nurture, grow, and live courageous hope as we live the days of Advent, counting down to Christmas.

Grace and peace,  
  
Rev. Jim Wishmyer

<sup>1</sup> *Because of Bethlehem*, p.140

<sup>2</sup> “Rabbi Ben Ezra,” Robert Browning – “Grow old along with me! / The best is yet to be, / The last of life, for which the first was made: / Our times are in His hand / Who saith ‘A whole I planned, / Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!’”

<sup>3</sup> *Romans 5:2-5*, “we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

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# Connect

## December Worship Theme: Courageous Hope

In faith we dare to believe that God, who brought forth the miracle of Christ in the manger, continues through history the work of redemption and reconciliation – bringing forgiveness and cleansing of sin; and authentic welcoming community. Biblical hope is courageous hope. Hope that dares to believe despite the circumstances. Hope that dares to believe despite our doubts. Hope that dares to dream again despite our disappointments. Hope that dares to believe that God through Christ will bridge the divisions that separate us.



**Rev.**  
**Jim Wishmyer,**  
**Pastor**

Date	Theme/topic	Scripture	Specials
Nov 24	Speaker: Walter Tennyson, Lay Leader	Genesis 28:10-22	Christ the King Sunday Leadership Recognition
Dec 1	Courageous Hope: The Prophet's Story	Isaiah 2:1-5	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, Holy Communion
Dec 8	Courageous Hope: Mary's Story (Rev. Heather)	Luke 1:26-38, 46-47	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent
Dec 15	Christmas Cantata & Children's Pageant	Matthew 1:18-24	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent
Dec 22	Courageous Hope: Jesus' Story	Luke 2:1-7	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent
Dec 29	Shalom Worship: Hope that Heals	Luke 2:15-20	1 service at 10 am
Jan 5	What God Wants: Following the Star	Matthew 2:1-12	Epiphany Sunday, Holy Communion
Jan 12	What God Wants: God Is Pleased	Matthew 3:13-17	Leader Dedication



### Special Ways to Serve in Worship During Advent and Christmas:

**Advent Worship** - We need individuals or families to read prepared liturgy (all three services). We need folks to do the Advent Wreath lighting and reading, and also to read along to a short video. You may do one or both of these readings.

**Christmas** - We need scripture readers for all Christmas Eve Services.

Contact [Rev. Jim](#) or [Rev. Heather](#) if you'd like to serve.

## Advent and Christmas

<b>Sunday, December 1st:</b>	First Sunday of Advent <b>Candy Caning Season begins</b> (p. 5) <b>Angel Tree Gifts due back</b> (p. 14)
<b>Saturday, December 7th:</b>	<b>UMW Prayer Breakfast</b> , 9 am
<b>Sunday, December 8th:</b>	Second Sunday of Advent
<b>Sunday, December 15th:</b>	Third Sunday of Advent <b>Christmas Pageant</b> , during 9:45 am worship (p. 10) <b>Choir Cantata</b> , during 8:30 & 11 am worship <b>LHSC donations due</b> (p.13)
<b>Sunday December 22nd:</b>	Fourth Sunday of Advent <b>Cookie Party</b> , 3-4 pm (p.4)
<b>Tuesday, December 24th:</b>	<b>Christmas Eve worship</b> <i>Lessons and Carols, Holy Communion (at 12, 7 &amp; 11), Candle-lighting</i> 12 Noon Traditional 3:00 PM Families with young children 5:00 PM Family-friendly 7:00 PM Contemporary 11:00 PM Traditional
<b>Sunday December 29th:</b>	First Sunday after Christmas <b>Shalom Worship</b> , one service, 10 am



### Shalom Worship, Dec 29th at 10 am

We traditionally have just one worship time on the Sunday-between-the-Holidays. This year, the Reach Task Force has planned a special post-Christmas/pre-New Year "Shalom Worship" for the occasion, on Sunday December 29 at 10 am.

Shalom Worship explores the meaning and message of God's shalom (peace) for the world, which is realized through the incarnation and reconciling atonement of Jesus. This message is made visible and experiential through a time during worship for healing prayer and anointing with oil, for ourselves, our community, and our world.

**We encourage you to invite others to this meaningful and moving time of worship, as we welcome all to LUMC, "where faith and life intersect."**



### Advent Prayer Breakfast

**Celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season with the United Methodist Women!**

Join with others at the annual Advent Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, December 7th, from 9 to 11 am in Asbury Hall. Our guest speaker is the Reverend Tracey Lyons of Mt. Zion Leesburg UMC.

You are invited to bring a dish to share at the buffet table.

Everyone is invited and childcare will be provided.

# Connect

## Christmas Cookie Decorating Party

On Sunday December 22nd , from 3 to 4 pm, come enjoy some Christmas cheer as we decorate cookies and watch *Charlie Brown's Christmas* in Asbury Hall. The cookies will be premade and each person will be given supplies to decorate with. All ages are welcome to attend.

Registration is required so that we can prepare. Please [register online](#) or find the sign up form in our app.



