

## Holy Covenant UMC Newsletter

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Issue: #115

December 1, 2014

### Message from Pastor Carol



#### **Advent Theme: *A Different Kind of Christmas* by Mike Slaughter**

As we were cleaning the dishes from our Thanksgiving feast or returning with our bargains from our Black Friday shopping, the season of anticipation began on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. With this season of festivities and lists comes a tendency to mute the quiet voice of the Spirit whispering to us to watch in the stillness of the night for God to come in new and surprising ways.

The Advent/Christmas story is the opening scene of our faith story and it sets the stage for the rest of the Christ narrative to come to its full impact at Easter. We begin by understanding God's intent for taking on humanity. The creator of the universe came into the world through a poor unmarried teen to challenge the political and religious authorities of the day so that everyone could experience fulfilled hope, abiding peace, unconditional love and uncontainable joy. God became a vulnerable, perishable, and suffering servant so that no one had to feel thrown away, forgotten, invaluable or unlovable.

Isn't it amazing how comfortable we are with ignoring the radical and compassionate message coming from the crèche? We spend more time considering what gifts we will buy or events we will plan to try to create the perfect Christmas when the perfect Christmas has already been created. With each year's commemoration of that first nativity, we have an opportunity to approach God with honesty and awe hoping to encounter the holy in order to be forever changed by the magnitude of God's love. God is trying to be born into our hearts and the hearts of all people.

We have a choice. We can go through the next five weeks of red and green decorations, Christmas card lists, decadent foods, and wish lists with our goal to create a party for ourselves and our family, or we can refocus our hearts to the message the child has for us this year to be different as a result of God's spectacular love.

As a church, we are going to work together to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming season. We are offering in five of our seven Sunday School classes to study the book, *Christmas is Not Your*

**Sundays at 9:45 am**

K-2nd is in Room 202  
3rd-5th is in Room 206  
Preschool is in the  
Nursery, Room 101

**Save The Date**  
**Vacation Bible School -**  
**June 15 - 19, 2015**

**Youth Ministry**

**7th- 12th Grade**

**Sunday Nights -**  
**UMYF (United**  
**Methodist Youth**  
**Fellowship)**  
**from 6-8 pm**  
**in the Youth Room**



**Harvey's Kids**  
**December 13th**  
**3-8 pm**

Families with special  
needs children are invited

*Birthday*, by Mike Slaughter. We will also have an opportunity for you on Wednesday nights at 6 pm in Room 113. We will have weekly theme reflections with daily meditations provided by Jason Redick, Rev. Susan Bryan, Rev. Debbie Chapman and myself. We will place them on the Pastor's Blog on the website and send a weekly email.

Through our thematic approach to study and worship, our church will be able to pay attention to how God wants to create hope, peace, love and joy in our spirits and in the world. As a part of this work, we will learn more about the very people to whom we are to be the good news. God wants this community to know that Jesus was born on the corner of Peters Colony and Josey Lane through the people we call Holy Covenant United Methodist Church. Let's bring a gift to God this year that honors the child laying in a manger and does not trivialize the gift of love to bring joy to the world!

Blessings,  
Pastor Carol

**New Members**

**Alyssia, Stacy, Elliot and Tremayne Phillips**  
**joined November 9, 2014**

for Christmas snacks and activities while parents have time away to shop, wrap, etc. *Extra volunteers are needed!*



**Caroling & Christmas Party**  
**Sunday, December 14**  
**6 pm**

Bring your favorite holiday dish and a gift to become someone else's favorite!

**Music Ministry**



**Community Nativity**

The Wesleyan Choir will sing at the Community Nativity Celebration at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at 4000 Nazarene Dr. in Carrollton on **Thursday, Dec. 4 at 7:00 pm**. They have hundreds of nativity sets to see while listening to sacred Christmas music. Come support our choir and get into the spirit of Christmas!

Our own Gary Feltner will also be playing and



Felicity Grace Hinton became the newest member of the Holy Covenant family on November 25, 2014.  
 Congratulations Heather, Jon and big brother Preston!

**Decorating the Church**

**Saturday, December 6**  
**1 to 4 pm**

Everyone is invited to join us as we decorate the church for Advent. We will meet in the sanctuary to put up the Christmas tree and hang wreaths and banners.



