



The Spire  
December 2024  
First United Methodist Church

Dear Friends,

A friend and colleague did a pulpit exchange with a pastor from England. For two months in England, he preached at the church, made hospital calls, visited parishioners, etc. The pastor from England did the same here.

Upon arriving in England, my friend was exhausted. He decided to take a nap. And he overslept. When he awoke, he was remembered that he was to lead a worship service at the church that evening. He frantically grabbed his robe and sermon notes and raced out the door. He sped to the church and arrived only a few minutes late.

Inside, a lay member welcomed him. My friend apologized for his lateness and prepared to enter and begin the service. The wise lay member stopped him. First, take a moment to collect yourself. They went into the study and sat down for a moment. For having raced to the church, it was a good opportunity for my friend prepare himself emotionally, physically, and spiritually for the task at hand. After sitting together and having a gentle conversation, the lay member offered a prayer. Then they went into the sanctuary and began the worship service.

The service was a few minutes late, but people seemed very understanding. My friend benefitted from the chance to collect his thoughts rather than continuing to race into the worship service.

I was remembering that story in light of the preparations for Christmas. In our staff meetings we have already begun preparing and working on the services and events that will make this an inspiring and meaningful season.

Whether we are ready or not, December 25th will be here soon. In the weeks ahead we will likely experience higher stress levels because of all there is to do to get ready. But along the way, I want to offer a small piece of advice. Go slowly. Be patient with yourself. Take a rest when you need.

When the decorations are done, take a moment to be still and admire the beauty. Whether you adorn your house like Chevy Chase in "Christmas Vacation" or you put a few simple decorations around the house. Stop to enjoy the beauty. If a Christmas tune comes on the radio, take a moment to really enjoy it. Sing along if you'd like (even if you're in Target.) If you send Christmas cards, take a moment to give thanks for the friends and loved ones. Throughout this season, find opportunities to slow down, even stop, to appreciate the steps that lead to a holy Christmas.

Pace bene (peace and all good things),

Howard



### Christmas Eve Worship

Christmas Eve will feature three distinct worship opportunities to celebrate the birth of Jesus. The evening begins with the Family service at 6:00 p.m. Come and join us for a family friendly service as our children and youth lead us in the celebration of Jesus birth. At 8:30 p.m. we celebrate Christmas Eve with a bit of swing in the Jazz Service. This service features the hymns and carols of the season,

performed by the same jazz combo who led our service on picnic Sunday. Then at 11:00 p.m. we conclude the evening with the traditional Lessons and Carols. We will hear the familiar readings with hymns and special music by our chancel choir, leading up to the lighting of candles and singing of "Silent Night" at midnight. Be sure to share these service opportunities with your family and friends and invite them to share in these inspiring services.

### Hot Chocolate Holiday Tradition

On Saturday December 7th the Festival of Lights parade will be held at 6:00 p.m. One of the meaningful traditions of our church has been to handout free hot chocolate to those walking by the church. The parade begins at 6:00 p.m. so if you would like to help hand out the hot chocolate, meet us here at the church around 5:00 p.m. A word of thanks to our HOPE Committee that is providing the hot chocolate for the evening!



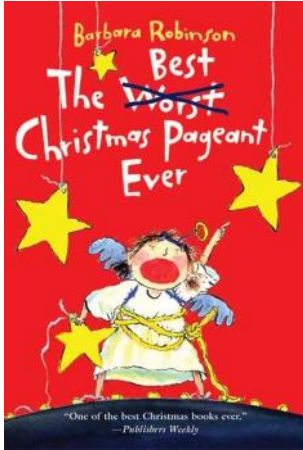
### Longest Night Worship Service

The holiday season can be a difficult one. When everyone is "Decking the Halls" and singing "Joy to the World" for many this is also a season of grief or sorrow. As a recognition of that, First UMC will provide a Longest Night Service on Wednesday December 11th at 7:00 p.m. This is a service of comfort amid the difficulties, a service where we can bring our sadness, a service to meet God in our grief. Share this with your friends and neighbors and join us in the sanctuary for this service of comfort and hope.

