

DECEMBER 2024

GROW IN FAITH | SHARE IN WORSHIP | SERVE OTHERS

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SUNDAY

WORSHIP

9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Live-stream worship:

**YouTube
Channel GBFUMC**

**Special Sunday
Worship — 10 a.m.**

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Thank You for Your Kindness, Generosity

Dear beloved church family,

On behalf of Elaine and Shannon, I would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for the overwhelming kindness and generosity you have shown us during our transition into the parsonage and the life of the church. Your thoughtful preparations and warm welcomes have made our move smooth and sweet. Every handshake, smile, gift card, card, flower, visit, email, and call has left a lasting impression on our family. We cherish these memories and are truly grateful for the essentials you provided that helped us settle in. We look forward to getting to know each and every one of you more deeply, forging meaningful relationships through the grace awarded to us by our Lord. Together, as a community united in faith, let us continue to share the light and love of Christ with one another and beyond.



As we reflect on the profound words found in Isaiah 9:6, *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”* This verse lays down the incarnational truth that in the birth of Christ, we are introduced to a person, presence, purpose, peace, promise, and power — bigger than all our imaginations put together. The late English lay-theologian C.S. Lewis once wrote astoundingly, *“Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world.”* In Christ, our disappointments are made into appointments with the Great I AM!

The liturgical seasons of Advent (December 1st to 24th) and Christmas (December 25th to January 8th) most certainly reminds us of the incredible gift of Jesus Christ. This message in Isaiah encapsulates the essence of hope and the promise of peace that our Savior brings into our lives. As the Christmas season approaches, let us open our hearts to the transformative love of Christ, allowing His peace to reign within us and in our community.

If you are one who is struggling to celebrate the birth of Christ due to your difficult circumstances, then be encouraged by these words by the German pastor, the late Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who captured the essence of Christmas from a

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SHARE in Worship



WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

December 1st — Preaching: Rev. Zach Anderson (*Communion – both services*)
First Sunday of Advent

December 8th — Preaching: Rev. Zach Anderson
Second Sunday of Advent — One-service Sunday at 10 a.m.
 Children’s Christmas Pageant — “Campfire Christmas”

December 15th — Preaching: Rev. Richard Fitzgerald
Third Sunday of Advent

December 22th — Preaching: Todd Scheuerman
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24th — Preaching: Rev. Richard Fitzgerald
Christmas Eve Candlelight Services at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

December 29th — Preaching: Rev. Karen Rice Ratzlaff
Fifth Sunday — One-service Sunday at 10 a.m.

- * *Sunday Service times are 9 a.m. for the Traditional Service and 11 a.m. for the REVIVE! Service.*
- * *One-Service Sundays happen on 5th Sundays, Holidays and Special-Event Days. Service is at 10 a.m., like for our Special Sunday service this month on December 8th for our Children’s Christmas Program and on December 29th, which is a 5th Sunday and between the Christmas and New Years Holidays when people are spending time with family.*
- * *If you can’t worship with us in person, the services may be found on our YouTube channel: GBFUMC*



Angel Tree Ornaments Fly Off the Tree

Only a few ornaments are left on our annual Angel Tree.

Between the foster children from St. Francis, the youth from the local Girls and Boys Homes and a few children from Noah’s Ark Preschool, we had 72 ornaments this year.

After the first Sunday the tree was up, we only had 17 left to be selected.

Gifts for the children should be wrapped and returned to

the Angel tree by Sunday December 8th.

Please put the ornament on the package so that we know who gets the gift.

The Boys and Girls Home gifts were different this year due to the change over of youth. Backpacks and bags were purchased for the children and filled with various hygiene items. Givers just needed to make a donation to help cover the costs.

NOVEMBER Attendance

	9:00	11:00	TTL
Nov. 3	62	30	92
Nov. 10	53	53	106
Nov. 17	One Service		137
Nov. 24	62	37	99

These numbers are for those who attended worship for the four Sundays in November.

