

OTTERBEIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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Tidings



December 2022

The Tidings
Otterbein United Methodist
Church

176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Office - (540) 434-7747
Fax - (540) 433-4018
oumcharrisonburg.org

Prayer Ministry - (540) 434-7745

Tidings articles are due by the
15th of each month.

You may either bring articles to
the church office or email them
to oumccadm@hotmail.com

Saturday Night Alive
Not meeting at this time.

Sunday Schedule
9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Worship Service

Please check the calendar for
times of regular and special
events.

Weekday Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm



Have you checked out our Facebook Page? You can find us at facebook.com/OUMCHarrisonburg or through the link on our website. Please check out our page and share with your friends!

Our Staff

Rev. Adam Blagg
Senior Pastor
oumcpastor@hotmail.com

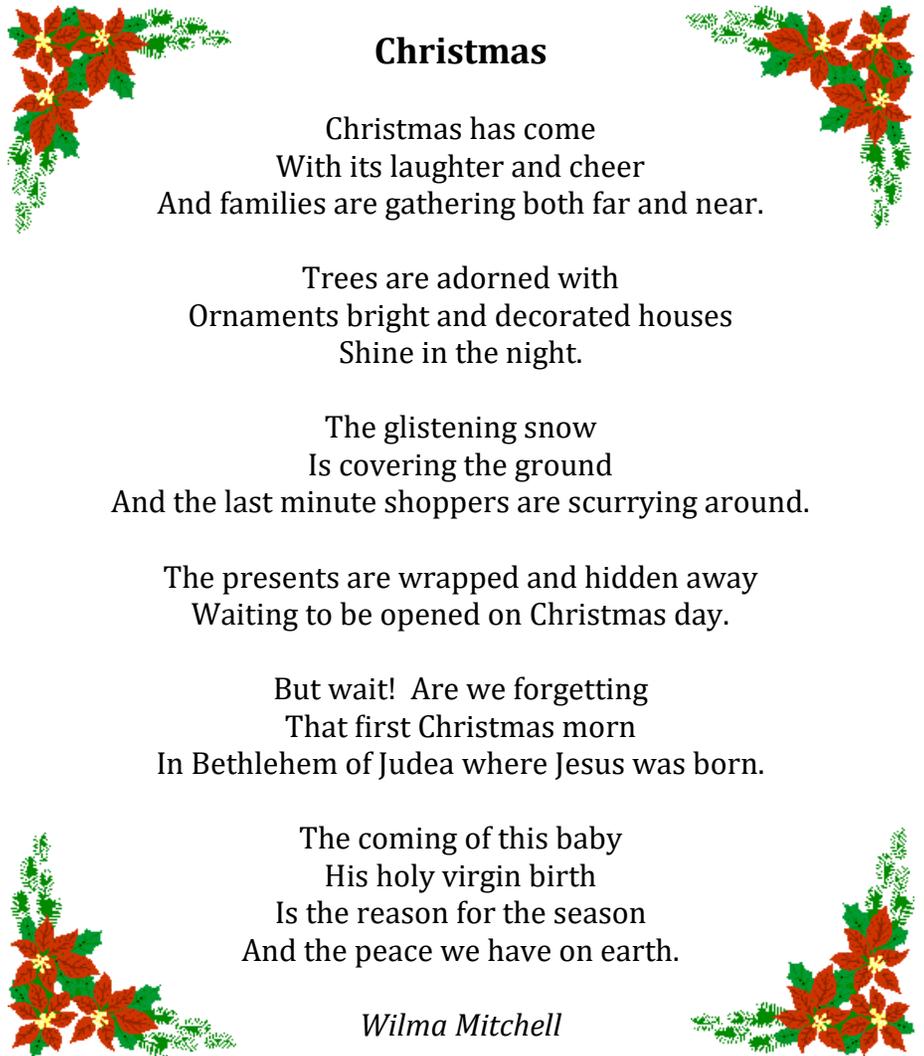
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Office: 540-434-7747
x200 for Melissa
x201 for Adam
x203 for Dawn
x204 for Sandy
x207 for Judy



Christmas

Christmas has come
With its laughter and cheer
And families are gathering both far and near.

