



Phone: 979-836-2008

Fax: 979-836-6202

[www.fumcbrenham.org](http://www.fumcbrenham.org)

Email: [fumc@fumcbrenham.org](mailto:fumc@fumcbrenham.org)



*Open Hearts . . .*

*Open Minds . . .*

*Open Doors . . .*

#### SUNDAY MORNINGS AT FUMC

- 8:15 a.m.** Worship in the Sanctuary
- 8:30 a.m.** Breakfast in the Activity Center
- 8:45 a.m.** Refreshments in the Parlor
- 9:00 a.m.** Celebration Service in the Activity Center
- 10:00 a.m.** Sunday School classes for all ages
- 11:00 a.m.** Worship in the Sanctuary

*Nursery care provided*

*The 11:00 a.m. service is broadcast each Sunday on Brenham radio KWHI/AM 1280 and Channel 96 Cable TV.*

#### Pastoral Staff

Rev. Jon Stouffer  
[jon@fumcbrenham.org](mailto:jon@fumcbrenham.org)

Rev. Kay Reed  
[kay@fumcbrenham.org](mailto:kay@fumcbrenham.org)

# First United Methodist Church

408 North Baylor St. Brenham, Texas 77833-3213

December 2, 2016



## Holiday Services & Information

**December 11<sup>th</sup>** – *A Musical Celebration* during the 9:00 a.m. Celebration Service  
-Church Family Caroling, Meeting at the Activity Center @ 3:00 p.m.

**December 18<sup>th</sup>** – *Morning Star: Celebrating the Everlasting Light of Christmas* -Cantata Sunday during the 8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services

**December 24<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas Eve Candlelight Holy Communion Services @ 5:00 p.m. in the Activity Center and 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

**December 25<sup>th</sup>** – One Service Only @ 11:00 a.m.

**January 1<sup>st</sup>** – One Service Only @ 11:00 a.m.

## Holiday Office Hours

**December 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Closing @ 12:00 p.m.

**December 26<sup>th</sup>** – Closed

**December 30<sup>th</sup>** – Closing @ 12:00 p.m.

**January 2<sup>nd</sup>** - Closed

## Newsletter Deadline



Your next newsletter deadline will be **Tuesday, December 27, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.** If you have a submission for the newsletter, please email your written article to [fumc@fumcbrenham.org](mailto:fumc@fumcbrenham.org) or submit a handwritten article to the church office. This is the best way to make sure that all the information for your article is accurate. Thank you.



## Prayer Concerns

### SUNDAY November 6, 2016

#### Church Attendance:

Nursery	3
Worship 8:15 a.m.	66
Celebration 9:00 a.m.	83
Worship 11:00 a.m.	92
<b>Worship Total</b>	<b>244</b>
Sunday School	93
<b>Offering:</b>	<b>\$14,826.00</b>

### SUNDAY November 13, 2016

#### Church Attendance:

Nursery	3
Worship 8:15 a.m.	77
Celebration 9:00 a.m.	50
Worship 11:00 a.m.	102
<b>Worship Total</b>	<b>232</b>
Sunday School	106
<b>Offering:</b>	<b>\$6,177.00</b>

### SUNDAY November 20, 2016

#### Church Attendance:

Nursery	2
Worship 8:15 a.m.	72
Celebration 9:00 a.m.	78
Worship 11:00 a.m.	93
<b>Worship Total</b>	<b>245</b>
Sunday School	101
<b>Offering:</b>	<b>\$10,292.00</b>

### SUNDAY November 27, 2016

#### Church Attendance:

Nursery	2
Worship 8:15 a.m.	81
Celebration 9:00 a.m.	89
Worship 11:00 a.m.	83
<b>Worship Total</b>	<b>255</b>
Sunday School	116
<b>Offering:</b>	<b>\$7,696.00</b>

#### November Preliminary TOTALS

<b>Nov. Income:</b>	<b>\$39,121.00</b>
<b>Nov. Expense:</b>	<b>\$52,967.00</b>
<b>Nov. Total:</b>	<b>(\$13,846.00)</b>