### Blood Drive

The American Red Cross will be at the church on December 12th from noon to 5 p.m. for the final blood drive of the year. There is a great need for donations, so if you would like to donate, you can visit the Red Cross website or call 1-800-Red-Cross to sign up.





### Book Club

Keeping with the holiday mood, the selection for the December book club is Barbara Robinson's book, "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever." This lighthearted novel tells of the wild kids who show up to be a part of the annual church Christmas pageant. The result is a pageant filled with surprises, but unexpected goodness. Join us on Sunday December 15th in the church library at 6:00 p.m. as we discuss this novel together.

### Ugly Sweater Sunday

How about a bit of fun and frivolity? On Sunday December 29th, we invite you to attend worship wearing your Ugly Sweater. You have permission to wear the ugliest, goofiest, most unusual sweater as we gather for worship at 10 a.m.



### Advent Devotional

During Advent, we invite you to read the daily devotion "Words for the Beginning." This devotional connects with the Sunday readings and sermons and will be a nice compliment to your Advent journey. Copies are available at the church.

### Brown Bag Luncheon

The Brown Bag Luncheons continue to Wednesday December 18th at noon. This is an informal time to share lunch and meet new people. Along with enjoyable fellowship there will be a time for conversation together. No advance sign up is needed. Just bring a lunch for yourself and meet us in Room 116.





# YOUTH MINISTRY



## Youth Volunteer Opportunities

### Monthly Youth Volunteering Opportunities

Monday, December 2nd is the next Hot Meals opportunity. 6th graders and up are invited to be dropped off from 3:45 – 6:15 to help prepare and serve meals. Younger children can volunteer as well with a chaperone.

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### Youth Group Monthly Meetings

6th graders and up are invited to join us from 11:30 – 1:30 on December 8th for our Christmas party! Please bring 1 gift wrapped with a gift (with a dollar cap of around \$15) per youth attending. Friends are welcome. Plan on have a great afternoon of Christmas games and activities. If you would like to sign up to bring something special for lunch, please follow the link, <https://signup.com/go/USUREQG>

YOUTH  
MINISTRY

# SANTA'S *Workshop*



## **Santa's Workshop**

December 7th from 9- 1 we will host Santa's workshop. From 9- 10 we will have a sensory friendly time and open to everyone from 10:30 – 1. Santa will be here at 10:30 and we will be able to print a keepsake ornament you will be sure to smile at for years to come and many more just as fun. No drop offs please but invite your neighbors. All activities are free but we will collect a love offering to help fund the crafts done today. Still a few spots left to volunteer if you are interested, contact Shana at [sdublan@fumccolumbus.org](mailto:sdublan@fumccolumbus.org).

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## **Parent's Night Out December 13th from 5:30 – 8:30**

We offer a once a month 3-hour parents' night out. During this time your child will be well take care of while they enjoy time in a game room, playroom and movie time. Every event provides dinner and a dessert. This program is offered to children 2 years old to 5th grade. Some exceptions are made for siblings. You don't have to be a member of the church or even attend the preschool. So please invite your friends. The next event will be December 13th from 5:30 – 8:30 pm. Must pre-register so we know how many will be attending. This month our movie will be "Horton Hears A Who" and we will enjoy cheese pizza and chocolate chip cookies.

**Kids Night Out  
Friday  
December 13th 5:30—8:30**



Looking for a little time to yourself, or maybe that long overdue date night?!

We are here to help.

\$20 per child with a family cap \$60; includes 3 hours of fun, games, a movie and food.

Currently we are able to host **2 years old up to and 5th grade.**

**Movie:** Horton Hears A Who

**Dinner includes:** Cheese pizza and chocolate chip cookies

Please fill out the following and bring it back by December 6th

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Current grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Current grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell number: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, contact: 1.) \_\_\_\_\_ phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Special concerns (allergies, medications, medical conditions, etc.)

For additional space to list any and all allergies, medications, and medical conditions, please use the back of this form. Thank you.

I, the undersigned parent, guardian, do hereby grant permission for my child/children, named above to be a part of the Parents Night Out that First United Methodist Church of Columbus is hosting on Friday December 13th from 5:30—8:30. In order that my child may receive the proper medical treatment in the event that he/she may sustain injury or illness during PNO, I hereby authorize staff to obtain or provide medical treatment for my child for such injury or illness during the camp, and I hereby hold the event staff, as well as its representatives, harmless in the exercise of this authority.

