

Lovely Lane *network* United Methodist Church

December 2018

The Season of Advent

*“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a branch will fruit.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. . .”*
(Isaiah 11:1-2, NIV)

Vision Statement

We are here
to reflect
God’s glory
in our
congregation,
in our world,
and in our
hearts.

Forgiven by
Christ,
we forgive.
Accepted by
God,
we accept.

Empowered by
the Holy Spirit,
we equip,
enable
and inspire
God’s house-
hold to servant
leadership.



The Season of Advent makes me think about a children’s story, *The Giving Tree*, by Shel Silverstein. The story is a tale about a relationship between a young boy and a tree in the forest. The tree provides the boy what he wants throughout his life.

As a young child, the boy gathers the tree’s leaves on mild autumn afternoons. He fashions them into a crown for his head and plays king of the forest. The tree is fun to climb and he loves to eat its delicious apples. The boy enjoys swinging from the tree’s branches and discovers a shady resting place beneath those same branches on hot days.

As the boy becomes a teenager, he visits the tree less frequently. He stops by to carve his initials, and those of his girlfriend, on the apple tree’s trunk, framing them with a heart. As the boy matures and his interests change, he finds he needs some spending money. He picks the tree’s luscious apples and sells them at the farmer’s market in town.

As an adult, he cuts off many of the tree’s branches to provide lumber for his young family’s new home. During his middle years, he finds himself with leisure time and cuts down the tree’s trunk to fashion a sailboat’s hull. Where a magnificent tree had once stood, spreading its leafy branches toward the heavens, all that remains is a stump. In his final days, the boy, now an old man, returns to the remaining stump to sit and rest his weary bones and to reminisce of days gone by.

But that stump is not the end of the memorable tree. From a stump that seemed long dead, new shoots spring to life and become a tree again. The story reminds us that God makes all things new. Even an old stump can be reborn into a tree tomorrow. Even a Savior can enter our hearts and live in the form of a baby.

As we stand at the threshold of a new church year during the Season of Advent, we find ourselves waiting again for the Christ Child to come alive in our hearts once again. We experience darkness all around us. We yearn for new life and a message of hope. We know this season has the capacity to bring forth the new beginnings we desire.

As we journey forward then, might we remain open to the sights and sounds around us! As we hear the words of those like the prophets, angels, and shepherds, might our hearts be open to a life-giving message that can change us forever!

A Thousand Blessings to each of You! Scott

Calendar of Events — December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		ILF = International Ladies Fellowship WOF = Women Of Faith WWW = Wednesday Women & The Word	CCM = Care Center Ministry CWM = Children's Weekday Ministries UMW = United Methodist Women			1 9:30 UMW Advent Coffee
2 <i>First Sunday of Advent & Communion</i> 9 am Chancel Choir 6-8 pm H.S. Youth Group	3 10 am—3 pm PEO luncheon & mtg. 5:30 pm Tai Chi 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	4 6:45 pm WOF	5 9:30 am CCM (offsite) 9:30 am Mom's Club 12 noon WWW 1:30 pm Staff mtg. 5:30 pm Family Meal 6-7:30 pm Kid's Club & M.S. Youth Group/Confirmation 6 pm Adult Explo	6 5:30 pm Yoga 6:15 pm Handbells	7	8 9 am-1:30 pm ILF 4:30-7 pm Mom's Club Holiday Party
9 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> 9 am Chancel Choir 6-8 pm H.S. Youth Group	10 11:30 am Happy Endings lunch (@ Emil's) 5:30 pm Tai Chi 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	11 6 pm UMW Ornament Exchange & Dinner (@ Vito's) 6:30 pm Mental Health Support Grp. 6:45 pm WOF	12 12 noon WWW 1:30 pm Staff brief prayer time 5:30 pm Family Meal 6-7:30 pm Kid's Club & M.S. Youth Group/Confirmation 6 pm Adult Explo	13 7 am Leadership Mtg. (@ Panera's) 5:30 pm Yoga	14	15 8:30 am Men's Breakfast 9-11 am Rehearsal for Children's Christmas Program (on Dec. 16 during 9:15 am service)
16 <i>Third Sunday of Advent / Children's Christmas Program @ 9:15</i> 9 am Chancel Choir 3 pm Blue Christmas Gathering 6-7:15 pm H.S. Youth Christmas Party—location TBD	17 5:30 pm Tai Chi 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	18 10:30-5 JFON Office Hours (if needed) 6:45 pm WOF	19 9-Noon CWM Preschl. Christmas Program & Celebration 12 noon WWW 1:30 pm Staff mtg. 5:30 pm Family Meal 6-7:30 pm All Youth Christmas Party & Jesus' Baby Shower 6 pm Adult Explo	20 9-Noon CWM Preschl. Christmas Program & Celebration 5:30 pm Yoga 6:15 pm Handbells <i>Any monthly committee meetings???</i>	21	22
23 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> 9 am Chancel Choir	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 5 pm Family Worship Service 7 pm Candlelight Worship Service 9 pm Worship with Communion Candlelight Service	25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i> <i>(church & office closed)</i>	26	27 Noon-9 pm M. Vorwerk hosting a Baby Shower 5:30 pm Yoga 7 pm Stride group	28	29
30 <i>First Sunday After Christmas</i> (9 am Chancel Choir)	31 <i>Have a Safe New Year's Eve!</i> 10:15 am Lexington E. Good Nbr. Coffee					

