

The Chimes

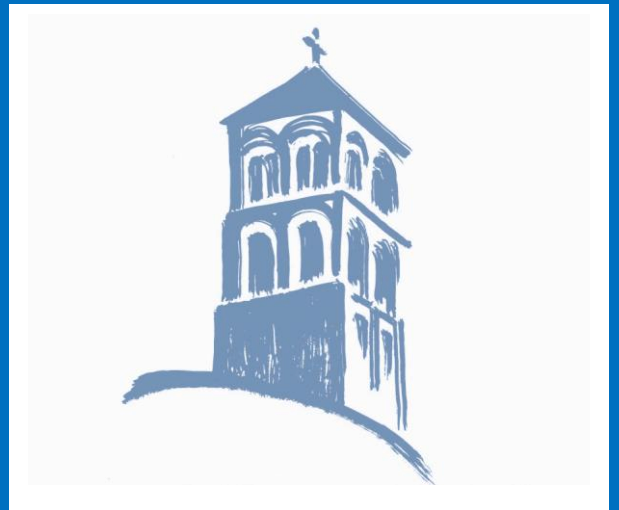
of East Lake United Methodist Church

December 2023

Volume 64

Issue 12

In the neighborhood for good!



The Weary World

The dictionary definition for weary is: exhausted in strength, endurance, vigor, or freshness; having one's patience, tolerance, or pleasure exhausted. I feel that! Do you? Do you see it in the faces of people around you? Strangers, even family and friends? A familiar song echoes the sentiment, "When you're weary, feeling small, when tears are in your eyes...When times get rough, and friends just can't be found...When you're down and out, when you're on the street, when evening falls so hard...When darkness comes, and pain is all around." Do you feel that? Do you see that all around you in this weary world?

Scripture talks about being weary and how Jesus lifts our burdens. "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak" (Isaiah 40:28-29). "For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish" (Jeremiah 31:25). "Even youths grow tired and weary, and the young stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:30-31).

The hymns of the season talk about our weariness and about the coming of our redemption with the coming of the Savior. "And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing. Oh, rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing." And, from our theme for the Advent season, "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!"

So, lift up your heads with expectation! Let us come to the manger this season, even if we come limping or crawling, that we may receive rest for our souls and good news to share with the world. News of hope that no weariness can take from us and light that no darkness can extinguish. This is why we light candles, this is why we bring our own representative figures to the manger, that we may remind ourselves and tell the world of the promise of God.

Peace,

Sally

... from Leslie

Hey, everybody!

Two main things:

We are still selling Vintage East Lake UMC Collector's Ornaments, so don't forget to email me at elumccomm@gmail.com if you'd like to order one of those! I can get you set up and walk you through your options with that. They are a very special keepsake or gift. I have one on my tree!

We are also giving out the Advent Devotional Booklets that I mentioned last month. So many people from all around East Lake have worked on wonderful, thoughtful, meaningful reflections and activities for us to use this season, so I hope you'll make sure to get a copy of it and follow along with the readings, prayers, and exercises for each day. Even if you jump in after Advent begins on December 3, it's better late than never, and it won't take you long at all to catch up. Those can be picked up at church on Sundays, in the Diner when it's open, and in the office during the week. You can also email me at elumccomm@gmail.com if you'd like one mailed or emailed to you.

I'm looking forward to several Spring Discipleship offerings, which will most likely take place during Lent (this year Ash Wednesday is on February 14 and Easter is on March 31). Can't wait to tell you about them soon! As always, reach out if you have ideas, dreams, hopes, or suggestions. I will be praying for you!

With love,

leslie

Women—

We have the opportunity to share in a one-day women's "retreat" on Saturday, January 6 (the day of Epiphany). A custom rooted in Ireland designates this day as *Women's Christmas*, which officially ends the season of Christmas and is an occasion for women to celebrate together. There is no cost, but we will need to explore options for lunch. Take a look at your calendars and let Jane Phares know if you are interested.

It's not too late to see *A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol!*

Performances yet-to-be:

Thursday, Dec. 7, 7:30

Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30

Saturday, Dec. 9, 4:00

Sunday, Dec. 10, 2:30



Come see your church friends, including **Greg Boling**, who stars as William St. Claire, who stars as Ebenezer Scrooge in the WOV radio play of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol!*

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December Birthdays

					1	2
3 *Carol Bullard	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 *Karen Brice	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 *Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace	26	27	28	29	30

SUPER SENIORS

Happy December, my friends!

