The Spire



First Methodist Church of Lake City
To make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

Celebrating 186 Years !

Volume 52, Issue 127









ADVENT: THE HOPE FILLED COUNTDOWN BEGINS!

A countdown is on,
With the daily opening of a door
In the Advent Calendar.

Some have their minds fixed
On consuming chocolate
Or finding a small gift.

Others watch a scene
unfold, a marvelous story
Slowly, slowly gets told.

Perhaps a candle is lit
And left to burn while we
Reflect on a word, name or date.

Anticipation builds
In the daily noticing,
Receiving, seeing and reading.

December's cold drabness
Is lifted by an interest
In things outside ourselves.

Gradually, these small
Snapshots of hope, joy, mystery
Are unveiled and revealed.

Until we reach the climax
Where the action really begins,
With a birth in Bethlehem.

Joy Lenton

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....

The holiday season is upon us. Such a wonderful time of year. I always look forward to this season with its decorations, foods, songs, and large amounts of fellowship. The word holiday implies the meaning of a holy day. That means that in the life of the church, this is a busy season. Some of the most fun, meaningful, and impactful events and activities will occur during this season. And if you're not careful, you will miss out.

If any of these are important to you, make sure to add them to your calendar, put a reminder on the fridge, or whatever you need to do so that you don't miss out. Also, if you don't get the Monday emails, please consider taking the necessary steps to rectify that. There's a lot of information in those newsletters. If you're not reading them, you will feel disconnected from everything that happens here.

Most of these are listed elsewhere in this newsletter, but here's a few highlights just to make sure you see them.

November 5: At 5:30, Grief Share will host a special presentation, "Surviving The Holidays"

November 8: Vision Planning Session after service with a meal.

November 15: Advent study guides will be made available. These can be used for personal devotion. They'll also be the subject of our Wednesday night Bible studies through December.

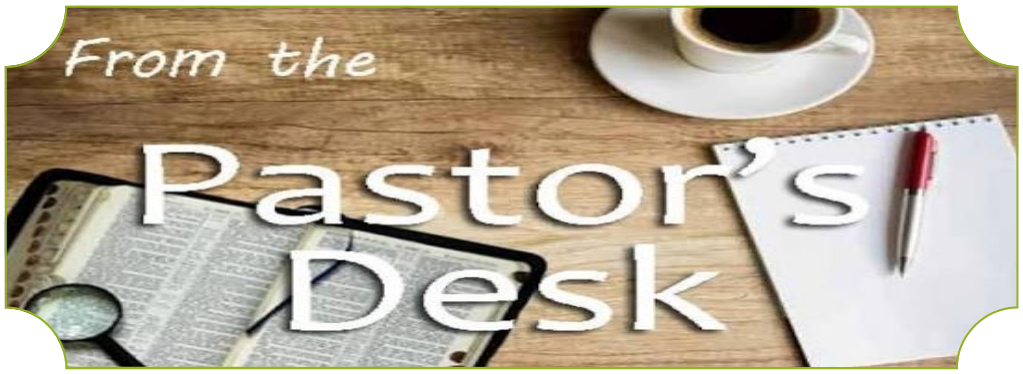
November 22: Thanksgiving meal after service. After that, we will decorate the church.

November 29: Advent season begins

December 16: Churchwide Christmas celebration and dinner.

December 24: Candlelight service at 6 PM

No one can do everything. Don't think you have to attend every event. These are simply tools to strengthen your connection with one another and with God. I pray you will utilize each tool that you are available for and will bring benefit to you. Consider sharing some of these with your friends and neighbors.



November Birthdays

1 Stephanie Kelley
Giovanni Tonetti
5 Shirley Mikell
8 Pearce Powers
David Kelley
9 Caroline Stevens
13 Ann Fortney



18 Bobby Case
21 Martha Shaw
28 Hugh Giebeig
30 Callahan Register







We want to celebrate your birthday!

If your name is missing, please, call the office @ 386-752-4488.