Your free-will donations will help us finish the year strong by supporting our general ministries and missions fund.

## Christmas Thanksgivings

This year, in place of our traditional Christmas flower sponsorship, you can share your “Christmas Thanksgivings”: the people, places, things, events, etc., for which you are thankful or that you want to remember this Christmas.

We’ll include your thanksgivings as a print insert in the Christmas bulletins that we’ll also make available on our website. We’ll also share teasers and tidbits on our social media accounts so we can enjoy and share one another's thanksgivings throughout the holiday season. **So start sending in your thanksgivings right away!**

Turn in this form and your freewill donation to the church office, put in offering plate, or find the sign up form in our app.

\*\*\*\*\*

This Christmas season I am giving thanks for:

\_\_\_\_\_

This is: ☐ Someone I’ve lost    ☐ Someone I want to honor    ☐ Something else

Who is giving thanks: \_\_\_\_\_  
(as you want it in our listing, for example, “Jane” or “the Doe family”)

☐ Check here if you do NOT want us to share your thanksgiving on our public social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). If checked, your item will still be listed in our print and website-PDF documents.

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

Phone/email (if we have questions): \_\_\_\_\_

Freewill Donation amount: \_\_\_\_\_



## Candy Canes

**New neighbors on your street?**

**Need an ice breaker before you invite them to church?**

**Spread some Christmas Cheer by having friends and neighbors candy caned this Christmas season!**



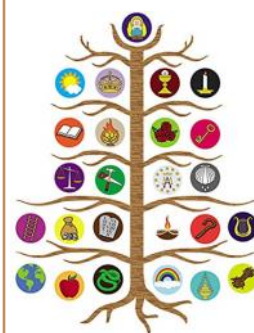
**Candy Canes**

This is a fundraiser for the youth mission trip. Youth (with their families) will go out in the evenings and place candy canes in the yard of your friends. The candy canes will stay for about two days and be removed and taken to the next ordered house.

To sign up use the QR code (left), or find the [registration page](#) in our mobile app.

## Advent Traditions – Jesse Tree and Advent Wreath

The word Advent means “coming” and refers to the coming of Jesus. There are many Advent traditions enjoyed by Christians around the world. One of these, the Advent Jesse Tree, emphasizes God coming in the flesh at Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago. The symbols and the readings for each day draw our attention to his life and ministry, using 25 symbols from the Old and New Testaments. They help guide us to also anticipate his second coming in glory, when the fulness of God’s salvation will be revealed for all of humankind. Advent prepares us to celebrate both of these “comings.” The symbols trace the heritage of Jesus Christ from the beginning of creation. We have our own LUMC Jesse Tree devotional, along with daily symbols on magnets and a “tree” to put them on. Pick yours up at church.



In addition, many Protestant and Catholic churches use an Advent wreath with the lighting of candles, one for each of the weeks of Advent, to symbolize Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that come wrapped in Christ. You can make your own Advent wreath to use in the home. It can be large or small, and should be in a prominent location where the family gathers; perhaps at the dining table or in the family room. The first lighting of the candle for the week takes place on Sunday. It can be accompanied by a brief responsive reading from the Sunday service by members of the family, either at the beginning of the day or in the evening. Monday through Saturday, the candle lighting can also be joined with the reading of the Jesse Tree devotional and placing that day’s symbol magnet on the tree.

### A simple, easy, Advent “Wreath”

4 Votive Candles (all purple or 3 purple and 1 pink) to represent hope, peace, joy (pink), and love.

1 Pillar Candle (white to symbolize Christ)

Large plate to accommodate the 4 candles in a circle, with the pillar candle in the center.

The plate can be decorated with live greens, although this is not necessary.

**Begin using your Advent Wreath on December 1 and continue through Christmas Day as your family takes time each day to focus on the greatest Gift ever given!**



# Connect



## Community Office Hours

**Wednesdays from 9:00 am–12:30 pm**

Stop by the Starbucks off of Edwards Ferry Road in Leesburg on Wednesdays from 9:00–12:30 for Rev. Heather's Community Office Hours. She would love to pray with you, lend a listening ear, and share some coffee. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates or changes to the coffee hours: [www.facebook.com/LeesburgUMC/](http://www.facebook.com/LeesburgUMC/)

## Forever Young

There will be no Forever Young session in the month of December. Our next Forever Young session will be January 13, 2020. Look for more information as the date gets closer. In the meantime, many thanks to all who have participated in our first three sessions; it has been fantastic and well received. Blessings to all, Wayne



**Forever Young** is a place where people gather for conversation about life and faith in a casual, comfortable setting. Questions about Forever Young may be directed to Wayne Reynolds at 703-777-4796 or [LUMC@assessnselect.com](mailto:LUMC@assessnselect.com), or to Rev. Heather Wray at [heather.wray@leesburgumc.org](mailto:heather.wray@leesburgumc.org).

## Keeping Up with the Congregation

### Congratulations

Congratulations to Nancy Wolford on the first of her first granddaughter, Whitley Rayne, on November 16th; Whitley and her family are doing well.