It's that time of year when . . . we play Bingo! Yes, it seems it's been awhile since we've played, so this is the Christmas Bingo Extravaganza! But you'll have to wait a couple of weeks, as we will have our fun on Tuesday, December 19, at 10 a.m. in the office conference room. Be sure to mark your calendars!

Jane P.



Friday Night Fellowship



Fellowship

It's Christmas potluck time! After a very small (but high-quality) turnout at Marty's GM last month, we need to have a big group get-together this month! Put Friday, December 22, on your calendar *now*. We'll meet in the Downstairs Diner at 6 p.m. We'll eat, and then we'll play reindeer games! You'll have to guess what that might mean, but whatever it is, it will be FUN!

And remember—everyone is welcome! Invite a fellow church member, a friend, a neighbor, or even a stranger—and no age restrictions! The more the merrier!

See you on Friday the 22nd!

Poinsettia Memorials/Honoraria

Our sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias on Sunday, December 17. If you purchase a plant (\$30), you may pick it up after the music concert (that day at 2:30), but we encourage you to leave it until Christmas Eve if you can. Please fill in this form (check or cash attached) and place it in the offering plate, or turn them in to the church office. **We must have these orders by Sunday, Dec. 10. Please print clearly.** (If you need more space, please write on a separate piece of paper.)

In memory of _____ By _____

In memory of _____ By _____

In honor of _____ By _____

In honor of _____ By _____

Name _____

Phone number _____

Total number ordered _____

Amt. of cash/check attached _____

“Keep on praying for the saints. . .”

Ephesians 6:18

Please pray for the members of our church family who have been in the hospital, who have recently had surgery, are scheduled for surgery, or who otherwise need our prayers:

Alma & Jack Boggan
Carol Ruth Devore
Mattie Lou Harrison
Kathy Bassham Jackson
Gary Sandridge

Memorials

Gifts have been received in memory of

Jan Briley

Bob Chapman

Roy Stewart

Barbara Hudson

Dr. & Mrs. Robert Castleberry (music program)

Bob Chapman

Vivian Shirley

Bob Chapman



Lectionary Readings for December

I keep your word close, in my heart, so that I won't sin against you.
Psalm 119:11 (CEB)

Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

Sunday, December 10 – Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday, December 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Monday, December 25 – Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1: 1-4 (5-12)

John 1:1-14

Sunday, December 31 – First Sunday After Christmas Day/New Year's Eve/Watch Night

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Needs for Community Ministries

Snack Bags: Fruit cups Vienna sausages Water Granola bars

Food Co-op: Cleaning supplies Paper goods (toilet paper, paper towels)

Wellness Pantry: Bar soap Toothbrushes Toothpaste Shower gel
Mouthwash Deodorant Band-Aids Lotion
Vaseline Baby Aspirin Toilet Paper Paper Towels
Feminine Hygiene Products Baby and Adult Diapers
Hydrogen Peroxide Wipes

Music Notes 'midst Organ-izing



Happy Season to Everyone!

I would like to add my two-cents-worth to everyone else's about all the wonderful things going on at our church right now. The play that The Bell Tower Players are in the midst of, is great one. It's entitled *A 1940's Radio Christmas Carol*. It's a play within a play which takes place during the second world war. It's poignant, yet extremely funny; and the actors remain in character throughout the play, so you may interact with them during intermission! An added bonus is that I'll be at the door to welcome you! There are four more performances, December 7-10. If you've not seen it come on down!

The second is that we at the church are reaching out to as many folks as possible about the Christmas Party on Wednesday the 13th, from five until seven. It's a great time to be with Santa, who has a new wardrobe this year! There will be Christmas carols led by yours truly, along with tasty treats to enjoy. Most importantly, it will be a time to meet and make some new friends.

Then the following Sunday afternoon, we are following tradition by continuing to host the master improvisationist, John Schwandt, to play for us. This year it's a little different, though, in our effort to share with even more people. We'll sing many of the familiar sacred Christmas carols, along with a few of the secular ballad ones. John will improvise on several of them, and there will also be a few stories told about the history of some of the carols. It's Sunday, December 17, at 2:30 in the Sanctuary. Please join us!

There are still yet more opportunities that are listed here in your Chimes. Please check 'em out!

Love,

Barry

From your Lay Leader . . .