December Birthdays

5 Wade Willis
6 Holly Cowen
9 Martha Rine
11 Austin Reiter
17 Ansley Crews





18 Linda Poplin
22 Linda R. Richardson
25 Jesus
28 Heather Crawford

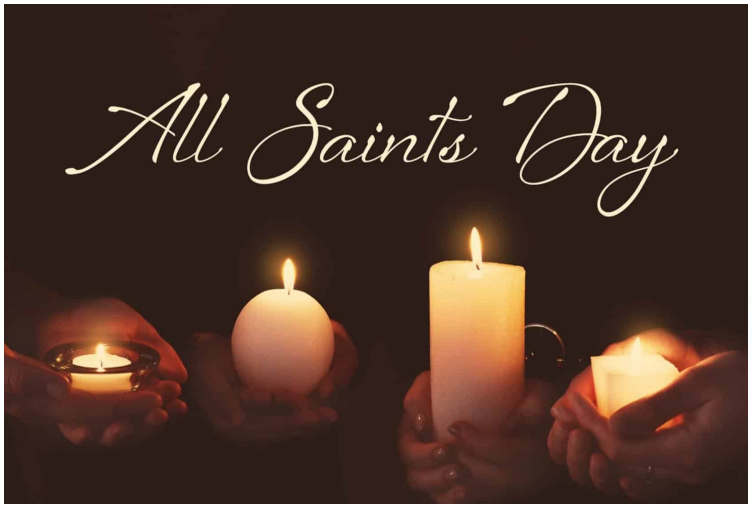


ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

All Saints Sunday will be on **November 1**. A huge thank you to Jule Reiter and Lindsey Reiter for the beautiful banners that will be given to the families of the members we've lost this past year. Thanks, also, to Blaine Wheeler and Gigi Register for all their coordinating efforts.

Those being remembered are: Milly Beggs, Jim Tompkins, Don Hembree, Joyce Ogden, Teddi Wengert and Helena Powers.







CLOCKS FALL BACK



The **time change will happen at 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 1**, at which point clocks will change to 1 a.m.
The shift means it will be brighter earlier in the morning, but it will also get dark earlier in the evening.

THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON



There will be a Thanksgiving luncheon immediately following the 11:00 a.m. worship service on **Sunday, November 22.**
Turkey and dressing will be provided by the church. Please bring a covered dish to share and drop it off in the kitchen before worship.

If you would like to make a donation toward the purchase of turkeys, please write "turkey donation" on your offering envelope or memo line of your check.

2027 LEADERSHIP

First Methodist Church had their Annual Church Conference in October and elected new lay leadership for 2027. These **new lay leaders will begin serving on January 1, 2027 and our current lay leaders will continue to serve until December 31, 2026.** Thanks so much to our retiring lay leaders for your service which has been incredibly valuable and appreciated. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!

The new lay leaders for 2027 will be:

CHURCH COUNCIL

Finance Chair: Hugh Giebeig
Treasurer: David Smith
Financial Secretary: Lee Gober
Lay Delegate: Karen Green
Children's Pastor: Martha Rine
Youth Pastor: David Amerson
SPRC Chair: Gigi Register
Trustee Chair: TBD
Lay Leader: Chris Costello

At Large Members for Church Council

Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Renee Liverpool	Joan Williams	Robin Green
Martha Jane Carter	Ann Fortney	Susan Woodard
Bob Breyer	Bob Santos	Blaine Wheeler

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Hugh Giebeig
Treasurer: David Smith
Financial Secretary: Lee Gober
Lay Leader: Chris Costello
Council Chair: Robin Green
SPRC: Gigi Register
Trustee Chair: TBD

At Large Members for Finance

Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Robert Woodard	Blaine Wheeler	Bob Santos

STAFF PARRISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Roger Davis	Lorrie Wheeler	Sid Whichard
Gigi Register	Audrey Short	Callen Melton
Martha Jane Carter	Bob Breyer	Cindy Dempsey

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Class of 2027	2028	2029
Bob Santos	Norman McRae	Rick Fortney
Terry Reiter	Robert Woodard	Jeff Melton
David Smith	Jerry Leszkiewicz	Carl Dempsey