Trees are adorned with
Ornaments bright and decorated houses
Shine in the night.

The glistening snow
Is covering the ground
And the last minute shoppers are scurrying around.

The presents are wrapped and hidden away
Waiting to be opened on Christmas day.

But wait! Are we forgetting
That first Christmas morn
In Bethlehem of Judea where Jesus was born.

The coming of this baby
His holy virgin birth
Is the reason for the season
And the peace we have on earth.

Wilma Mitchell

For Your Information

- *Tidings* deadline for the **January 2023** issue is **Thursday, December 15** by **9 am**. All groups, classes, and individuals are welcome to submit articles for the *Tidings*. Plan your activities and bring the written details to the church office or email to the office at oumccadm@hotmail.com by the 15th.
- **Prayer Line Ministry:** Call 434-7745 anytime (day or night) to hear a prayer to encourage and give you support. To leave a prayer request: listen to the prayer, then follow the prompts to leave your request or words of praise.

**Mission Moment:
Charterhouse School**



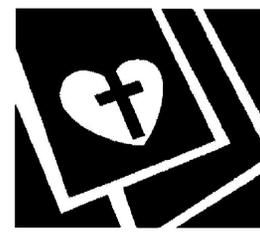
On Sunday, December 4, we are pleased to welcome **Kim Collett** for our Mission Moment. She is the principal of Charterhouse School in Edinburg, VA. The Charterhouse School is operated by United Methodist Family Services. They opened in 2013 and currently serve 36 students from ages 5-20 years old. These are students who are referred by local school districts in the Shenandoah Valley because of special needs. There are 10 teachers, 10 classroom behavior specialists, 15 aides, and 7 administrative staff. They are taught a core curriculum as well as Art, PE, and Culinary Arts. The two full-time therapists help students learn to navigate well socially. Charterhouse School serves 7 School Districts and operates on the Shenandoah County School calendar.

Our Christmas Eve offering will be donated to the school to set up a Teacher Appreciation Fund.



Otterbein in Prayer

Susie Ayala	Dennis Gaines	Randy Nelson
Wanda Baker	Ray & Audrey Griffith	George & Betty Painter
Gary Billingsley	Doris Hanger	BJ Payne
Millie Bruce	Laura Headlee	Judy Pruett
Rev. Louis Carson	Norma Heath	Mary Ellen Rohrbaugh
Fern Cline	Hunter Hensley	Glen Sites
Loretta Crider	Alice Ely Howell	Becky Smith
Eleanor Davis	John Liskey	Anna Steele
Cliff & Jean Davis	Allen Litten	Linda Stephens
Ann Dellinger	Marion Malabad	Juanita Taylor
Jo Ellen Dickenson	Allene McCoy	Anthony VanPelt
Amber Earman	John Miller	Daisy VanPelt
Mike Earman	Eugene Moyers	Mary Wenger
Nancy East	Mary Jo Mitchell	



FROM THE PASTOR

Advent is a season of preparation. Preparing for the birth of Jesus, preparing for his return, preparing for the Kingdom of God. We don't always get Advent right. We confuse it with Christmas and do all of our celebrating while we should be preparing. It's how our commercial world operates. I write this more than a week before Thanksgiving and yet this morning I saw Christmas lights already decorating houses in our neighborhood. By the end of December, all the shops and stores will be looking towards Valentine's Day and will have moved on from Christmas. While I don't hope or expect our consumer-driven society to change, we at the church should put up some mild resistance to rushing headlong into Christmas without at least giving Advent some time and attention.

