

The Chimes

of East Lake United Methodist Church

January 2024

Volume 65

Issue 1

In the neighborhood for good!



It's Not Over

Are you glad it's all over and are looking forward to what's next, or are you missing the holiday seasons? Whether Thanksgiving and Christmas were about food and family and festivity, or about loneliness and want, it was a lot. So, what do we do when the radio stations go back to regular pop music, and the lights and the greenery are gone. Do we remember that in their absence, we are the ones who are called to sing the story, we are to be the light, we are to remind people of our everlasting covenant of grace and forgiveness with our God?

Ecclesiastes says that for everything there is a season and a time for every purpose. What season are you in? What are we to do with our time? What is the purpose we are called to fulfill? We cannot change or live in the past although we often try. We cannot predict or change the future although we act as though we can. Our moment, our only time is right now. We still have a job to do. We still have something to celebrate.

This first Sunday of the new year is chock full of story and meaning. Epiphany Sunday reminds us of how God appears to us, all of us, even those who are different or from far away. Sometimes it is those very different people who are the ones who bring the message we need to hear that we may need to change our itinerary, that we may go home by a different way. Baptism of the Lord Sunday reminds us of Jesus hearing the word of God confirming his calling to teach and to save. And, it reminds us that we too are called to hear that we are beloved children of God and we have a mission to fulfill for God in this world. Both of those remembrances happen this first Sunday. What a lot to think about and pray about. At the beginning of the year, I am reminded that I really only have this one precious moment and that there is so much to do in this moment. I am also reminded of this quote by Howard Thurman:

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations
To bring peace among the people,
To make music in the heart.

It is only the beginning. We have a chance to start anew. What will you do with this one precious moment?

Peace, *Sally*

from H. N. . . .

After All, Now What?

After all the presents are open,
What will happen?
After all the time with loved ones,
What keeps us feeling so alone?
After all the food and charity,
What keeps us from true parity?

We are many, seeking one.

Seeking one who binds us at our best
And draws us nearer at our worst.
Draws us to hear our needs and wants,
And never causing us to wonder lonesome
haunts.
It taunts us with something inaccessible.
We yearn for something more comprehensible.

The Christ Child is born in Bethlehem.
Even in the most desperate places,
Christ comes to them.

In war and strife,
May we replace death with life.
In hunger and thirst,
May our filled hearts burst.
In loneliness and despair,
May our souls find repair.

May we continue to seek the star,
Guiding the lonely and the lost.
Though we may have to travel from afar,
There is nothing else worth so great a cost.

After all, we are the greatest gift,
Life in all its many forms.
Let our vulnerable hearts lift,
Lift despair, thirst, and strife to the one who
transforms.
The closer we come to one
The better we see another.
We are not alone.
May we seek the eternal other.

Hinton in the Springtime (and Fall)

We are in the process of forming a team to go once again to Hinton Rural Life Center in Hayesville, North Carolina, this time in the Spring, April 25-29 (Thursday through Sunday). When we returned from our work trip last November, several team members expressed the desire to go twice a year. This will be our first trip, and we are tentatively planning another one for November again. But our priority right now is forming a team for April 2024. If you think you might be interested, talk to any of our previous team members. They can tell you all about it: John Milledge, Robert Milledge, Bruno Hughes, Melinda Adkins, Sally Allocca, Jackie Folk, Karen Marks, Lucy Lipp, or Carol Hay.



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January Birthdays

	1	2 *Marshall Spencer	3	4	5 *Mimi Jackson	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 *Jane Walker	16	17	18 *Mike Dorriety	19	20 *Roxane Serrano
21	22	23	24 *Mitchell Nash *Barry Norris	25 *Tracy Heathcock *Tammie Milledge	26	27
28	29	30	31 *Tallulah McDonald			

SUPER SENIORS

Friends, we have some making up to do! After my being sick and having to cancel our scheduled gathering last month, we need to get together and make up for it! We'll meet on Tuesday, January 9, for our "Christmas" Bingo Party, at 10 a.m. in the *Office Conference Room* (instead of the back room of the diner as we have been doing). My apologies—many of the prizes are Christmas oriented, but there's always next year! Spread the word!

Jane P.



Friday Night Fellowship



By the time you read this, it may no longer be the Christmas season, but it's still potluck time! This month, the theme is "Soups, Stews, and Sweets." So either bring a crock pot of soup (chili counts) or stew or a sweet. Crackers and toppings will be provided. We'll meet on Friday (of course), January 26, at 6 p.m. in the Diner. I'll send an email closer to time to see who's bringing what—but would it be so bad if everyone brought a sweet???

As I said last month: 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!