### Condolences

Condolences to the family and friends of LUMC member John Laycock, who passed away on October 26th.

### Healing Prayers in the Worship Program

Those in our congregation in need of healing prayer are listed each week in the Worship Program. People are listed based on prayer chain requests or information from Pastor Jim or Rev. Heather. If you need to be listed for healing prayer, please contact the church office ([office@leesburgumc.org](mailto:office@leesburgumc.org)) or submit a prayer request to [prayerchain@leesburgumc.org](mailto:prayerchain@leesburgumc.org), or use the Prayer Chain form in the "Contact Us" section of our new App. Names will be listed in the worship program for four Sundays. To remain on the list longer contact us with an update; to be taken off sooner just let us know. Requests for prayer for others outside our church family can also be sent to [prayerchain@leesburgumc.org](mailto:prayerchain@leesburgumc.org) to be prayed for by our prayer chain members.

### December Birthdays

The December birthday list is available in Wesley Hall.



## Connecting Over the Holidays

Last spring through the sermon series, *The Art of Neighboring*, our congregation was introduced to the concept of “Neighboring.” Neighboring is when we make an intentional effort to build relationships with our literal neighbors. We learned that most Americans don’t know the names of, let alone details about, their neighbors.

As Christians, we too often think that loving our neighbor is metaphorical, and we think we can fulfill that obligation by donating to Loudoun Hunger Relief or Back Pack Buddies or Salvation Army or Operation Christmas Child. When we think our neighbor is someone far away, not in our every day life, we miss the opportunity to engage with God. God desires that we will learn to love our literal neighbors—yes, the ones right outside our door!

If you don’t know the families that live around you, there is no better time than the holidays to get started on this holy task. Below are some tips and suggestions on how to start Neighboring—engaging meaningfully and building relationships with those right outside your door.

- **Happy Holidays Package:** Make some holiday treats, create an ornament, put together a hot cocoa kit, or purchase a small gift (like scented hand soap and a holiday hand towel) and take them to your neighbors as a gift. Be sure to include a card with your name and the names of your family members so they get the opportunity to know them too. And don’t just leave the package on their doorstep; be sure to knock and introduce yourself or your family personally. This may take a few tries but it’s important to make that face to face connection.
- **Candy Caning:** Maybe you know your neighbors names but you’re having a hard time moving past the friendly hellos in your driveway. You can have the youth decorate their yard in festive Candy Canes for a few days; make sure to let Angela know that you don’t want the surprise to be anonymous! Neighbors with young kids are especially likely to enjoy this treat. It’s a great ice breaker, and it helps our youth raise funds for their summer mission trip. (see page 5)
- **Host a Holiday Hot Chocolate Bar for the Santa Rides:** Every year Santa comes through Leesburg on a fire truck to wave to the kids. Find out which night he’s coming through your neighborhood and invite your neighbors over for some warm beverages, like hot chocolate and apple cider, about 30 minutes before he makes his appearance. It’s a brief way to practice hospitality without having to throw a big party. Give people disposable coffee mugs so they can take their warm beverages with them as they wait for Santa to come by!
- **Cookie Party at Church:** If you think your neighbor might be interested in church but the thought of inviting them to worship makes you, or them, nervous, then consider inviting them to our Cookie Party on December 22nd. It will be a low key way for them to experience our church environment without the pressure of a worship service. Make sure to help them register for the event and accompany them to the event. Our church can be intimidating to new comers; Wesley Hall and Asbury Hall



**Rev Heather  
Wray, Director  
of Connect**



(Continued on page 15)



# Grow

## Volunteer Opportunities with Children & Youth

We have several opportunities to serve through our children's and youth ministries. We have leaders for our groups and classes, and need adult assistants each week: Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings.

There is no prep work, just come with an open heart and ready to serve by being a loving presence, helping with activities and assisting with clean-up.

Please plan to arrive 10 minutes before start time and stay until all children/youth picked up; this helps to keep us in compliance with our child protection policy. You will be contacted prior to your selected date with policy required information.



Details & Sign-up Here:



## VAUMC Fall Retreat

Our youth had a blast in November while they learned about unity and reconciliation, worshipped together, and spent time building relationships.

They also planned "Bring a Friend Sunday" for December 8.





## Reflections on Darcy: Traditions Old and New

**Did you know that one of our former youth, Darcy Pierce, recently had a movie that she worked on released on Netflix?**

*Santa Girl* is a Hallmark Christmas movie that was filmed at Shenandoah University and around Winchester. Darcy served as an executive director and appears in several scenes throughout the film. This past weekend, I traveled to the Fall Retreat with our youth, and I asked several of our high school girls if they were aware of Darcy's movie. They weren't and they also shared that they didn't remember Darcy, although they remembered hearing her name when they were in middle school.

