

THE CHURCH BELL



DECEMBER
2024



HE WILL BE GREAT AND WILL BE CALLED THE
SON OF THE MOST HIGH, AND THE LORD GOD
WILL GIVE TO HIM THE THRONE OF HIS ANCESTOR
DAVID. HE WILL REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF
JACOB FOREVER, AND OF HIS KINGDOM THERE
WILL BE NO END.
LUKE 1:32-33



“The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” John 1:9

We tell so much of the story of this season from the gospels of Luke and Matthew because we love their stories of shepherds, angels, and wise men. However, in one simple verse, John the gospel writer nicely and neatly summarizes the entire season into which we now enter. This season of Advent is all about Jesus’ coming into the world, coming into our presence, coming into our flesh and blood experience. In fact, the very word *Advent* is from a Latin phrase *ad venire*, which means “to come into.”

Of course, we celebrate this as a remembrance of a point in history at which Jesus came into the world as a vulnerable infant. May we never lose our appreciation for that revelation of God’s love for humankind.

Perhaps the greater challenge, though, is to celebrate Advent as a present reality and to acknowledge the ways we have been changed by Jesus’ coming into our lives and hearts, or better yet, to embrace this season as a time in which Jesus’ love, grace, and mercy might come into our lives in fresh new ways.

In 1914, Rufus McDaniel was grieving the tragic death of his youngest son Herschel the year before. To honor his son’s memory, McDaniel wrote these words we now know as a hymn:

*What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought
Since Jesus came into my heart!
I have light in my soul for which long I have sought,
Since Jesus came into my heart!*

Tempted as we are to opine or to argue about how early in the season Christmas lights should go up or how long after Christmas we should leave them on display, what if we were more concerned about displaying that “light in our souls” because Jesus came into - *advent* - our hearts?

What if we were more concerned about Jesus’ coming into those shadowy or dark spaces in our lives—the places in which we are still prideful, argumentative, critical, condescending, oppositional, or simply downright unneighborly?

What if we celebrated this season as not merely a time to look back upon what God has done, but also a time to look forward to the ways in which God will continue to shine light in us and through us as Jesus enters more fully into our lives, our thoughts, our conversations, and our actions.

May the true light, which enlightens everyone, come into our lives in new ways this season. May we experience the miraculous inbreaking of light and love! May we experience *advent*.



DayBreak receives \$20,000 grant

Just weeks after launching, the DayBreak Dementia Respite Care Ministry got a big boost. The Holston Foundation awarded DayBreak a \$20,000 grant to help further its mission. “We are grateful for the support of our mission and the help will allow us to extend to more families in need,” said DayBreak Director Jill Pope. The Holston Foundation serves as a stewardship partner to individuals, churches and ministries throughout the Holston Conference of the UMC (North Georgia, East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia). Recently, the Holston Foundation announced its own big milestone, They now manage \$179 million in funds, the most ever in the foundation’s history. Learn more about the ways, beyond the grant to DayBreak that the Holston Foundation helps others at holstonfoundation.org.

A Note from DayBreak Director Jill Pope

We would like to thank everyone who has volunteered for the DayBreak ministry, made donations, and purchased items from the Alternative Gift Fair and our Amazon Wish List. All of your prayers, kind words, and efforts for this ministry have blessed us. 1st Church is always generous, but the love and support we have received so far has been awe inspiring.

If you missed our email announcement a couple of weeks ago, it’s not too late to join the DayBreak email list to receive the DayBreak newsletter and get updates.

Sign up at:

<https://tinyurl.com/DayBreakNewsletter>



Living the Dream

Throughout the decades, the 1st United Methodist Church community dreamed of different ways to reach out and help people in big ways. Those dreams led to the creation of things like Compassion Counseling Center, Celebrate Recovery, Welcome Table and the creation of a ministry hub at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree. During this year’s Churchwide Thanksgiving Dinner people filled out post-it notes with dreams fulfilled and dreams for the future. Here’s a look at what was on a few of those notes.

