

How Shall We Prepare This House For The Coming Of the King?

The response to that question in the traditional liturgy for Hanging Of The Greens is "With branches of cedar, the tree of royalty...with garlands of pine and fir...with light of candles..."

Those traditional adornments were placed with joy, reverence and lots of fun on November 26 in the Sanctuary and in the Fellowship Worship Center by more than 40 volunteers.

Please go to the fumc-odessa facebook to enjoy more photographs showing the labors of love that occurred to prepare our church house for Advent.

Children's Pastor April Cole and Noah Wilson hand a garland to Sylvia Watts, not shown because she's on the ladder.



"As A Result Of Your Ministry, They Will Give Glory To God." 2 Cor. 9:13



It's official! The Bridge-UMC was presented to the New Mexico Conference and named at the November 5, 2017 Consecration Service. Rev. Donnie Williams and his son, Moses, cut the red ribbon held by Odessa Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors. Members of the Nick Williams family were close by as part of the dedication of the Family Life Center named in his honor. The joyous occasion at 3901 E Yukon was attended by 591 people.

Donnie quoted 2 Corinthians 9:13-14 to express heartfelt thanks to everyone who gave of their time, hard work, dedication, and financial resources to make The Bridge a reality.



Four Pastors and 19 Years in the making: Pastors involved in the creation of The Bridge are pictured as they consecrate and bless the long-awaited opening. (L-R) Rev. Todd Salzwedel is current senior pastor of 1st-UMC; Rev. Jim Hawk initiated a vision of a family-life center in north Odessa in 1998; Rev. Terry Tamplen oversaw two capital campaigns to fund construction of The Bridge; Rev. Donnie Williams is the associate pastor assigned to The Bridge.



Todd Salzwedel
Senior Pastor

I love this time of year when you open the newsletter to see all the exciting events going on in our church and community! The celebrations, time spent with family, and our intentional preparation of Emmanuel – God with us – is a glorious reminder of God’s goodness in our lives!

Please take time to look at all the ways in which you can be involved in worship and ministry this month as part of your holiday commitments. There are lots of opportunities to be engaged and invite others to join us here at First UMC.

One of the great traditions of many churches is getting ready for the advent and Christmas season including those who will visit us during that period. We anticipate the special music programs, the invigorating worship, and the treasured time with our loved ones! One of the ways we mark that is through the time and effort we put into decorating our church and home.

As a few of us were conducting an inventory of Christmas decorations and supplies at the church, a thought occurred to us. A very traditional and significant symbol of our faith during this time is a nativity scene. Well, FUMC is planning a trip to the land of Jesus birth, ministry, death and resurrection in October 2018 (you can pick up an informational brochure in Sylvia’s office right now!), and what better place to purchase a special

nativity for our church and community to enjoy for many years to come! The olive wood artisans in Israel create beautiful nativities in a variety of sizes, and I will be inquiring from friends in Israel to get an idea of cost so that we might do a little fundraising and present the church with a special gift from the Holy Land.

As we prepare for Christmas, I also encourage each of us to finish the year strong in our homes and in our church. The end of the year becomes a time when we make plans for the upcoming year, setting goals and making decisions about how our time and resources will be allocated. The church is no different, and we want to finish strong here too! It is our hope and intention always to fully fund the ministries we have committed to here at the church, to pay our shared ministries, and put ourselves in position to make major impact in our community! Please join with me in prayer and action as we get ready for a new year of God’s blessing among and through us. I’d encourage each of us to consider making a special gift to the church and its ministries, as we also share gifts with our family and friends.

I want to wish each and every one of us a Holy and Blessed Christmas season. May the birth of the Christ child warm our hearts anew and may the example of his life inspire each of us to new heights in our walk with Christ. As Charles Wesley’s famous hymn states, “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King!”

God’s grace and peace be with us all!

Pastor Todd

Celebrating 80 Years Of Ministry Mackey Chapel-UMC

Our sanctuary choir was one of the musical presentations honoring the church on Sunday, Nov. 12. Associate Pastor Karin Carlson serves 1st-UMC and Mackey Chapel each Sunday. Mackey kids join in Echo Youth and Foundationkids activities.



