



The Good News

First United Methodist Church New Braunfels

HANGING OF THE GREENS

*May the decorations we offer
engage our senses during the
days of Advent and enliven
our praise and worship, in the
name of the child of Bethlehem,
our risen and coming savior,
Jesus Christ.
Amen.*



The church building is adorned with wreaths, garlands, and ornaments for the season of Advent. Consider how these decorations point to the story we celebrate at Christmas.

According to the United Methodist Church website, evergreens can remind us of “the unending life of the age to come when Christ returns, the dead are raised, and the righteous enter life in the new creation.”

Additionally, “the shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves resemble the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus.

The red colored leaves represent the blood of Christ shed for the world.”

Retired pastor, Don Snyder, writes about Advent symbols in “Don’s Doodles.”
Read more on page 9.

As you appreciate the beautiful decorations, extend thanks to those who stayed after church to decorate: Gwen Gabriel, The Weatherby Family, The Odens, and Lenny Robertson.



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Church Pianist

Gwen Gabriel
 Susan Bell

Custodian

Pedro Aleman
 Becca Westfahl



First United Methodist Church
572 W San Antonio St
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Downtown New Braunfels, across from Arlan's Market

CONNECT

**Sunday Worship Times**

8:30 Traditional
 9:45 Modern
 11:00 Traditional



(830) 625-4513



www.fumcnb.org

**OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Thursday
 8am—4pm
 (Closed for lunch 12-1)

**FACEBOOK**

www.facebook.com/Fumcnb/

**ONLINE CALENDAR**

<https://www.fumcnb.org/calendar/>



www.fumcnb.org/onlineworship/

We have streamlined our link for watching worship online. There will now be only 1 link to access all 3 livestream worship services.



Deadline for next newsletter: December 15

**GIVE**

www.fumcnb.org/give/

FINANCIAL UPDATE as of OCTOBER 31, 2023

OCTOBER Income - \$111,526.66
 OCTOBER Expenses-\$99,427.52

YTD Income-\$936,114.89
 YTD Expenses-\$1,000,478.54

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

First United Methodist Church New Braunfels

DECEMBER 2023

1

2

4 Walk to the Manger
6:15 Vespers in Seguin

2 Memorial Service



**Manger
Donation:
Toys**

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

IMPACT SUNDAY

8 Sunrise Singers
8:30 Traditional Svc
9:45 Contemporary Svc
9:45 Adult SS
9:45 1st Kid's Worship
9:45 Youth Sunday School
11 Traditional Svc
11 Friends/Followers
1 Revised Version
6:30 Stellar Christmas

3 Theresa's Prayer Grp
4 Walk to the Manger
5 Grief Share

7:30 Coffee Connection
9:30 Staff Mtg
11 UWF Luncheon
2 Pray & Play
4 Walk to the Manger
5 United Handbells
5:30 RCA Vet Group
6 First Bells
6:30 Pickleball
6:30 Church Conf
6:30 Small Group

8 Cantata Setup
1 Unlikely Advent
1:30 Heart for Homebound
4 Walk to the Manger
5 Emmaus Reunion Grp
5:30 Midweek Worship
6 Digging into the Bible
7 Cantata Rehearsal
7:45 Sanctuary Choir

10 Grandma's Christmas Stockings
1:30 Mahjong
3 Spitzer Party
4 Walk to the Manger
6 Discipleship Mtg
6:30 Mission Mtg

4 Walk to the Manger
6 PNO

9 Cantata Rehearsal



**Handspun
Hope
Market**

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

8:30 Cantata Svc
9:45 Contemporary Svc
9:45 Adult SS
9:45 1st Kid's Worship
11 Cantata Svc
11 Friends/Followers
11 Youth Sunday School
1 Revised Version
3:30 Students
Progressive Dinner