Broadly speaking, I think we do a fairly good job of this at OUMC through our worship practices and Advent devotionals. Our Advent scriptures from the lectionary also assist. One of the rotating texts for Advent is the conversation between Jesus and John in Matthew 11:2-11. By this time in the narrative, John is in prison and Jesus is in the heart of his work. John sends some of his followers to ask if Jesus is really the Messiah and Jesus responds by telling them to relate all they have seen: *"the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them."* Assurance to John that Jesus is the Messiah, that the words of Isaiah are being fulfilled, that the preparation John called for is coming to pass in the work of Jesus. How John must have felt at peace knowing that his work was not in vain.

Jesus continues to speak to the crowd, turning his attention to John. His words adequately describe John, but I think they also apply to any who continue to follow Jesus. He describes John as one who is strong and not acclimated to the luxury of his day. *"What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces."* Jesus is reminding his listeners and us that the work of

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being a disciple is not easy, not comfortable, and not found in the luxury of the secular world. John literally removed himself from civilization and lived in the wilderness! Our call as Christians might not be to go live in the wilds of Shenandoah Mountain, but it is to stand in opposition to the excess of our society. We can do this in many ways, but a good start would be attending to a true Advent, one not focused on celebrating Christmas but preparing for that celebration. Let's wait patiently and attentively to what is to come on December 25th. Let's prepare for the feast throughout December and not rush ahead as the world will surely do.

Adam



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith News

The spiritual gifts of Christmas can quickly slip away. How can we hold onto the spiritual gifts of Christmas and find balance in our doing and being? We can thank God for the food at each meal and in silence pray the Lord's prayer after. We can spend some quiet time listening to God to see how He is calling us. Read the Bible and devotionals daily. At the close of the day, simply pray: "Please fix the things I didn't do so well and spread the love I shared and bless me as I sleep."

From the January 2019 Advocate

There will not be a December meeting. Please send your pledges to Jo Ann Liskey (210 Virginia Avenue, Apt. 231; Bridgewater, VA 22812) so she can meet the end-of-year expenses.

Thanks for all your help during the years I served as your president. ~Wilma Mitchell

*Giving things to God in prayer always
makes the world a better place.*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Advent and Christmas Music Opportunities

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 11th, 10:30 am, Otterbein UMC

Featuring the Sanctuary Choir, College Chorale,
Soloists, and Guest Instrumentalists

Join us for readings and music of the season
as we prepare our hearts for the birth of the Christ Child.
Invite your family and friends!

Massanutten Brass Band presents *Christmas in Brass*

Sunday, December 11th, 6:00 pm, Otterbein UMC

Come hear The Shenandoah Valley's Award Winning
"British-Style" Brass Band playing Carols of the Season.

This concert is a benefit for The Salvation Army of Harrisonburg.

Invitation to a Miracle

Saturday, December 17th, 4:00 pm, Asbury UMC

Joint choirs of Asbury and Otterbein with Chamber Orchestra

Come and experience the joyful sounds of the season!
This Christmas Cantata is a journey of narration,
scripture, and traditional carols inviting us to
witness the miracle of the Savior's birth.

As part of Asbury's Sacred Arts Series, a freewill offering
will be taken for the community ministry of Open Doors.

Christmas Caroling

Monday, December 19th, 1:40 pm, Otterbein UMC

Join your Otterbein Church Family as we sing carols
and spread cheer to members of our congregation. You
will be blessed as you are a blessing!

Meet at the church to carpool together to shut-ins' residences.

choice. If you want a live tree, buy from a local tree farm.

Food

- Make a shopping list of what and how much you need to avoid buying unnecessary items that lead to food waste.
- Store leftovers in glass jars or dishes instead of plastic containers.
- Minimize the use of styrofoam, plastic cups, and other disposable paper and plastic products.
- Opt for paper, cardboard, and glass packaged food and avoid single serving plastics.
- Remember to take your reusable bags with you to grocery shop.