Their time in youth group did not overlap with Darcy's, so Darcy is no longer part of the shared memory of the group. That makes me sad because I remember when Darcy would tag along on the ski trip as a fourth or fifth grader because her dad chaperoned. Darcy was also the youth representative when a few of us gathered to discuss starting a youth worship service; she was just starting high school then. Today we are still using the general format that we developed back then to reach Darcy and her peers but now I must consider whether we need to reevaluate that format.

Even as I reflect on our youth ministry and the traditions that have brought us to today, I am forced to ask myself whether we continue doing something only so that a few people (myself, in this case) can remember something that happened once (those happy times when Darcy was one of our youth). Is this tradition being continued to help me remember something else, or does the practice have deeper meaning that is still helpful in moving others toward maturity in Christ?

This year, outside forces caused a few of our youth traditions to end: SPY and separate Fall Retreats (middle schoolers vs. high schoolers). In their places, new

traditions were born that will help foster community for new youth who have little connection to the past.

Letting go of favorite traditions can be painful because we feel we are also being forced to let go of the memories of those we love, memories attached to those traditions. But we must make space for new generations to create new traditions so that they, too, can create new life and pass on the mission of sharing God's love with the world they live in.

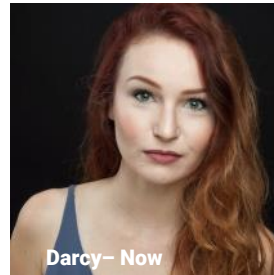
The basic structure of our youth ministry program was developed by the sixth through ninth graders during a retreat in 2005, the same month that one of those current ninth graders who doesn't remember Darcy, was born. As I look at our current middle school kids, who have no memory of a youth group that didn't meet in the AG, I have to remember that what worked for the Class of 2009 was shaped by a world that the Class of 2025 never knew.

This spring, I am would like to especially invite all of our middle school youth to a retreat to help us redefine what our youth ministry should look like today. March 14-15, all middle school students should plan to participate in this special retreat. High school students are encouraged as well, so you can pass forward what has been meaningful for you over the years.

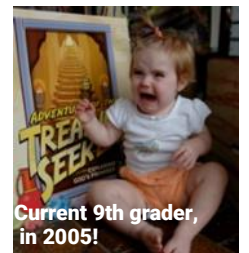
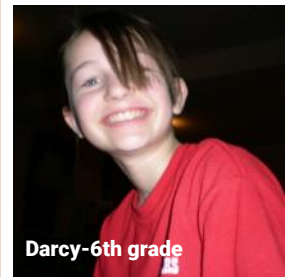
~ Angela Becek



And everyone... check out *Santa Girl* on Netflix and see if you can find Darcy!



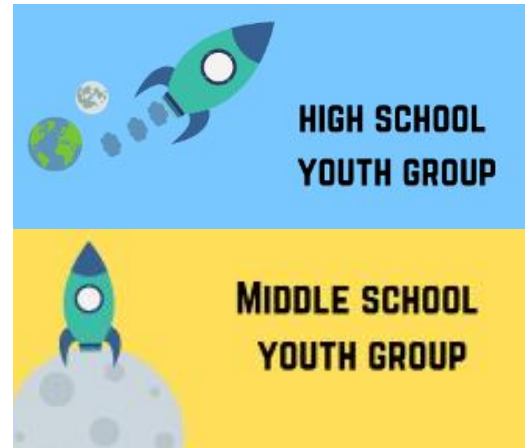
**Angela Becek,**  
**Director of**  
**Discipleship**  
**Ministries**



# Grow

## Youth Dates

- December 1** Gallery at 9:45  
(no evening youth group)
- December 8** Gallery at 9:45  
Youth Group at 6 pm
- December 15** Gallery at 9:45  
Christmas Party at 6 pm
- December 22** Gallery at 9:45



## Children's Sunday School

For children in pre-K through 5th grade  
Please pre-register; click images above to be taken to registration pages.

**Sundays: 9:45 to 10:45 am**

**Preschool:** meets in the Preschool Blue Room (Bees)

**K–2nd grade:** meets in Asbury Hall

**3rd–5th Grade:** meets in the third floor Red Room

**Club 345, 6 pm:** will meet Dec 8th and Dec 15th



## Kids' Christmas Pageant

**December 15 at 9:45**

Our *Simple Christmas Pageant* will retell the story of Jesus' birth through narration, a few key roles with speaking parts, and several non-speaking roles for kids to dress in character. Preschool kids are encouraged to participate as animals - they'll get to choose a costume that morning (pigs, cows, sheep, dogs, donkeys, etc.)

**We'll do a practice during Sunday school on Dec 8th with those present.**

**Dress rehearsal will begin at 9 am on the 15th.**

**Sign-up Here:**



## Youth Winter Retreat

**Feb. 14-17 at Canaan Valley Resort**

**A weekend of skiing (or snowboarding), fellowship and worship.**

We will leave Friday after school and return Monday around 1 pm. Two full days of skiing/snowboarding, three nights lodging, two nights of programming, three breakfasts, and two dinners are included.

Cost per person: \$400 (youth sleep 4per room; adults sleep 2 per room). Deposit of \$150 (plus rentals) is due on registration; balance due by January 5.