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Class of 2027	2028	2029
Chris Costello	Joan Williams	Martha Maxwell
Lorrie Wheeler	Rick Fortney	Kathy Smith
Julie Davis	Wanda McRae	Lavon Leszkiewicz

SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

If you're looking for a cause that helps children, this is the one for you!!!! Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a national non-profit ministry that gives children a safe and comfortable place to lay their heads at night and is for children living in Columbia County.
The beds are delivered complete with a mattress and bedding. If you would like to donate new twin sheets (twin only not twin XL), comforters or thick quilts and shams (matching sets would be great) please drop by the church office during the week. The office is open Monday-Thursday 10a.m – 3p.m.
Monetary donations are greatly appreciated. Please make your checks payable to Sleep in Heavenly Peace and add FL-Lake City in the check notes to make it specific for our Lake City Chapter. The mailing address is:

Sleep In Heavenly Peace
PO Box 2905
Phoenix, AZ 85062
Checks can be dropped off at our church office, or donated on-line at shpbeds.org.

We had our Bunks Across America bed build on September 12th. We had a good turnout of volunteers and good weather. We have been fortunate to see some new faces and we built 21 beds. We also received 5 beds from Columbia High School trades program.

Financing our chapter is a critical need. We have been fortunate to be able to support our requirements. We did recently receive a $6,000 grant from a local fund. The Buck Rogers Foundation has been a supporter of SHP for several years.

Deliveries continued over the summer. On October 8th we actually delivered our 500th bed. It is a sobering metric but it is also a celebration as we have gotten 500 kids off the floor and into a bed in Columbia County.

We always have a need for more volunteers. We can use help with Media Support, helping to obtain Sponsorship and donations.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to an even greater year of helping our kids!!

Please volunteer and join the team, or join us for a future bed build!!!!







(Pictured above: Bed delivery-Steve Stafford, Sr.; right: Bed Build held in September; Below: Bed Delivery)





SHP







Children's Ministry News

The children are practicing Christmas songs on Wednesday nights and have a skit planned. The children's program will be on **Wednesday, December 16th**. Hope you'll join us for this special event.

They are also continuing to learn their memory verses and the children in third grade and up are learning the about the chiming of the hour on the bells with our organist, Avery Wallace.

Remember that we still have acolyte service open for kids, youth, and adults too. Look for a schedule to be made up starting in November. Blessings, Martha Rine, Children's Pastor



Dear Church Family,

Children's & Youth Ministry: Growing Deep

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." — Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

Wednesday nights continue to be a highlight of our week. Our students gather in a safe, welcoming space to worship, study Scripture, and build friendships rooted in Christ.

Worship has become a real strength of our group. The students engage deeply with the songs and hymns, and it is encouraging to hear them humming the melodies long after service ends. Our Bible studies have sparked thoughtful conversations as well. The students are asking sincere questions about Scripture and faith, often providing insightful answers to complex theological questions. Their curiosity consistently leads us into discussions that give all of us something to reflect on.

Just as encouraging, our students are actively inviting their friends and supporting one another in their walk with God. Even simple moments, like a student sharing a favorite verse, remind us that faith is something we learn alongside one another.

Thanks to our pastor, new lights have been installed at the playground, and additional lighting is on the way for the basketball court, creating a safer, brighter space for everyone. We have also been enjoying the new basketball hoop. Last week, we played a full game where even the dads joined in to shoot hoops and connect—it was a wonderful evening that truly reflected the heart of our community.

A perennial flower garden is also in the works, offering our students a hands-on way to learn, serve, and watch something grow over time. If you enjoy building, painting, or planting, we would love your help. No experience is needed, and new ideas are always welcome. Please feel free to catch me at Wednesday night dinner to discuss how you can get involved.

Looking ahead, we are planning a winter trip to Wild Adventures in Valdosta, Georgia, for our students to build friendships and make lasting memories. Additionally, we are in the early stages of planning next year’s multi-generational mission trip, with locations such as Jamaica and Tennessee under consideration. This will be a great opportunity for parents and church members to serve together. If you would like to learn more, please come chat with me during Wednesday night dinner.