Jill Boultinghouse,
 Nancy Gale and
 Crystal Marzolf,
 Angel Tree Committee

Thanks to everyone who helped make this project successful.

GROW in Faith

EYG Prepares Parade Float and Christmas Program

Wow, this year has flown by!

To finish out November, we will be working and riding on the float for the Holiday parade, November 30th. Our float will be a Shoebox for Operation Christmas Child.

We will NOT meet Wednesday November 27th. Have a great Thanksgiving!

We are practicing hard on the Children's Christmas program "Campfire Carols" for December 8th at 10 a.m.

Dress rehearsal is Saturday December 7th at 10 a.m. All the children should be at their classrooms at 9 a.m. Sunday, December 8th to prepare for the program.

If you have any questions, please give Vivian a call at

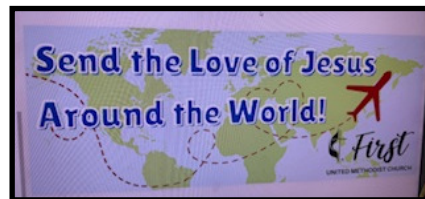


620-791-8584.

December 11th will be a fun night and on December 18th, the kids will be able to spend the Bible bucks they've earned

this first semester. The Bible Bucks store will be open in room 35 for the children to "shop." This is our last meeting for the year.

We will NOT meet again until January 8th. Have a



wonderful, safe Christmas break, and I'll see you all next year.



EYG decorates/prepares the Christmas parade float which will feature an Operation Christmas Child shoebox and items to go in it.

Vivian Harbaugh
EYG Teacher



DREAM CENTER MEAL

The next Dream Center Meal is set for December 15th at 5 p.m.

Since the pulled pork is already to go, needs for the meal will include:

- * Baked beans for 25

- * 3 bags of chips
- * 3 pkg of hamburger buns
- * 1-2 bottles of BBQ sauce
- * Dessert for 25-30 (so 2 13x9 pans)
- * 3-4 volunteers to serve at Dream Center.

A sign-up sheet will be at the back of the sanctuary for everyone will to help with this ministry.

COMMUNITY CONCERT

The Central Kansas Community Choir will present the Messiah in our sanctuary on Monday, December 9th at 7:30 p.m.

It will be a magical evening of holiday music as they perform Part of of Handel's Messiah.

Admission is free.

They will hold a rehearsal on Sunday, December 8th.



Mid-High Youth Group
Meets on Wednesdays
5:30-7:30 p.m.

High School Youth Group
Meets on Wednesdays
7-8:30 p.m.

GROW in Faith



NOAH'S ARK PRESCHOOL (NAP)

PHOTOS:

LEFT: The children were enthralled to see Ms. Kaylee make the pumpkin “throw up”.

RIGHT: A scavenger hunt around the church — inside and outside — helped make the children aware of where to find exit signs, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, firefighters, fire truck and fire hydrants.

Kaylee Keilman,
NAP Director

NAP Students Learn ‘the Reason for the Season’

Noah’s Ark Preschool students sold 143 pie certificates, netting \$864 for scholarships and other needs.

The NAP students finished out November by making “stone soup,” bringing various fresh vegetables to add to a soup pot.

This month they turn their lessons towards learning about Jesus, who is “the reason for the season” and making crafts/Christmas presents for their parents to cherish for years to come.

Ms. Jessica from the Great Bend Public Library will visit NAP on December 5th to read to the students.

The school Christmas party will be December 19th.

Children will bring wrapped books to exchange and the party will include cookies and other treats.



Christmas Program

The NAP Christmas program is set for 6 p.m. on December 19th in the sanctuary. Cookies will follow in Fellowship Hall.

Everyone is invited to come to the program.

Holiday

NAP will not have classes December 20th to January 6th. Enjoy your holiday.



Here We Go a Caroling and Chili Cooking

Spread Christmas Cheer with Caroling and Chili Cook-Off on Sunday, December 15th!