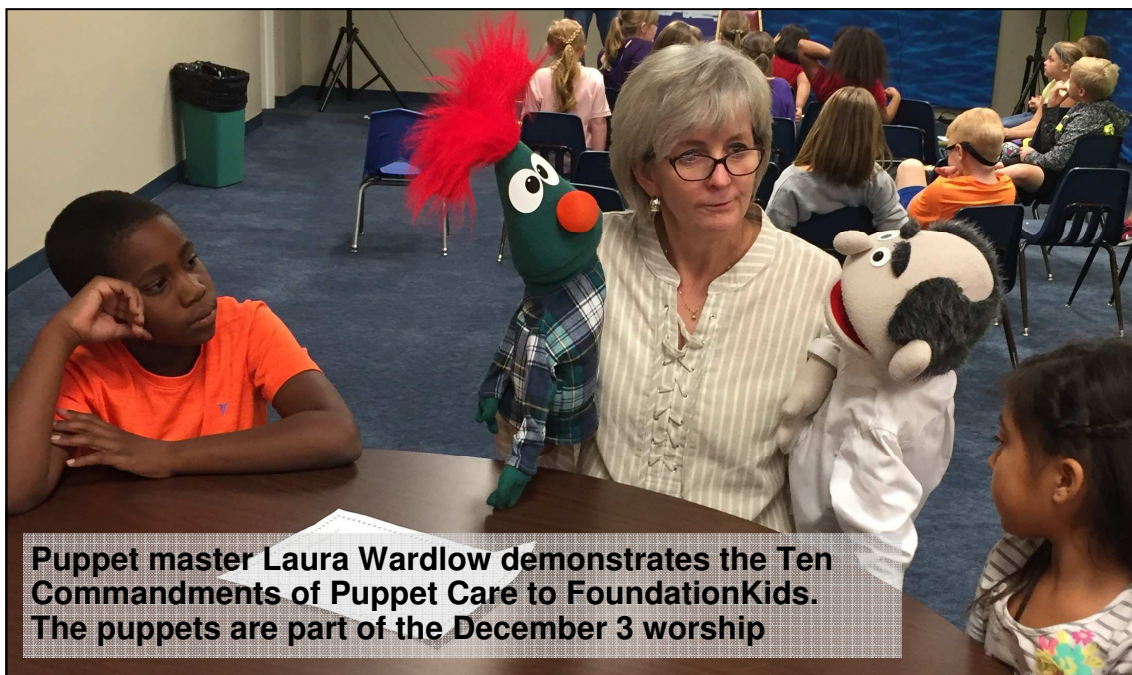
Cavazos Thanksgiving Baskets

At Thanksgiving this year, 1st UMC continued our outreach to Cavazos Elementary School and the Children’s Center by giving out a total of 57 hams and food baskets. **Thank you for your continued support of this vital ministry!**



On Wednesday nights, our children have been learning about puppets: how to care for them, the proper techniques, and practicing different skits. It's been a blessing to see each of the children develop different personalities for their assigned puppet and to watch as even our most shy children suddenly become outgoing as soon as they get behind the stage and have a puppet on their hand.

Ask anyone who is in charge of a specific ministry and they will all tell you that it is the volunteers that make it all possible. This month I want to highlight volunteer, Laura Wardlow. Laura has been a faithful volunteer for several years and watching her interact with the children is so much fun. Just recently we had a group of new students start coming and she sat down with them one night and



Puppet master Laura Wardlow demonstrates the Ten Commandments of Puppet Care to FoundationKids. The puppets are part of the December 3 worship

went over the 10 Commandments of Puppet Care, going as far as to have a puppet on each hand and acting out each commandment for the children. If you want to be involved with our puppet ministry, please call me at 432-337-1527. —April Cole, Children's Pastor
P.S. Be sure to ask Laura about her puppet Homer.