ADULT EXPLO

This group continues to meet on Wednesdays @ 6 PM in the Library. Our focus is on the book "The Journey" by Adam Hamilton. Please join us!

MEN'S BREAKFAST—SAT., DEC. 15, 8:30 AM

Join Pastor Scott in the Fellowship Hall for some breakfast treats plus a special guest: Justin Gehrts, meteorologist for KCRG. Hope to see you there!!!

Lovely Lane Worship, et al.



Worship in December

Dec. 2nd: **First Sunday of Advent & Communion**—3 services: 8, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott
Scripture: Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: “Mark: Preparing the Way”

Dec. 9th: **Second Sunday of Advent**—3 services: 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Jenny
Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon: “Matthew: The World As It Is”

Dec. 16th: **Third Sunday of Advent**—3 services: 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott

Scripture: Luke 1:39-45

Sermon: “Luke: The Lord Is Present”

Dec. 23rd: **Fourth Sunday of Advent**—3 services: 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott

Scripture: John 1:1-5

Sermon: “John: Light In the Darkness”

Dec. 24th: **Christmas Eve**: 5 PM-Family Worship Service, 7 PM-Traditional Candlelight Service, & 9 PM-Traditional Candlelight with Communion Service

Dec. 30th: **First Sunday After Christmas**—One service only @ 9:30 AM / Pastor Scott

Scripture: Luke 2:41-52

Sermon: “Looking for Jesus”

Blue Christmas Grief Gathering

On Sunday, Dec. 16, at 3 pm, we will host a *Blue Christmas Gathering*. We recognize that not all people will be able to celebrate happily this Christmas, and so we’re offering you the opportunity to gather and name the grief. Even in sorrow, Christ’s coming at Christmas brings light to the dark places in our lives.

Join us for a time of remembrance in Fireside, with snacks following. All those grieving from loss—of job, a loved one, mobility, health—are invited to come. For more information, contact Pastor Jenny Seylar at the church.

Hosted by Health & Wholeness

2018 Advent Offering Recipients

Our Missions Committee has selected the following to be the recipients of our 2018 Advent Offering:

1) Helping Hands Ministry serves people with limited material assistance on an emergency basis, helping with rent, utilities, and/or supportive services and advocacy. Staff and volunteers help the client to prioritize needs and work with community agencies and funding sources to meet those needs. HHM offers someone to talk to and share concerns with, and to receive encouragement from in reaching goals—rejoicing in those accomplishments when goals are met.

2) Catherine McAuley Center offers hope and opportunity thru educational and supportive services that promote stability, skill-building, and connection. Catherine McAuley believed that education was the ultimate answer to the struggles of the poor. CMC continues to share mercy, bringing light and life to where there was little or none.

3) Pierce Backpack Ministry is one of the most important programs we’ve supported and continue to support. In East Central Iowa, 1 in 7 children are at risk for hunger or food insecurity. By addressing this concern, this ministry provides needy students with nutritious, easy to prepare food when other food resources may not be available, specifically on weekends and during school vacations.

4) Argentina 47 supports the Rev. Doug Williams, a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC, and pastor relating to the Iowa Annual Conference. Doug serves as pastor and Volunteer-In-Mission promoter of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina. Commissioned in 2015, he is specifically pastor of the Mendoza and San Juan Churches in Argentina, as well as an elementary school chaplain, and host for VIM teams.

