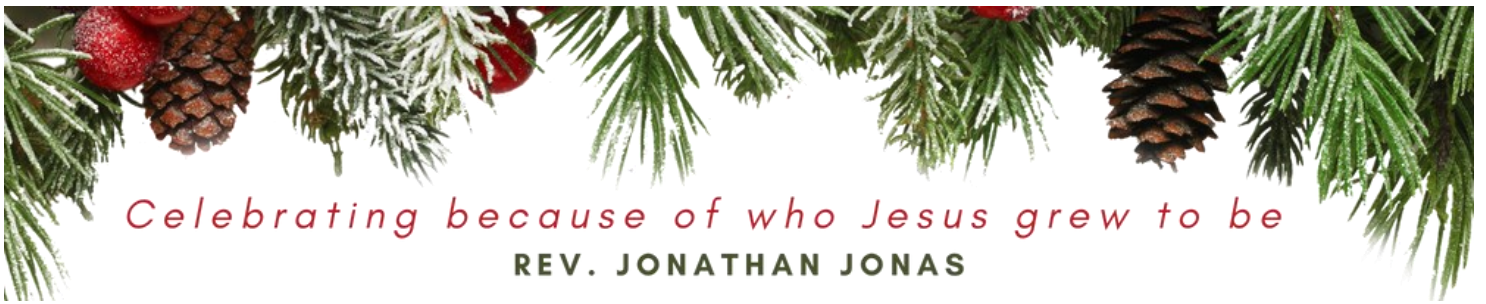




THE  
CHURCH  
BELL

**DECEMBER 2022**





*Celebrating because of who Jesus grew to be*

REV. JONATHAN JONAS

The very most effective mentors in my life didn't just tell me what to do or how to do it—they *showed* me.

That was certainly true of my parents, who didn't merely describe the standards but also offered good examples to be emulated. My grandfather allowed me to learn the tasks of farming by shadowing him, watching him, and trying under his supervision.

A little league football coach didn't merely talk, but he also stretched with us, exercised with us, and even did conditioning runs with us. A high school basketball coach was only on the sidelines during games, but during practice, he was in the middle of the action, seeing from our perspective, and allowing us to see through his.

I learned the most from teachers and professors who met me where I was and *led* me to new places of comprehension, new ways of thinking. They didn't recite facts; they showed me new ways to view the world and my place in it.

Showing me is always more effective than telling me. Perhaps that's the beauty of this season for me.

We celebrate Jesus' birth because of Jesus' life. That is, we celebrate Jesus' nativity because of who Jesus grew to be. Our celebration of Advent and Christmas is ultimately a celebration of Jesus' *incarnation*, of God's choice to become human in the person of Jesus Christ.

As John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and lived among us." In other words, God got down on our level to *show* us how to be holy people. God didn't merely command us to love; through Jesus, God *showed* us how to love.

Through these weeks of Advent and Christmas, I give thanks that God hasn't merely told us how to live, but through the miracle of Jesus' incarnation—his birth, life, death and resurrection—God has shown us how to live abundantly and eternally.

Let that be a lesson for us—in Advent, Christmas, and beyond. The people of the community and world around us who have not yet encountered the love of God through Jesus Christ probably aren't listening for us to tell them about love. They're watching for us to show it.



*Jonathan Jonas*

## A season of waiting and watching

Many of you sitting down to read this edition of *The Church Bell* may be taking a breather after a hectic time of feasting, visiting with family and shopping. The first Sunday of Advent has come and gone and the calendar is filled with holiday events that may have you wondering how you'll possibly squeeze them all into your already busy schedule.



Advent is supposed to be a time for waiting and watching for the coming of the Christ Child, something difficult to do when you are in a rush. The church calendar is filled with events celebrating the season and we hope each of them will help you discover the sense of anticipation Advent brings with it. We hope you will choose to watch and wait with 1st Church as we celebrate the Good News of Christ's birth together.

More events and details at:

**[ChristmasinMaryville.com](http://ChristmasinMaryville.com)**

Be sure and invite your friends and neighbors to share in the joy of the season.