“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

We extend our sympathies to

Pamela Padgett and her siblings in the loss of their mother and our friend, **Corrine King**, on December 26. Corinne was a faithful member who attended the 11:00 service and the Joy Class for many years. There will be a memorial service for her on January 13. Details to come, but please keep Pamela, her brother, and her sister in your prayers.

Memorials

Gifts have been received in memory of **June Chapman, on her birthday**

Bob Chapman
Barbara Hudson
 Jack and Alma Boggan
 Nancy and Dwight Anderson
Charles Walker
 Jane Walker

Honoraria

Gifts have been given to the church in honor of **Sally Allocca**
 Bob and Susan Phares
Jane Phares
 Bob and Susan Phares

Bell Tower Players prepare for next show

The Bell Tower Players next production will be *Alpine Intrigue*, a play written by our very own Ichabod Temperance. He describes it as “comedic espionage,” and it features many familiar faces of the BTP. Mark your calendars: February 9-11 and 16-18.

New Study on Zoom

Join in this study led by our own Rev. H.N. Gibson to explore what scripture and theology have to say about LGBTQ+ identities!

Study Schedule:

Session 1 (Jan. 7th): Gender & Gender Identity
 Session 2 (Jan. 14th): Gender Expression
 Session 3 (Jan. 21st): Sexual Identity
 Session 4 (Jan. 28th): What's Next?

See next page for more info!

Women of the church . . .

It looks like the women’s day apart tentatively planned for Saturday, January 6, will not happen this year due to several factors that got in the way. We will plan it again for next year, maybe in an extended format (overnight). Pray about your participation, and mark your calendar for Monday, January 6, 2025, if you feel so led.

Church and Community Christmas Party



Santa!

Crafts!



Snowball Fight!

Lectionary Readings for January

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

Saturday, January 6 – Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday, January 7 – Baptism of the Lord

Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 14 – Second Sunday after Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 21 – Third Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 28 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:12-20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

THEOLOGY, IDENTITY & ME:

AN AFFIRMING STUDY OF
GENDER, SEX, AND HUMAN SEXUALITY



SMALL GROUP STUDY ON ZOOM

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY @ 4 PM

Join other inclusive United Methodists from around the North Alabama Annual Conference to discuss and learn more about affirming theology with a lens for diverse gender identities and expressions and sexual identities.

Led by Rev. H.N. Gibson

Music Notes 'midst Organ-izing

Merry 12th Day of Christmas, Twelfth Night! Joy to the world! Over the years, though, with many family and friends in heaven, Christmas was a time to just be endured. Not so this year! I set out early on to list the enumerable things for which I have to be joyful—home, health, food, good friends, a wonderful church, two sweet cats, a few pipe organs on which to engage my passion, a God who loves me. Then, I decided to be more proactive, singing with the carols in the stores even when I didn't feel joyful, playing old Christmas CDs in the car, saying "Merry Christmas" to friend and stranger, visiting close friends on Christmas Day.



Our singing together with John Schwandt, this time with a new format, has long-since been my "Christmas morning," but this year all of our services were just that, too. The four Advent Sundays (special thanks to Leslie for all the beautiful leaflet covers), the Longest Night, led by the "young-uns," Christmas Eve (special thanks to Doreen), and Christmas (special thanks to Bruno) were all a wonderful time to be together! And that's just it, we were all together. Even though some were out because of Covid and other ailments, we tried to include and keep in touch with them via Facebook, texts, and phone calls, sending love and good cheer their way!

Beginning again, I want to give thanks to you, congregation and choir; and especially to those whom I am around during the week. There's Sally, Jane, Leslie, H.N., Stephanie, Kay, Alma, Angela (and all the other P.E.E.R folks), Rasheena and company, Eric and his helpers. And let us not forget Roy, Lucy, Yvonne, and Lisa!

All you are my joy. I'm so very blest!

Love,

Barry

From your Lay Leader . . .