2018 brings exciting changes to our Wednesday evening FoundationKids schedule beginning in January. Every **third Wednesday**, we will have a **Family Game Night**. This is a time for parents to come and spend time with their child(ren) and play board games. There will be light snacks and plenty of games to play. It is vitally important for families to spend time together. As a parent, I know often times it is

difficult because of everything we have going on! Family Ministries want to make this opportunity available. Please make plans to attend this with your child! This is a great time for anyone to invite a friend or even a family with children to come and check out our church. I look forward to 2018 and all the things the Lord is going to do in and through FoundationKids!—April Cole, Children's Pastor


D6: A MOVEMENT, NOT MERELY A CURRICULUM

Has a title or a saying ever jumped out at you? I know when I was a kid I begged my mom for a box of Wheaties. It is the "breakfast of champions!" I look back and it wasn't so much the bowl of Wheaties I ate but it was my mom always talking with me while I ate my "breakfast of champions." Honestly, I was not as good at that with our daughters. They had breakfast but I did not always talk with them. I let them watch cartoons so I could get things ready for the day. Now, they are 21 and 23 and I regret not talking with them at each breakfast. I see clearer now that *time is impact!*

How do we make the time for impact with people in the fast-paced culture of the 21st century? "**1/168 It's Not Enough!**" is a driver of D6 generational discipleship. "**1/168**" is a flawed fraction that represents the 1 hour out of 168 hours in a week spent at church. FUMC is intentionally moving towards a culture where the church partners with homes for a lasting generational change. The goal is to marginally increase the parent's role in reinforcing faith learning and discipleship at home. December can be a hectic month. I challenge each of us to make time (at least 15 minutes) for one person each day. *Time is impact!* Blessings on Your Journey, Pastor Karin

1/168 It's Not Enough!

2017 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
DEC 3	4	5	6	7	8	9
READ: Isaiah 40:3 & Mark 1:3 DO: Advent means "the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event and is the time of the year that Christians prepare to celebrate the arrival of Jesus at Christmas. Is there something new that you could add or take away this year to help you prepare?"	READ: Isaiah 9:6 DO: Give each person a sweet Treat. Tell them to not eat it until each family member shares their 3 favorite things about Christmas. After each person has shared, eat your sweet treats as a family. Was it hard to wait?	READ: John 3:16 DO: Create and decorate a special sign with this verse on it to hang in your home during advent. Memorize the verse as a family. How does knowing this verse help you to prepare for Christmas?	READ: Luke 1:26-27 DO: Create a card for someone who needs a special message or encouragement. Pray over this special message and drop it in the mail!	READ: Luke 1:30 DO: Show unexpected favor to someone.	READ: Luke 1:31 DO: Do some research online to discover what each family member's name means.	READ: Luke 1:32 DO: Brainstorm as a family to develop a top ten list for names of Jesus.
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
READ: Luke 1:38 DO: Think of someone in your neighborhood who you could serve in a simple way.	READ: Luke 1:45 DO: What does it mean to make a promise? In the Bible we learn how God always keeps his promises, and just like Mary, we can trust God, too! Make a list of God's promises to his people.	READ: Luke 2:1 DO: Research online what questions are asked on a census. How would you answer those questions for your family?	READ: Luke 2:3 DO: Do you know where your family is from? Talk with relatives about your family heritage.	READ: Luke 2:4-5 DO: Get out an atlas or a map and plan a pretend trip! Dream big, and enjoy hearing each other's ideas about where to go and what to do.	READ: Luke 2:6-7 DO: Share photos and stories about your child's earliest days and months. Parents, locate a baby picture of yourself to share as well.	READ: Luke 2:7 DO: Make a list of items that a newborn would need. Go shopping as a family to buy some of those items then donate to a local agency
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
READ: Psalm 95:6-7 DO: Attend worship together as a family. Discuss afterwards what elements of the service were most meaningful to each family member.	READ: Matt 2:1 DO: Reading scripture helps us to be wise. Choose family scripture for focus and memory this year.	READ: Matt 2:2 DO: Gather up some blankets and head outside this evening to gaze under the stars. Imagine what it must have been like for the wise men to know in their hearts what the star meant.	READ: Matt 2:11a DO: The wise men came to see the newborn king. Work as a family to create a special crown fit for a king	READ: Matt 2:11b DO: Go on a treasure hunt in your house. Have each family member find one thing that they would offer Jesus.	READ: Luke 2:20 DO: Celebrate the birth of Jesus like the shepherds did by having a birthday party for Jesus!	READ: John 8:12 DO: Turn the lights out and light a candle. Talk about how the candle helps us to see in the darkness. Jesus came into the world as a baby to be our light!
24	25				<b style="text-align: center;">FAMILY CORNER <i>Passing on a spiritual legacy has always been part of God's plan.</i>	
READ: John 8:12 DO: Attend and serve at a Christmas Eve service. 4 – 6 or 11PM	READ: 2 Cor. 9:15 DO: As a family, talk about how Jesus is the BEST gift that we receive at Christmas. Say a prayer together, thanking God for his "indescribable gift."					