As we plan, our heart for these young people remains simple: true growth begins on the inside and flows outward. When our roots are anchored in Jesus and connected to the Holy Spirit, we produce fruit that enriches the lives of those around us.

We are deeply grateful for how God is working in our youth, and we ask that you continue to keep them in your prayers.

Blessed, David Amerson
FMCLC Youth Pastor

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER



The Worship Committee is responsible for maintaining the sanctuary throughout the year. This includes any decorations, displays and materials that are used in the process of worship. The committee works with the pastor to ensure that the layout of the service creates a worshipful experience for all attendees.

We change the paraments on the altar and pulpit as needed and according to the liturgical church calendar and sacraments. We are responsible for providing the altar flowers each Sunday and the flower reservation calendar that is located in the narthex.

We prepare, organize, set up, and take down of communion each month. This includes gathering the bread and juice and preparing it on Sunday mornings, changing the paraments for the communion sacrament, helping to serve communion and providing the pastor with communion materials for the church shut ins.

The altar flowers each week are prepared in house by volunteers instead of purchasing at a florist. We have found this to be easier, more cost-effective and more personal for our donors. We are willing to teach others how to arrange flowers if they are interested in being part of this ministry.

During the seasons, we add decorations to enhance the worship experience for our members. This committee is responsible for designing, purchasing and presenting the decorations throughout the year.

We have special decorations for our patriotic holidays, Thanksgiving, Lent / Easter and Advent/ Christmas. We also provide the lilies and hydrangeas at Easter and Poinsettias at Christmas that our members purchase in honor and memory of loved ones. From time to time, we have other special event decorations that we are responsible for throughout the year.

We work with the choir and ushers to make the service meaningful to all that attend. Our team plans and works hard to set the tone of our services and to make sure the altar area and other areas reflect the reverence and meaning that it should provide.

If you are interested in being part of this ministry, please let us know and we can add you to our list to help prepare our sanctuary for worship.

Ministry of the Month-November



NOVEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 11 am worship All Saint's Sunday	2 LIFe Group 6 pm	3 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	4 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	5 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	6	7
8 Men's Breakfast 9 am 11 am worship Communion 12:15 pm Vision Planning	9 LIFe Group 6 pm	10 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	11 Veteran's Day Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	12 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	13	14
15 11 am worship Avent Study Guide Pickup	16 LIFe Group 6 pm	17 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	18 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	19 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	20	21
22 11 am worship Thanksgiving Luncheon after worship	23 LIFe Group 6 pm	24 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	25	26 	27	28
29 11 am worship Advent Begins Week 1	30 LIFe Group 6 pm					

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR SEPTEMER AND OCTOBER



September 6	49	October 4	76
September 13	78	October 11	89
September 20	72	October 18	74
September 27	65	October 25	61



BACKPACK MINISTRY



A lack of nutrition affects a child's cognitive and behavioral development, as well as their physical growth. That's why we have participated in the backpack program at Summers Elementary for many years. We are able to provide weekend food for 25 students due to your generous donations.

We also rely on donations from the nonprofit program Hunger Fight. Hunger Fight is a Florida-based nonprofit committed to ending childhood hunger and improving child literacy. They empower communities through hands-on meal packing events, and literacy kit assembly directly benefiting local underserved children. According to Hungerfight.org 67% of public-school children in Columbia County are adversely affected by poverty. Hunger fight distributes food packets assembled by volunteers through the Christian Center in Lake City and similar programs throughout Florida.

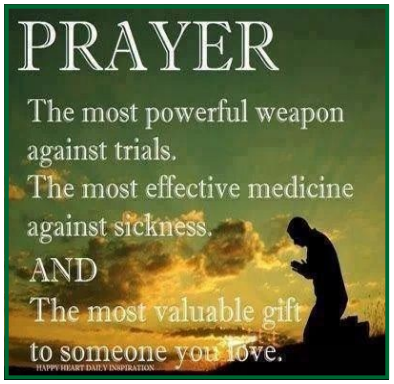
You can help pack our donations to the school on Tuesdays at 10:30 am. You can also put food donations in the basket located near the entrance to the Sanctuary. We were recently asked not to donate food items containing peanut butter as some children are allergic to it. Any donations we had received with peanut butter we donated to the Christian Service Center for their food outreach program. Thanks, The Backpack Team

INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

If you would like to be a prayer warrior, then join our Intercessory Prayer group. They pray over the needs of our church congregation as well as friends and family.

