

# Faith Matters

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

A Newsletter of Epworth United Methodist Church

Join us on a journey this Advent and Discover the joy of Christmas: Past, Present, and Future I am excited to lead us to Christmas this Advent Season by taking a fresh look at the story of Christmas through the lens of an old classic. Have you ever read the original tale of Scrooge?



We have FREE copies of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* available at the Church Welcome Center. You can even join one of the Sunday Morning groups that will be discussing further this classic tale.



I also want to encourage you to pick up a a copy of our Advent Devotional for home use. Take an extra one and give it to a neighbor! There is a special devotion for each week with suggestions for activities to help capture the spirit of Christmas.

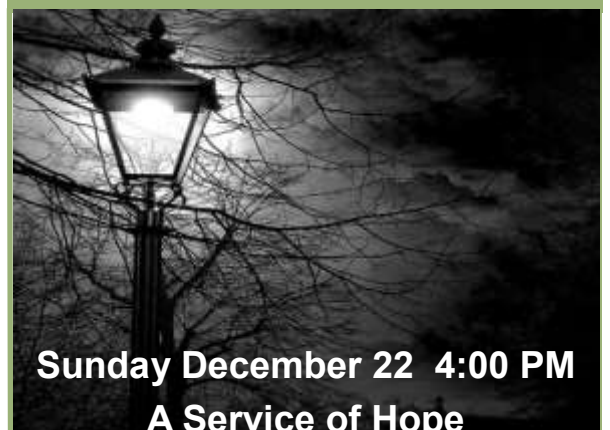
It is easy to lose the Spirit of Christmas amidst all the hustle and bustle. So take note in this newsletter of the many events and activities of the season taking place right here at Epworth. We plan these things not to add to your busy calendar, but rather we do these things to help you rediscover the meaning and joy that is Christmas!

There are so many wonderful things happening in the coming days and weeks. I hope that you can find time to join us on our journey to making a difference with our Faith this Christmas and as we journey into the New Year.

See you Sunday, Pastor Rodney

### Inside This Issue

- Upcoming Events | 2
- Opportunities to Grow | 3
- Financial Update | 4
- Opportunities to Serve | 5
- Calendar of Events | Insert



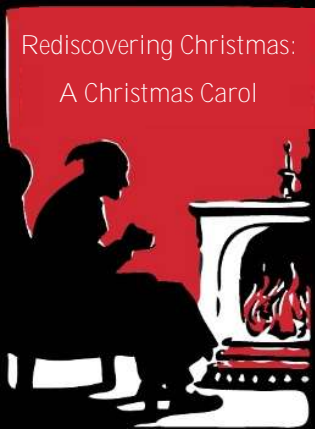
**Sunday December 22 4:00 PM**  
**A Service of Hope**

During this season of joy and anticipation, it can be hard to be merry especially for **those with heavy hearts due to life's** circumstances. Plan to attend this special worship service as it will acknowledge this **isn't a jolly time of the year for everyone** and it will provide a glimpse of hope.





# Upcoming Events



Rediscovering Christmas:  
A Christmas Carol

**A New Christmas Drama/Musical**  
**Sunday December 22 @ 9:30 AM**

Costumes, Bells, Choir, Praise Team, and a story that has been told countless ways by countless people gets one more reboot. Don't miss this retelling of the Christmas Story and a Christmas Carol. There is still time to join the chorus! Want to sing in the Christmas Program? We've got a spot for you!  
Contact John Phillips - [jdmusman@gmail.com](mailto:jdmusman@gmail.com).



**Family Pitch In and Carol Sing**  
**Sunday, December 15 at 11:30 AM**

Part of the joy of Christmas is the music.  
And don't forget the Food !

Come gather around the table with your Epworth Church Family as we share a meal together and sing a few carols and songs.  
**Plus a special Christmas Program from KIDS.** Bring a side dish or dessert. We will provide everything else including Fried Chicken!



**Sunday, December 8 @ 5<sup>00</sup>-7<sup>00</sup> PM**

A Night in Bethlehem allows you to explore the town of Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth. Through hands-on experiences, you will learn about the story of Jesus' birth and the miracles surrounding the life of Jesus. Plan to attend this event. There is something for every age.