#### Preliminary YTD TOTALS

<b>YTD Income:</b>	<b>\$559,092.00</b>
<b>YTD Expense:</b>	<b>\$601,289.00</b>
<b>YTD Net Total:</b>	<b>(\$42,197.00)</b>

Luene Harmer  
 Frances Sidebottom  
 Alan Williamson  
 Bob & Susan Jenkins  
 Fred Ketcham  
 Roberial & Dorothy Boenker  
 Mike Kalil  
 Juanita Hickey  
 Susan Fowler  
 Ronnie Ochoa  
 Eloise Carmen  
 Jim & Linda Clements

Jeffery Janner  
 Norman Kitzman  
 Kristi Vanzura  
 Sam & Beverly Duree  
 Alice Pryor  
 Steve Ritchie  
 Frank Tyson  
 Rev. Max Grubb  
 Linda Winstanley  
 LaNelle Wagner

Our homebound members and those  
 serving in the military

### Donations Received

In memory of  
***Nita Winton***

By

Milton & Twila Tate

In memory of  
***Ken Goedeke***

By

Milton & Twila Tate

Gary & Kay Ivy

Smitty Hinners

Tom & Carol Ann Post

Don & Mary Wilhelm

Larry & Konnie Thomas

In memory of  
***Bob Perry***

By

Milton & Twila Tate

Donna Sprenger

The Jurden Family

In memory of  
***Jim Hickey***

By

Donna Sprenger

Marilyn Whitmarsh

The Card Group Ladies

Bill & Jo Powell

In memory of  
***Buddy Dorow***

By

Milton & Twila Tate

Donna Sprenger

Marilyn Whitmarsh

Danna Edwards



In memory of  
***Henry Kuecker***

By

Milton & Twila Tate

A.W. & Virginia Hodde

Gary & Kay Ivy

Nick & Marianne Nelms

Mr. & Mrs. Wilfred Kuecker

Howard & Mildred Kuecker

James & Sharon Stolz

Danney & Connie Rohde

Harper, Donna, & Bryan Muery

Gary Schulze

Walter & Evelyn Thielemann

Smitty Hinners

Larry & Cindy See

Tom & Carol Ann Post

Maxine Marek

Frances Sidebottom

John & Mildred Taden

Don & Mary Wilhelm

Lydia House

Ken & Ann Pieper

Donald & Gwen Spiess

Ron Kuecker

Mr. & Mrs. W. V. McAdams



Dec 4 in Sunday School  
- Children will be making goodie bags for college students to get them through finals week.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>**  
**AT 9:00 AM**  
**IN THE *CELEBRATION!***  
**SERVICE**

Join us as our children, youth and adults help us celebrate the season in music and song. If you or your child/youth would like to participate please contact Jennifer Patrick.

Dec 10 @3pm in the Gray House our Youth will be making deliveries of Christmas JOY to friends & family.

**A**  
**Celebration**  
**of Music**



Wear your favorite Christmas outfit and join us as we share in fellowship and outreach to those homebound members and sing carols on a hayride thru Kruse neighborhood. Bring your friends and family and make this your family's tradition.

**CHURCH FAMILY CAROLING**  
**Sunday, December 11**  
**Meet at 3:00pm in Activity Center**

After the caroling we will share in a meal of pot luck appetizers. Bring your favorite snack foods or try something new to share. Drinks will be provided.

## Christmas Eve Service



*5:00p.m. in the Activity Center*  
*7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary*

## Stouffer's Food For Thought . . .

The keeping of Advent & Christmas preparations and celebrations has become such an important time of the Christian year for me. The lighting of the Advent wreath candles, the Scriptural focus of the Lectionary, the waiting and realizing this has all happened before, and the anticipation that God will once again bring renewal and refreshment to God's People in these seasons sets me at deep peace and gives me much hope.