Dreams fulfilled

- Blessing Box
- Teaching a Sunday School Class
- Grace for All Podcast
- DayBreak Ministry
- Trips to Latvia
- 3-year-old Big Boy Class



1st UMC - Maryville has raised for
\$40,000

- Holston Conference Flood Relief, Flood Buckets,
- Hygiene Kits
- and Relief Labor.



GO. DO.
FAITH IN ACTION

Dreams for the future

- Neurodivergent Youth Ministry
- Yearly mission trips to...
- New worship service at Sycamore Tree
- All-Church Retreat to Camp Wesley Woods
- To play basketball in Sunday School (from a child)

He will ... a sermon focus for Advent & Christmas

In the gospels of Matthew and Luke, the angels/messengers prepare us for Jesus' birth and ministry by telling us who and what Jesus *will be*. In these statements, we hear some of God's intentions for sending Jesus into the world. So, long before Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do people say that I am," or even, "Who do *you* say that I am," we hear through the words of the angels who God *intends* Jesus to be. This Advent season we take a look at what Jesus will do for us all.

- Sunday, December 1st**
He will save. - 8:15 & 10:30 Traditional Worship
- Sunday, December 8th**
He will reign. - 10:30 Traditional Worship
He will save. - 10:30 Contemporary Worship
- Sunday, December 15th**
He will reign. - 8:15 Traditional Worship
He will reign. - 10:30 Contemporary Worship
- Sunday, December 22nd**
He will be Holy.
- Christmas Eve, December 24th**
He IS Christ the Lord!
- December 29th**
He will cause division.

Learn more about each week's sermon focus and where to watch online at: 1stchurch.org/worship

Christmas in Maryville

God fulfilled a promise in sending his son Jesus, a promise that brought light into a dark world, and one that offered us a LOVE greater than no other. Starting on December 1st, you have many opportunities to experience that LOVE through special worship services, musical events and celebrations to inspire you to show your LOVE to others. We have postcards printed with all this information on them and we hope you'll take a few and use them as invitations for others to join in the holiday celebrations.

Here is a quick look at what's happening this Christmas in Maryville.

Visit ChristmasinMaryville.com for inspiration and details.

<p>December 1st 10:30 am Contemporary Worship Music Special</p>	<p>December 11th 6:30 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service (@CR)</p>	<p>December 18th 6:30 pm Sleepers, Wake! Word Players (@CR)</p>
<p>December 8th 8:15 am <i>Love is Born</i> Morning Glory Chorus Christmas Cantata</p>	<p>December 15th 10:30 am & 7:00 pm <i>Sing in Exultation</i> Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata</p>	<p>December 22nd 3:00 pm Christmas Music Recital</p>
<p>December 8th 4:00 pm 1st Kids Christmas Celebration</p>		<p>December 24th 2:00 pm Kids & Family Christmas Eve 7:00 pm & 10:00 pm Traditional Candlelight Worship</p>



Sunday, December 8th

4:00 pm - 6:30 pm
Sanctuary
(upper level)
Asbury Hall/Gym
(lower level)

Get ready for an unforgettable evening filled with joy, creativity, and community! Here's a rundown of what to expect.

4:00 pm:

Kick off the festivities upstairs in the Sanctuary as the talented 1st Kids choir, hand chimes, and bell ensemble lift your spirits with beautiful music! Come together in worship and let your hearts be filled with the magic of Christmas.



Around 5:00 pm:

The celebration moves downstairs to the Contemporary Worship Space (Gym) for an evening packed with fun, food, and creativity!



Craft Stations Galore:

Kids will dive into the world of creativity with **8 exciting Christmas craft options!** Our hope is that kids will use their crafts to share the true meaning of Christmas with their friends and neighbors.

Free Food: Everyone is invited to enjoy a meal together with pizza, chili, various sides, and our annual tradition of cookie cake! Have any dietary concerns? Don't hesitate to reach out to Kristi Alton - we want everyone to enjoy!

Volunteers Needed!

Join the fun and help us create a magical evening that will remind everyone of the true meaning of Christmas! We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers of all ages to assist with food service, craft stations, and cleanup. If you're ready to help, contact Kristi Alton at kalton@1stchurch.org or call **865-982-1273**.