Heating

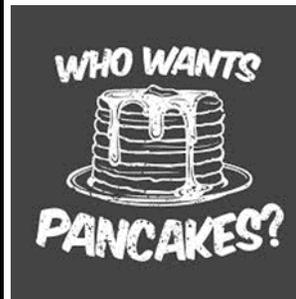
- When the temperatures dips below your comfort zone, reach for a sweater or warm blanket instead of turning up the heat.
- Remember to run your ceiling fan clockwise on lowest speed to circulate the hot air that is trapped near the ceiling.

Make this year your most eco-friendly, green Christmas yet. The best of the Christmas season comes from the wealth we create through relationships to each other and nature - God's creation.

Betty Redmond
Creation Care Taskforce



Christmas Brunch to Support College Chorale Scholarships



The **Christmas Family Brunch** is planned for **Sunday, December 11** in **Memorial Hall** immediately following the Christmas Cantata, presented during Morning Worship at 10:30 am. All donations will support the **College Chorale Scholarship Fund**. The meal will feature good food and fellowship for everyone! This year, enjoy pancakes with syrup and a variety of fruit toppings, sausage, fruit cup, and beverage.

The Otterbein United Methodist Men will meet on **Saturday, December 10 at 7:30 am in Memorial Hall**. Following a short business meeting, the men will set up the dining area and make other preparations for the Family Brunch. Cooking for the meal will begin Sunday morning, December 11 at 9:00 am in the kitchen.

Our monthly Otterbein Men's Fellowship prayer breakfast meetings will resume on the 4th Saturday in January 2023.



Want to know more?

Contact the Leadership team, Mike Earman, Bill Pollard, or Carter Ritchie. Also check out our website: oumcharrisonburg.org/united-methodist-men

It was so kind and thoughtful of you to send expressions of sympathy during the illness and passing of Paul Swartz. He had Covid, pneumonia, and a rare form of cancer, but no pain. Thanks to all of you from the Paul Swartz family.

To My Otterbein Church Family—Words cannot adequately convey my thanks to you. From Pastor Adam Blagg, Sandy Schaefer, Betty Redmond, UMM, and all my church family, you brightened my days with beautiful cards, phone calls, and many prayers to my Lord and Savior who was with me every day. My sincere thanks. It has been a long road, still not to the end, but prayerfully closer. May God bless each and every one.

~ Ann Dellinger ~



Creation Care

CREATION CARE TASK FORCE

"Hanging of the Greens" is a traditional service of decorating the church for the Advent and Christmas season. This service includes the hanging of greenery traditionally associated with everlasting life. You may have participated in such a service in years past. The following litany for the service is found in the UMC Book of Worship:

Litany of the Greens

How can we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, the King?

With branches of cedar, the tree of royalty.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, the eternal Christ?

With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, ever green.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, our Savior?

With arrangements of holly and ivy, symbolizing His passion, death, and resurrection.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, the Son of God?

By hearing again the words of the prophets who foretold the saving work of God.

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Glory to God in the highest!

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This litany is a beautiful reminder of the beauty of God's creation and our responsibility to utilize, manage, protect, and defend His creation.

Following are some way to protect God's creation in the Christmas season, minimizing the environmental impact of eco-unfriendly decorating and consumerism that comes with this season.

Gifts

- Shop locally to reduce your carbon footprint and support the local economy.
- Buy quality, choosing what will last and avoiding non-recyclable plastics.
- Choose **recyclable** Christmas wrapping paper or printed kraft paper. Reusable gift bags are another good choice, and of course reuse the cardboard boxes you receive.
- Avoid rolls of Christmas paper, bows, and ribbon containing non-recyclable elements like foil, glitter, or plastic.
- Recycle wrapping paper by testing with the "scrunch" test. Gently squeeze paper into a ball. If it keeps the ball shape, it can be recycled. If it springs back to form, it's likely not recyclable.
- Use natural raffia or raffia ribbon.

Decorations

- Choose LED lights. They have a longer life span and use less energy. Use a timer so your lights are only on when needed.
- Stick to decorations that are reusable year after year. If you decide not to reuse an item, consider donating it instead of trashing it.
- Greenery and other natural foliage from your yard or from a friend or neighbor is always a good

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