**\*\*All parent chaperones must be willing and able to drive and to transport other youth.**

**NO REFUNDS.** You are welcome to try to "sell" your spot, but it is not the responsibility of LUMC to do this for you. LUMC cannot get a refund for registrations paid, therefore cannot refund if you cancel at any point.

Registration deadline to guarantee your spot is December 6.



**Details & Sign-up Here:**



## Join a Small Group

**Our on-going groups; contact the church office for more info.**

**On Sundays:**

**9:45 am The Friendship Class—AG 1; Facilitator: Kim Kadesch**

**11:00 am Wesley Discipleship Class—AG1; Facilitator: Carl Snyder and Steve Chapin**

**11:00 am Royal Rebels—Blue Room (upstairs education building); Facilitator: Sharon Reith**

**6:00 pm Friends and Followers—Wesley Hall; Facilitators: Steve & Celesta Miller**

**Wednesdays:**

**7:00 pm Disciple Bible Study—AG1; Facilitator: Rev. Jim Wishmyer**

**Thursdays:**

**9:30 am Women's Study Group—Wesley Hall; Facilitator: Sharon Reith**

**Fridays:**

**7:00 am Men's IHOP Meeting—IHOP restaurant; Facilitator: Rev. Jim Wishmyer**

**Daily:**

**Receive Daily Emails**

You can sign-up to receive daily e-mails at [mailchi.mp/23ac72cc4601/dr](mailto:mailchi.mp/23ac72cc4601/dr)







BACKPACK BUDDIES

**2019-20  
Packings**

**Dec 1  
(Wesley)  
Jan 5  
Feb 2  
Mar ch1  
April 5  
May 3  
June 7**

# Reach

## Backpack Buddies

**Backpack Buddies will host its next backpack packing session on Sunday, Dec 1st. Please join us in Wesley Hall after the 8:30 service and between the 9:45 & 11 am services. We pack 80 bags per week .**

### FOOD ITEMS NEEDED:

Milk (white or chocolate, shelf stable)	Cheese crackers
Instant oatmeal	Mac n' cheese single serving cups
Juice boxes	Granola bars (without nuts)
Cereal (individual sizes)	Ramen Cup-o-Noodles
Fruit cups or applesauce cups	1 lb bag rice
Chef Boyardee single serve cups/cans	1 lb bag dry beans



## Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

**Thank you to everyone who filled shoe boxes this year; we filled 54 boxes.**

Please note that we will not be collecting shoeboxes in 202. However, if you feel called to this ministry, please know that you can still participate, and the drop-off will be at Cornerstone Church.

## TOP: Teens Opposing Poverty

On November 10, our youth and adult chaperones prepared over 100 meals and went into DC to distribute to those in need on the streets. It was a great opportunity to practice sharing God's love and grace in the world.





## Loudoun Homeless Services Center: Our Signature Mission

### Dinner for Shelter Residents

Leesburg UMC will provide and serve a hot meal for homeless shelter residents on the second Wednesday of the month, starting January 2020. Sign up through [Sign-up Genius](#) (or navigate to [www.leesburgumc.org/article/loudoun-homeless-services-center/](http://www.leesburgumc.org/article/loudoun-homeless-services-center/) to find the link). If your group would like to serve more often, you can contact Linda Kimble (703-771-5429) to see if other dates are available to serve.

### Dinner for Cold Weather Shelter

Leesburg UMC will provide and serve a hot meal every for Cold Weather Shelter users on the third Thursday of the month, December 2019 through March 2020. Sign up through [Sign-up Genius](#) (or navigate to [www.leesburgumc.org/article/loudoun-homeless-services-center/](http://www.leesburgumc.org/article/loudoun-homeless-services-center/) to find the link).

### Lunch bags for Cold Weather Shelter

LHSC provides lunch bags for the people using the Cold Weather Shelter, about 15-25 people. If you or your group would like to provide sandwiches, apples, granola bars, 4oz water bottles, please contact Linda Kimble at 703-771-5429.



## Donations for LHSC—Due Dec 15th

**Pick up at Wesley Hall Poster Display—drop off in Missions Room**

**Benefits LHSC residents**

**We are collecting Long Underwear; Sweat Suits; and Bus Passes.**

**Bus Passes:** LHSC gives out on average 50-60 bus passes per week. The residents use the county bus service to go to work, doctor appointments etc. One trip bus pass cost is \$1 and a five-trip punch pass is \$5. Please leave cash in the basket in Missions Room or donate through our app (in Giving>Special section). You can also donate using the QR code.



