



*In*

*Taking Pascal's Wager*, author Michael Rota references a 2010 study which emphasizes the importance of moving beyond the pew and into the social fabric of a faith community. Rota restates,

*"Devout people who sit alone in the pews are not much more neighborly than people who don't go to church at all. The realm impact of religiosity on niceness or good neighborliness, it seems, comes through chatting with friends after service or joining a Bible study group, not from listening to the sermon or fervently believing in God. In fact, the statistics suggest that even an atheist who happened to become involved in the social life of a congregation (perhaps through a spouse) is much more likely to volunteer in a soup kitchen than the most fervent believer who prays alone. It is religious belonging that matters for neighborliness, not religious believing. (Robert Putnam & David E. Campbell: *How Religion Divides & Unites Us* (2010), p. 452.*

Worship helps shape & strengthen our beliefs, but living out those beliefs more often occurs *beyond* the hour of worship. That is why helping newcomers connect – with the church and one another - is important to the church's mission to make disciples. Each worshiper on Sunday morning needs a community to plug into, as well as outlets to be a *good* neighbor and *have* good neighbors. A newcomers' event is designed with such community in mind.

### **Newcomers' Dinner in January**

If you are new to the congregation within the past two or three years (a flexible benchmark), we want to invite you to a newcomers' dinner this coming January.

The gathering will be hosted in the home of Shelley & Mike Lopez on Wilson Rd. in McMinnville. Because space is limited, reservations will be required and will be accepted in the order they are received. The specific date will be announced in the bulletin and the January *Flame*. If you are interested in this event, express your interest to Pastor Ryan or office staff.

### **Christmas Eve Worship**

Join us Christmas Eve at 8:00 PM to celebrate one of the most sacred worship events of the year! Together, we will reflect on the birth of Jesus as preserved in Luke's cherished witness and memory. We will conclude by singing "Silent Night," by candlelight, is a beautiful experience which captures the heart of the season. Bring your family and friends as we celebrate the wonder of Jesus' birth!

In Christ,  
Ryan Heatherly

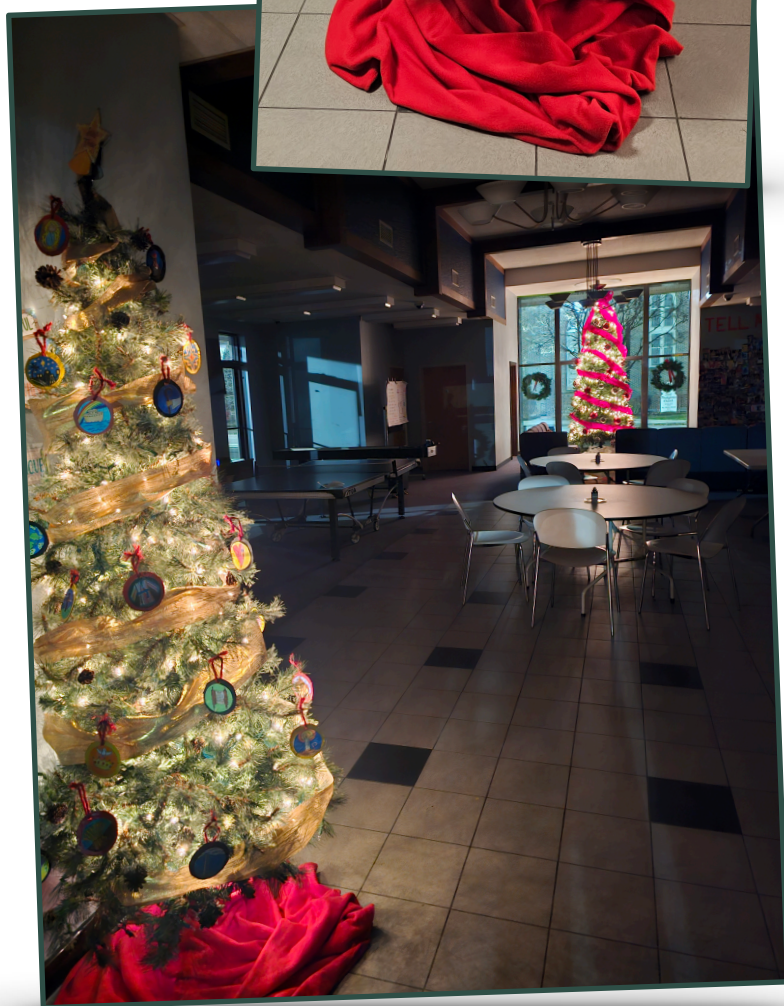






Wishing our church family all the Hope, Peace, Joy and Love of the Christmas season!

Bruce Watson and all our youth at FUMC.