I further understand that there is always a possibility that my child may sustain physical illness or injury while attending a church function. If this occurs, I hereby authorize the staff representatives to refer my child to a medical treatment center (hospital, etc.). I further acknowledge and understand that I will be responsible for any medical bills that may be incurred on behalf of my child/children for physical illness or injury that he/she may sustain during event.

Understanding that there is always a possibility that my child may sustain physical illness or injury. I release First United Methodist Church of Columbus, and its representatives from any claims for personal illness or injury that my child may sustain during the event.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission that pictures of my child can be taken for promotional purposes to be used on church website and on social media – like, but not limited to Facebook.

Name of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_



# YOUTH MINISTRY



## Angel Tree Tags

All the tags are in and are decorating the Christmas tree outside the church office. On the tree you pick a tag with the child's age and code on it. Bring that tag to Shana and she will give you the official tag with the child's wish list and sizes on it. She will also be able to answer any questions you might have.

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## Christmas Eve Family Service Practice

We will begin working on our Christmas Eve Family worship service pieces December 1st at 9:30 Sunday mornings until December 22nd with 6th grade and lower. If you know your child will be there on Christmas eve but can't make it to these practices, just email Shana and she will make sure your child/youth has a role in leading service. We will practice on December 15th & 22nd at 5pm to help bring all the pieces together. We have places for everyone and if you know you can be at some of these practices that is OKAY. Shana has the worship outline to send home so you can work on them at your convenience.



## Cookie Walk

The Cookie Walk Team would like to thank everyone for their donations and purchases which helped make our 34th Walk such a success.



## UWF

The Executive Board of United Women in Faith will be hosting a soup and dessert luncheon on Wednesday, December 4, in Fellowship Hall. The luncheon will begin at noon and will feature a program by Pastor Mackenzie Phillips. All women of the church are invited to attend. Executive Board members will serve as hostesses.

The final United Women in Faith meeting for 2024 will be Monday, December 9, at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Jane Lyle will serve as hostess with Jennie Lutes as her assistant. Susan Gobert will present the worship portion of the meeting, while Georgianna Waldrop will present the program. All women of the church are invited to attend.