**Long underwear:** for adults who stay at the Cold Weather Shelter. This will keep them warmer when they leave the shelter in the morning. All sizes are needed: S,M,L,XL

**Sweatsuits:** Sweatsuits (pants and top do not have to match) are for adults at the Cold Weather Shelter when they don't have a change of clothing, so they can have something to change into when their clothes get washed. All sizes needed: S,M,L,XL

If you have any questions, please contact [Missions@leesburgumc.org](mailto:Missions@leesburgumc.org)  
or call Margrit 703-431-2845

# Reach

## Salvation Army Angel Tree—Extended to Dec 5th

Pick up at Wesley Hall Angel tree—drop off in Missions Room

Benefits Loudoun County children

The Angel Tree in Wesley Hall is adorned with tags bearing angels and Christmas gift requests. Requests include not only toys but sometimes also essential needs and winter clothing items like hats and mittens. Please consider taking a tag and purchasing some or all of the requested items.

Bring the items, unwrapped, enclosed in the clear Angel bag with the Angel tag inside and the manilla tag attached to the outside with the zip tie. Green tag is for oversized items like bikes, that won't fit into the clear bag. Bring your gifts to the Missions room by Sunday, December 1st. We'll get them to the Salvation Army, where they will be given directly to those in need right here in our community.

Questions? Please contact [Margrit Snyder](mailto:missions@leesburgumc.org):  
missions@leesburgumc.org or 703-431-2845.



## LHR Thanksgiving Meals

Thank you to those who contributed for Thanksgiving meals. We collected 24 meal bags and \$320 worth of grocery gift cards.



## LUMC Supports Loudoun Hunger Relief (LHR)

Did you know that the First Sunday of each month is Loudoun Hunger Relief Sunday?

Please support Loudoun Hunger Relief by bringing food and other items to the Missions Room (next to church office) on Sundays or any time the church is open.

### Shopping List:

Cereal  
100% juice  
Canned tuna  
Canned chicken  
Peanut Butter  
Canned fruit  
Canned peas

Canned green beans  
Canned corn  
Toothpaste  
Toothbrushes  
Feminine hygiene products  
Diapers



The LUMC Missions Team: For more information or if you have questions about Missions at Leesburg UMC, please contact Missions Chair Margrit Snyder at [missions@leesburgumc.org](mailto:missions@leesburgumc.org).

## Great Beginnings Preschool

We are excited to wish all of our friends at LUMC a very happy holiday season! November has been a productive and fun month at GBP! We have learned about community helpers, football, patterns, Veteran's Day/patriotism, manners, and Thanksgiving. Our 5th Annual Vendor Fair was a wonderful showcase of local businesses. We appreciated seeing so many familiar faces at the fair!

December is a month of giving and sharing at Great Beginnings! We cannot wait to share the message of Jesus' birth during the LUMC Christmas Pageant on December 15th. We will also be hosting our annual bake sale after all three services on the 15th in Wesley Hall. Our Sunbeams created special commemorative 2019 GBP ornaments; their ornaments will be featured at the bake sale.

We are looking forward to celebrating baby Jesus' birth throughout the month of December. Our bible verse is from Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." We will also concentrate on the color red, the star, the numbers 5 and 12, and the letters J and K.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We are grateful to have such a supportive church family!

Blessings and Warm Regards,  
Heather Gonzalez  
Director, Great Beginnings Preschool  
greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com



GBP's 2019  
Ornament

## Connecting Over the Holidays *(continued from page 7)*

*(Continued from page 7)*

may mean something to you, but for a first time guest our church can be a maze. (see page 4)

- **Invite them to Christmas Eve:** If you have a relationship with your neighbors, you know their names, and feel comfortable with them, then invite them to one of our Christmas Eve services. Don't just list off the service times; invite them instead to come with you and your family. Tell them which service you attend and what you love about it. Offer to carpool with them to church and sit with them in the service. Ask them if they have any questions. Follow up a few days later to thank them for going with you and to invite them with you the next time you go to church.

I hope you will use some of these ideas to connect with your neighbors. The end goal isn't to make them members at LUMC, the end goal is for them to see Christ in you. That won't ever happen if you don't know them! Go out knowing that Christ goes before you to make a way, the Holy Spirit will empower you, and God will be with you as you do the holy work of loving your neighbors. ~ Rev. Heather Wray

# Steward

## Our Way Forward Together: Preparing for General Conference, 2020

**SAVE THE DATES: January 26, February 9, May 31**

Many are aware that the United Methodist General Conference meets next May, 2020, and will once again take up the issues of Lesbian and Gay sexuality and inclusion, along with how the United Methodist Church may move forward knowing the deep and painful division over these issues. United Methodists world-wide hold differing opinions on the issues of gay/heterosexual marriage, ordination, and what local churches/clergy can and cannot do with respect to celebrating gay marriage. The General Conference, comprised of delegates from the global UM Church, is the official voice of United Methodism. It is charged with establishing the mission, priorities, processes, and parameters of our ministry together worldwide.

Knowing that the decisions of this (and every) General Conference will impact local churches, please put the above dates on your calendar, as we prepare and pray for GC 2020.

In particular, **on January 26**, we will hold a town hall conversation with two Virginia Conference clergy who are, or have been, delegates to General Conference; followed by a time for theological reflection and discussion. Our two presenters are the Rev. Rob Vaughn and the Rev. Keith Boyette. We have asked them to share 1) what they anticipate and expect, leading up to the Conference, 2) what we can do to prepare leading up to and following the Conference, and 3) how we can effectively pray.