3 Theresa's Prayer Grp
5 Grief Share
4 Walk to the Manger
6 Life HACs
6:30 Trustees Mtg
6:30 Girl Scouts

7:30 Coffee Connection
9:30 Staff Mtg
1 Faith Stitches
2 Pray & Play
4 Walk to the Manger
5 United Handbells
5:30 RCA Vet Group
6 First Bells
6:30 Pickleball
6:30 Small Group

1 Bridge Group
1 Unlikely Advent
1:30 Heart for Homebound
4 Walk to the Manger
5 Emmaus Reunion Grp
5:30 Midweek Worship
6 Digging into the Bible
6:30 Eve Circle
6:30 Youth Council
7 Sanctuary Choir

1:30 Mahjong
4 Walk to the Manger
7 BS District Committee

4 Walk to the Manger
6 Parents Night Out
6:30 Darkest Night



**Manger
Donation:
Dogfood**

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

8 Sunrise Singers
8:30 Traditional Svc
9:45 Contemporary Svc
9:45 Adult SS
9:45 1st Kid's Worship
9:45 Youth Sunday School
11 Traditional Svc
11 Friends/Followers
1 Revised Version
4 Pet Blessings

3 Theresa's Prayer Grp
4 Walk to the Manger
6:30 Finance Mtg

7:30 Coffee Connection
9:30 Staff Mtg
9:30 UWF Circles
11:30 Mary Circle Lunch
2 Pray & Play
4 Walk to the Manger
5 United Handbells
5:30 RCA Vet Group
6 First Bells
6:30 Pickleball
6:30 Small Group

1 Unlikely Advent
1:30 Heart for Homebound
4 Walk to the Manger
5 Emmaus Reunion Grp
5:30 Midweek Worship
6 Digging into the Bible
7 Sanctuary Choir

1:30 Mahjong
4 Walk to the Manger

4 Walk to the Manger



**Manger
Donation:
Blankets
& Hoodies**

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

11 Traditional Svc
1 Revised Version

Christmas Eve Services
3 Children-Focused Svc
5 Contemporary Svc
7 Traditional Svc

5:30 RCA Vet Group

5 Emmaus Reunion Grp

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

31

8 Sunrise Singers
8:30 Traditional Svc
9:45 Contemporary Svc
9:45 Adult SS
11 Traditional Svc
11 Friends/Followers
1 Revised Version

HAPPY
New Year

**Check the online
calendar for
updates:**

<https://www.fumcnb.org/calendar>



First Bells providing music during worship

MUSIC MINISTRY

Christmas Cantata

Morning Star by Joseph and Pamela Martin

December 10

Join us for a Sunday of music that showcases our incredible music ministry and celebrates the birth of Christ.

The cantata will feature the Sanctuary Choir, Handbell Choir and a small instrumental ensemble.

CANTATA REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Wed. 12/6	7-8 p.m.
Sat. 12/9	10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Dress Rehearsal with small orchestra and piano.
Sun. 12/10	8 a.m. Call, sing Cantata at 8:30 & 11 a.m. Services.

UNITED BELLS for beginners or experienced ringers, rehearsals on Tuesdays, 5-5:50 p.m. in the Bell Room 213.

FIRST BELLS for intermediate to experienced ringers, rehearsals on Tuesdays, 6-7:15 p.m. in the Bell Room 213.

SONRISE SINGERS rehearsals on Sundays, 8 a.m. Choir Room: ALL ARE WELCOME

SANCTUARY CHOIR rehearsals on Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m. Choir Room: ALL ARE WELCOME

Contact Michael Kahl for more info

WORSHIP



SLOW: A SEASON OF SABBATH

- Sundays, December 3, 10, 17 (8:30, 9:45, and 11:00 a.m.)
- Sunday, December 24 (11:00 a.m. one service only)**
- Wednesday evenings, December 6, 13, 20 (5:30 p.m.)

This year we will have services on both Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. The theme for all of our services is Slow: A Season of Sabbath. As in year's past our midweek services will feature music and a devotions. This year, however, our midweek service and our Sunday services will be united in our theme, meditating on similar ideas in different ways.