Advent Offering cards are available to let us know how to split your Advent Offering donation(s).

CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday School: Children's classes are held during the 9:15 and 10:30 AM services. Adults and Middle Schoolers meet only during the 9:15 hour. Completed Sunday School and/or Kid's Club (Preschl.-5th gr. & MS) registration forms can be placed in the Sun. School container in the narthex.

During our 9:15 & 10:30 AM Sunday services, we are using the Sparkhouse rotation curriculum where kids can enjoy classes in science, art, cooking, stories, games, and drama.

Kid's Club: All Preschool-5th graders are invited to attend Kid's Club! A family meal takes place at 5:30 PM with Kid's Club starting at 6 PM.

OUR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM ("Sharing the Light of Christ: a Christmas Story") is on Dec. 16th during the 9:15 AM service. Dress rehearsal is on Sat., Dec. 15th, 9-11AM, in the Sanctuary. We will run through music, dress children in costumes and practice speaking parts. Please try to have your child(ren) stay for the entire rehearsal.

Contact Mrs. G (Barb) at christianedu@lovelylane.org or 393-6674 with questions about Sunday School; contact Julie Meyer at juliem@lovelylane.org or 393-6674 with questions on Kid's Club.

Middle School Youth Group (gr. 6-8): M.S. youth group and confirmation on Weds. nights continues. We will be going Christmas caroling on Weds., Dec. 12th, after the 5:30 pm meal, @ Legacy Manor (1350 A'Hearn Dr. NE, off of Council St.). More details to come!

Middle School Youth Group in December:

Dec. 5, 4:45-7:15 pm: SERVICE NIGHT—All Youth will make supper for the Wednesday Night Meal; youth will sign up for food items to bring.

Dec. 12, 5:30-7:15 pm: All MS Youth will be going caroling after our 5:30 meal (see above).

Dec. 19, 5:30-7:15 pm: MISSION NIGHT—All Youth Christmas Party and Baby Shower for Jesus. Youth are invited to bring a snack to share AND a baby item to be donated to Waypoint Family Services. IDEAS: size 2, 3, or 4 disposable diapers, baby wipes, baby bath soap and lotion, baby blankets and towels.

Dec. 26 & Jan. 2—NO Youth Group

High School Youth Group (gr. 9-12): H.S. youth group on Sunday nights continues.

High School Youth Group in December:

Dec. 2, 6:00-7:45 pm: MISSION NIGHT—Angel Tree shopping; meet at the church for a quick supper and then we'll go shopping for angel tree gifts. Each youth should bring \$5-10 to contribute for the gifts.

Dec. 9, 6:00-7:45 pm: Worship and discussion after supper

Dec. 16, 6:00-7:45 pm: Christmas Party—White elephant gift exchange, ugly Christmas sweater and appetizers! Location TBD.

Dec. 23 & 30—NO Youth Group

DIRECTORY UPDATE

Rev. Nick Longworth
202 35th St. Dr. SE, Apt. 103
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Jeramie & Dana Ellefson
10245 45th Ave.
Wyoming, IA 52362

Mike & Mary Symmonds
7807 Tower Terrace Rd.
Toddville, IA 52341

Kendall Sale
21 Mountainview Ave.
Albany, NY 12208

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

HUGE THANK YOU FROM UMW

Thanks to all the bakers and buyers who participated in this fall's bake sale. We had a wonderful selection of treats just in time for our Thanksgiving visitors. The money raised will be donated to Trinity Lane Preschool's playground project.

ADVENT COFFEE

Saturday, Dec. 1st, 9:30 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall

We know that Christmas is a busy time, but let us take time to reflect upon the true meaning of this season. Begin this year's joyous Christmas season with us. Advent should be a time to celebrate the love that God gives to us. We cordially invite you to join in two special Advent celebrations.

First is an Advent Coffee, Sat., Dec. 1st, in the Fellowship Hall, 9:30-11:30 am. Please join us for refreshments, reflections and warm fellowship as we begin to celebrate the season with the beautiful sounds of *Young at Harp*. A Christmas love offering will be taken which will be given to help Kennedy students in need. If you need babysitting, please notify the church office, Cheryl Murphy (377-6205), or Cindy Sale (395-0106).

Second is our annual Ornament Exchange & Dinner on Tues., Dec. 11th, at 6 PM, at Vito's. Come to eat and bring a Christmas Ornament to exchange. Everyone is welcome to join us! Sign up on the bulletin STUB or call Nancy Miller (393-6340) to reserve a spot.

UMW BIBLE STUDY

The Bible Study group will not meet in December. We will resume meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 8th, from 9:30-11:15 a.m. in Fireside. We invite you to join us for fellowship and study. If you have any questions, call Cheryl Murphy (377-6205). We are currently studying the Gospel of John. **We have decided to not only lug our mugs, but to fill them at home—so, remember to come prepared with your favorite beverage in hand!!!**

OUR NURSERY HAS A WISH LIST that perhaps some of you with growing children or grandchildren can help with. If you have any items below that you would like to part with that are in good condition, please consider making a much-appreciated donation (**thank you for donations received so far!!**): Fisher Price Little People, musical instruments, baby dolls, play food/dishes/silverware, nice wood or magnet blocks ,toy vacuum (this beloved toy recently broke)

FRIENDLY FELLOWSHIP

There will be no Friendly Fellowship in December. Our next luncheon and program will be on Jan. 18th at noon; our program will be " A Missionary Life: Growing Up in the Belgian Congo" presented by Jim and Jan Robinson. Jim grew up in the Belgian Congo where his parents were missionaries.

HAPPY ENDINGS

Happy Endings, the book discussion group, will meet on Dec. 10th at 11:30 AM for lunch at Emil's. The book we'll read for Jan. 14th is "In Pieces" by Sally Fields. For Feb. 11th, we'll read "Someone Knows My Name" by Lawrence Hill. Please call Nancy Miller (393-6340) with any questions.

Remembering with love:

Bev Munnik.....2016

Paul Nylin.....2017

Presence: Worship Attendance

<u>11/4</u>	<u>11/11</u>	<u>11/18</u>	<u>11/25</u>
258	264	263	165

Oct. Financial Totals

Cash inflow—mo. of Oct..	\$ 43,151
Cash inflow—YTD	\$433,458
Budget need/month	\$ 47,794
Cash outflow—mo. of Oct.	\$ 47,598
Cash outflow—YTD	\$451,659
Unpaid bills	\$ 19,098

Our Ministry Teams at Work

Missions / Community Outreach

- ◆ Scheduling Advent presentations as speakers are being lined up
- ◆ Getting Angel Tree tags/ornaments from Trinity Lane, Taylor Elem. School, & Tanager
- ◆ Start planning for 2019

Lovely Lane's Church/Charge Conference was held on our usual monthly committee meetings night in November; most committees shared 2 or 3 accomplishments for the year. Most committees are NOT meeting in December.

Living Life Between Sundays: Christmas with a Broken Heart

The Christmas season is upon us as Thanksgiving comes to a close and Advent begins. Yet, I find myself a bit out of sorts, facing Christmas once again without my husband. The Christmas classic, A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS comes to mind. Poor Charlie Brown is trying desperately to make sense of the season, and discovers what it is through the wise monologue of his friend Linus. The recitation of the King James Version of Luke 2 concludes with, "And that's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

Christmas is not about illustrious decorations, brightly wrapped gifts, or mouth-watering goodies. It's about the birth of Jesus, the Savior of the world. Unfortunately the message gets lost in the secular race to December 25th. It also gets lost when facing the holidays with a grieving heart. Grief comes in many forms: loss of a job, loss of mobility or health, loss of a loved one, loss of a friendship. Whatever causes a heart to grieve, the Christmas season can be difficult. Engaging in the usual holiday parties, and hearing Christmas music around town, can be hard to handle.

So, where do we turn to face the holidays when the heart is broken? I turn to the Lord in prayer, asking for guidance through this season that, on most days, is less than jolly. I turn to others who have experienced loss and can walk this path with me. I turn once again to the ancient scriptures: Luke 2, Matthew 1, and John 1. In the words of the Gospel writers I find eternal promises of salvation, light, and love through Jesus Christ. I also listen to the music of the season that reminds me of what Christmas is really about.

In 1739 Charles Wesley wrote the words to a familiar Christmas song, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." It is the very song Charlie Brown and his friends sang around the miracle Christmas tree in the closing scene of the show. Read again the familiar words and see the reminder of how, through Jesus, we sinners are reconciled.

