



THE CONNECTION

December 2019 Newsletter



The Best Christmas

When you look back and reflect... what were your favorite Christmases?

For some people.... an actual gift that you received might come to mind.

For example, I never got a car for my 16th or 18th birthday, but if I had... it would have been pretty memorable.

So maybe a gift comes to your mind, but my guess is... if you reflect back... it would be WHO you spent certain Christmases with.

I confess, one of my favorites was my first with Melanie.

We were engaged and the wedding was December 28. I was living in Alabama (home

Worship Times

Sunday Mornings

Christ Chapel 8:30AM

The Well 9:45AM

Traditions 11:00AM

Office Hours

Mon - Thurs

9:00AM- 4:00PM

Staff Meetings

Mondays 9:30-11:30AM

Lunch

12:00-1:00PM

Closures

Dec 23 at noon

through Jan 1

Church Staff

Pastor

Pastor Ronnie Bearden

drronbearden@hotmail.com

Church Administrator

Angie Arnold

fumcrestview@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant

Cathrin Owens

office.fumcrestview@gmail.com

Youth Ministry

Michael Milani

fumcrestviewyouth@gmail.com

from graduate school) and she had returned home to Georgia to finish plans for the wedding.

But after Christmas morning, I arrived early in Georgia. My father-in-law was in on the plan and I arrived at the house early with my car hidden – while Melanie was out. So when she arrived and walked into the den, she found me sitting on the couch. I still remember the way her jaw dropped wide open in amazement- and stayed that way long enough for her dad to get a photograph! (one of my favourite photos).

It wasn't the gifts. It was the who.

And it was the worship. Growing close to Jesus in love and service.

For example, one year when we had no family close by and the children were little, we had a birthday party for Jesus.

Another year, we went to a nursing home on Christmas Day to make a visit.

It wasn't the gifts received. It was the people who were present for the celebration.

And it always is a wonderful Savior.

Make this year memorable!

To Jesus be the Glory,

-Pastor Ronnie

Children's Ministry

Angela Long
fumc.angelalong@gmail.com

Director of Adult Discipleship
& Congregational Care

April Hight
fumc.aprilhight@gmail.com

Music, Contemporary

Nathan Hight

Music, Traditional

Kevin Lusk

Housekeeping

Amy Lohr-Sticha

Maintenance

Devon Stoy

Organist

Leon Curenton

Pianists

Pam Myers, Susan Smith

Sexton

Samuel Allen



FUMC Children's Ministry Presents

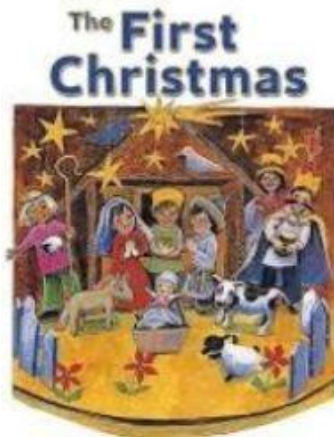
***** THE FIRST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT *****

Bring your family, friends & neighbors!

Wednesday, Dec 11
at 6:30PM

in The Crossroads Center

(Happy Birthday Jesus party will follow the presentation.)



Family Gingerbread House Decorating Party

Saturday Morning CHRISTMAS FUN!

Join us in The Crossroads Center on Dec 14
from 10:00AM-12:00PM
for a gingerbread house party, hot cocoa bar, and snacks.

DONATIONS NEEDED: Vanilla Icing, M&M's, gumdrops
and other fun candy for decoration. (No red hots please!)
Please bring donations to Angela Long's office.



Chancel Choir

Presents their Cantata
JOURNEY OF PROMISES
on Sunday, December 22 at 8:30 & 11:00AM
in the Main Sanctuary.
**Regular Sunday service with sermon will be held
at 9:45AM in The Crossroads Center.
Sunday School schedule will not change.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

*Please join us on Christmas Eve
at 6:30PM in the Main Sanctuary*



*for one of FUMC's most special services.
A love offering will be taken*

Seeking Blood Donors

Get ready to roll up your sleeves because ONE BLOOD will be rumbling in on their Big Red Bus on **Sunday, Dec 1** from 8:00AM-1:00PM on the corner of 8th & Texas (to the side of The Crossroads Center). All blood donors will receive a wellness checkup, free blanket, and a \$10 egift card. Be someone's Christmas miracle-donate blood!