**December 15
6:30 p.m.**

Darkest Night

This service is for those experiencing sadness, grief, disappointment or loss during the Christmas season, who would like to observe Christmas in a more subdued atmosphere.



Christmas Eve Services
Carols, Communion, and Candlelight

3:00 p.m. Children-Focused
5:00 p.m. Contemporary
7:00 p.m. Traditional





**Student Ministry
Friendsgiving meal
November 19, 2023**

STUDENT MINISTRY

To anyone (parents or students) who have not yet downloaded the new church app – Church Center in the app store – and joined the Student Ministry group, please do so ASAP if you are capable. It will be our primary source of rapid communication for the foreseeable future. If you already have an account, we'd love it if you could upload a profile picture of yourself to help church staff more easily recognize you when we see you out and about!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wed, Dec. 6th Student Ministry Council, 6:00-7:00 in the Student Ministry Loft (room 202/204).

Sun, Dec. 10th Progressive Dinner Christmas Party,

Sun, Dec. 24th Christmas Eve! *No Sunday School or MYF.* Last advent service at 11:00 a.m. Christmas Eve services at 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m.

Sun, Dec. 31st New Year's Eve. *No Sunday School or MYF.*

Sun, Feb. 11th Next Gen Sunday, all 3 services, details to come.

Fri.-Sun, Feb. 16-18th Student Ministry Winter Retreat to Galveston, details to come.

Sun, Feb. 18th Confirmation starts, 4:00 p.m. at the church, details to come.

Some events require registration. Reach out to Everett for sign-up links.

FIRST KIDS

RISE for 4th and 5th Graders

RISE will not meet in December.

Instead we encourage families to attend the pet blessings and Santa pictures on December 17 at 4 p.m. RISE will meet again January 21st.

First Kids worship Please note there will be no First Kids Worship on December 24th nor December 31st.

Moms' Night Out

Some of our young moms gathered for a great evening of painting, snacks, and hot cocoa while the kids had play time and movies on their own. Many thanks to our Children's Co-Directors, Amber and Mallorie, for planning this event to help get us ready for the Christmas season! This group plans to meet again in January to consider forming an on-going small group or groups to encourage each other through the all-important years of "mommin'!"



**Mom's
Night Out**

ADULTS

Walking to the Manger is a four-week daily devotional, led by Hanna Salazar, inviting you to make walking, reflecting, and prayer a part of your daily Advent practice. Just as Mary and Joseph traveled the long journey to Bethlehem, during the Christian season of Advent, we journey in faith through the lessons of the season. We prepare in body and spirit to meet the Christ-child once again. Drop in as you are able 4 to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday through December 22 in Wesley Hall.

Begin with a short devotion and then walk at your own pace for as long as you would like. Weather permitting, we make laps in the parking



Walking to the Manger

Advent Study-*An Unlikely Advent* by Rachel Billups

Karen is leading this study which began on November 29. This study examines our fears of missing out, the story of a villain, some curious people, and what happens when God shows up. Meet from 1:00 – 2:15 on Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13, and Dec 20. Please let Karen know if you plan to attend.

Discipleship Groups

- Gardening Group
- Life HACs December 11
- Grandma's Christmas Stockings
- Faith Stitchers December 12
- Lunch Bunch
- Holy Smokes
- Classical Music Lovers
- Travel Ministry
- Dinners for 8

Ask **Karen Andrews** karen@fumcnb.org how you can join one of these groups.

*God
Speaks
Still*

Women's Retreat! Plan to join us for the 2024 the Women's Retreat, "God Speaks Still." Pastor Karen Horan will return as our speaker; Carol Johnson and Jessica Bauman will serve as our music team. The location is beautiful Camp Capers, near Comfort. Please make note our weekend days will be a bit different this year, so check your calendars as you make your plans to attend. The retreat will be on Saturday and Sunday February 17 and 18. Registration forms are available on the Adult Bulletin board. Cost for the weekend is \$110 per person. Partial scholarships are available; see Karen Andrews. Registration and payment will be due by January 17.

