

Bookwalter United Methodist Church

4218 Central Avenue Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37912

December 1, 2022

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

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***“Sharing God,s love with our neighbors,
Inviting them to share in in the joy of Jesus Christ”***

ARTICLE

Christmas just isn't what it used to be. My childhood memories of getting up on Christmas morning are draped in a fuzzy gauze of memory. I wish I still had some of the toys I remember unwrapping back then. I recall my cowboy stocking with a missing eye. Mom's punch and haystack candy is what Christmas tasted like. A ceramic tree with Lite-Brite looking ornaments was a favorite decoration. I also loved the old-fashioned electric candles that used to adorn our neighbor's windows.

Christmas just isn't what it used to be. I spent many exhausting Christmas Eves coming home from a candlelight communion service at church, getting kids to bed and then spending hours working on presents that required “some assembly.” It was worth it to see their smiles as they ran in to see what Santa had brought them as they marveled at the magic of the morning. We then ate sausage casserole and drank hot chocolate and spent the day in our pajamas,

usually watching a new video someone got as a gift.

Christmas just isn't what it used to be. The kids have moved out and I do not have to sneak around on Christmas Eve much anymore. Scheduling time with all the family and their significant others and the resulting conflicting schedules is one of the more challenging parts of the season now. While I lament no longer being able to make at least one holiday trip to East Towne mall, I do enjoy the convenience of online shopping and delivery. We are getting to the point where we are not wrapping as many presents but rather giving monetary gifts and some stocking stuff.

Christmas just isn't what it used to be. I am sure things will continue to change for the remainder of my life. Perhaps instead of an artificial tree, I will get a hologram instead and presents can be beamed instantly to my space deck. When I am gone, Christmas celebrations will transform and shift for those I leave behind. I am at peace with this because I am comforted by what does not change. Hebrews 13:8 reads, “Jesus Christ is the

same yesterday and today and forever.” Everything around the babe born in Bethlehem changes, but He does not. Steve

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Join us for one or both performances of “O Holy Night! A Christmas Celebration” on Saturday, December 17 at 7:00 PM or Sunday, December 18 at 3:30 PM.

This is the first year since the COVID-19 pandemic we will feature a full orchestra and mass choir. For sponsorship information to sponsor a musician for the event or to honor/memorialize someone in the program, please contact Bailey or leave a message with the church office.

We need some help with food for the musicians and singers following the dress rehearsal on that Saturday from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please see Bailey for details if able to volunteer or provide.

We also need able-bodied volunteers to help bring in the stage extensions following worship on December 11. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

We will gather at 5:00 PM on December 24 for our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service. Hopefully we will have neither Covid nor blizzard conditions this year.

YOUTH PIZZA PARTY

The youth will have a pizza party on Wednesday, December 14 at 6:30 PM. We will play games and hang out as this will be our last meeting of the year.

NEW YEAR’S DINNER

According to legendary Southern food researcher John Egerton's “Southern Food: At Home, On the Road, In History” black-eyed peas are associated with a mystical and mythical power to bring good luck. Some say the tradition of eating black-eyed peas dates back to the Civil War. Northern troops considered the peas to be suitable only for animals, so they were one of the few edible things left behind by raiding soldiers. Black-eyed peas symbolize “coins,” and point to monetary gain. Cornbread, with its yellow hue, represents “gold.”

Whatever your opinion might be regarding black-eyed peas and/or cornbread, you are invited to our first “Peas On Earth” dinner on January 1, 2023. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship for black-eyed peas, pinto beans, ham, and cornbread. If you don’t like any of the bean choices, we will have pizza as an alternative. We will also have various kinds of desserts. Rumor has it Idonna Bryson will be bringing her very famous (and delicious) banana pudding. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided. Please join us as we begin 2023 in fellowship with one another.

