



# Bookwalter United Methodist Church

4218 Central Avenue Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37912

(865) 689-3349

[www.bookwalter-umc.org](http://www.bookwalter-umc.org)

December 2023

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director  
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Edie Jo Hall, Children's Director  
Taylor Stephens, Youth Director

*Sharing God's love with our neighbors,  
inviting them to share in the joy of Jesus Christ.*

## ARTICLE

The new Bible study "An Unlikely Advent" has begun and the basic premise is to take a deeper look at some of the secondary characters in the Christmas story. The first session is about the parents of John the Baptist, Zechariah and Elizabeth. These two have been unable to have a child together well into older age. This dream just did not seem to be in the cards.

Then one day when Zechariah was performing his priestly duties, an angel appeared to him and said they would have a child. Rachel Billups writes, "*Let's be honest, sometimes we get so caught up in the religious routine that we forget to expect the unexpected. While we are worshipping week after week, we can become numb to certain God possibilities.*" She also points out that this Advent season is one of active waiting, not passive. When we sing, "Come, Thou, Long Expected Jesus" let's not forget that he might just show up.

*Steve*

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

We will be decorating the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall this Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> starting about 9:00 AM. Any and all help will be appreciated as we transform our worship space with beautiful Christmas décor.



## CHRISTMAS PARTY

On December 9 at 3:00 PM, we will have a church-wide Christmas party in our fellowship hall. We plan on filling bags for our Homebound folks and playing games such as Bingo. We also invite everyone to bring snacks (cookies, finger foods, etc.) to share. The more festive the better!

There is also a rumor that a special red and rotund guest might be on hand also. So, you better watch out.

## **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Here we are in the last month of 2023! December brings a lot of excitement with people looking to wrap up (*Christmas pun intended*) the year. It also brings a lot of gatherings and events for the holiday season! Here are some reminders about specifics for events from the Music Ministry:

During the Church Christmas Party on Saturday, Dec 9th we will be having a “Silent Night” auction to help fundraise for the Christmas concerts. There will be a plethora of gift baskets, gift cards, baked goods, etc to bid on. Bidding will start when the Christmas party begins and will end approximately 15 minutes after service on Sunday December 10th – to give some time for those who can’t make it to the party on Saturday that would still like a chance to bid!

Saturday, December 16th from 5:00pm to 7:00pm – we will have an International Christmas Festival. We will have tables representing countries from across the globe (England, Greece, Italy, Germany, New Zealand, Austria) but we still have room for plenty more! Each booth will showcase Christmas traditions of that country. We have passports to take to each “country” to get stamped. Treats are optional but certainly not required. Let Bailey know what country you or your family/friends would like to represent!

Following the Festival at 7:00pm on Saturday, Dec 16th will be our International Christmas Concert. We will have an orchestra again this year and choir and soloists. We will be singing carols from around the globe, including countries like Germany, France, England, Venezuela, Nigeria, and more!

We will have a second performance of the Concert on Sunday, Dec 17th at 3:00pm for those who do not like to drive at night. This will also serve as our December concert of our Third Sunday Sessions concert series. We will be taking up a love offering at each concert.

We hope that everyone can come to at least one of the performances, as it is always a time that we welcome the Knoxville community into our beautiful space for the Christmas season. If you have any questions, reach out to me. *Bailey*

## **LETTING OUR LIGHTS SHINE**

At our last Church council meeting, we discussed some issues with our outdoor lighting. Thank you to R.A. Laws who has replaced the bulb in the spotlight that shines on the steeple as well as the door outside the secretary’s office. Thanks also to Charles Gault who arranged to have KUB fix the big streetlights in the back parking lot.

## **CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION**

We will gather at 5:00 PM on Sunday, December 24 for our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service.



## **PEAS ON EARTH DINNER**

After worship on Sunday, December 31 we will have our second annual “Peas On Earth” dinner. Centered around the Southern tradition of Black-Eyed Peas and Ham for blessings in the New Year, we will have both of those. We will also have other soups, cornbread and desserts.

This year we are having this meal as a fundraiser for the youth to go to Resurrection in January. There is no specific charge, but we appreciate any donation you can share.