Even though the days and weeks leading up to Christmas are filled with much activity and preparation that looks like December 25 is already here, there is always a sense that something is waiting just in the wings for arrival on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. This holy waiting for the arrival of the expected yet unknown is for me the Hope of the Seasons we celebrate. It reminds me that we live in both the "now" and the "not yet."

The "now" is that the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus, whose birth we prepare to celebrate, forever changed all of creation and gave birth to the whole church and brought the new of the Gospel to the whole world. The "now" is that our lives are different because of Jesus' birth! The "now" is that we live in the midst of the work of building God's Kingdom on the earth every time we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

The "not yet" is that the Kingdom of God is not fully realized in the here and now and we continue to learn and grow as we seek God's will for our lives. The "not yet" means that we often make mistakes, we rely on the liturgy and practices of the church (repentance, confession, pardon, feast), and we stay the course and keep the faith. The "not yet" is that often we are in the midst of the Kingdom even though we may not realize the fullness of events at the time.

When I remember that we live in both the "now" and the "not yet," I remember that we all live with deep peace and much hope, especially in these seasons of much busyness and activity. We all live with the truth of our triumphs and our tragedies. And we all live with the promise of New Life and the Resurrection to Eternal Life. All this, because we remember and celebrate the birth of one who came into the world to love and serve others. May our celebrations of Christ's birth bring God's renewal and refreshment to each of us, to our church family, and to God's people and the world this and every year.

May Christ be our sufficiency,

**Jon**



## *F.U.M.C. WOMEN'S RETREAT*

Twenty-three women attended our Women's Retreat on November 12<sup>th</sup>. We had a wonderful day of learning to "Decorate your Heart, Decorate your Home, To the Glory of our Lord." It was interesting, informative, renewing, relaxing, and just a really nice day! Our speaker, Teresa Granberry gave us a very hands-on presentation. We had a fun craft project at the end. Hopefully this will be a start of an annual tradition at our church.





### *The Gifts of Advent*

When asked to explain what the four candles of the Advent wreath represent, seven-year-old Luke began to explain, "There's love, joy, peace, and..." His six-year-old sister piped up, "I know!" She said excitedly, "Peace and quiet!"

If there is anything that Advent doesn't bring to us, it's peace and quiet. We sing, "Silent Night," but our hearts are far from being silent. We read the heavenly hosts' words about peace on earth, but peace has escaped not only our lives, but our vocabulary.

What's a person to do? There always seems to be two ways of thinking about the matter. First, just accept it. This is the way the Christmas season is. Just cope with it as best you can. Or second, just forget it. Christmas is way too commercialized. Let's just get rid of all the hype and gaudy trappings.

Perhaps there is another way. I don't believe we have to resign ourselves to the frenzy, nor do we have to trash all our Christmas decorations. Just as in our everyday lives, true peace comes not from a lack of activity around us, but from within us. It comes from having our hearts and minds focused on what is truly important.

Remember that Christmas is about Jesus and why He came to earth and lived in human flesh. Remember that Christmas is about sharing the love and joy that we have because of the love that was shown to us through Jesus Christ. Remember that all of the decorations and activities are pointless unless you have a reason to celebrate.

Do you want a little peace and quiet during Advent and Christmas? Think about Jesus and how much God must have loved you to send Him to earth. Do that a couple of times a day between now and Christmas. I think it will make a difference.

See you Sunday,  
*Kay*



### **'Twas the Night Before Christmas**

We are all familiar with that great Christmas story, and how the family was fast asleep, and all those amazing things happened on Christmas Eve. To most of us, it is a special night every year also. We celebrate with family and friends. We go to candlelight service. We drive around looking at beautiful lights. We get ready for Christmas morning. Then we go safely to our beds and sleep the night away. However, for many folks in our community that isn't the case. They stay up all night and watch out for us, for our family's safety. I'm talking about the police and sheriff officers, EMS workers, police dispatchers, firemen, and nurses.

This year, like we have done in the past, we'd like to take time to thank these people for their service to our community. You can take part in our church's thank you to them. On Christmas Eve, just bring something to put in their gift basket. It can be cookies, crackers, candy, fruit breads, or anything else you would like. There will be a container set up outside of the church parlor and at the entrance to the church off of Baylor St. to drop off these goodies. The items will be divided up into baskets, and then right after second service starts, they will be delivered.