Coffee With The Pastor

If you have any questions about FUMC, our Methodist faith, or how to become a member, you are welcome to meet with Pastor Ronnie on **Wednesday, Dec 4** at 6:00PM at The Crossroads Center for some conversation and a cup of coffee!



Storm Clean-Up Day Scheduled

What: Roof re-tarping mission

When: **Saturday, Dec 14**

Where: Somewhere in the Panama City / Marianna region.

Who can help? Most anyone, but there are three primary types of jobs:

- (1) We need talkers / listeners to spend time with the homeowner on the day of the job
- (2) We need folks to keep an eye us from the ground, to hold the ladder when folks are going up and down and to hand up supplies when needed.
- (3) We need people to work on the roof: first to clean up the roof surface and prepare it for a new tarp, and then to install the new blue tarp and tape around the various protuberances.

Blessed be the Lord,

-Scott Sallberg / 505-553-9631



Have Bus Will Travel!

Do YOU have a CDL license and a hankering to drive our bus? It's raring to go, so call Angie in the front office if you'd like to be included on our list of bus drivers.

A big thank you to Alesha Dabbs for the stenciling- it looks GREAT!



A Benevolence Gift

A big THANK YOU to Christie, Brogan and our Community Bank Family for their donation to our Benevolence Ministry!



Women's Service Group Christmas Cake Sales

Hi Folks, do you remember those wonderful DEAN CAKES we had at Easter, well The Women's Service Group will be taking orders again for Christmas. **Orders will be taken through Dec 8.** There will be forms out at all services. Payment must be made at the time of ordering. There may be some new cakes this time especially for Christmas. There will also be cookies as before. You can turn your order in to any of the people, in any service, who belong to our group, Sharon Wykle – 8:30 service, Pat Dreaden 9:45 service and Judy Beard 11:00 Service, or any other ladies in our group that you may know.

Just call Sharon Wykle at Home: 850 682 5336 or Cell 850 830 5536 for more information.

-Sharon Wykle



United Methodist Men Christmas Dinner

United Methodist Men will have their annual Christmas Dinner on **Monday, Dec 9** at 6 PM in the Crossroad Center. The menu will be turkey (fried and baked), dressing, gravy, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, corn and desert catered again by Uncle Bill's. All are invited. The tickets are \$10 per person and available in the



Church Office or from any UMM member. The cut off date is December 2nd. Music will be provided by Pam Myers. Come out for a great evening of good food, singing and Christian fellowship.

Children's Ministry

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: The children invite you all to come out in December for our Children's Christmas Pageant, *The First Christmas*, on December 11th at 6:30 pm. Children should arrive between 6:00 and 6:15 pm for dress and warm up. The preschool and toddlers will be invited up on stage during a song so they can participate at the manger scene. A short video and Happy Birthday Jesus party will follow the presentation.

FAMILY GINGERBREAD HOUSE DECORATING: *Bring the family to our 2nd annual "Family Gingerbread House Decorating Party", Saturday December 14th (10 am to 12 pm) in the Crossroads Center. We will have a hot chocolate bar, light snack and gingerbread house supplied. Donations needed: Vanilla Icing, M&M's, gumdrops and other fun candy for decoration. (No Red Hots please).*

Blue Lake Winter Retreat (3rd to 5th Grade)

January 31 - February 2

Cost for the trip is \$115

We have a link to all forms and "What to Bring" on the FUMCrestview website. Please visit <http://fumcrestview.com/blog/2019/11/14/blue-lake-winter-retreat-2020> for more information. Parents, make sure and have a Winter Retreat Registration Form and Kids Street Trip Consent/Health Information and Release Form completed and turned in by December 10th so I can reserve our spots. We will be hosting a few fundraisers prior to this date which will be applied toward the balance of children who participate in the fundraisers. Children can donate their portion of fundraiser to another campers balance if they choose to do so. Please see Angela Long if you would like to donate sponsor a child or donate to the overall cost for the group to attend this event.

Please see our facebook website and monthly Kids Street Newsletter/Calendar for more details and an overview of the month.

Please contact Angela Long at fumc.angelalong@gmail.com with any questions or if you would like to be a part of our Children's Ministry activities.

Youth Ministry

It has returned! MELTDOWN!