Don't miss this chance to connect with families, celebrate the season, and make lasting memories together! Bring your holiday spirit, and let's make this Christmas celebration truly special!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS



Contact the 1st Kids Director Kristi Alton

.....

✉ kalton@1stchurch.org

☎ 865-982-1273 ext. 712



December 1st
Chrismon Creations

On **December 1st**, Kindergarten through 5th grade students will participate in **Chrismon Creations** during Sunday School, led by Barb Rogers.

All grades will start together in **C11**, then move as a group to **Wesley Hall** for a craft activity and a brief lesson on Chrismons. Students will return to **C11** for pickup before the end of the Sunday School time.

**Sunday School for December:
Rockin' Christmas**

**Kid's Own Worship for December:
Christmas Vacation**

**Trackers of Truth Bible Study wraps
up for 2024 on December 4th.**

**More information on all these events
can be found online at:
1stchurch.org/1st-Kids**



More than 70 students start their Tuesday mornings here at 1st UMC. The Rise and Shine breakfast devotion time is open to all junior and senior high school students. Scott Moss and Charles West lead this time together.

The last Rise and Shine of the Semester is December 17th.



1stchurch.org/students
info@1stchurch.org

Sign up for Resurrection 2025

The event is happening
 January 24th - January 26th.
 Cost is \$150 per person.

Just visit the website at:
1stchurch.org/resurrection



Welcome to 



Megan Gass, Erin Gass & Jim Gass



Generosity 2024

Most of you should have received an estimate of giving card for the current stewardship campaign. If not, there are estimate cards at various spots around the church as well as print editions of the *Generosity 2024 edition of The Church Bell*. Please turn those cards in by the end of December. You can also provide this estimate online at 1stchurch.org/Generosity2025.



Dr. Sarah Mason
Joined First Church: April 9, 2006
Entered the Church Triumphant:
 October 24, 2024

Anthony (Tony) Von Klock
Joined First Church: December 8, 2002
Entered the Church Triumphant:
 October 23, 2024



Community Food Connection

In memory of: Larry Ladd
Given by: John & Gayle Stachel

DayBreak Dementia Respite Care

<i>In honor of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
George & Linda Otwell	Gene & Frances Lovell
George & Linda Otwell	The Stallers
George & Linda Otwell	Doug & Emily Smith
George & Linda Otwell	Phyllis Bostick
George & Linda Otwell	Barbara Hammond

Memorial Fund

In memory of: Jerry West
Given by: Herb Dixon

Music Ministry & Choir

In memory of: Larry Ladd
Given by: Phyllis Bostick

Welcome Table

<i>In honor of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Shirley R. Stinnett	Steve & Shirley Stinnett
<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Grant Reynolds	Sharron Kull
Judy Ballard	Herb Dixon
Ditto Murrin	Fred Needham
Ditto Murrin	Charles & Peggy Murrin
John Cochran	Greenback Heritage Museum
Ditto Murrin	Sonny & Julia Kyle
Ditto Murrin	Herman & Judy Goddard

Christian sympathy extended to:

Margaret Murrin and her family. Margaret's son, Ditto Murrin passed away on November 2nd.

The family of Dr. Sarah Mason. She passed away on October 24th. Sarah served as one of our "Bell Ladies" for many years.

The family of Tony Von Klock. He passed away on October 23rd.



CELEBRATE RECOVERY

BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE DECEMBER 11th

Sleepers, Wake! DECEMBER 18th

WordPlayers Theatre Company

CRMaryvilleTN.com

The Church Office will be closed on December 25th & 26th in observance of Christmas. .

Staff Contacts



You can find staff and ministry contacts under the "Reach" tab on the church website:
1stchurch.org

The church phone number is 865-982-1273.

Maryville First United Methodist Church
804 Montvale Station Road
Maryville, Tennessee 37803
Phone: 865-982-1273
Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG

US POSTAGE
PAID
MARYVILLE TN
PERMIT NO. 113

MAKE PLANS TO CELEBRATE
CHRISTMAS

@  1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MARYVILLE



CHRISTMASINMARYVILLE.COM



MARYVILLEFUMC



1STMARYVILLE



MARYVILLE1STUMC



1STCHURCH.ORG