**Heifer International**



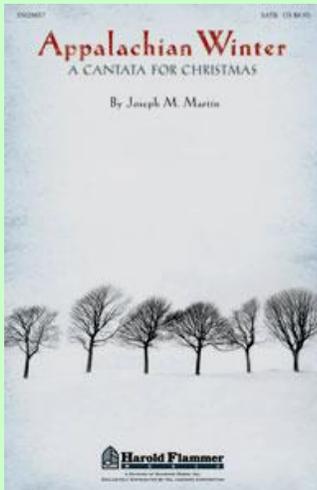
**Cards available each Sunday in Advent**

We invite you to celebrate Jesus' birth by spending less and giving more this Advent Season. Each Sunday morning, the Missions Committee is offering gift cards indicating a gift has been given to support Heifer International. Heifer links communities and

helps bring sustainable agriculture and commerce to areas with a long history of poverty. Heifer's animals provide partners with both food and reliable income, as agricultural products such as milk, eggs and honey can be traded or sold at market.

Together, we can change the world, one family, one community, at a time. And it all starts with a gift.

singing **Friday, December 5 from 3:30 to 4:30 pm** and always appreciates seeing friendly HCUMC faces.



**Appalachian Winter**  
Wesleyan Choir and Instruments on Dec. 14 at 8:30 and 11:00 am. The music is from early American carols and hymnody. Instruments will include guitar, mandolin, flute, violin, cello, piano and drums. Children and Youth will join in singing the final song of this Cantata.

### Missions

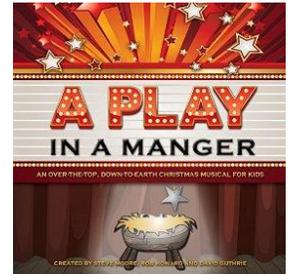


**Angel Tree**  
**Only 9 Angels Left!**  
This year we have partnered with the Peters Colony Learning Center to provide Christmas gifts

### Family Feast and *A Play in a Manger*

**Sunday, December 7**  
**5:30 pm**

Join us for this family friendly evening! We will enjoy a covered dish dinner and birthday day cake for Jesus in the Covenant Center. Please bring a dish to share. Dinner will be followed at 6:30 by the play presented by our Children's Choir and selected youth in the Sanctuary.



### Poinsettias



**\$12 Each**

Help beautify our sanctuary for Advent and order a poinsettia in the narthex in honor of memory of a loved one. Deadline for orders is **Sunday, December 14.**

### Parsonage Open House

**Wednesday, December 17**

**7 to 10 pm**  
**1021 E. Seminole Trail**  
**Carrollton, TX 75007**

**Hosted by Pastor Carol**



### Life Line Health Screening



**Friday, December 19**  
**Covenant Center**

Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, will host their affordable, non-invasive, painless health screenings on Friday, December 19. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries, which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms, which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs, which is a strong predictor of heart disease; Atrial fibrillation or irregular heartbeat, which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for the Stroke, Vascular Disease and Heart Rhythm Package for \$139 or register for all 5 screenings for \$149.

**Pre-registration is required.** Call 1-888-653-6450 or visit [www.lifelinescreening.com/community-partners](http://www.lifelinescreening.com/community-partners).

for several families. Each angel lists family sizes and ages as well as a *need* and a *want*. **Choose an angel ASAP or contact Jason Redick** [jredick@hcumc.org](mailto:jredick@hcumc.org) to claim one of the remaining angels. Please return your new, unwrapped gifts by Sunday, December 14.

### Holy Covenant Anniversary Ornaments



#### Only 6 left!

We commissioned a woodworker in Gatlinburg, TN to make a Flame & Cross ornament to celebrate our 40th anniversary. These special ornaments are on sale for the low price of \$10. You will surely want one to commemorate our 40th year! To purchase, contact Julie Fuller [juliepfuller@aol.com](mailto:juliepfuller@aol.com)

### Parents' Night Out

#### December 20 from 4 to 9 pm Covenant Center

Additional time for Christmas shopping! Ages Infant - 5th Grade. Reservations are required by noon on Wednesday, December 17th! RSVP to [sbryan@hcucm.org](mailto:sbryan@hcucm.org). You may drop off and pick up children anytime during the designated hours. Pizza dinner or you may bring your child's dinner.

**4 - 9 pm - \$10 per child; \$25 max per same family**  
**6 - 9 pm only - \$5 per child; \$10 max per same family**



### Santa's Helpers Needed



#### Sunday, December 21

3:00 to 5:15 pm

2661 Midway Rd. Suite 216

We will assist clients of Metrocrest Social Services with Christmas gift shopping for their families, and help load gifts into vehicles. Sign-up sheets are at the entry to the Education Bldg. Contact Lori Snyder (469-222-6415) or Rick Davis (972-814-5325) if you have questions.

### Christmas Eve Family Nativity Service

#### 6:00 pm

Begin gathering at 5:45 for children to select simple nativity costumes!

A brief 30 minute family friendly worship service with children gathering around the holy family - Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus, as we hear the Christmas story and sing favorite Christmas hymns. The service will end with candle and glow stick light as we sing "Silent Night".