They meet **every Tuesday @ 10 am** in the **Youth Room** and would love to have you join them!

Prayer request forms are available in the pews and in the narthex or you may put in a prayer request by calling the church office @ 386-752-4488.



Power of Prayer

RESIDING HOPE CHILDREN'S HOME



In our bi-monthly Spire, we aim to provide you with Residing Hope Children's Home information and convey how lostness, tragedy, & abuse in a young person's life can be positively impacted by living at the Children's Homes in Enterprise and Madison campuses as residents.

Brokenness and feelings that these young people aren't loved change when they are guided by the Home's people and cottage parents. Both the Enterprise and Madison campuses are places where young lives are turned around. We, as a Church, cannot see how these young lives are changed, but we can foster those changes by our financial support of those who work with the children. Our help facilitates programs, cottage housing, therapy, counseling and recreation programs for unsettled children and youth.

Our goal, as your Church representatives for the Home, is to emphasize how important your support is. Each calendar month with a 5th Sunday, we feature on that 5th Sunday as special Residing Hope giving day to the Home. Residing Hope envelopes and literature are in the bulletins on that Sunday (you can give anytime just by using a regular giving envelope and writing "Residing Hope" on it). Also, on that Sunday a short video will be played of a young person witnessing how the home has impacted them.

Our Church has several outreach programs and we are thankful that some of you are supporting the Home!

We appreciate the support that you are giving. It has been a joy for us to embrace Residing Hope as a place that fosters positive programs for the children.

One more thing...the Home is having a Christmas Gift Card Drive and have invited our congregation to participate in this endeavor with them to demonstrate unconditional love to the children. The staff at the Home will utilize the gift cards to purchase personalized gifts for the children that will go under the Christmas tree for Christmas morning. The children will also receive some gift cards to go shopping with. Any additional gift cards will be used after Christmas to purchase needed items for the children.
The Home is collecting gift cards in increments of $20-$100 (larger increments when possible) to major chain stores and restaurants. The most requested cards are Visa, Ross, Kohl's, Dick's Sporting Goods, Academy Sports, TJ Max, Walmart, JCPenney, Burlington Department Stores and Epic Theater. Popular restaurants include Darden Brands, Cracker Barrel, Applebee's, McDonald's, Burger King, Chick-Fil-A, Dairy Queen and Chili's.

Please turn in the gift cards by Sunday, December 5th. You may hand them to an usher, drop them in the offering plate and mark them for Residing Hope or drop by the church office.

Love Y'all, Steve and Elaine Stafford

:Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for such belongs the Children of God" - Luke18:16

STUFFED ANIMAL FALL ROUND-UP



It is that time again to help us gather enough stuffed animals to round all the way up our Christmas tree. That's right, we want to cover our tree in stuffed animals by **November 22nd.**

Last year we gathered over **110 animals** to cover the tree. So, start bringing in your stuffed animals and place in the box in the narthex or in the pews if you wish. On November 22nd we will see how far we can wrap them up our tree.

The donated animals will be distributed to local agencies, safety departments and Kada's Promise though our Stuffed with Love Ministry.

If you haven't heard of Kada's Promise yet, this is a very special organization.

It was founded by Kadance Fredericksen in 2017 who endured hardships of abuse, neglect, and homelessness as a child. Her life changed when she was rescued by her biological father and adoptive mom who gave her the love, stability and support every child deserves. In her darkest moments, the only thing that brought her comfort was a single stuffed animal which was a small source of security in a world that often felt unsafe. She carried that stuffy with her from house to house, couch to couch, clinging to it when everything else felt uncertain. Kadance became a winner of the Miss Okaloosa County Teen USA title and was a Miss Teen USA pageant competitor about to graduate high school when she was tragically killed in a car accident in February 2025. Her family continues to carry on her legacy.