End-of-Year Giving

The church office will be CLOSED from December 25th thru January 1st. Nevertheless, there are many options for year-end giving:

- Mail your gifts to the church. Envelopes postmarked by the 31st will count towards 2023, regardless of when they actually arrive at the church.
- Drop your gifts off at the church. We have a drop off mail slot in the door of the Parlor/Rm 100 (from San Antonio St. it's in Old Educ. Bldg. to left of sanctuary in the 1st door). One of the pastors will be coming by daily to pickup those gifts.
- Give online. You can go to our website and give at www.fumcnb.org/give. ACH transfers have minimal fees.
- Bring your gifts by the church on or before the 21st. Please bring any giving during our regular office hours 8am-12pm/1pm-4pm.
- Give on any Sunday in December. Christmas Eve is a Sunday this year. Naturally all giving on Sunday will be deposited and processed as normal.

Additional information regarding End-of-Year Giving...

As the Christmas season approaches we often ask ourselves "What shall I return to the Lord for all that He has given me?" Psalm 116:12.

If you have appreciated stock this year, you may realize a tax break thru a donation. Consult your tax advisor for your situation. If you're 70 1/2 or older & have a Required Minimum Distribution from retirement plan, you may benefit from a directed gift. Talk to your tax advisor or plan admin & let them know if you are interested in the possible tax benefit.

Message From SPRC

Dear Congregation,
Our church has a tradition of collecting a Love Offering for the church staff and presenting it to them as a "Christmas Bonus". If you'd like to contribute to this, please indicate that you'd like for your donation to go to the "Love Offering".



Thank you,
Lee Brinkerhoff
Chair Staff Parish Relations Comm. (SPRC)

Heritage Pins

We have a limited number of heritage lapel/hat pins available in the Welcome Center. We suggest a donation of \$5 per pin to cover the manufacturing cost.

Charge Conference

Charge Conference is scheduled for December 5 at North Shore UMC at 6:30 p.m.

Pet Blessings & Santa Pictures



December 17, 4 p.m. Bring donations for the Humane Society

Holiday Schedule

The church will be closed December 25 through January 1.

Have you downloaded our church app, yet?

You'll have access to your the calendar and your ministry and fellowship teams right on your phone. If you've already downloaded the app and created an account, don't forget to add your user picture!



APP

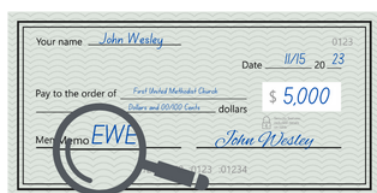
THE BE A GOOD SHEPHERD CAMPAIGN

Lead our flock back to the still waters and green pastures of an Enhanced Worship Experience.

Our Church, God's house, has developed some consequences of aging over the years, just as many of us have. Some of the aging effects have impaired the process of worship for many of the members of our growing congregation. Our church leaders have listened. They have identified what is needed to correct the most pressing aging issues and the technology issues affecting sight and sound that are currently preventing a complete and more fully-shared worship experience.

On September 25, 2023, the Administrative Board approved moving forward with the **Enhanced Worship Experience project** and financing it through a fundraising campaign. The target of the campaign, \$400,000, is needed to pay for the repairs and improvements to enhance the in-person and online worship experience for the present and for the foreseeable future. The fundraising effort is over and above normal giving and required to accomplish the project.

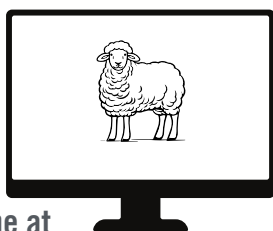
The "Be a Good Shepherd" campaign rolled out, November 12. Giving to the campaign is easy. You can give:



By Check. Put "EWE" in the Memo



By QR Code or Church App



Or Online at
fumcnb.churchcenter.com/pages/ewe



SYMPATHY

To the family of *Bob Mayer* on the death of their father on November 9.

To the family of *David Collander* on the death of their father on November 14.