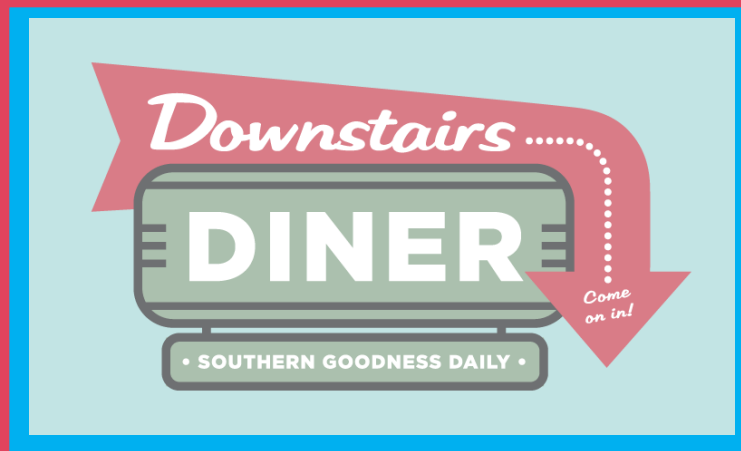
Looking back at January *Chimes* articles from previous years, I was struck by one in particular. It said something to the effect that once we stop growing in our spiritual life, we stop moving closer to God. It led me to ask, How am I growing? What am I doing that is likely to bring me closer to God? I admit, that hasn't always been a conscious priority for me. I've come to church and listened to the sermons (twice every Sunday), and I've apparently thought that was enough. This year, though, we started the Thursday morning study/discipleship group at my house, and that has made a huge difference for me. Sharing and working through my beliefs about God and my faith, and listening to others share, has nudged me in God's direction every week. We have been off for a few weeks during the holidays, and I can't wait to get back together! This is an open group, by the way (for lay people), so if you'd like to join, please talk to me.

I am also participating in the North Alabama Conference's *Read Together* program, through which participants read the whole Bible during the year. A couple of years ago, I put the readings in *The Chimes*, but I wasn't sure if anyone wanted to read along. If you are interested now, let me know, and I'll provide you with a copy of the readings for the whole year. Either way, I would appreciate it if you would pray that I will have the discipline to follow through with this!

There are studies that go on during the Sunday school hour that I can't participate in due to band preparation for the 11:00 service. If you haven't participated in any of these, I urge you to check them out when the next one comes along. By all accounts, they are excellent.

Join me in making 2024 a year of spiritual growth, how ever you choose to do it. I'm cheering for you,

Jane Phares



Diner Offerings for January 2024

Monday, January 1	CLOSED – NEW YEAR'S DAY
Tuesday, January 2	Taco salad with Spanish rice, corn, and tortilla chips
Wednesday, January 3	Pork chops, cabbage, sweet potatoes, roll
Thursday, January 4	Barbecue chicken, coleslaw, baked beans
Friday, January 5	Chicken Alfredo, garden salad, green beans, roll
Monday, January 8	Hamburger steak with gravy, rice, roasted vegetables
Tuesday, January 9	Baked chicken, collard greens, mashed potatoes
Wednesday, January 10	Spaghetti with meat sauce, garden salad, roll
Thursday, January 11	Salisbury steak, squash casserole, scalloped potatoes
Friday, January 12	Chicken tetrazinni, garden salad, roll
Monday, January 15	CLOSED – MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY
Tuesday, January 16	Chicken sandwiches, tator tots, green beans
Wednesday, January 17	Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, cabbage, roll
Thursday, January 18	Baked or fried fish, coleslaw, baked beans
Friday, January 19	Loaded baked potatoes with chicken or pork, shredded cheese, sour cream
Monday, January 22	Greek chicken, rice pilaf, roasted vegetables
Tuesday, January 23	Lasagna with meat sauce or veggie lasagna, garden salad, cornbread
Wednesday, January 24	Macaroni and cheese, blackeyed peas, collard greens, cornbread
Thursday, January 25	Barbecued chicken or pulled pork, potato salad, baked beans
Friday, January 26	Baked or fried fish, coleslaw, green beans
Monday, January 29	Spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, corn, roll
Tuesday, January 30	Macaroni and cheese, butterbeans, cabbage, cornbread
Wednesday, January 31	Cheeseburger, baked beans, potato salad

January 2024

Monday, January 1

CHURCH AND DINER CLOSED: HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tuesday, January 2

Thrift store – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, January 3

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

Thursday, January 4

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, January 7

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)

Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)

Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)

Tuesday, January 9

Senior Bingo Party – 10 a.m. (Office Conference Room)

Thrift store – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, January 10

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

Luke Bible Study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, January 11

Thrift store – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, January 14

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)

Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)

Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)

Staff-Parish Committee meeting – 2 p.m. (Office Conference Room)

Monday, January 15

CHURCH AND DINER CLOSED: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Tuesday, January 16

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, January 17

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

Luke Bible Study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, January 18

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Ponder w/ the Pastor – 5:30-7 p.m. (True Story)

Sunday, January 21

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)

Tuesday, January 23

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, January 24

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

Luke Bible Study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, January 25

Thrift store – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Friday, January 26

Friday Night Fellowship: Soups, Stews, and Sweets Potluck – 6 p.m. (Diner)

Sunday, January 28

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)

Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)

Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)

Tuesday, January 30

Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, January 31

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

Luke Bible Study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one.
Brad Paisley, country singer

You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.
C. S. Lewis, novelist and theologian

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of diversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.
Anne Bradstreet, American poet