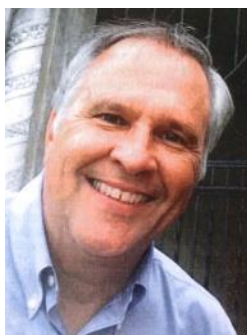


Beacon

... guiding our walk



December 2021



Advent is here! This is my favorite time of the year. I look forward to sharing this season with you. There are a lot of great opportunities for events and ministries this time of year.

Many of you have already participated in the shoebox ministry providing gifts for children. Many of you have also been involved in buying gift cards to be used at the children's home. Some of you have volunteered to ring the bell and collect money for the Salvation Army. At some point there will be an opportunity to go caroling and spread some joy through song. Our regular ministries of Soul Café and the Thrift Store continue to be a blessing for many during this season.

There are also so special events going on. These are great opportunities to invite others to come with you! December 5 we will be celebrating Holy Communion. December 12 we will be receiving new members. At 4pm there will be a Christmas Concert followed by a Potato Bar in the fellowship hall. December 19, in our 10 am worship service the choir will be presenting a Christmas Cantata. December 24 we will celebrate Christmas Eve with candlelight and Holy Communion. The first service will be in the Sanctuary at 4pm. The second service will be out under the oaks at 7 pm. It's BYOC. Bring Your Own Chair! December 26 will be a service of Scripture and Carols.

I hope you will find worship and meaning in all of the special Advent events and ministries. I also hope none of these things or others will distract us from what we are really celebrating; that the God who created us became flesh and blood to show us how much we are loved!

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas!

Don



Just a note
from Megan Mash

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

Charles Wesley is one of the most prolific hymn writers of all time, not only in volume but also in variety and distinct style. Before he began writing hymns, Wesley compiled and published the first hymnal in America. This collection is known as the Charlestown hymnal and was published in 1737. It contains a hymn by his father, his older brother, George Herbert and many hymns by Isaac Watts. Wesley began to write hymns after his conversion on May 24, 1738. He lived for fifty years following this experience. Charles is estimated to have written 8,989 religious poems, most of which qualify as hymns. If he would have written right up to his death, during his career he would have averaged 3.4 poems per week. Wesley's hymns have become an indispensable part of hymnody in all denominations. The English *Methodist Hymn Book*, published in 1904, contains 440 of Charles's hymns out of the 980 total hymns. When the hymnal was redone in 1933 the committee removed almost half leaving him with 243 contributions. Most modern hymnals contain at least twenty of his hymns.

Wesley was very passionate about celebrating the church year. In 1744 he published a collection titled *Hymns for the Nativity of the Lord*. This collection starts with hymns for Advent and then moves to hymns for Christmas. It is very fitting that he would publish a collection under this title early in his writing career since Advent is the beginning of the church year. This collection contains one of Wesley's most well-known hymns, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus." This collection was reprinted twenty times during his life. Interestingly this specific hymn did not appear in British Methodist hymnals until 1876. It found its way into American Methodist hymnals earlier in 1847. Ever since its original inclusion it has always been printed in its original form of two stanzas of eight lines.

Despite the length of this text, Wesley packed it full of images and ideas. The central idea of this text is the Hebraic messianic expectation. The Israelites were waiting for a messiah to set them free. This harkens back to Moses and the Israelites escape from Egypt. The journey was long. It took awhile for them to receive their freedom from Pharaoh and then they wandered in the desert for forty years! They were longing to be set free from the trials they were facing. Following Jesus's resurrection we find the disciples, and ourselves, waiting for Jesus to return. The time of waiting is not over and we are full of expectation. We are also full of hope. The incarnation of Jesus showed us that there is hope for our brokenness. We can be made whole and released from the bondage of sin. Wesley writes of this hope and reminds us God will heal and restore us. May this Advent season be a time that we are hopeful and continue to trust in the child that will be born. This child that will die on a cross for our salvation. This child that will return to take us to our eternal home. "By thine own eternal spirit/ rule in all our hearts alone;/ by thine all sufficient merit,/ raise us to thy glorious throne."





"Sounds of the Season"



Sunday, December 12, 2021

Featuring SUNC Ensembles

Adult Choir

2 Handbell Choirs

Brass Ensemble

Flute Ensemble

Freewill offering to benefit the Ecumenical Food Pantry

Following the concert is our annual

Potato Bar and Chili Supper

Everyone welcome



If you would like to donate cookies or have a favorite chili recipe we welcome your crock-pot of chili for this event

Please call the church office



**Mary's Circle will meet December 10
At CJ Cannon's in Vero Beach
For the annual Christmas Lunch at 11:30 am**

Thank you to everyone that helped with "Christmas Under the Oaks". Although we had to move inside, it was a fun and successful event.

The Bake sale table was the most popular table and the goodies were as good to look as they were to eat.

If you want to join us at the Christmas Luncheon call Mary Schulze to put in your reservation 518-265-2769. You do not have to be a member to join us! WE WOULD LOVE TO VISIT WITH YOU.

Our next regular meeting will be January 21, at 11 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Sharon Johnson & Ann McCullough
Co-Leaders, Mary's Circle



If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, that means we don't have that information in our records. Just call the church office to add yours.

Happy Birthday

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Ed Ortner | December 12 |
| Margit Hollifield | December 17 |
| George Schulze | December 17 |
| Judy Gallagher | December 25 |

Happy Anniversary

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Jack and Tina Schwey | December 1 |
| Don and Lisa Davis | December 9 |
| Bill and Sheri Peterson | December 26 |



December 2021

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | | 1 1 pm Computer Circle CO 3 pm Joyful Ringers 7 pm Handbells | 2 10 am Zoom Adult Bible Study | 3 | 4 |
| 5 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship Café 1 pm Brass 3 pm LOL | 6 12 pm Serving Soul Café FH | 7 10 am Pastor Bible Study FH/Zoom 12 pm UMM Road- side Rest. 12 pm Rug Hookers FH | 8 1 pm Computer Circle CO 3 pm Joyful Ringers 7 pm Handbells | 9 9:30 am Mary Lou Sm. Group SGR 10 am Zoom Ben Adult Bible Study 7 pm Choir | 10 UMW Mary's Circle Christmas Luncheon CJ Cannon's Vero 11:30 am | 11 |
| 12 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship Café 4 pm Christmas Concert and Potato Bar Supper  | 13 12 pm Serving Soul Café FH 2 pm Lois Sm. Group LCR | 14 10 am Pastor Bible Study FH/Zoom 12 pm UMM Road- side Rest. 12 pm Rug Hookers FH | 15 1 pm Computer Circle CO 3 pm Joyful Ringers 7 pm Handbells | 16 9:30 am Mary Lou Sm. Group SGR 10 am Zoom Ben Adult Bi- ble Study 7 pm Choir | 17 | 18 |
| 19 10 am Worship Cantata 11 am Fellowship Café 1 pm Brass 3 pm LOL | 20 12 pm Serving Soul Café FH | 21 10 am Pastor Bible Study FH/Zoom 12 pm UMM Road- side Rest. 12 pm Rug Hookers FH | 22 1 pm Computer Circle CO 3 pm Joyful Ringers | 23 7 pm choir | 24 Christmas Eve 4 pm Sanctuary 7 pm Outside | 25  |
| 26 10 am Worship Lessons and Carols No Fellowship Café 3 pm LOL | 27 12 pm Serving Soul Café FH | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 <i>Happy New Year</i> | |

A Note from Missions,

Greetings, I pray that our church family continues to be well and are feeling the many blessings we receive. How beautiful do our sanctuary windows look, plus all the Christmas decorations. I love the Chrismon tree and the addition of the purple really shows off the white ornaments. Great Job Decorators!!

Often times I find myself feeling overwhelmed with things being just wrong. Our country seems to be in a mess. As we age, I see more people around me getting ill and maybe passing on. The whole covid thing has us living in crazy times. Tragedies happen around the world and in our own country. I could go on but we all get it, I believe. Sometimes it gets in the way of feeling gratitude for all that I have, at times it can blind me even to the point of anger.