# Calendar

**Monday, Dec 8 @ 10am**- Prayer Shawl meeting; **11am**- Luncheon at Gondola

**Tuesday, Dec 9 @ 10am** - Christmas at Beersheba

**Thursday, Dec 11**

**10am**- Shepherding Team Meeting

**11:30am** - UMW luncheon at Helens on the Green Country Club

**Sunday, December 14 @ 4:00pm** - Season of Praise Christmas Cantata

**Tuesday, Dec 16**

• @ 9:30am - UMW Meeting

• @ 7pm - Christmas Community Chorus; Historic Sanctuary

**Wednesday, December 24 @ 8pm** - Christmas Eve Service

## Counting Our Blessings

As we approach the Christmas holiday and season of celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, let us be mindful of all the blessings our Lord has lovingly bestowed upon us. Our Church continues to grow its presence in our community through ministries and outreach carrying forth the message of God's Grace.

I am pleased to report to you that First United Methodist Church of McMinnville continues to be in stable financial condition as of the end of October. Thanks to the generosity and faithful stewardship of our congregation, it appears that we will finish the year in balance with expenses. Additionally, funds received from the sale of the bus and two bequests have been placed in reserves for "rainy days" which appear from time to time.

Please review your giving commitment and blessings, in reflection and prayer, and help First Church maintain strong financial vitality as our ministry grows.

Mac McWhirter, Finance Chair

Jeff & Jimmie Dean,

We want to thank you both for the thoughtful card. Also, thank you for the prayer cloths and the beautiful shawl. Please tell the ladies of the Prayer Shawl Ministry how much we appreciate them. Thank you for your prayers! Our hearts are touched.

With love,  
Glen & Pam

Jimmie Dean,

Thank you for the Beautiful prayer shawl. It means so much that others care. Thankful for your prayers-

Always, Love  
Jina Daphne





# 2024 Christmas Poinsettias

## Historic Sanctuary

In Memory of Elizabeth Allison, Evelyn Phifer  
In Honor of Mrs. Edley Newman, Mr. & Mrs. Tom  
Garmon, Johnny Lee  
*Given by Robert & Marsha Newman*

In Memory of Sara Fritter, Jim & Jeanne Schmidt  
*Given by Robert & Beverly Schmidt*

In Memory of Homer & Doris Rose, Jane & Harry  
Camp, Sara Jean Thaxton  
In Honor of Family, Church Family  
*Given by Woodiels*

In Memory of Kenneth Odineal  
*Given by Lucinda Smith*

In Memory of Charlie, Charlotte Boyd, Camps  
In Honor of Chancel Choir, Our Children  
*Given by Donna Campbell*

In Honor of Karen Ethridge, Mike & Cindy Ratz,  
Ryan & Beth Heatherly, Church Staff, UMW  
Ladies, Robert & Beverly Schmidt  
*Given by Joe & Charlotte Hamby*

## Outreach Building

In Honor of Praise Hym Band, Our Children &  
Grandchildren  
*Given by Robert & Marsha Newman*

In Honor of Ryan, Beth, Hudson Heatherly,  
Church Family  
*Given by Cerissa & Bruce Smith*

In Memory of Bruce Harvey  
*Given by Patricia & Ken Murray*

In Memory of Our fathers & Dr. James Phillips  
& Robert Bourner Jr.  
In Honor of Our mothers (Mary Phillips & Pat  
Bigbee) & Wally Bigbee  
*Give by Jack & Robin Phillips*

In Memory of Alice & Howard Litz,  
Mary Hamby, Cecilia Murphy  
In Honor of Karen Carr, Sam & Linda Young,  
Praise Hym, Jimmy Haley, Julie Holt &  
Family, Prayer Shawl Ladies, UMW Ladies  
*Given by Joe & Charlotte Hamby*



### Good Neighbors Cooks & Driver Schedule



#### December 4

##### Cook: Mac

Route 1: Sandlin  
Route 2: Hinds  
Route 3: Sandlin  
Route 4: Young  
Route 5: Alsbrook

#### December 18

##### Cook: Brock's

Route 1: Sandlin  
Route 2: Hinds  
Route 3: Miller  
Route 4: Spanjer  
Route 5: Alsbrook

No Good Neighbors on January 1, 2026

## Thank you for giving gifts

**TO:** Good Neighbors, General

**IN MEMORY OF:** Barbara Gillespie

**GIVEN BY:** Jack & Robin Phillips, Beverly Zweitzer, Liz  
Lay, Joe Lay Jr., Mark Lay, Robin Lay, Sara Lee,  
Anthony III & Amy Anthony, David & Monica Carlin





# December

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Noah Murphy	2 Levon Jones Sally Brock Diane Grove Randle Myers	3	4	5 Pandy Burck Hershman	6
7 Tommie Harvey	8	9	10 Lucas & Emily Holt	11 Lillie Hodges	12	13
14	15	16 Cynthia Hamrick Linda Cantrell	17 Ryan Heatherly	18 Dianna Thaxton Brenda Spanjer  Robert & Beverly Schmidt	19	20 Tena Basham
21 Ian & Michaela Riley	22 Helene Vickers	23 Jenny Mullican	24	25 John & Peggy White	26 Everett & Sally Brock	27 Jack & Mary Anne Noblin
28	29	30 Jack Noblin Wilson Love Bryce Dodson Susan McWhirter Sarah Murphy	31 Larry & Ann Layne			