### Each Wednesday at Noon

Take a break from your day each Wednesday of Advent for a brief worship service in the Sanctuary followed by a light lunch in Wesley Hall.

### December 4th

#### **Contemporary Worship Christmas Special in Asbury Hall - 10:15 am**

The 1st UMC Praise Band and Worship team help get you into the spirit of the Season at the annual Contemporary Worship Christmas Special. Come at 10:15 for some pre-service music, breakfast snacks and coffee. Please bring a breakfast food item to share. Worship begins at 10:30 am.

### **1st Kids Christmas Celebration in the Sanctuary & Wesley Hall - 5:00 pm**

Fun for all ages awaits children of all ages as we come together to hear the sounds of the season from the Children's Choirs, come together to eat and make some Christmas crafts.

### December 11th in the Sanctuary

#### **"The Christmas Light" - Morning Glory Chorus Christmas Cantata at 8:15 am**

From the darkness and hope of Advent to the light and joy of Christmas, the Morning Glory Chorus presents Benjamin Harlan's "The Christmas Light" during our early morning worship service.

### December 18th in the Sanctuary

#### **"Oh, Watch the Stars"- Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata at 10:30 am & 7:00 pm**

This presentation of music centers around the importance of the stars in Christ's nativity story from Advent through Christmas and Epiphany.

### December 20th in the Sanctuary

#### **"Christmas in Song: An Evening of Special Music" at 7:00 pm**

On this night, soprano, Shelley Maddox and Dr. Jennifer Anderson on piano present a selection of sacred and secular carols, spirituals and even songs from Christmas movies.

### December 24th in the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Services at 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm

### December 25th in the Sanctuary

We will have only one worship service on Christmas Day at 10:30 am.

## December Discipleship Opportunities - Rev. Nathan Irwin



We have some unique opportunities for you to learn and serve in the month of December, all part of our Wednesdays at 1st programming.

Children's Bible Study moves to 5:00 pm for Wednesdays, December 7th and 14th. While the children meet we invite parents and others to room 202. On that first Wednesday, Dr. Dwight Dockery delves into the history and meaning of the "Songs for the Waiting" that we are exploring on the Sundays of Advent. Then, on the second Wednesday we give you a chance to Go.Do. by putting together Christmas stockings for our community with Rev. Sarah Slack.

Throughout the year we help a variety of organizations in the community and we want you to know more about what they do. In place of the Adult Bible Studies at 6:30pm, we hope you'll join us on December 7th to hear from Family Promise Director April Smith. Then, on December 14th New Hope Children's Advocacy Center CEO Tabitha Damron joins us for a look at that organization.

After December 14th we will have a break in Wednesdays at 1st. Regular programming resumes on January 11, 2023. Celebrate Recovery will still meet on Wednesday evenings.



**December 7th**  
 5:00 pm Children's Bible Study  
 5:00 pm Songs for the Waiting with Dr. Dwight Dockery  
 6:30 pm Getting to Know: Family Promise

**December 14th**  
 5:00 pm Children's Bible Study  
 5:00 pm Go.Do. - Christmas Stockings  
 6:30 pm Getting to Know: New Hope Children's Advocacy Center  
 6:30 pm *Nativity on the Square* presented by: The Word Players Theatre Company

**December 21st**  
 6:30 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service

*After December 14th, Regular Wednesdays at 1st Programming resumes on January 11, 2023*

## Wishing Chris Lee the best



For nearly ten years, Chris Lee has been a valued employee and leader of 1st United Methodist Church. Across those years, he has served as worship leader for the Sunday morning contemporary service, for Celebrate Recovery, and at times for Sunday night youth. You have seen him and appreciated him in those roles.

What you may not have noticed were the hours he spent coordinating All Church Tailgate Sundays, designing graphics for our various publications and screens, and managing software platforms for our worship planning, staff communication, and worship livestreaming. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he invested time, effort, and passion into editing and producing our weekly online worship services.