**Food Pantry Need**



**Macaroni & Cheese**  
Please drop off in the church office.

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

**8:30 and 11:00 am  
Worship Services**

**9:45 am  
Sunday School for all ages**

**Staff**

**Rev. Carol Sparks**  
Senior Pastor

**Rev. Debbie Chapman**  
Associate Pastor of Music and Worship

**Rev. Susan Bryan**  
Associate Pastor of Discipleship

**Jason Redick**  
Youth & Young Adult Minister

**Beth McClure**  
ECDP Director

**Elise Webb Odell**  
Administrative Assistant

***In Our Thoughts and Prayers***

The Murphy family; the Gunn family; Byrne Underhill; Joni Taylor; Nikki Holmes and Michele Carter; Elaine Edgington;

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**



**7:00 pm**  
**Childcare Provided**

**Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Service**



**11:00 pm**

Eileen Ritter; Valerie Roberts; Bill Henly; Rachel Millaway; Robert Sheets; Katie Evans; Mark Tacy; the Pearce family; Dena Kimbrel; Larry Bond; Dorlis Glass; Joan Richards; Emily Ferrario; Delia Rivera; Betty Chapman; Susan Kiker; Michael Prees; John Bator; Carl Robertson; Pam Krause; Norma McCormack; Elizabeth Rudolf; Jeff McCreight; JoAnn Wiggins; Kristin Nelson; Joey Crumpley; Jessica and Philip Stallings; Geraine Allen; Nita Sharp; Virgil Ronning; John Michael; Sheila Anderson; Stephanie Flangin; the Walters family; Joseph Millioto; Donna Crawford; Leta Mae Parrish; Landy Clifton and family; Tamara Carsin; Dorinda Hendricks; Sherri Livingston; Karen Bennett Lawler; Gusty Pritchard; Eddie Mae Washington; and the Foster family.

### Our loved ones in the military

Hunter Blue, Max Blue, Chad Davidson, C.J. Davidson, Zach Glass, David Hunt, Jake Oliver, Ashton Rudolf, and Ashley Wert.

## A Message from the Ad Council

The Ad Council is aware that many of the church are asking for more information about the status of the church's exploration of our joining the Reconciling Movement Network within the UMC. We will start with a summary with a fuller explanation following:

1. Some lay people of the church are exploring the possibility and have not yet reached a conclusion. All they can do is ask the Ad Council to consider the proposal. They have no power to take any action on behalf of the church.
2. The Ad Council can vote to, or vote not to, bring the issue to a church vote. The Ad council is not empowered to make the decision for the church.
3. The Church can join the RMN when, and only when, the church decides to do so by a vote of the members

Let me emphasize that some lay people are looking at it. No decision has been made or will be made without a vote of the church. It is not a done deal. In fact, it isn't even a proposal yet.

Now for more complete explanation: The Reconciling Committee is a group created by a request from Advocates for Peace and Justice to explore the pros and cons of HCUMC becoming a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network.

["Reconciling Ministries Network is committed to policy change and the creation of long-term solutions and practices that create full inclusion in The United Methodist Church and our broader society. RMN works for full equality in membership, ordination, and marriage for God's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children." For more info see their website [www.rmnetwork.org/about](http://www.rmnetwork.org/about)]

That committee is currently exploring those pros and cons and, when they feel they have explored them fully, they will recommend to the Advocates whether or not they believe that HCUMC should consider joining RMN. If the decision is for the church to consider joining the network, they will make that recommendation to the Ad Council who will then vote on whether or not to bring it to a church vote. That vote would be taken at a called church conference wherein all members have a vote.



## Carrollton West Pet Hospital

[www.CarrolltonWestPet.com](http://www.CarrolltonWestPet.com)

3729 Old Denton Rd.  
Carrollton, TX 75007  
972-492-1828

Lynda VanAntwerp, DVM  
Leigh-Anne Morris, DVM  
Anna Osofsky, DVM  
*Diplomate, ABVP, certified in Avian Practice*  
Ashley Braniff Champagne, DVM  
Jon Paa, DVM

### Piano Lessons at Holy Covenant!



Jonathan Kaan is teaching piano lessons at Holy Covenant. You can contact Jonathan at [jkaan@dccd.edu](mailto:jkaan@dccd.edu) or at 972-505-1833 for more information.

Jonathan graduated with honors from Baylor University with a Masters Degree in Piano Pedagogy and Performance.



We are welcoming and open to all people;  
black or white, yellow or brown, you are welcome here;  
rich or poor, young or old, you are welcome here,  
gay or straight, citizen or sojourner, you are welcome here.