If you would like to help make the baskets or help deliver them, please contact Michele Smith, 979-251-9840. It is true blessing to be involved in this evening. Help us show our love and support to those that "Stay up all night, the night before Christmas."

### ***It's Already Confirmation Time Again***

I can't believe it's almost Confirmation time again! Do you have a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade young man or young lady in your home that would be interested in going through a church membership class? Beginning in late January through May I will be offering our annual confirmation class for those who have not been baptized, confirmed, or joined the church. We will meet on Sunday evenings.

Baptism is the sign of "Christian initiation" into the family of God and confirmation is a way of giving knowledge to the young person so that they may confirm or accept their baptism before the Lord. In the classes we will talk about the Bible, religious beliefs of the Church, our own congregation, and answer any questions the young people may have about God and the church. We will also learn about worship, the sacraments, prayer, and what it means to serve Jesus Christ in our lives. When the class is completed those who so choose will proceed with the steps that lead to church membership.

Confirmation Sunday will be Sunday, May 21, 2017. If you would like your child to be a part of this class, please give me a call at 836-2008.

*Kay*

## Notes from the Choir Loft

Dr. Nancy Taylor Ginsburg

### Happy Advent! Happy (Christian) New Year!

The word “advent” is derived from the Latin *adventus*...meaning approach or arrival. It is a time of beginning! For Christians, it is the beginning of a new Christian year...and a time of anticipation and excitement. Our Savior is coming! Are you ready?!

Now, if you're like me, you probably remember a time when you came to church the Sunday after Thanksgiving and sang Christmas carols. What happened?!

Well, back in 1968, Vatican Council convened. From that Vatican Council there emerged a multi-year lectionary – a three-year cycle of Bible passages (Old Testament, Psalter (Psalm), New Testament, and Gospel) recommended for each worship service of the year. Though the Vatican Council was associated with the Catholic Church, the impact of this decision was far-reaching. In 1983, the Revised Common Lectionary came into being...and began to be adopted by many denominations, including the Methodists.

When we started to use the lectionary, the liturgical year -- the church year -- took on greater importance in denominations and/or congregations that had previously not given it so much consideration. Today, our worship pays close attention to the seasons of preparation, celebration, and response that are built into the church year.

- For the 12-day Christmas celebration, Advent is the season of preparation, and Epiphany is the season of response.
- For the 50-day celebration of Easter and then Pentecost, Lent is the season of preparation, and the time after Pentecost is the season of response.

This year, the season of Advent began on November 27<sup>th</sup>...and we continued an Advent tradition that dates back at least as far as the 6<sup>th</sup> century church.

Advent is a time of preparation...and a time of waiting. It always begins on a Sunday and includes four Sundays...and Christmas is always December 25<sup>th</sup>. In many worship traditions, the first two Sundays of Advent focus more on the second coming of Christ and the next two Sundays of Advent prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In some churches, Christmas carols begin to be sung at this mid-point of Advent. The Third Sunday of Advent is the Sunday of JOY, of *gaudete*.

Because Christmas is on Sunday this year, our Advent season is as long as it can possibly be. (When Christmas is on a Monday, Advent is nearly a week shorter – and the Sunday before Christmas is both the fourth Sunday of Advent and ... once the sun goes down ... Christmas Eve!)

There are several ways we show we are waiting. One of the most obvious is the Advent wreath, where we light a new candle each week for four weeks ... and illuminate the center candle, the Light of Christ, for the first time on Christmas Eve.

Another is that the nativity scene is set up in front of the church, as a reminder of the coming celebration...but there is no baby Jesus! Baby Jesus will arrive on Christmas Eve! ...and there are no kings! They have begun their journey and will travel toward the manger, arriving for Epiphany – which comes on January 6<sup>th</sup> – immediately after the 12 days of Christmas!