To Tom Tabler & family on the death of *Janet Tabler* on November 18.

To Sandra Collier on the death of *Howard Collier* on November 24.

HERITAGE SUNDAY



Pictures from the November 12 Heritage Sunday Luncheon



FUMC currently has two nursery worker positions available. The pay is \$15.50/hour, and the hours are VERY flexible. Contact mallorie@fumcnb.org to apply!

A MESSAGE FROM RETIRED PASTOR DON: DON'S DOODLES

The turkey and even the leftovers are already gone. I hope you all have had a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration. We are now in the season of Advent which is a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ on Christmas. Our sanctuary is beautifully decorated and there are a couple of very special things in the sanctuary during this season that deserve special attention. They are the Advent wreath and the Chrismon tree.

The Advent wreath is a Christian tradition that symbolizes the passage of the four weeks of Advent. Advent wreaths are circular, representing God's infinite, unending love, and are usually made of evergreen leaves which represent the hope of eternal life brought by Jesus Christ. Within the Advent wreath are candles that represent the four weeks of the Advent season as well as the light of God coming into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ although each of the candles can be attributed its own significance as well. The four candles of the Advent wreath specifically symbolize the Christian concepts of hope, peace, joy and love with these candles being lit subsequently throughout each week of the Advent season. Our Advent wreath also has a white Christ candle in the center which is first lit on Christmas Eve.

The colors for the four surrounding Advent candles are violet (or blue) and rose. Violet is the liturgical color for three of the four Sundays of Advent as it is the traditional color of penitential seasons; blue has been historically used too, as it represents hopefulness, reflective of the theme of Advent

surrounding the First Coming of Jesus and Second Coming of Jesus. Rose is the liturgical color for the Third Sunday of Advent and represents a pause in the penitential spirit of Advent.

A Chrismon tree is an evergreen tree placed in the chancel or nave of a church during Advent and Christmastide. The Chrismon tree was first used by North American Lutherans in 1957, and the practice has spread to other Christian denominations including Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists, and the Reformed. As with the ordinary Christmas tree, the evergreen tree itself for Christians, symbolizes the eternal life Jesus Christ provides. However, the Chrismon tree differs from the traditional Christmas tree in that it is decorated only with clear lights and Chrismons made from white and gold material which are the liturgical colors of the Christmas season.

The Chrismon tree is adorned with Chrismons, ancient symbols for Christ or some part of Christ's ministry: the dove descending, fish, Celtic cross, Jerusalem cross, shepherd's crook, chalice, shell, and others. These symbols help us to focus on Christ's mission and ministry. The beautiful Chrismons on our tree were lovingly handmade by the ladies of our church several years ago.

I pray that your Advent season is richly blessed by our Advent Wreath and Chrismon Tree. I took much of the above information from the internet which I edited significantly. There is much more rich history available on these Christmas traditions available there if this brief summary piqued your interest and you would like to know more. Merry Christmas!

A Look Into our FUMC New Braunfels History... Rev. John Wesley DeVilbiss-Presiding Elder

Rev. Jim Wright, Retired

John Wesley DeVilbiss was born August 18, 1818 to Alexander and Priscilla 'Devilbissin' in Graceham, Maryland. The family later moved to Licking County, Ohio. In 1833, while learning the saddler's trade in Tiffin, Ohio, Wesley (as his family called him) went to a Methodist camp meeting and had a conversion experience that turned him toward the ministry. After attending Methodist College in Augusta, Kentucky, he joined the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1840. He received his ministerial training by riding the circuits as an assistant to experienced preachers. DeVilbiss (as he now wrote his name) was admitted into full connection and ordained a deacon by Bishop Thomas A. Morris in 1842. Then he was recruited with five colleagues as a missionary to Texas. The party left Cincinnati in November 1842, traveled by steamer to Natchitoches, Louisiana, and then by horseback until they reached Texas in December. On his second appointment to the Gonzales circuit he organized a congregation in Seguin and reportedly preached the first Protestant sermon in San Antonio in 1844. He was ordained an elder in 1845 by Bishop E. S. Janes. In 1846 he was assigned to San Antonio to develop the ministry further there. During the following two years he organized a congregation which became Travis Park Methodist Church. When assigned to be the Presiding Elder (District Superintendent) of the German District, which at the time included all of the German churches in Texas (1855-1858), he moved to New Braunfels and learned German. He was an important mentor to many of the German lay preachers who were in the process of becoming ordained ministers in the state.