With love and gratitude for all the ways he has shared the love of Jesus Christ during his time among us, we wish Chris the very best as he begins a new role

with *Be Aware Blount*, a community organization committed to reducing and preventing drug abuse. Express your gratitude and best wishes to Chris on Sunday, December 4th, his final Sunday among us, or reach out to him at [clee@1stchurch.org](mailto:clee@1stchurch.org).

With Chris' departure, the staff-parish relations committee is in search of a part-time worship leader for our Sunday morning contemporary service. If you know someone who may be interested, please encourage them to contact Jonathan Jonas at [jjonas@1stchurch.org](mailto:jjonas@1stchurch.org).

*We would like to thank the 1st Church Women, Paul Brown and Leslie Ragland for all the work they did helping get the Chrismon Trees and Christmas decorations ready in the Sanctuary and Wesley Hall.*



Although the official day for Thanksgiving has passed, at 1<sup>st</sup>UMC Thanksgiving continues throughout the year. The families overcoming the obstacles that left them homeless continue to be thankful to have a roof over their head and food enough to eat.

Food provided via contributions from donors enabled Sherrie-Ann to cook her first turkey ever for her husband Scott and their little children Landyn and Paytann. Sherrie-Ann was so grateful for everything that was provided, she made "Reindeer Food" for the four families in *Transitional Housing* as her way for giving back.

Thank you to everyone who purchased wreaths and other evergreens from the Family Promise sale. If you missed out there are some still available. Check with the Second Chance Thrift Store at (865) 233-4737 or go to 705 E. Lincoln Rd, Alcoa, TN.

The next host week for 1<sup>st</sup>UMC is December 18th - 25th. What a joyous time that will be to continue demonstrating the thanks we share from all our many blessings.

Blessings,  
Mavis Ziegler and Amy Large  
Co-Coordinators of Family Promise at 1<sup>st</sup>UMC

*\*On **December 7th**, Family Promise Director April Smith will be here for Wednesdays at 1st talking about how the organization helps end homelessness in the community. Come hear her at 6:30 pm in Room 202.*

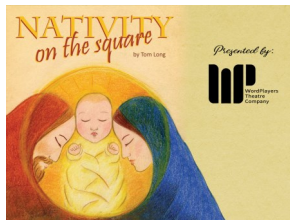
# CELEBRATE RECOVERY

**Each Wednesday Night**  
5:30 pm Dinner  
6:30 pm Worship  
7:40 pm Share Groups  
**CRMaryvilleTN.com**



**December 7th - Admit**

**December 14th**



The Word Players return this year with *Nativity on the Square*. The figures of the public creche come to life on Christmas Eve and attempt to discover who they are. A drunken bag lady explains the Nativity to them in a manner that is both comic and deeply moving.

## December 21st as part of Celebrate Recovery

For some, the Christmas season is not a joyous time. It instead brings reminders of past loss, whether that be the death of a beloved family member or other family disruptions like a move or divorce. During this season they are looking for comfort and hoping someone understands their pain. The Blue Christmas Worship service is designed to meet this need. If you are feeling a bit down this season or you wish to support those who are struggling plan to attend this special service. We will have testimonies from some of our members who have found light in the darkness, hope in the midst of despair, and life when walking through the valley of shadows.



**December 28th— Christmas Reflections**



**Kristi Alton**  
 Director of 1st Kids Ministries  
 kalton@1stchurch.org  
 865-982-1273 ext. 113



### Learning the Good News

What are your go-to Christmas traditions? It's amazing how different all of our Christmas celebrations can be, especially when you take into account how Christmas is celebrated all over the world. In December during Sunday School, children will be reminded what a universal gift, Jesus is, and how **Jesus brought good news, joy, and peace** on that very first Christmas **so that the whole world could know God!**



### Wednesdays at 1st Update

The children's Bible study on Wednesday evening will move up to 5:00 pm on December 7th & 14th. This will still happen down in the 1st Kids area. The kids will be learning about Joshua. Dinner will still be served from 5:30 to 6:15, so the kids will still be able to grab a bite to eat after the study. After the 14th, the Bible Study will take a break, resuming on January 11, 2023.