Sundays at 1st-UMC December 2017

Celebrating Advent 2017

The season of **Advent**, which comes from the Latin word "adventus" meaning "coming" or "visit," begins four Sundays (December 3) before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. **Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year for Christians.**

Although we are accustomed to celebrating Christmas on a single day, in both Christian tradition and on the Church calendar, the **Christmas season** lasts sundown on December 24 (Christmas Eve) through Epiphany of the Lord (January 6). This is sometimes popularly referred to as "the twelve days of Christmas."

The Advent wreath, four candles on a wreath of evergreen, is shaped in a perfect circle to symbolize the eternity of God. In our worship services, we light three purple, and one candle being rose or pink, to represent joy. The one larger white candle in the middle is the Christ candle.

For each Sunday of Advent, we focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brings us: Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. The white, center candle, the Christ candle, is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to remind Christians that Jesus is the light of the world. The order and exact wording vary among churches, but the wreath continually reminds us of whom we are called to be as followers of Jesus. —
United Methodist Church,
www.umc.org.



ADAM HAMILTON

WILL YOU JOIN US?
EVERY SUNDAY
THROUGH DECEMBER 24

The Journey
 Walking the Road to Bethlehem

FUMCODESSA.ORG

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
 CHURCH - ODESSA

1st Sunday of Advent December 3

"Crazy Dreams!" Joseph of Bethlehem

Matthew 1:18-24

Children's Puppet Ministry will be at both the 9:00 and 11:00 am worship services

2nd Sunday of Advent December 10

"Help along the Way" Mary's Visit to Elizabeth

Luke 1:39-56

3rd Sunday of Advent December 17

9:00 am Sanctuary Choir Musical Presentation,
 with assistance from Children's Center
 and Children's Ministry

11:00 am Advent Concert by Praise Band,
 with assistance from the Youth

4th Sunday of Advent December 24

"Traveling for the Holidays" From Nazareth to Bethlehem Luke 2:1-7

9:00 and 11:00 worship services

December 24 Christmas Eve Worship Services:

"This Holy Moment" The Manger Luke 2:8-20

4:00 Contemporary in Fellowship Hall

6:00 Traditional in Sanctuary

11:00 Watch Night Christmas Eve in Sanctuary;
 singing and scriptures with a modern
 adaptation of a John Wesley Watch Night

We exist for LIFE...To LOVE others, INVITE them to join us as we FOLLOW Christ...



The Spice of Life group last met on Thursday, November 16. Russell

Kimble, and Debra & Steve Meador prepared our wonderful, home-made Thanksgiving feast. We were served roasted turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, sweet potato casserole, green beans, home-made rolls, cranberry pinwheel, and cranberry salad. For desert, we had sugar-free pumpkin cake, pumpkin pie, and coconut cream pie! Wow, what a wonderful menu that was so delicious! Thank you all so very much. We are so very blessed!!!

Marlene Moss made a beautiful Thanksgiving themed centerpiece for the door



prize. Thank you, Marlene, for all the love and work you put into our door prizes.

The program was given by Pastor Todd Salzwedel, and it was about "Giving Thanks." I am especially thankful for Pastor Todd for the leadership, and love he has given to everyone over the past six months since he arrived. Todd certainly has a gift of preaching and a true pastor's heart! Our church is so fortunate

to have such a wonderful new pastor, and his family is equally wonderful!