First Methodist Church is honored to partner with Kada's Promise. This charitable organization is dedicated to providing teddy bears to children in foster care, homeless shelters, abuse shelters and hospitals. Please help us support this extraordinary ministry.

If you'd like to read more about this organization, go to their website www.kadaspromise.com



Kada's Promise





DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	2 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	3 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	4	5 Ladies Brunch 11 am Fellowship Hall
6 11 am worship Communion Advent Week 2	7 LIFe Group 6 pm	8 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	9 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	10 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	11	12 
13 11 am worship Advent Week 3	14 LIFe Group 6 pm	15 Intercessory Prayer Group 10 am	16 Churchwide Christmas Celebration Children's Skit 5:30 pm	17 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Group 5:30 pm	18	19
20 11 am worship Advent Week 4	21 LIFe Group 6 pm	22	23 	24 Christmas Eve Service 6 pm	25 	26
27 11 am worship	28 LIFe Group 6 pm	29	30	31 Grief Share Alumni Dinner 5:30 pm	Best Wishes for a Happy New Year in 2027	

GRIEF SHARE

If you are grieving for any reason and need support to help you then please join us for this program. It is open to anyone and everyone in the community.

The program will meet on Thursdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Please call the office if you would like more information @ 386-752-4488.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Gentleman and male youth of all ages are invited to join us for a Pancake Breakfast on **Sunday, November 8th @ 9 am in Fellowship Hall.**

Hope you'll join us!



FLORIDA CARE PORTAL

1st Methodist Church is a member of the Florida Care Portal. This is a national non-profit organization that has churches working with local caregiver organizations to help local families with needs.

By joining Care Portal, 1st Methodist Church will have a powerful way to help meet urgent needs, and build new relationships in the community.

Since our last Spire update, we have not had any new Care Portal donations.

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER



The Music Ministry Team leads the congregation in worship through singing hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs during services to bring about a shared experience of praise and prayer. Music is a way of preparing our hearts ahead of the sermon.

The people that make this happen each Sunday are our Worship Leader and Pianist, Amelia Tompkins and our Choir Director and Organist, Avery Wallace along with the choir.

We can't forget our sound people who add technical assistance to the service. These are Rusty Bailey, David Smith and Karl Plenge. Be Blessed, the Music Ministry

Ministry of the Month-December

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Thanks so much to all that made it possible!! From donations of goods, to individuals filling boxes and donations toward the shipping costs, it has been a blessing. First Methodist had a packing party and put together 100 boxes. We hope to meet the goal of completing 200 boxes to donate to Operation Christmas Child and share with children around the world through Samaritan's Purse. What a great way to share God's love.

A huge thank you to Ann Fortney!! She spent tireless hours making this ministry a success. We couldn't have done it without her!!





Christmas Poinsettia



In Memory:

_____

In Honor:

_____

Given by:

_____

Poinsettia –Price TBD **Deadline is Monday, December 13**

_____How many? _____Amt. Paid

HOLIDAYS PRAYER



Dear God, I thank you for allowing me to make it this far into the year. I am very grateful and excited to end the year off with you by my side.

As me and my loved ones come together for the holidays I ask that you please keep us united through your love. Let the holidays remind us how blessed we are to be alive and well.

Please be extra generous with your love and presence to those who are feeling lonely, experience loss, or not well during this time. Send all your angels to comfort them. Thank you for all that you do for us.

In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Courtsey ACFeedherwisdom

Church Staff
***Senior Pastor*:** Rev. Tim Dunavant
Children's Pastor: Martha Rine
Youth Pastor: David Amerson
Administrative Assistant : Lee Gober
Worship Leader/Pianist: Amelia Tompkins
Choir Director/Organist: Avery Wallace
Custodian: Hope Crawford
Grounds Keeper: Austin Reiter
Audio Visual: Rusty Bailey, David Smith, Karl Plenge