Mark your calendars for a festive evening of holiday fun at First UMC on Sunday, December 15th!

The celebration begins at 4:00 p.m. with Christmas Caroling. Gather with friends and family to spread

joy through song as we visit local homes and share the spirit of the season. Songbooks and festive flair will be provided!

After caroling, return to First UMC for a warm and welcoming dinner at our Annual Chili Cook-Off. Whether you’re ready to compete for the coveted **Golden Ladle** or

simply want to taste-test, everyone is invited! Prepare your best chili or soup recipe to enter the contest, or bring along a side dish or dessert to share. Winners will be crowned in two categories: **Chili** and **Soup**.

Don’t miss this opportunity for fellowship, fun, and holiday cheer! See you there!

SERVE Others

Children's Church: Advent Countdown to Christmas



Sunday Children's Church: 11:00 a.m.

Curriculum: Advent Countdown. Waiting for Christmas

December 1st : HOPE. Kids will learn that advent is a season of hope.

December 8th: No lesson

because of Christmas Program at 10 a.m.

December 15th: JOY.

Kids will learn that Advent reminds us of the



joy Jesus gives us.

December 22nd: PEACE. Kids will learn that Advent reminds us that Jesus can give us peace.

December 29th: CHRIST. Kids will learn Jesus is God's gift to the world.

Larissa Graham,
Director of
Children's Ministries

Let's Gather 'Round the Christmas Campfire



Wednesday Nights: MOPs/Kids Klub 5:30 p.m.

December happenings:

December 4th: Practice Christmas program on stage with EYG kids.

Curriculum:

Campfire

Carols: Joy to the World.

Kids will learn that "Jesus' promise of salvation brings joy."



First Kids sang "We Are In the Lord's Army" during both services on the Sunday before Veterans Day.

God loves them.

December 18th and 25th: No Kids Klub due to Christmas break.



Larissa Graham,
Director of
Children's Ministries

Come Share Campfire Carols With OUR YOUTH

The Children's Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday December 8th during the 10:00 a.m. service (This will be a one-worship-

service Sunday.) Kids Klub and EYG youth have been practicing hard to share this



program with everyone in the church.

Our older youth will be handling parts in the church service.



SHARE In Worship



GATHERING FOOD FOR CHRISTMAS

Our Goal is to provide 75 Food Boxes to needy families this year.

We are starting to gather names. If you know of a family that needs a food box this year, contact the church office.

Our shelves are getting full of all the food being donated for our Christmas Food Boxes.

Since early October we have been collecting food for our annual food box project. In late November we received a \$1,000 grant from United Way to help flesh out the needs to fulfill our goal of 75 boxes.

In December, donation are:

Sunday December 1st

- 12-count cartons of eggs
- 5-pound bag of potatoes
- Can of soup



Sunday December 8th

- Loaf of bread (Check dates for furthest out)
- Half-gallon of milk (Check dates for furthest out)

HELPING ASSEMBLE THE "BOXES": We will meet Friday, December

13th, at 5 p.m. to fill the food sacks to be ready for delivery on Saturday.

Saturday, December 14th, we will meet again at 9 a.m. to pack the cold and frozen items and deliver the boxes to all the families.

Thank you to everyone who has been contributing to this project — either with food or cash donations.

And a special thank you to the United Way for the grant.



PHOEBE'S KITCHED BLESSED TO BE REPLENISHED

Because of your generous response to the recent 'loose change' fundraiser for Phoebe's Kitchen, we were not only able to have a cook day to fill our empty freezer with around 3-dozen meals, but we also have extra funds to finance the next cook day as well!

I'm proud to be part of such a giving church family. Thank you!

However, there's another aspect to this mission that includes all of us in the church. We need to know who needs a meal and a meal needs to be delivered.

So, if you know of someone who had medical attention

Who is Phoebe?

"I commend to you, Phoebe our sister, who is a servant for our church. She has been a helper of many ..."

Romans 16:1-2

Be a Phoebe!!




Recent cook day found (l-r) Anna Faye Hensley, Rhonda Phillips, Nancy Gale, Judy Turner, Stephannie Goerl and Linda Bunselmeyer cooking up a storm. They made a soup and a pasta dish, providing food for 3-dozen meals.

grieving, hardship or any reason which a prepared meal might be appreciated.

Judy Turner,
Phoebe's Kitchen

Questions?
620-617-6082

First United Methodist Church — DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 1st Sunday of Advent 9 am and 11 am — Services in Sanctuary & live on YouTube 10 am Discovery Hour 5 pm Vintage Car Club	2 No NAP Classes	3 5:30 pm TOPS 7 pm Vintage Car Club	4 5:30-7:15 pm Kids Klub/EYG/MHYG 7-8:30 pm SHYG	5 9-3 St. Francis Christmas Party (District) 5:30 CORE Community	6 Church Office Closed	7 Children's program rehearsal — 10 am
8 2nd Sunday of Advent 10 am Service in Sanctuary & live on YouTube w/ Children's Christmas Program 3 pm Community Concert Rehearsal	9 10 am MW Christmas Cookie Assembly-Delivery 6-10 pm Christmas Community Concert 6-7:30 pm GS Troop	10 10 am-8 pm—Healthy Families Christmas 5:30 pm TOPS	11 5:30-7:15 pm Kids Klub/EYG/MHYG 5:30 pm MomCo 7-8:30 pm SHYG	12 10-2 St.Francis Christmas Party (GBD) 5:30 CORE Community 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band	13 5 pm Christmas Box — Assemble non-perishables	14 8 am Christmas Box — Assemble perishables & delivery
15 3rd Sunday of Advent 9 am and 11 am — Services in Sanctuary & live on YouTube 10 am Discovery Hour 5 pm Dream Center Meal 4 p.m. Christmas Caroling 5ish pm Chili soup cook off	16 No NAP Classes	17 5:30 pm TOPS	18 1:30 pm MW Circle 5:30-7:15 pm Kids Klub/EYG/MHYG 5:30 pm MomCo 7-8:30 pm SHYG	19 6 pm NAP Christmas Concert w/ treats 7 pm NA	20 No NAP Classes 9-3 Quilt Guild	21 No NAP Classes
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9 am and 11 am — Services in Sanctuary & live on YouTube 10 am Discovery Hour	23 No NAP Classes	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Church Office Closed No NAP Classes 7 pm Candlelight Service 11 Candlelight Service	25 CHRISTMAS Church Office Closed No NAP Classes No KK/EYG/YG	26 No NAP Classes 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band	27 No NAP Classes	28 No NAP Classes
29 5th Sunday 10 am Service in Sanctuary & live on YouTube	30 No NAP Classes	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE No NAP Classes	Find our Calendar Online 			

SHARE in Worship — CELEBRATIONS & PRAYER CONCERNS



December Birthdays

1 Zelaina Harbaugh
 1 Samuel Unruh
 3 Karole Erikson
 3 Taylor Calcara
 4 Kaitlyn Albers
 5 Molly Sager
 5 Elaine Tan-Robert
 7 Frances Fanshier
 7 Michael Yarmer
 7 Sonya Rein
 11 Frank Deines III
 11 Mike Harbaugh
 14 Steve Beaumont
 15 Robert Luthi

December Anniversaries



6 Rod & Danae Cory



13 Cory and Molly Sager

16 Alan & Janet Schremmer

17 Randall & Angela Fanshier

29 Roger & Gayle Fanshier

29 Harlen & Linda Jerke

30 Scott & Dawn Sisson

19 Leah Graham

26 EmmaLynn Zecha

20 Diana Webster

27 Brock Bauer

21 Clara Gleason

28 Rick Garrett

25 Kolten Cory

28 Keely Ireland

26 Marilyn Batman

28 Konner Ireland



WE REMEMBER THESE IN OUR PRAYERS:

All Those Who are Involved in Cancer treatment and recovery:

Amnee Brown (April Harbaugh's sister), **Dick Lytle**, **Linda Essmiller**, **Leonard Bunselmeyer**, **Lisa Baum**, **Kathy Rogers**, **Dana Cheney**, **Suzie Evans**, **Carol Bird**, **Roberta Bartlett**, **Bill**

Koelling, Valerie Peak

All Those Who Reside in Nursing Homes/Care Facilities or are home-bound: (*Aster Estates*)

Jackie Curtis, **Claire Stephenson**, and **Ivy Webster**; (*Azria*) **Cindy Phillips**; (*Brookdale*) **Harriet Herzberg**, **Eugene Hoelscher**, and **Eileen Ingersoll**, (*River*

Bend) **Imogene**

Christenson, **Carol Thier**, **Janice Schmidt**; (*other facilities*) **Roberta Bartlett**, **Larned**; **Mary Ann Boyle**, **Ellinwood**; **Barbara Lear**, **Colorado**

All Those Serving Our Country in the Military:

All our men & women in the armed forces including Bryan Farthing.

GROW in Faith

Shoeboxes Blessed, On Their Way

A HUGE THANK YOU to all who participated in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox project! We delivered 129 shoeboxes to the local drop-off site in mid-November. There were also 8 shoeboxes filled online (maybe more of you would like to use that option next year if you do not choose to shop).

We were so thankful to the EYG for filling 30 boxes this year! The MomCo group who meet in our church twice a month filled 18 boxes, and volunteers packed 26 boxes at the church one evening with donated items—Thank You donators and packers! And thank you so much to



those of you who filled your own boxes!

Last but certainly not least, we are so thankful to those of you who helped by contributing to the shipping fund!

We were able to send funds to cover shipping on all of

our boxes.

Regardless of how you helped, we hope you were blessed by participating in this wonderful project and that you can picture the delight on a child's face as they open a box and feel the love of Jesus!

Boxes were blessed by Rev. Richard Fitzgerald, our youth, and the congregation, before they were loaded up for the first leg of the journey to children around the world,

Jann Sherman.
Missions Chair

ENJOY THIS SEASON OF MYSTERY, MAJESTY, MIRACLES



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Christian perspective, emphasizing the themes of humility, hope, and divine love. Bonhoeffer wrote, *“The celebration of Advent [Christmas] is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect.”* Thus, this makes you a perfect candidate to be enriched by what the

Christmas child has to offer you this year.

As we savour the presents of Christmas and begin to make them part of our lives — things to use, to wear, to play with — so may we savour and use the blessings we unwrap in the gift of Jesus, and make his promise real in our lives.

So cheer-up my friends; may this season of mystery,

majesty, and miracles be filled with great excitement, and the warmth of family and friends.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed 2025!

With love and gratitude,
Robert, Elaine,
and Shannon

First United Methodist Church

2123 Forest

Great Bend, KS 67530



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www.GBFUMC.org

[FaceBook.com/GBFirstUMC](https://www.facebook.com/GBFirstUMC)

Contact the office to receive this newsletter by email or find it on the website, www.GBFUMC.org.

WORSHIP @ FUMC!

SUNDAY

- 9:00 a.m. Worship Service
- 10:00 a.m. Discovery Hour
- 11:00 a.m. REVIVE

Virtual Worship Services:

- Both Services on YouTube channel
GBFUMC

SPECIAL SUNDAYS & 5TH SUNDAYS

10:00 a.m. Worship Service (see church calendar)

COMMUNITY GROUPS that meet each week, bi-weekly or monthly at FUMC are CORE Community, Girl Scouts, NA, TOPS, The MomCo (MOPS), Central Kansas Thread Benders Quilt Guild, and Vintage Wheels of Great Bend.

Contact us:

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secretary@gbfumc.org

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kmsband@yahoo.com

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NAPdirector@gbfumc.org

Custodian, Marc Webster

custodian@gbfumc.org