Our primary focus through all of these discussions continues to be how we can effectively and genuinely “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”. The delightful paradox of disciple making is that in the process we, too, undergo transformation as the wind of the Holy Spirit continues to stir – and sometimes stir up.

- January 26:** Town Hall: Preparing for General Conference, 3:00-4:30PM
- February 9:** Reflection and Discussion on our Beliefs – Theological, Biblical, Cultural... 3:00-4:30PM
- May 31:** Town Hall: Results of General Conference, TBD

*~Rev. Jim Wishmyer, Our Way Forward Together Task Force*

## Logo Town Hall – Sunday, Dec 15

We’re having an LUMC Town Hall meeting on Sunday, December 15, at 12:30 pm. Our topic will be the brand new logo approved by our Church Leadership Team this fall.

Our NLI Communications Task Force will give a presentation on the development of the new logo, what it is designed to communicate, and how the new logo will be used along with our classic brand symbol (the Cross and Flame) and brand promise



“Open hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors. The people of the United Methodist Church”.

Questions may be submitted ahead of time by emailing our NLI Communications Task Force chairperson, Leslie Payne ([lpayne@asce.org](mailto:lpayne@asce.org)), or our Church Leadership Team chairperson, Steve Chapin ([schapinjr@jarsllc.com](mailto:schapinjr@jarsllc.com)).



## NLI: Communications

The Task Committee on Communications will be continuing its work in 2020 as the Communications Advisory Team and will meet monthly to continue work toward achieving the communications goals of the Next Level Innovations initiative.

Fresh leadership and ideas are encouraged and welcome. If you are interested in taking a more active role in the life of the church through helping to plan, implement, and evaluate communications strategy, please [contact the church office](#). The team will begin meeting again in January.

## Leadership Training

We are blessed to have two opportunities to attend training events hosted by our Winchester District and the Alexandria/Arlington Districts. The first will be **Sunday, January 12**, time and location TBD, by the **Winchester District**. Classes for our leaders on the following: Finance Committee, CLT for Nominations and Leadership Development, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, and Trustees. This schedule will be published Friday, November 22.

The second will be **Saturday, January 18**, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM, at Floris UMC, hosted by the **Alexandria/Arlington Districts**. Registration is available online or by completing a paper registration by mail. Early registration (through Dec. 14) is \$40 for the day and includes lunch. After the 14<sup>th</sup>, registration is \$60.

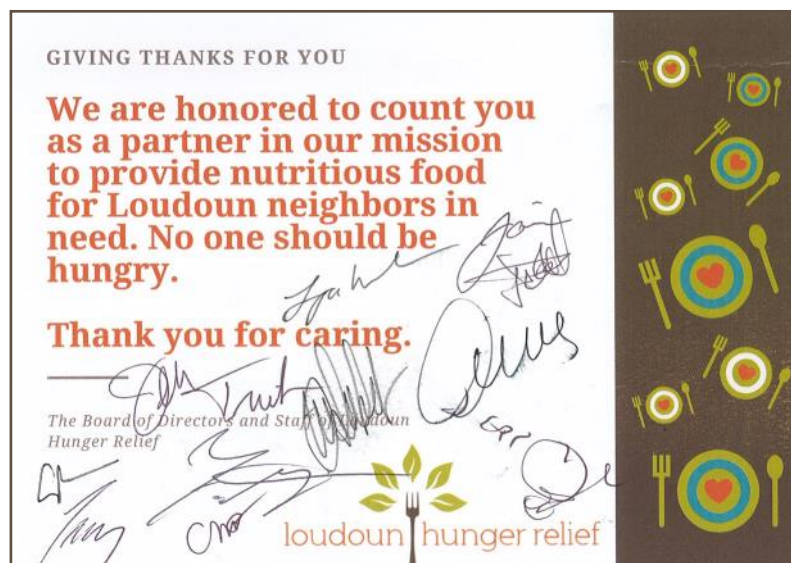
Register online at <https://btdt.novaumc.org/> or use the QR Code below to access the PDF brochure for paper registration.

**Note:** there are two sessions: one in the morning, and one in the afternoon, with lunchtime “Roundtable Discussions”. This event is for anyone in the church, not just current leaders. The list of workshops covers many different aspects related our church, including one that previews the upcoming General Conference in May, 2020.

**Also note:** These workshops fill up FAST so sign up soon.



Thank you,  
LUMC, for  
your  
support to  
provide  
food for  
those in  
need!