Next month we will be able to celebrate the triumphant return of one of the AWFC premier youth retreats. After taking a year off as a result of the devastating tragedy of Hurricane Michael, we are so excited to get back to a weekend of worship, fellowship, and fun. As per usual, there is a pricing tier. I pre-ordered a set number of tickets at the discounted rate. As of the typing of this newsletter, I have roughly 19 slots left AT THE DISCOUNTED RATE(\$120). The first 19 students to get me their paperwork and payment will get to enjoy the discounted price. If you aren't one of the first 19, fear not! Full price is only \$140 and is a tremendous value for the kind of Jesus filled incredible weekend that MELTDOWN provides. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at any time at fumcrestviewyouth@gmail.com. We are so looking forward to all that God has in store for both the students and adults who choose to attend Meltdown this year!

- Mike Milani



Yarn Ministry

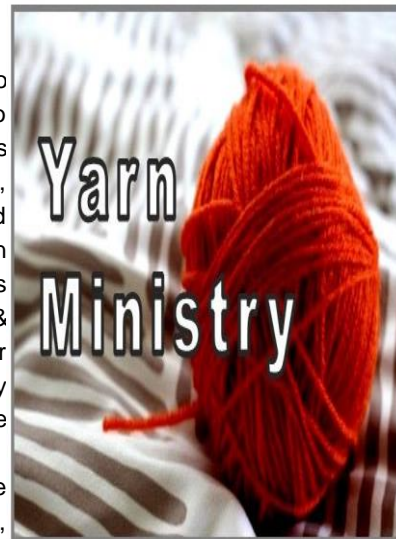
It's one of the most precious times of year- CHRISTMAS!

One of the perks of being an artsy person is having the desire to make everyone on your list a gift. The thing is finding the TIME to do it! Irregardless, the desire is there. A hallmark desire of a Yarnie is the gifting throughout the year for people that we don't even know, who are ill, hurting, need a bit of squishy blanket or shawl to remind them of the good things of the world. Or it could be the celebration of a new baby who is always worthy of rejoicing over. A Yarnie gives because it is in their DNA, a spiritual gift, a desire to love & celebrate through the work of their hands. Thank you, Lord, for putting that desire in our hearts AND hands. We celebrate this baby God has sent to us- may He always be the inspiration for all that we do!

We have one meeting this month, **Tues, Dec 10** at 6:00PM and we will enjoy a bit of Christmas with yummy nibbles, ornament making, and a gift exchange (no more than 15\$, please). All interested in this outreach ministry are welcome!

We'll be back to our regularly scheduled meetings in January (14 & 28), so circle those days in red- I already can't wait!!!

-Cathrin Owens



New Round of Study Groups are Coming!

FUMC Small Group Ministry

To Register: www.fumcrestview.com

For more information:

April Hight / Director of Small Group Ministry fumc.aprilhight@gmail.com

**Online Registration Begins Mon, December 9*

***CommUnity Dinner & Small Group Book Fair - Wed, Jan 8*



Tuesday Morning Group

Irresistible: Reclaiming the New that Jesus Unleashed for the World (Andy Stanley) - Women's Bible Study

Tuesday mornings @ 9:30 AM. Crossroads Center – Asbury Room

Begins February 4, 2020 Facilitated by: Sheila Stout

****Nursery Care available from 9 AM – 12:30 PM.**

Once upon a time there was a version of our faith that was practically . . . irresistible. But that was then. Today we preach, teach, write, and communicate as if nothing has changed. It's time to hit pause on much of what we're doing and consider the faith modeled by our first-century brothers and sisters who had no official Bible, no status, and humanly speaking, little chance of survival. What did they know that we don't? What made their faith so compelling, so defensible, so irresistible? Buckle up . . . you're about to find out. Andy Stanley invites us to embrace the version of faith that, against all odds, initiated a chain of events resulting in the most significant and extensive cultural transformation the world has ever seen. This is a book for anyone who cares deeply about the future of the church.

Wednesday Night Groups

REFIT: Christian Fitness for Women

Wednesday Nights @ 6:30 pm. Fellowship Hall

On-going Facilitated by: Cassie Baird

Nursery care will be available for ages 6 weeks to 4 years.

REFIT*For Women Only* is a "movement + music" experience that adds resistance-training elements to give you a total body workout. Refit focuses on participation and not perfection, building community and connection. After a good physical workout, we will work our heart muscle through meditation, devotion and prayer practices, leaving us feeling whole and revived. No prior exercise experience needed. Come with a willing heart, open mind and ready to dance.