He was also instrumental in converting many of the Germans to Methodism through his preaching, society gatherings, and camp meetings. One of his converts that was so important to the Methodist in New Braunfels was David Karbach.

Rev. Friederich Vordenbaumen wrote this about Rev. DeVilbiss upon his death:

"He was much beloved by our German people. He was a good man, a good preacher and an industrious, good pastor: a great friend to children. Our work prospered during his four years administration as presiding elder. In order to acquire a more ready knowledge of the German language, he moved to New Braunfels, a German town in Comal County. While there, he learned to speak, read and write 'the German language' tolerably well. He was much beloved, even among the infidel class in that city. He would study his sermons and write them in English, then translate them into the German tongue: then he would read, and re-read them in German, until he could read them to the edification of his German congregations."

Rev. DeVilbiss would preach his first sermon in German about a month after moving to New Braunfels. On January 11, 1856, he wrote in his journal that he preached at Antioch Chapel on Clark's Creek which was the predecessor of Hope United Methodist Church in Lavaca County near Yoakum in the community of Hope. He had written the sermon in English and then had someone help him translate it into German. His effort was greatly appreciated by those gathered.

History continued on page 10

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The UWF General Meeting will be held December 5th in Wesley Hall.

We will gather at 11:30. Bring your favorite holiday dish for our Noon Potluck meal. Guest Speaker will be from Southside Community Center. There will be a Memorial Service for those we have lost in 2023, Special Mission Recognition recipients, and a drama spot by Janet Kaderli. The Luncheon is Hosted by Leadership Team.



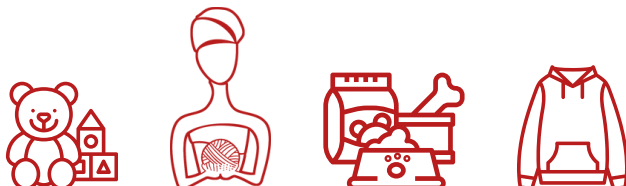
Pictured above are members of the Eve Circle who, in collaboration with the Tabler Small Group, filled boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

MANGER DONATIONS

Each Sunday during Advent we collect donations to make an impact in our community and beyond.

This year we are collecting:

- December 3: Toys for children in Comal County
- December 10: Handspun Hope will set up a market in the Welcome Center. Handspun Hope, Inc. is a Christian organization providing holistic support to Africa's poorest through job creation, community building and spiritual counsel.
- December 17: Pet supplies for the Humane Society
- December 24: Hoodies for teens and blankets for the homeless



History (continued from page 9)

Rev. H. A. Graves, a close and dear friend, wrote this about Rev. DeVilbiss:

"Whether Mr. DeVilbiss was of German parentage, is not known to me: but his name, and his general physical build and complexion would, it seems to me, indicate a German descent. He was quite staunchly built, of light hair and fair complexion. Hi name "Devilbiss," which was its original pronunciation, must have been German; the stress of accent put upon the first syllable—Dev. ...The accent is now laid upon the second syllable. Vil, and is pronounced De-Vilbiss. It is no discredit to any man to be descended from the "Tueton" race. Their present offspring has given to modern history the largest class of profound thinkers in science and theology. They are now a robust, hardy and industrious race of people; more so, perhaps, than any other race of modern times."

DeVilbiss would go on to serve the church as Presiding Elder of the following districts: Helena, (1859); San Antonio, (1860-61, 1865); Corpus Christi, (1870-72); he also served as an agent of the American Bible Society (1866-69) and as agent of Southwestern University (1875-76). He was three times elected president of the Rio Grande Conference and was a delegate to the General Conference in 1866. He died on January 31, 1885, and was buried in Oak Island Cemetery.