# Steward



## NLI Update: Wesley Hall Improvements

In the next few weeks, the NLI Hospitality Task Force will be at work making Wesley Hall even more hospitable as the holiday season gets under way. Here are some of the new things to look for in the coming weeks:

- **A photo gallery wall**, featuring pictures of our congregation fellowshipping together, serving together, and worshipping together over the past year, will be located next to the archives room. This location is meant to signify that we are a church with a significant and meaningful past, a vibrant present, and a hopeful future.
- **A chest/console to serve as an information center** for sign ups, hand outs, and other items that used to be located at the Just Ask Desk will be added. The drawers will store convenience items for use in Wesley Hall, such as the DVD player/ cable for the television, pens, clipboards, etc. Find this new info center below the Wesley TV.
- **A historical gallery wall**, featuring photos of our church history, will be laid out on the wall that adjoins the Narthex. It will include familiar photos relocated from other walls as well as some new ones that we collected from Thomas Balch Library. The glass-topped display will also be relocated to serve as an anchor for the historical photos. We selected the narthex wall for this gallery because it is an original wall, so we're celebrating our history on our historical wall.
- **Conversation areas are being furnished in two corners** of Wesley Hall where people can sit to enjoy their coffee and conversation on Sunday mornings. The new furnishings include some light-weight arm chairs that can easily be moved out of the room if needed, yet are more formal and substantial than folding chairs. We also have new black occasional tables to place coffee and snacks on while they sit.

We hope that you will enjoy these improvements to Wesley Hall. We have taken care to listen to each other throughout this process as we have discerned what was needed to amplify the beauty and functionality of this room. We were thoughtful as we chose items that enhance the beauty of the space and respect and honor its historical significance. We believe that Wesley Hall is the hub of our hospitality on Sunday mornings, and we hope that these changes will help create an even more welcoming atmosphere for you and all our guests.

# Steward

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## Christmas Love Gift for Staff

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: the time has come again to show our appreciation for the Staff of LUMC. Please make your contribution and mark on your check "Christmas Love offering" and place in offering plate. Thank you, SPRC



## Year-End Giving Reminder

Per IRS rules, all charitable giving that is counted for 2019 must either be received by the church by Dec. 31, 2019, or mailed with a postmark no later than Dec 31, 2019. Our last regularly scheduled worship service will be on December 29th this year, but mailed and our online/app/text digital giving will be available on the 30th and 31st. Please keep this schedule in mind as you plan your year end giving, and help LUMC finish the year financially strong!



## Our Current Breakthrough Prayer:

**O God, Awesome and Holy, we praise and adore you!**

**Thank you, Jesus! for walking with us and calling us to be your church.**

**Thank you, Holy Spirit! for empowering us to serve, witness, and work according to your will.**

**Thank you, Father! for helping us to do more than we dreamed.**

**Forgive us our doubt and stubbornness. Kindle our hearts with hope for the future, love for neighbor, and faith to persevere in doing your will.**

**Keep breaking through our lives, our church, and our community to bring new partnerships, new life, and new power to do far more than we can even imagine.**

**May it be, O God! In Jesus' name. Amen.**



## Inclement Weather Policy

As winter weather approaches, just a reminder that LUMC will be open for worship on Sundays, regardless of the weather, except in very extreme conditions such as a hurricane, 100-year flood, blinding blizzard conditions, etc..

Always use good judgment and err on the side of safety when inclement weather hits the area. Check the church's website when in doubt.



## Leesburg United Methodist Church

107 West Market Street  
Leesburg, VA 20176

703-777-2056  
www.leesburgumc.org



The January Newsletter will be published near the beginning of January. To ensure your item gets in, please submit by 9 am on Thursday, Dec 19th. Thank you!



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

**The people of The United Methodist Church®**

## Do You Have Our App? Have You Tried Text Giving?

### We Now Have an App!

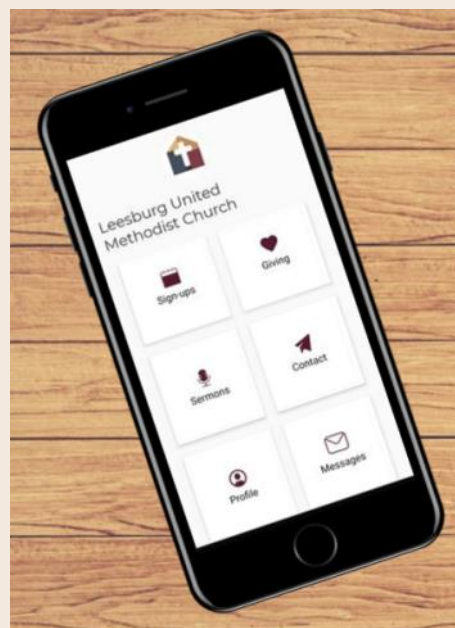
Our new app (available for Android and Apple devices) will help you find event sign-ups, listen to recent sermons, make it easy to give using credit card or direct debit from your bank account, and contact us for general questions or prayer requests.

Use the QR codes to get the Apps. Once it's installed on your device, search for "Leesburg UMC".

### Text to Give

Don't want to bother with the app for your online giving? Just use "Text-to-Give"! Simply text GIVE to 703-440-7222. The first time you give this way, the system will return a link to set up your payment info.

After the one time set-up, you're just a simple text away from quickly honoring God through your giving and gratitude.



Apple:



Android:

