



Crossville First

United Methodist Church

The Church With the Window on the Heart of Our Town

ADVENT to the New Year

Drew Shelley, Senior Pastor

Dear Church Family:

What a blessing to be in this Advent Season together. I hope you are finding ways to cultivate PEACE in and around your life. It is one of the greatest gifts of our faith. Remember the words of Jesus, "Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." My prayer is that your faith will be enriched by the journey we make together toward the manger at Bethlehem, where hope is born into the world!

As we think about the hope making its way FROM Bethlehem, we can't help but think about our work in 2019. At the time of this writing, the Estimate of Giving cards continue to come in. I am so thankful to report that we have 22 new givers making an estimate of giving this year. We also are anticipating 22 usual givers who have not yet turned in their estimates. While the Finance Committee continues to finalize the budget, we offer a hopeful look at the new year. If you have not yet had a chance to make your estimate of giving, please do so as soon as you can. We always like to have a finalized budget before getting to January 1st!

With a final note on giving, I remind you that the church can receive gifts of stock from persons who need to make required distributions by year-end. The Finance Committee is prepared to handle such distributions.

As always, you will need to consult your tax advisor concerning the deductibility of your contributions, especially with changing tax laws. Whatever the case, I know you will consider a deeper reason behind your giving and find ways to bless God's mission with financial gifts which will prepare us for an incredible new year of ministry, whether you receive a tax benefit or not.

Remember: **All gifts must be in the church office before noon December 31 to be counted as 2018 giving.** Thank you so much for your prayerful consideration of giving to support all the work of this church. Much love, Drew

Your Pastor's Status toward Advanced Degree

Drew Shelley, Senior Pastor

For nearly four years, as many of you know, I have been working on the degree, Doctor of Ministry (DM). The opportunity to have this experience has been entirely funded by a special gift to the Tennessee Annual Conference UMC. I am grateful for the privilege and have been enjoying the journey. Some have asked when will I complete this work. If all goes well, I will graduate at the Washington National Cathedral in May 2019.

Practically speaking, I am in the home stretch of writing my dissertation. I have taken a few writing retreats in the past six months to wrap things up. I am grateful to a special family in our church who have allowed me to use their lake house for these intense work sessions. My final draft is to be submitted to Wesley Theological Seminary by January 15, 2019. We are getting close!

For those who are interested, I am working on a project related to leadership in the local church. Specifically, I am exploring how our identity as followers of Jesus Christ shapes our practice of leadership in the local church. My central thesis is that the alleged crisis of leadership in the Church is an actual crisis of identity, which we are trying to resolve by applying business-world leadership practices to communities of faith, communities which need serious work **remembering whose they are, the home to which they belong, and the mission to which they are called.** Once we remember and reclaim our faith identity, the Holy Spirit brings gifts of leadership which provide what is needed for our churches to live into God's mission.

In late January or early February, I will set a time to present this central thesis for my dissertation to the seminary. If you are interested, you will be more than welcome to attend!

Are You Ready?

Louis Davis, Associate Pastor

Luke 2: 9-11 (NKJV): 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

There are not many days until Christmas. Are you ready? We have numerous church events planned, and I pray you will attend some of the various activities. The worship service bulletin, the video screens, and several colorful notices announce the goings-on for Advent and Christmas. If you are not getting a bulletin or other publications, please call the church office, and we will let you know the schedule.

One service I want to emphasize is the HEALING SERVICE FOR THOSE HURTING DURING THE HOLIDAYS. We know the Holiday season is emotionally hard for those of you whose hearts are hurting. You are not alone. On Friday Night, December 21 at 6:30 p.m., we will hold a healing service for everyone, but especially for ones hurting during the holidays. This service is a safe place for you who are carrying pain from death, divorce, loss of a job, mental or physical illnesses, domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, or other personal or financial burdens during this season of celebration. Prayer teams will be available during and after the service for anyone who requests a supportive moment of individual prayer.

With this season rushing forward, I have been thinking, "What makes Christmas time Christmas for you? Is it repeating a tradition? Remembering a single incident? Or adding a new reason to celebrate?"

One Christmas, we experienced a crazy ice storm that knocked out electric power on Christmas Eve. I remember thinking we would have power restored for Christmas day, but it was out for nearly a week. That Christmas morning, we got up and had our family celebration. We had a generator that powered our refrigerator and the electric dart board we received. (Our priorities were right!) Then we made ready to go to Grandma and Grandpa's house.

We arrived and found Grandpa using a propane camp stove to fry some ham we could eat. I look back on that time and reflect on its being truly the best Christmas. Sure, we were cold, the lights were out for the house and tree, and we had no big dinner from Grandma, but the sum of it has served as a lesson to me for what this season is all about.

The angel announced to the shepherds something wonderful, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."

I think we sometimes get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season, and we forget about the "great joy" that the day of Christmas is. My prayer for you and your family is this: May you be filled with the Holy Spirit so that Christmas 2018 will be your best ever...even if it is not personally your expected most wonderful time of the year.

Lessons in Bell Ringing

Doug Hensley, Next Gen Ministry

The Youth group from Crossville First United Methodist Church rang bells for the Salvation Army on November 30 and again on December 7 at Walmart between the hours 5:00 to 7:00 pm. They sang songs during this time and had fun with a special guest, "Santa!" and, seemingly, they learned a few things about themselves as well.

Each year the youth love to schedule ringing the bells, and this has helped to instill in them a spirit of serving others. The activity teaches students about community involvement not only at a seasonal holiday time but about social, civic duty at any time.

We want them to be able to show God's love to others, but to also think of others before themselves and more than themselves. Furthermore, I think adults benefit to witness the teens supporting a cause with their spirited immersion in a worthy community activity.



Anna Davis, Laci Eddington, Isabell Mangano, Santa, Scott Looney, Abigail Davis, Tyler Looney, Elijah Schley



Gareth Matthews, Santa, Jacob White



Pastor Louis consults Santa.

Keeping Thanksgiving Day Tradition

Pat Roper

The Thanksgiving Day meal at FUMC on November 22 was a huge success and well received by church members and community friends as well. The event might not have happened at all had I not been visiting with Bill and Sally Oglesby on October 3.

Bill mentioned that the church might need to cancel the effort because Carolyn Boyle was unable to give leadership in the manner she established several years ago. Carolyn, still recovering from a lengthy illness and hip surgery, was unable to carry out her role in organizing the Thanksgiving Day meal, and no one else had stepped forward.

I was saddened to know we might have to forego the yearly event. I talked with Melea (wife), and we decided to take on the task. I called Caroline for advice and help. On October 8, we reviewed what needed to be done for the preparations of the meal. I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of details in Caroline's notes and records which she handed over. With her road map of instruction, I knew Melea and I couldn't mess up too much.



Pat and Melea: Final Count down.



The protocol depended on volunteer contributions of prepared, ready-to-portion, traditional foods. The menu featured turkey, ham, dressing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green beans, corn, cranberry sauce, and rolls. The beverages included coffee, water, sweet and unsweetened tea, lemonade, and fruit punch.



Last minute efforts to present foods and beverages for serving were given to a kitchen team of three members coordinated by Frances Carson.

We fed 184 people through the serving line, which was staffed by volunteers. After everyone had eaten, we served up 60 To-Go boxes.

Logged in were 147 volunteers who helped with food, or elsewhere

needed, and they subsequently served themselves from the bounty. Most volunteers were members of our church.



The spirit of friendship and love among the attendees at the Thanksgiving Day Meal was evident by smiles and conversations in the cultural and spiritual celebration of a day embraced by faith believers and friends. The atmosphere was joyous, and hearts were touched by the generosity of food and fellowship heaped upon them without expectations other than knowing they are loved. Prayers of thanks for many blessings were lifted by both silent and jubilant voices in celebration of Thanksgiving Day 2018 at Crossville First United Methodist Church.



Pictures by Janice Woods

Wednesday Night Live News Donna King, Next Generation Ministry

Our Wednesday Night Live children have made a concerted effort to focus on missions this semester and finished strong by preparing 72 Blessing Bags for the Bread of Life Rescue Mission. The bags included items much needed, such as bottled water, Chapstick, snacks, wash clothes, Christmas candy, and assorted toiletries. We also included a small metal pocket cross and a Gideons New Testa-



ment. One recipient was appreciative of the new toothbrush because she was overheard to say she didn't have one.

The children also remembered the 278th National Guard Unit soldiers and families by making 160 Christmas notes of good cheer! These happy missives also included copious amounts of glitter that will surely brighten their days.

Our team of volunteers for Wednesday Night Live give incredible service. Their willing hands and loving hearts make a difference in our Wednesday night program and in the children's lives.

Music Matters

Kimberly White, Director of Music

Thank you to each reader, ringer, and singer who participated in the Hanging of the Greens Service on December 2, the first Sunday in Advent.

I have always loved the special music services that begin our new Christian year. Hearing and singing the beautiful carols and listening to the Word and descriptions of symbols and elements that adorn our sanctuary is truly inspirational. I was especially moved when we sat in almost complete darkness before the lighting of the Christmas Tree and listened to Pastor Drew read the passage from John, chapter one.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God, and things came into

being through Him and without Him, not one thing came into being. What has come into being in Him was life, and life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

Thank you, Jesus, for being our light. May we let Your light shine in us this season and throughout the new year.



The following Sunday, December

9, the children's choir enriched the 8:30 am worship service with their anthem, "When I Kneel at the Manger Tonight." Their performance moved the congregation to applaud in appreciation of the meaning and spirituality of the words and score.

Music Rehearsal Schedules for 2019:

Chancel Choir will resume Wednesday, January 9, at 5:30 pm.

Choral Bells will resume Monday, January 14, at 4:00 p.m.

Children's Bells and Choir will resume, Wednesday, February 6, at 4:00 and 4:30 pm.

New members are welcome! Our music program relies on the heartfelt joy of members who desire to express themselves in song or instrument. If you are interested in singing and/or ringing this season please contact me, Kimberly White, 931-484-3537.

Resolution for 2019: Capture Your Memories

Anne Looney Cook

Memories—We might say they spark many senses: sweet/bitter, warm/cold, bright/dull, loud/subdued, hard/soft, comforting/disturbing, funny/sad, and many more. Such reflections are prompts to writing stories about your life, and the writing is one objective for a new year's resolution that is creative and obtainable.

Written memories are called **MEMOIRS**. They can be chapters stretching over a lifetime, revealing a continuous storyline, or be a collection of vignettes capturing unforgettable slices of life. A memoir is your own story as you remember and authenticate facts and details. You address your chosen audience whether it be you or others.

The FUMC Memoir Writing Group began in May 2009 to attract senior adults. Since then, the members have both welcomed and said farewell to individuals as life changes occurred, but the sense and purpose have continued. While their numbers are few, they are dedicated in their tasks to pen memoirs as legacies about their lives. A powerful sense of trust and appreciation exists because members encourage each other.

In declaring a New Year's Resolution for 2019, you are invited to join the FUMC Memoir Writing Group and begin the often-heard claim about your

intent. The regular meetings are on First Monday every month, 1:00-4:00 pm in church room 210. The block of time favors the individual readings of vignettes or excerpts, plus comments and questions, from members present. Between meetings, new drafts or revisions of past-read stories can be prepared.

While the emphasis is writing to preserve your story, the craft of writing is reviewed and encouraged. As the facilitator of the group, I sometimes bring forward topics intended to strengthen the process. Examples and discussion lead to refining your results.



The invitation is extended to writers and wanabes to join the unique ministry in developing a creative means for self-expression through memoir writing. A satisfying goal is obtainable throughout the year in the FUMC Memoir Writing Group.

Please contact me for additional information: Anne Looney Cook, 731-225-9770.



**Merry Christmas
From The Youth Group & Santa!**

Email for Clergy and Staff

Drew Shelley, Senior Pastor
drew@crossvillefumc.com

Louis Davis, Associate Pastor
louis@crossvillefumc.com

Eliud & Janet Martinez, Pastor y Pastora
Hispanic Ministries
Eliud.Martinez@tnumc.com
janet.martinez@tnumc.com

Kimberly White, Director, Connectional
Ministries and Music
kimberly@crossvillefumc.com

Doug Hensley, Next Generation Ministries
nextgeneration@crossvillefumc.com

Scott Looney, Next Generation Ministries
scott@crossvillefumc.com

Donna King, Next Generation Ministries
donna@crossvillefumc.com

Jill Kemmer, Media Ministries
jill@crossvillefumc.com

Carol Bond, Executive Assistant
carol@crossvillefumc.com

Rhonda Phillips, Secretary
rhonda@crossvillefumc.com

Gregg Rector, A/V Production and Engineering Director,
gregg@crossvillefumc.com