A Short History of First United Methodist Church New Braunfels, Texas 1853-2016, Second Edition 2016, Rev. Jim Wright Editor, pg 11-13



For quick, daily Advent devotionals, watch Pastor Andrew Payne's videos on Facebook beginning December 1.

<https://www.facebook.com/Fumcnb>

Our next Family Promise host week begins January 28th. Watch the weekly news for sign ups.

Impact Sunday

First Sunday of Each Month

Support our impact ministries

Bring food pantry donations, laundry supplies, Gap Pack donations, etc, and/or leave donations for the discretionary fund.



Heart for Homebound



Heart for Homebound is looking for a few new volunteers to help us on Wednesday afternoons as we visit our members who are no longer able to make it to church.

We meet at 1:30 in the Welcome Center and are usually finished with our visits by 3:30. Contact Martha Harrison mimiharrison@sbcglobal.net for more information.



ADVENT YARD SIGNS

Pick up a yard sign at the church, and display it in your yard to share the joy of the season with your neighbors.



Loads of Love is an ongoing ministry facilitated by our Wesley Nurse intended to lessen the burden of hygiene insecurity in our community. Whenever you are able, purchase and donate laundry supplies to the designated collection baskets at the church.

FOOD PANTRY MOST NEEDED DONATIONS

Canned Goods

Soups and Chili, Tuna, Beans, Sauces

Dry Goods

Dried Fruits, Dried Meats like Jerky, Crackers, Rice, Pasta and Mac & Cheese, Cereal, Oatmeal, and Granola Bars

Other Essentials

Fruits and Vegetables, Nuts and Seeds, Peanut Butter, Boxed Meals

Extras

Pet Food, Baby Food, Diapers and Baby Wipes, First Aid Kits, Feminine Products

Please, non-perishable items only. No pre-opened items. Thank you for your generosity.



GROW

The Book of Amos is one of the books of the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. Amos, a shepherd and fig tree farmer from Judah, was called by God to prophesy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel during a time of peace and prosperity. The central themes of the book include social justice, God's omnipotence, and divine judgment. Amos sharply criticizes Israel for its complacency, idolatry, and exploitation of the poor and calls for repentance, emphasizing that true worship of God requires ethical and just behavior.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, as we embark on this journey through the book of Amos, we seek Your wisdom and understanding. May our hearts and minds be open to the lessons You have for us in these ancient words. Guide us to see the world through Your eyes of justice, mercy, and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 1: Amos Chapters 1-2

The judgments against the nations and Israel.

Reading: Amos 1:1 - 2:16

Questions:

1. What are the sins of the surrounding nations, and how do they reflect on their relationship with God and others?
2. How does Amos' message to Israel differ from his message to the other nations?
3. In what ways does the message of judgment challenge or affirm your understanding of God?

Week 2: Amos Chapters 3-4

Prophetic declarations against Israel's complacency.

Reading: Amos 3:1 - 4:13

Questions:

1. How does Amos describe the relationship between Israel and God?
2. What are the specific transgressions of Israel mentioned in these chapters?
3. Reflect on the statement, "To whom much is given, much will be required" (Luke 12:48) in the context of these chapters.

Week 3: Amos Chapters 5-6

A call to repentance and a lament for Israel.

Reading: Amos 5:1 - 6:14

Questions:

1. What does Amos say about the nature of true worship and justice?
2. Discuss the significance of Amos 5:24, "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."
3. How do the warnings and laments in these chapters speak to our context today?

Week 4: Amos Chapters 7-9

Visions of judgment and the promise of restoration.

Reading: Amos 7:1 - 9:15

Questions:

1. What are the visions Amos sees, and what do they symbolize?
2. How does the theme of judgment continue, and what hope is offered?
3. Reflect on the promise of restoration in Amos 9:11-15. How does this point forward to the New Testament's message?