**SOLD IN THE NARTHEX ON  
NOVEMBER 24TH AND DECEMBER 1ST**

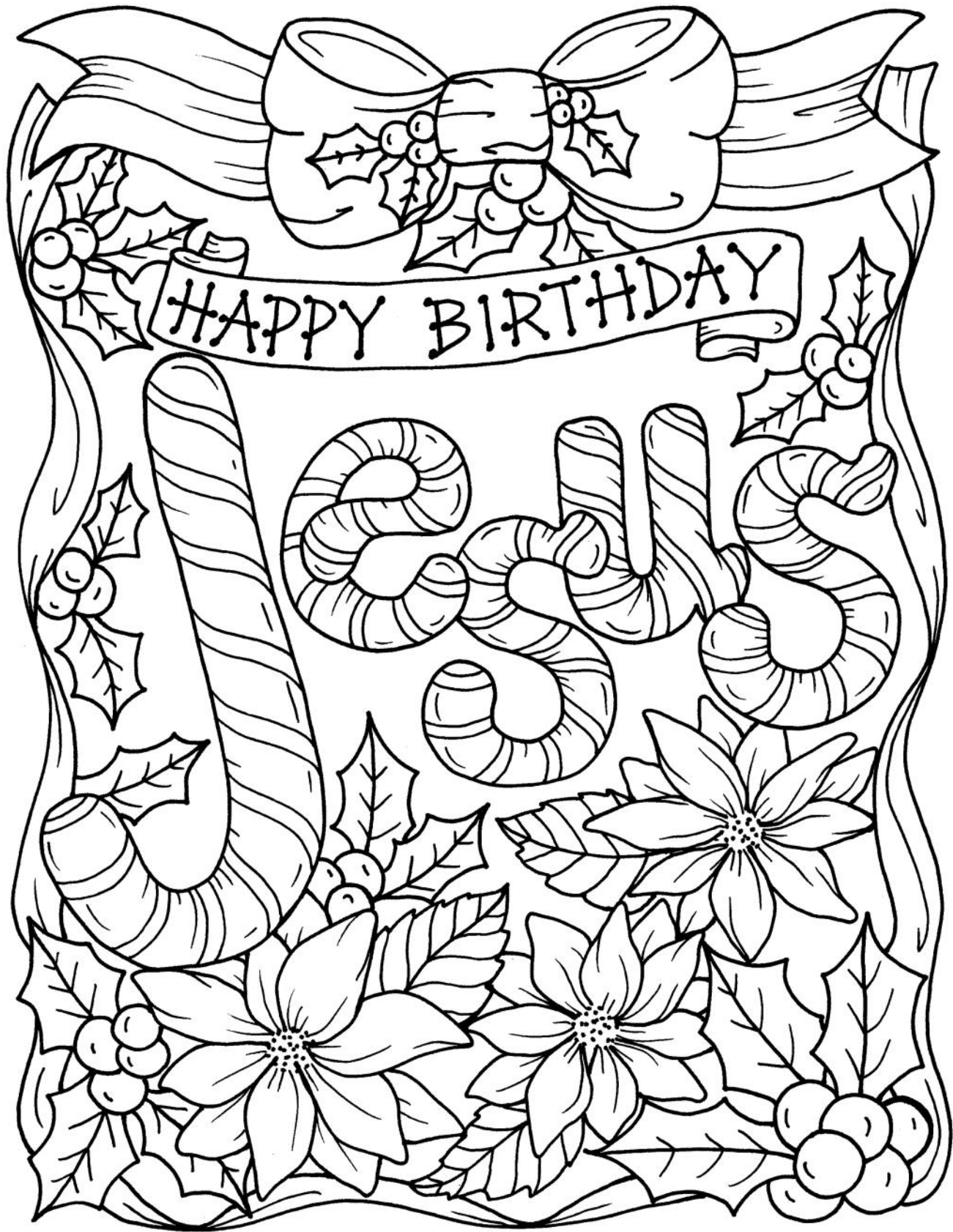
**TEXAS ROADHOUSE** & **WAL-MART**  
**ROLLS AND GIFT CARDS** **OR**  
**AMAZON**

**ORDER FORMS DUE BY  
DECEMBER 6TH**

**\$10 GIFT CARDS**

MERRY  
*Christmas*  
LEARNING TREE PRESCHOOL  
**18 DECEMBER, 2024**  
Join us for our Christmas  
program at 10:00 am in  
the Sanctuary







## First United Methodist Church

618 Eighth Street,  
Columbus, IN 47201  
Phone: 812.372.2851

# The Spire

## Church Staff

Pastor, Howard E. Boles  
Associate Pastor, Mackenzie Phillips  
Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Shana Dublan  
Music Director, Caio Lopes  
Organist, Matthew Williamson  
Handbell Choir Director, Joyce Crowder  
Co-Director of Learning Tree Preschool, Gayle Kelley  
Co-Director of Learning Tree Preschool, Teresa Nickerson  
Business Administrator, Daron Thayer  
Administrative Assistant, Vivien Teo  
Maintenance Supervisor, Steve Heyerdahl  
Custodian, Damaris Muñiz

*Do we have your email address?*

*If not, please send to [fumc@fumccolumbus.org](mailto:fumc@fumccolumbus.org).*

*The Spire* is a monthly publication of  
First United Methodist Church.

[www.fumccolumbus.org](http://www.fumccolumbus.org)

### **Worship Services:**

Sunday Mornings

**9:00 a.m.** Sunday School for kids up to 8th  
grade (multiple classrooms; **won't meet during  
Summer Break**)

**10:00 a.m.** In the Sanctuary

Will also be livestreamed via our Facebook or  
YouTube pages:

[www.facebook.com/columbusfumc](https://www.facebook.com/columbusfumc)

[https://www.youtube.com/@FUMC\\_Columbus](https://www.youtube.com/@FUMC_Columbus)

### **Church Office hours:**

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Articles for *The Spire* should be submitted to  
Vivien Teo at [vteo@fumccolumbus.org](mailto:vteo@fumccolumbus.org) by the  
20th of each month.