Then I do my morning devotion, or go to bible study, or reach out to a prayer buddy. My gratitude returns and I am reminded that I am never separated from our Lord & Savior. With that realization I know in my heart I can endure and be strong. Walking into our Sanctuary on Sunday or the Fellowship Hall on Monday mornings really fills me with the Spirit of God. How blessed are we to be a part of SUMC!

It is like living those biblical times that I have read about. The words of Jesus are being acted out in front of me in this quotes I love.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I, with them.”
“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

I attend Pastor Don’s Tuesday morning bible study, and come away feeling so enlightened and blessed. I encourage others to join us. Even after being a part of this church for about 10 years, I feel such joy to be a part of so many loving, giving, kind people. Most people know when they see me approach the pulpit, I will be asking for something. And time after time after time there is a wonderful response and needs are met.

A year and a half ago the Soul Café was born out of the goodness of the people here in SUMC. A need was presented to us and we all said Yes! Each Monday since March 2, 2020 people have come to our kitchen to cook & clean & deliver food so those less fortunate could eat.

We are people who God uses. It is an incredibly awesome feeling to know that we are able to respond to God’s call. I know the other volunteers feel it as well. They are eager to be able to come back and volunteer again and again. And since its inception, 6266 meals have been prepared, taking about eight different volunteers each week from three different churches totaling 2121 volunteer hours to help our neighbors.

Thank you to so many who cook, clean, bake, deliver, arrange for deliverers, or lead a Monday morning team. You are all being blessed as you bless one another. I know while we are helping others, we too are being fed. The blessings we receive are immense to witness. We come to know caring people who want to help. We work together with people from our church, from other churches and some who have no church at all.

If you are not currently involved with Soul Café, and feel called to be a part of this mission, see me and I will get your name on the email list.

With Blessings & much gratitude
Donna Osborne, Mission Chair



Welcome New Members

Sue and Mark Hulsbeck

Patricia Rogers

Sebastian United Methodist Church will be receiving new members on December 10.

**We would be delighted to welcome you into the Sebastian Methodist community of faith!
We receive members into our congregation in the following ways:**

Profession of Faith – If you are interested in learning more about what it means to become a follower of Jesus Christ we would love to partner with you on that journey. It is our goal as a community of faith to help each other become more like Jesus.

Baptism – Holy Baptism is a Sacrament. We believe no one is too young or too old to receive God's grace. If you or your children have never received the Sacrament of Baptism we would be pleased to talk with you about that important decision.

Transfer of letter from another United Methodist Church - If you are presently a member of another United Methodist Church, you may transfer your membership to Sebastian United Methodist Church.

Affiliate Membership - If you are presently a member of another United Methodist Church and desire to retain membership in that congregation, we invite you to become an affiliate member of our congregation.

Associate Membership - If you are presently a member of another Christian church or denomination and desire to retain that membership, we invite you to become an associate member of our congregation.

Transfer of membership from another Christian church or denomination – We welcome you to our church upon your statement.

For more information on joining our Church,

contact Rev. Dr. Don Pratt at dpratt.sumc@gmail.com or call the Church Office at 772-589-5230 and ask to speak with Pastor Don.



Open

hearts.
minds.
doors.

Sebastian United Methodist Church
1029 Main Street
Sebastian, FL 32958

Rev. Dr. Don Pratt

dpratt.sumc@gmail.com

Church Office: 772-589-5230

sebastianumc@bellsouth.net

www.facebook.com/sebastianumc



CHRISTMAS 2021
SEBASTIAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 12, 4 pm Christmas Concert

Potato Bar Supper after the Christmas Concert in the Fellowship Hall

December 19, 10 am Worship - Christmas Cantata

December 24, Christmas Eve Services

4 pm *Sanctuary*, lighting of the Advent Candle, communion, special music

7 pm *Outside*, Traditional Candle lighting, communion, special music. **Bring your lawn chair.**