When to Walk Away: Finding Freedom from Toxic People (Gary Thomas)

Wednesday Nights @ 6 pm. Room 404 – Crossroads Center.

Begins January 15 Facilitated by: April Hight

As Christians, we often feel the guilt and responsibility of meeting the needs of unhealthy people in our lives. Whether a sibling, parent, spouse, coworker, or friend, toxic people frequently seek to frustrate our life's calling. While you're seeking first God's kingdom, they're seeking first to distract your focus and delay your work. Instead of attempting the impossible task of mollifying toxic people, it's time we dedicate our energy to the only worthwhile effort: completing the work God has given us by investing in reliable people. It's only when we learn to say no to bad patterns that we can say yes to the good work God has planned for us.

James: Mercy Triumphs (Beth Moore)

Wednesday Evenings @ 6 pm. Room 402 – Crossroads Center.

Begins January 15 Facilitated by: Elaine Mantle

James, Jesus' own brother, started out as a skeptic. See how one glimpse of the resurrected Savior turned an unbeliever into a disciple. Bible scholars compare James to the prophet Amos. In other ways, James more closely resembles the Book of Proverbs than any other New Testament book. Topics in this study include: joy, hardship, faith, reversal of fortunes for rich and poor, wisdom, gifts from above, single-mindedness, the dangers of the tongue, humility, and prayer.

Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say

(Adam Hamilton)

Wednesday Evenings @ 6 pm. Room 403 – Crossroads Center.

Begins January 15 Facilitated by: Steve Long

They are simple phrases. They sound Christian – like something you might find in the Bible. They capture some element of truth, yet they miss the point in important ways. Join Adam Hamilton in his search for the whole truth by comparing some common Christian sayings with the wisdom found in Scripture.