*Christmas Eve Service*

Family Service | 6:00pm

Traditional Service | 11:00pm

## Order Your Christmas Poinsettias Now



You can order a Christmas poinsettia which are used to decorate the sanctuary.  
Order one in honor of someone special or in memory of a loved one.  
Poinsettias are available for just \$10.  
Call the church office or stop by the Welcome Center to pick up an order form.

Remember the days past when families joined together @ the table and took part in meaningful conversations?  
In the world of social media and instant access we have stopped talking face-to-face. We want that to change in 2020.  
Join us @ the table as we share a catered meal and engage in important and honest conversations with our church family.  
All ages are welcome @ the table.



**Plan now to join us!**  
**The conversation begins January 12 after Sunday School**



## New Opportunities

### New Sunday Morning Study - Understanding the Bible

*Sunday Mornings | 10:45AM | Coming in January 5,12,19,26*

Reading the Bible is often a goal, but rarely a reality. Why is that? In part because the Bible is easy to read, but hard to understand. Spend 4 weeks with Pastor Rodney to start the New Year. You will discover some secrets that will unlock your understanding of the Bible, making it much easier to read from cover to cover.

### New Study - The Way of Discipleship

*Thursday Morning | 10:00AM | beginning January 9*

Get started with the Companions in Christ series with this 5 week study. The Way of Discipleship begins Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. Discover Christ's presence in your life through weekly discussions and readings. Contact Pat Engel to get started and reserve your spot.

### 2020 Bible Study with the Pastor : Genesis to Revelation

*Tuesdays, 6:30PM | Wednesdays, 10:00AM | Beginning March 5/6*

Pastor Rodney will lead this weekly study that will take you step by step through the entire Bible. You will discover that the story of God's love is the one common thread that runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

### New Small Group Opportunity - Dig In



*3rd Tuesdays of the month | 6:00-7:00PM*

*@ WB's Pizza 6165 Allisonville Road*

You bring money for your dinner. We'll provide the food for thought. Share a meal together and then Dig Into a current event through the lens of faith.

### New Small Group Study - Reckless Love

*Sunday | 4:30-5:30 PM | beginning January 5*

This study is one recommended to all of our small groups for 2020. We'll look at how loving our neighbors is the best way to love God more fully. There is an optional book available for all participants. Contact Pat Engel to get started with your book.



### The Conversation begins in 2020 @ the table

January 12 and thereafter on the first Sunday of the Month, we will gather @ the table for food and conversation. We have much to discuss as a church family. Plan to take part.

## Giving Thanks

*We are thankful for new partners in collecting food for the Food Pantry*



Peak Performance Fitness

5028 E 62nd Street

## Congratulations!

**Our 2020 Leadership Table members were elected on November 6 during**

**Annual Charge Conference:**

**Chair: Jean Leonard**

**Trustee Chair: Vern Cookson**

**Staff Parish Chair: Lucinda Lutz**

**Finance Chair: Brian Turpin**

**Lay Delegate: Melissa Zabel**

**Additional Members: Bert Talbott, Brittany Ward, Mary Klee,**

**Randy Seibert, Mark Dorrell,**





## Looking ahead

### Finishing the Old Year Strong and Gaining Clarity for 2020

This past Sunday, November 24, we collected the stewardship pledge sheets for the coming year. You still have time to turn in your commitments to the church office. Your pledges help Leadership best plan for the coming year.

Your generosity this year has allowed us to move forward with many of the plans made a year ago, but with adjustments. 2019 has been an eventful year at Epworth. The storm this past Spring meant we spent most of the summer rebuilding our playground and repairing and updating 4 classrooms in our Education wing. Thanks to our insurance, we were able to get all the repairs and updates done with only \$15,000 of extra out of pocket expenses. The Trustees have also been busy with a number of unexpected repairs at the Parsonage. They have continued to work to bring the church HVAC system on-line in order to take advantage of the savings related to better control of the heating and cooling of the building. There is a WISH LIST on this page of more projects that Leadership would like to underwrite to keep the building in good repair for the future.

We share this with you to say continue with your giving as we head to the end of the year and thank you for your pledge of giving for the New Year. We will continue to work hard and prudently as good stewards of your generous gifts.