All youth in grades 6 through 12 are invited to be a part of Youth Ministries here at 1st Church.



Sunday School classes meet each week at 9:15 am. The classes are divided with 6th through 8th Graders in one class and 9th through 12th graders in the other. Youth Sunday school classes meet in rooms 153 A & B.

Youth Fellowship on Sunday evenings wraps up for the year with a Christmas Party on December 11th at 6:45 pm.



RESURRECTION 2023  
 January 20 - 22, 2023  
 LeConte Center in Pigeon Forge, TN

**Resurrection 2023** is coming up January 20th - 22nd in Pigeon Forge, TN. Registration is now open for this event. The cost is \$13 \$150. Just visit [1stchurch.org/resurrection](http://1stchurch.org/resurrection) for information and links to register and pay.

**When you sign up please put the name of the youth going to Resurrection in the "Name" field on the first page.** You can then add other youth later in the process. You will also need to provide parent/guardian names and contact information.



**Gloria Watson**

Joined First Church: November 30, 1969  
Entered the Church Triumphant: November 9, 2022

**Ben Young**

Joined First Church: April 1946  
Entered the Church Triumphant: November 17, 2022

**Christian sympathy extended to:**  
Denise Johns and her family in the death of Denise’s father, Robert “Mike” Stephens on November 6th.  
The family of Gloria Watson who passed away on November 9th.  
Megan Crim in the death of her father, David Starnes Bartee on November 21st.



**Appalachian Trail Ministry**

*In memory of:* Cheryl Coleman  
*Given by:* Challengers Sunday School Class

**Memorial Fund**

*In honor of:*  
The Staff of 1st UMC given in memory of Dennis Raines from Pat Raines, Todd, Drew & Beth

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Virginia Porter	Steve & Martha Shields
Web Slawson	Steve & Martha Shields
Edwin Parker	Steve & Martha Shields
Gary Burchfield	Steve & Martha Shields
Roy Stinnett	Steve & Martha Shields
Nelson Woody	Steve & Martha Shields
Ben Young	Don & Cora Cochran

**Missions Fund**

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Cheryl Coleman	Roy & Sara Gregory

**Music Memorial**

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Charlie Ferst	Steve & Martha Shields
Wilma Patterson	Roy & Sara Gregory
Gloria Watson	Sue Wolf

**Welcome Table**

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Cheryl Coleman	Suzanne Rhoden
Ken Flowers	Karen Flowers
Wilma Patterson	Suzanne Rhoden
Roger Scott	John & Marion Paulk
Roger Scott	Suzanne Rhoden
Roger Scott	Rick & Carolyn Glardon
Roger Scott	Bill & Elizabeth Pedersen
Roger Scott	Paul Bay & Sara Culvahouse
Roger Scott	Karen Towle
Roger Scott	Tom & Kathy Howard
Roger Scott	Phil & Amy Large
Roger Scott	Steve & Shirley Stinnett
Roger Scott	Ed & Judy Green
Roger Scott	Gene & Frances Lovell
Roger Scott	Jim & Susie Curtiss
Roger Scott	Kenneth Campbell
Roger Scott	Glenn & JoAnn Doig
Roger Scott	Roy & Sara Gregory
Roger Scott	Kathy Dorner
Margaret (Peggy) Taylor	Jim & Susie Curtiss
Margaret (Peggy) Taylor	Steve & Martha Shields

**Staff Contacts**



You can find staff and ministry contacts under the “Inside at 1st” tab on the church website:  
**1stchurch.org**

The church phone number is 865-982-1273

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Maryville, Tennessee 37803  
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**CHRISTMAS DAY - ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY AT 10:30 AM**

This year's Christmas Offering will go to the **Welcome Table**. Offerings taken during the 7:00 pm Cantata presentation on December 18th and all three Christmas Eve Services will be included in the Christmas Offering. Please mark your checks with "Christmas Offering."

You can give online at [1stchurch.org/giving](https://1stchurch.org/giving).



[1stchurch.org](https://1stchurch.org)