Advent Readers

Christ Chapel 8:30AM

Dec 1- Zick family

Dec 8- Debbie Watson

Dec 15- Dabbs family

Dec 22- Pastor Ronnie & Melanie Bearden

The Crossroads Center 9:45AM

Dec 1- Stout family

Dec 8- Sutherland family

Dec 15- Lee Smith family

Dec 22- Milani family

Traditions/Main Sanctuary 11:00AM

Dec 1- Raiche family

Dec 8- Mike and Sharon Steen

Dec 15- Art and Rosemary Luckie

Dec 22- Sallberg family

Christmas Eve- Sam & Julie Field

December Greeters

Christ Chapel 8:30AM

Dec 1- Kit Callahan

Dec 8- Melanie & Gary Zick

Dec 15- Megumi & Warren Caruso

Dec 22- (Cantata in Main Sanctuary) Don Ure

Dec 29- Alesha & Robert Dabbs

The Crossroads Center 9:45AM

Dec 1- Jim and Aimee Keller

Dec 8- Judy Brinkley, Pat Dreaden, Bunny Orr

Dec 15- Debbie Smith, Judy Martin

Dec 22- Pat Dreaden, Judy Brinkley

Dec 29- Cathy Thigpen, Jim and Aimee Keller

Traditions/Main Sanctuary 11:00AM

**Narthex greeter, ** Side door greeter*

Dec 1- Dax Reeves *, Mark Young **, Youth

Dec 8- Troy Thurman *, Margaret Larson **, Youth

Dec 15- Suzanne Long *, Elaine Mantle **, Youth

Dec 22- (Cantata) Sam Field *, Linda Biondi **, Youth

Christmas Eve- Sam Field *, Scott Sallsberg **, Youth

Dec 29- Scott Sallsberg*, Judy Beard **, Youth

December Ushers

8:30 Christ Chapel- Gary Johnson and Mike Roy

11:00 Traditions- Team 3

Leader: Mike Steen & Carli Owens

Youth

Important Dates in December

Dec 1- Angel Tree Gifts Drop Off at CRC between services,

One Blood 8:00AM-1:00PM

Dec 3- Women's Service Group Christmas Party 6:00PM Youth Rm

Dec 4- Worship Committee 5:00PM Conf Rm, Youth Wrap Party 6:00PM Youth Rm

Coffee With The Pastor 6:00PM The Crossroads Center

Dec 8- Angel Tree Gifts Drop Off at CRC between services

Children's Committee 12:00PM Conf Rm,

Last day to order Dean's Cakes from Women's Service Group members

Dec 9- UMM Christmas Party 6-8:00PM CRC

Dec 10- Yarn Ministry Christmas Party 6:00PM Rm 213

Dec 11- Kid's Street Christmas Pageant 6:30PM CRC

Dec 14- Kid's Street Builds Gingerbread Houses 10:00AM-12:00PM CRC,

Dean's Cakes Pick-Up in CRC, Storm Clean-up

Dec 15- Dean's Cakes Pick-Up in CRC, Missions 5:00PM Conf Rm

Dec 16- January Newsletter Deadline

Dec 20- Sr. Game Day 11:00AM-2:00PM FH

Dec 22- Christmas Cantata 8:30AM & 11:00AM Main Sanctuary, Contemporary Service 9:45AM CRC

Dec 23- Church Office Closes at Noon

Dec 24- Christmas Eve Service at 6:30PM Main Sanctuary

Dec 25- Happy Birthday Jesus!

Dec 24 through Jan 1 - Church Office Closed

**FH- Fellowship Hall, Conf Rm- Conference Room, CRC- The Crossroads Center, Youth Rm- Youth Room*

Please see <http://fumcrestview.com/calendar-1> for any updates or changes

Looking Ahead To January

Jan 1- Happy New Year!

Jan 2- Office reopens after the Holidays

Jan 3- Women's Service 9:00AM in Rm 213

Jan 5- Trustees 3-5:00PM Conf Rm, Finance Committee 5:00PM Conf Rm

Jan 8- CommUNITY Dinner, Church Council, Study Group Book Fair 5:30PM CRC

Jan 12- Long Range Planning 5:30PM Conf Rm

Jan 13- United Methodist Men 6:00PM FH

Jan 14- Yarn Ministry 6:00PM Rm 213

Jan 15- Small Groups Are Back!

Jan 17- Sr. Game Day 11:00AM-2:00PM FH

Parent's Night Out / Kid's Street

Jan 20- February Newsletter Deadline, Church Office Closed / Martin Luther King Jr Day

Jan 24 thru 26- Youth at Meltdown

Jan 28- Yarn Ministry 6:00PM Rm 213

Jan 31 through Feb 2- Blue Lake Children's Retreat

**FH- Fellowship Hall, Conf Rm- Conference Room, CRC- The Crossroads Center, Youth Rm- Youth*

Room

Please see <http://fumcrestview.com/calendar-1> for any updates or changes



Christmas: It's About Being with God

Did you know that Christmas is about God wanting to have a relationship with you?

You might have thought it was about presents, or peace on earth, good will to man ... that sort of thing – and it is in a lesser way. But at the center of the Christmas message is a God of love who desires to be with you.

That's right. God wants to spend time with you.

That's why the Father sent Jesus to be born as a little baby. It set in motion this whole plan of love in Jesus' death and resurrection that would break through the barrier of sin and reunite mankind with a loving Heavenly Papa.

Hanging out with mankind was God's idea from the beginning. The Bible says that God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden. The Father sent Jesus because he wanted to renew that kind of intimate fellowship with us.

During the Christmas season we often sing the classic hymn, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," but have you ever thought about what this familiar song means?

The text is based on the biblical prophecy from Isaiah 7:14:

...the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (ESV).

The name Emmanuel literally means "God with us." God gave Jesus to mankind as the first Christmas present.

The Apostle Paul tells of the wonder of this idea several times in his letters.

...God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27, ESV)

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ([2 Cor. 5:18](#), NLT)

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5:10, ESV)

Jesus Himself made it clear that relationship with God should be our highest priority in this life.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (John 15:7-8, NKJV)

It is God's will that we remain in fellowship with Him for all eternity. We see this in the beautiful hope-filled words of Apostle John in his revelation:

I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them." (Rev. 21:3, NLT)

This is the glorious news that we proclaim to the nations, that Jesus is Emmanuel. By His shed blood, He has ransomed captive Israel – and now He lives with us through the precious Holy Spirit.

So have a very merry Christmas knowing that God loves you and wants to be with you. May you know the presence of your Heavenly Father in a special way during this blessed season. And may you join with God's people in singing this glorious hymn, both now and forevermore:

"Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to thee oh Israel."

By: [Craig von Buseck, D.Min.](#)

FUMC News

For all the latest from FUMC please visit:

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