### What's next for Family Ministry?

As we look ahead to 2020, Epworth Leadership remains committed to the importance of ministry **to and with** our families and their children. Plans and updates were shared with families on Sunday November 17th. Leadership will be putting together a plan for a search for a candidate who will help us build on all the good that is taking place and who will help us continue to build a strong discipleship program for our children, youth, their parents, and young adults. If you have any questions, please direct them to Pastor Rodney or the Incoming Chair of Staff Parish, Lucinda Lautz. In the interim, there are plenty of activities and plenty of places for you to become active and involved in Epworth's Family ministry.

## Financial Update:

All numbers reported through 10/30/19

**Year-to-Date Missional Giving: \$68,693**

**YTD Mission Expenses: \$71,049**

**Year-to-Date Capital Giving: \$64,504**

**YTD Capital Fund Expenses: \$66,812**

**Year-to-Date Operations Giving: \$315,995**

**YTD Operations Expenses: \$356,522**

**Don't forget year-end tax gifts must be postmarked December 31, 2019**

## Christmas Wish List for Epworth UMC:

Parking Lot ReSeal and ReStripe - \$12,000

Paint the Church Exterior - \$17,000

New Landscape - \$12,000

Remodel 3 Preschool Classrooms - \$9,000

HVAC Computer Controls - \$9,800

New Fridge at the Parsonage - \$1,300

Water Leak Repair at Parsonage - \$7,800

Update Church Phone System - \$5,000

Update Staff Offices - \$5,000

Bathroom Updates - \$6,000

LED lights in Building - \$7,000







Make An Impact  
In Our Church, Our Community,  
and Our World

# LOVEJOYHOPEPEACE

## Alternative Gift Card Project

It is easy to get caught up in gift giving during Christmas. We live in a land of abundance and when we are honest, there is very little that any of us truly need. So at Epworth we have challenged our congregation to consider those around the globe that are truly in need and help make the world a better place with a different kind of gift card this year. Instead of buying someone a traditional gift card, make a donation to one of our Mission Partners. We will provide you a Christmas Card to give and an insert card that tells the story of the transforming gift made to the mission partner of your choice.



**Sunday December 8 - A Night in Bethlehem 5-7 PM**  
Explore the town of Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth. Volunteers are still needed to help.  
Call the church office or  
Email: [preschool@epworthindy.org](mailto:preschool@epworthindy.org)



**December 1 - Operation Warm Up Collection**  
A special collection of blankets, gloves, scarves, and hats will take place on Sunday, **December 1**. Items will then be distributed as part of *Operation Warm Up* for the Miracle & Blessings Food Pantry clients in the **Forest Manor** and Brightwood neighborhoods.



**Last Minute Gift? THINK EQUAL EXCHANGE**  
**COFFEE—TEA—HOT COCOA—CHOCOLATE**  
Equal Exchange pioneered the practice of Fair Trade with small coffee farmers and is available for purchase at Welcome Center



**Can you spare an hour of your time?**

Cocoa And Carols

Help serve Cocoa to Preschool Families  
And Hear our Students Sing  
**December 13 and December 17**  
**8:45-9:30 AM**

To Volunteer call the Church Office or  
Email: [preschool@epworthindy.org](mailto:preschool@epworthindy.org)



We feel very fortunate that Epworth has had a “baby boom” as of late! With all of our new little friends running (or crawling) around, we could use a few extra hands each Sunday to help out! If you are interested in helping out please call the church office or visit our Welcome Center on Sunday mornings.



### NEW MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

Families remember special days. We are in need of a few people to help lead a new (or is it old) family ministry. We want to keep track of birthdays and anniversaries of our church family. We have cards and postage, but we need willing people to send out the cards. There are endless possibilities. Are you the one we need? Contact the Church Office.



Keep These Dates In Mind:

**Sunday, December 8, 5:00PM - 7:00 PM**

*A Night In Bethlehem @ Epworth*

**Sunday, December 22, 4:00PM**

*A Special Service of Hope*

**Christmas Eve Worship 6 PM and 11 PM**

*2 Unique Services to Celebrate Christmas*

**Join us for Worship**

**Sunday Morning**

**9:30AM**

From now on you'll be receiving our monthly newsletter electronically. If you would like a physical copy, please contact our office.

(317) 251-1481

[thomasp@epworthindy.org](mailto:thomasp@epworthindy.org)



6450 Allisonville Road  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46220



**Epworth United  
Methodist Church**