I pray that this Advent season, this time of preparation for the arrival of our Savior, will be a very special time in your life...a time of reflection, of patience, of anticipation, and, yes, of waiting.



2017  
UMW OFFICERS

# DECEMBER



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				<b>1</b> <b>9:00</b> Yoga/ AC <b>5:30</b> Exercise Class/ FH	<b>2</b> <b>9:00</b> Ladies' Emmaus/ Parlor	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> <b>6:00</b> UMYF/ AC	<b>5</b> <b>10:00</b> Monday Morning Bible Study/ FH <b>12:00</b> Wesley/ Blinn	<b>6</b> <b>10:00</b> UMW Christmas Tea/ Debi Meschwitz's	<b>7</b> <b>5:30</b> Bells of Praise/ FH <b>7:00</b> Choir/ Choir Room Celebration Band/ AC	<b>8</b> <b>9:00</b> Yoga/ AC <b>5:30</b> Exercise Class/ FH <b>6:00</b> UMM Ladies Night/ AC	<b>9</b> <b>9:00</b> Ladies' Emmaus/ Parlor	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> <b>9:00</b> Musical Celebration/ AC <b>3:00</b> Family Caroling/ AC	<b>12</b> <b>10:00</b> Monday Morning Bible Study/ FH <b>12:00</b> Wesley/ Blinn <b>1:30</b> CDC Board/ Library	<b>13</b> <b>9:00</b> Card Group/ MH <b>12:00</b> Susana Circle/ Pendergrass <b>6:00</b> CDC Christmas Program/ AC	<b>14</b> <b>5:30</b> Bells of Praise/ FH <b>7:00</b> Choir/ Choir Room Celebration Band/ AC	<b>15</b> <b>9:00</b> Yoga/ AC <b>5:30</b> Exercise Class/ FH	<b>16</b> <b>9:00</b> Ladies' Emmaus/ Parlor	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> <b>8:15 &amp; 11:00</b> Cantata Sunday <b>6:00</b> UMYF/ AC	<b>19</b> <b>10:00</b> Monday Morning Bible Study/ FH	<b>20</b> <b>9:00</b> Goodman Circle/ Clark Hickey Circle/ Duree Amerson Circle/ Amerson <b>6:30</b> Wesleyan Circle/ FH	<b>21</b> <b>5:30</b> Bells of Praise/ FH <b>7:00</b> Choir/ Choir Room Celebration Band/ AC	<b>22</b> <b>9:00</b> Yoga/ AC <b>5:30</b> Exercise Class/ FH	<b>23</b> <b>9:00</b> Ladies' Emmaus/ Parlor  <i>Offices Closing                      @ Noon</i>	<b>24</b> <b>5:00</b> Christmas Eve Service/ AC <b>7:00</b> Christmas Eve Service/ Sanctuary
<b>25</b> <b>11:00</b> Only One Church Service  	<i>Offices Closed</i>	<b>27</b> <b>9:00</b> Card Group/ MH	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>9:00</b> Yoga/ AC <b>5:30</b> Exercise Class/ FH	<b>30</b> <b>9:00</b> Ladies' Emmaus/ Parlor  <i>Offices Closing                      @ Noon</i>	<b>31</b>  

**Jon's Regular Office Hours**

Monday 9 a.m. – Noon, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
Tuesday 11 a.m. – Noon & 1 pm. – 5 p.m.  
Wednesday 9 a.m. – Noon, & 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Thursday 9 a.m. – Noon, & 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
(Mondays 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. is your pastors' conference time together)  
(Tuesdays 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. & Wednesdays 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. are sermon writing times)

**Jon's Regular Visitation Hours**

Monday 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Thursday 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**Kay's Regular Office Hours**

Monday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Tuesday 10 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.  
Wednesday 10 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Friday 10 a.m. – Noon  
(Mondays 1 pm – 2 p.m. is your pastors' conference time together)  
(M, T, W, F 9 a.m. – 10 am are sermon writing times)

**Kay's Regular Visitation Hours**

Tuesday 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Friday 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.



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