If you haven't come to *Spice of Life*, we hope you will come join us next month. You will enjoy the food and fellowship, and you will be glad you came. We always meet on the third Thursday of each month from 11:30 – 1:00 in the Fellowship Building's dining room. Blessings to you all,

Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor

FOSTER ANGELS:

Making a difference in the lives of 50 children in foster care. Our FoundationKids 4th and 5th grade students assisted in sorting all of the wrapped packages given by congregations of the traditional and fellowship worship services. Children's Protective Services relies on our church to bring Christmas cheer to Permian Basin kids by fulfilling wishes for new toys and clothing.



Foster Angel volunteer Beth Brinker is assisted by Sloane Henderson, Paige Salzwedel, Jeremiah Estrada and Noah Wilson in getting packages sorted.



Celebrate Recovery is a Christian-based recovery program that is based on the eight Principles of Recovery taken from Jesus's eight Beatitudes and from the 12-Step Program. The program is geared to adults, 18 years old or older, and it is designed to work for any Hurt, Hang-up, or Habit. For more information, please contact Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor, (432) 337-1527.

Every Monday 6:30 p.m.—9:00 p.m. Student Ministry Building

...who Empowers us to make a difference in our church, our community and our world.



Medical Center Hospital honored two 1st-UMC members in November as Volunteers Of The Year Spirit Awards. Congregational Care Pastor Jody Wallin was honored for his pastoral services for patients in the hospital. Registered Therapy Dog, Duke and his owner Cherie Hensley, were honored for their involvement in Caring Paws. On his visits to the hospital, Duke provides comfort and calmness to patients, families, and staff. Ask Cherie about this inspiring and heartwarming personal ministry.



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE Tuesday, December 12

6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

This special worship service is a time to *acknowledge to ourselves and others that at Christmas time there is sadness, sorrow, pain and grief in our lives that needs to be honored.*

The candles of this candle light service serve as petitions to God for loved ones who are not with us this holiday season.

New Baby

Bowen Arthur Garza

November 8, 2017, 7lbs 15oz.

Proud Parents are Erica & Clifton Garza



January 27, 2018

FUMC Fellowship Center
217 W. 5th St.

RSVP (432)337-1527

~Memorials~

In Memory of Katherine Howell

Given by
Betty Dale
Doris Mason

In Memory of Jean Heggemeier

Given by
Virginia & Jackie Cowan
Doris Mason

In Memory of Billie Hill

Given by
Doris Mason

Children's Clothes Closet

In Memory of Jean Heggemeier

Given by
Doris McElmurry
Julie & Jim Brown



www.fumcodessa.org

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Bring A Friend This Sunday

8:00 AM	Adult Bible Class
9:00 AM	Traditional Worship —Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Sunday School, all ages
10:16 AM	The Bridge Worship, —3901 E. Yukon
11:00 AM	Fellowship Worship —Fellowship Center

First United Methodist Church, Odessa, Texas, founded in 1890, is a community of Christians who have pledged to support this church with their presence, their service, their gifts and their prayers. We dedicate ourselves to spreading God's Word throughout our community and to providing meaningful worship experiences, fellowship, and opportunities to fulfill the teachings of Jesus Christ through a variety of ministries. As United Methodists, "our doors, our hearts and our minds are open to all those who seek God's Grace."

The *CULTIVATOR* is a monthly publication whose exclusive purpose is to help FUMC-Odessa accomplish its Mission by communicating and "cultivating" the presence of Christ in the lives of this congregation.

First United Methodist Church-Odessa Mission Statement

*We exist for **LIFE**...*

*To **L**ove others, **I**nvide them to join us as we **F**ollow
Christ, who **E**mpowers us to make a difference.*

Messengers of Hope

Our Christmas Eve offering this year will allow us to *Be Christmas* and give love to people in our community and across the world

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS EVE



Sunday December 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services

- 4:00** **Contemporary in Fellowship Hall,**
with special music by Christian Love & Friends
- 6:00** **Traditional in Sanctuary,** with special music
- 11:00** **Candlelight Christmas Eve** in Sanctuary;
singing and Scriptures with a modern
adaptation of a John Wesley Watch Night