One of my favorite books is *The Count of Monte Cristo*, by Alexandre Dumas. And the last line of the book is one of my favorite quotes: "The sum of all human wisdom is contained in these two words: *Wait and hope.*" It seems to me that these two words also sum up the way we should approach Advent. We wait for the birth of Christ, and we wait with the hope that Christ will truly be born again in this world we live in—a world of war, poverty, addiction, disquiet in our homes, our neighborhoods, and our hearts, and all the ruinous factors that were also present when Jesus actually was born—oppression, racism and classism, and general social upheaval. Our hope is in Christ, that when he comes he'll bring peace and justice into all hearts and all situations.

But we can't just wait passively. We must wait *actively*. What can we do to bring peace into our world? Our minds often go to the various wars going on around the world, as well as the political wars going on in our own country. And we throw up our hands and usually do nothing else. So how can we bring peace in other situations? We can share ourselves, our resources, our gifts, to help others find peace in their lives. Bring a scarf, some gloves, or a hat for those who are in freezing homes or on the streets. Give to Embrace Alabama Kids (formerly the United Methodist Children's Homes) to help place a child or young person in a home where they are not abused or neglected. Donate to a food pantry, or to "Feeding Our Friends" here at the church. There are many ways to act justly and perhaps bring peace to those who are experiencing turbulence in their lives, to bring hope where there is hopelessness. Let us wait *actively*, hope *actively*, and thus bring peace to a sometimes-dark world. I'm cheering for you!

Jane Phares



Diner Offerings for December 2023

Monday, December 4	Macaroni and cheese, cabbage, butter beans, cornbread
Tuesday, December 5	Hamburger steak with gravy, rice, broccoli and cheese
Wednesday, December 6	Fried chicken, scalloped potatoes, green bean casserole
Thursday, December 7	Spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, corn, garlic bread
Friday, December 8	Baked or fried fish, fried okra, coleslaw
Monday, December 11	Chicken sandwich, potato salad, green beans
Tuesday, December 12	Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, lima beans, cornbread
Wednesday, December 13	15-Bean soup, white rice, cornbread
Thursday, December 14	Baked chicken, rice pilaf, roasted vegetables
Friday, December 15	Cheeseburger, French fries, baked beans
Monday, December 18	Turkey sandwich, pasta salad, dill pickle spears, chips
Tuesday, December 19	Taco salad, pinto beans, Spanish rice
Wednesday, December 20	Chili with grilled cheese sandwiches
Thursday, December 21	Turkey, dressing with gravy, green bean casserole, sweet potatoes
Friday, December 22	Chicken salad, sliced tomatoes, crackers, fruit
Monday, December 25	CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS – MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!
Tuesday, December 26	CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS
Wednesday, December 27	Creamy chicken spaghetti, green peas, roll
Thursday, December 28	Shepherd's pie, garden salad, roll
Friday, December 29	Chicken pot pie and garden salad

DEADLINE FOR CHRISTMAS SIDES FAST APPROACHES!

Deadline for orders – December 10
Last day to pick up – December 20

The Downstairs Diner
is open Monday-Friday
11-1
except where noted
above

December 2023

Friday, December 1

A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 7:30 p.m.
(Wesley Hall/“Bell Tower Theatre”)

Saturday, December 2

A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 4:00 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Sunday, December 3

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)
A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 2:30 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Tuesday, December 5

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, December 6

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
Luke Bible Study – 6 p.m. (1st floor mtg room)

Thursday, December 7

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 7:30 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Friday, December 8

A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 7:30 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Saturday, December 9

Hanging of the Green – 11 a.m. (Sanctuary)
A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 4:00 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Sunday, December 10

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)
A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol – 2:30 p.m.
(Wesley Hall)

Tuesday, December 12

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, December 13

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
Church Family/Neighborhood Christmas Party –
5-7 p.m. – Wesley Hall

Thursday, December 14

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Ponder w/ the Pastor – 5:30-7 p.m. (True Story)

Sunday, December 17

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)
“Feeding Our Friends” – 12:30 p.m. (Diner)
Christmas Pipes – 2:30 p.m. (Sanctuary)

Tuesday, December 19

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)
Seniors Christmas Party – 10 a.m. (Office building)

Wednesday, December 20

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)

Thursday, December 21

Longest Night Service – 7 p.m. (Chapel)

Friday, December 22

Friday Night Fellowship – Potluck dinner and reindeer games – 6 p.m. (Diner)

Sunday, December 24

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)
Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service –
5 p.m. (Sanctuary)

Monday, December 25

**Go, tell it on the mountain—
Jesus Christ is born!
Merry Christmas!**

Christmas Day Worship – 10 a.m. (Sanctuary)

Tuesday, December 26

**CHURCH AND DINER CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS
HOLIDAY**

Wednesday, December 27

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)

Thursday, December 28

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, December 31

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)