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King!"
 Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled
 Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
 Join the triumph of the skies;
 With th' angelic host proclaim,
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
 Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King!"*



Even amid sorrow and grief, Christmas is about how the Prince of Peace came to save us all. I pray you find joy in the promises of the Savior. - Blessings in Christ, Pastor Jenny

Concerns & Celebrations

Prayer concerns:

- *Lu Serbousek & family—death of her mom, Dorothy Keltner
- *Tammy Alt & family—death of her grandma, Josephine
- *Dave Keefe—death of his friend, Marvin
- *Pastor Jenny—death of her UCC colleague in Tipton
- *Sue Moss's sister-in-law Cindy & family—death of her father
- *Kay Oloff—health concerns
- *Norman Stepleton—health challenge
- *Pastor Jenny—recovering from arm surgery on 11/20
- *Brandon Drew—deep concern over a student
- *Barb Vancura's sister, Kathy—medical procedure
- *Lisa Pakkebie's father, Gary Cleo—bladder biopsy; a friend of Lisa's—diagnosed w/pancreatic cancer
- *Phil Martin's sister—health concerns
- *Brenk Schenk's father—cancer; Jessica's family—concerns
- *Chris Budny's Aunt Debbie—has chronic lymphatic leukemia
- *Dana Renken's cousin, Janell
- *Sue Moss's son-in-law's father, Jay—at home but still having rehab (after surgeries in IC for 2 brain aneurysms)
- *Victims of & those affected by the latest mass shooting in CA
- *Human trafficking victims, including here in Cedar Rapids
- *Destruction & loss of life due to forest fires in California
- *New Horizons will no longer be under Unity Point's *umbrella*
- *Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh during grieving time
- *Jewish community in our country and world
- *Ongoing recovery efforts after Hurricanes Florence & Michael
- *Thanksgiving travel for many

Joys:

- *Rachel Wylie—recvd. Girl Scouts Silver Award for volunteering
- *Dan Randall—celebrated his 81st birthday
- *Patty Logsdon—attended her nephew's wedding out of state
- *New inductees into the Nat'l. Honor Society @ Kennedy, et al.
- *Ron & Margaret Nelson had houseguests from the Ukraine here to learning about our democracy & election process
- *Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Outreach; thanks to Jan Culbertson for heading up the collection of boxes & requested items!
- *Awesome toys donated to our nursery, per their Wish List!
- *Baptism of Madeline Christine Hinke
- *Andy & Mary Vorwerk—expecting their first grandchild
- *Nancy Hinkel's grandmother's 101st birthday
- *Congratulations to our nonagenarians (90+) members being honored in the 10:30 service on 12/2 – an inspiration to us all: Charles Atkinson, Marcie Baugh, Millie Corbett, Kim Dao, Ruth Exline, Elsie Mae Hall, Helen Hansen, Do Koudelka, Berta Mullin, Arlene Oliver, Lloyd Peterson, John Sackett, Janell Smiley, Lou & Gerry Stolba, & Betty VanFossen.

THANK YOU NOTES

THANK YOU so much for contributing 266 LBS. of food to the Linn Community Food Bank during the 3rd quarter of 2018. We could not operate our food bank without the generous support of donors.

THANK YOU for your generosity this Holiday Season! Merry Christmas from Tanager Place! *(a note of thanks in advance of our Angel Tree gifts/donations to them)*

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF OUR LOVELY LANE FAMILY (joined in worship on 11/11 & 11/18):

Jon & Maggie Hartzler
Judy Keele
Heather Meador
Barb Oldenburg
Rob & Barb Olive
Jane Schildroth
Dave & Darlene Tammel
Jane Zhao

Talk to Pastor Scott if you are interested in joining Lovely Lane or have questions and have not indicated your interest on the STUB.

Singing for Your Health (Dr. Weil's Daily Health Tips)

Singing in the shower may perk you up for the day, but if you really want to be happy, consider joining a choir. British researchers examined how singing affects our feelings of well-being by reviewing data gathered from an on-line survey of 375 people who sang in choirs, sang solo or belonged to a sports team. Investigators found that all 3 activities had a positive impact on mental well-being, but singing in a choir topped singing alone, in or out of the shower. The choir members also felt even closer to their fellow singers than athletes felt about their teammates. The study didn't delve into why exactly singing buoys us, but lead author Nick Stewart of Oxford Brookes Univ. said that further research could look at how moving and breathing in synchrony with others might be responsible for creating a unique well-being effect. He suggested that joining a choir *could be a cost-effective way to improve people's well-being.*

