December 4th 2021 – Volume 1, Number 32

# The Martin & Shelbyville CONNECTION

# Newsletter for Martin & Shelbyville UMC

***Here Comes Baby Jesus! Here Comes Baby Jesus!***

*Here we are….December, 2021….Christmas is coming. Do you remember how you anticipated Christmas when you were a child….you were busting! You just couldn’t wait….it could not come soon enough!*

*Now that your grown you may not feel that same kind of. Here’s what I want you to do….I want you to imagine or remember Carly Simon singing the ketchup commercial. “Anticipation, Anticipaaaaation is making me late….” In the commercial the ketchup is just hanging in midair, slowly getting to the burger or hot dog. We should be filled with Anticipaaaaation. Not the bad kind. Not the kind that is making you late. Not the kind that is full of dread. The kind that is joyful. The kind that makes you smile as you do things for others. The kind that fills you up…not the kind that empty’s you out.*

*Sometimes Christmas can be a chore, it can be overwhelming. Gifts to wrap, parties to go to, shopping to do….it can be a lot. Wouldn’t it be nice if we could bring back that anticipation from when we were kids? We saw many of the gifts wrapped under the tree sometimes they were there for weeks, we couldn’t wait to open them!!*

*Anticipation usually ends with a surprise. Could be a good surprise or a bad surprise. But usually a surprise.*

Let’s move toward Christmas with wide eyes and an open heart, not dread. Don’t let Christmas become a chore—like the woman who had waited until the last minute to send Christmas cards. She rushed into a store and hurriedly bought a package of fifty Christmas cards without giving them a second look. In a panic to beat the post office closing, she addressed forty-nine of the fifty and signed them, never stopping to actually read the preprinted message inside. On Christmas Day, when things had quieted down, she chanced upon the leftover card and finally read the message that she had sent to forty-nine of her friends. Much to her dismay, it read: “This card is just to say, a big gift is on the way!” Suddenly she realized that forty-nine of her friends were anticipating a big gift from her–a gift that would never come!

Let’s not fill our Christmas season with stress. Let’s not make it feel like a chore. Let’s remember that a big gift is indeed on its way to us–the biggest and best in all human history. The gift of Christ at Christmas. Anticipate that gift. Prepare for it. Don’t let it get buried underneath the packages and tree trimmings. Don’t walk past the eternal, oblivious in your worries of the commercial holiday that the world sells to us.

Open your eyes. Watch for the signs. Prepare your heart. The miracle is coming!

Blessings, Pastor Maggie

Office Hours:

Closed Monday, Tuesday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Help Wanted:**

**Shelbyville UMC – Children’s Church Leaders and Nursery Worker’s – Please see Deb Boniface if you are interested in working in this important ministry. Sign-up sheet hanging in sanctuary.**

**Shelbyville UMC – Would you like to be a member of the trustees committee? Please see Dan Boniface if you would like to serve!**

**Martin UMC – FACEBOOK LIVE TECH! - Setting up the Live and making sure that it runs properly during the service – Can train!**

Did you know you can give thru our website? Go to martinumc.org or shelbyvilleumc.org for more information or you are welcome to give in person in our sanctuaries or drop your gift in the mail!

In Case You are Wondering:

November 28th, 2021

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: $1,148.17

Property: $65

Martin UMC:

General Collection: $581

Food Pantry: 200

Attendance:

Shelbyville UMC: 27

Martin UMC: 31

In Case You are Wondering:

November 21st, 2021

Offering:

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: $600.17

Special: $690.17

Martin UMC:

General Collection: $1,009

Attendance:

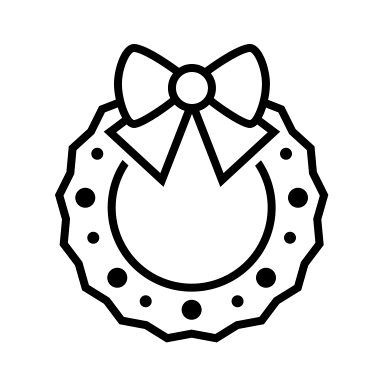
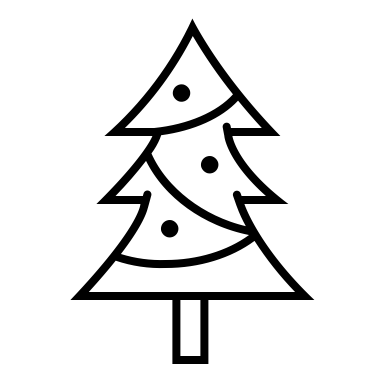
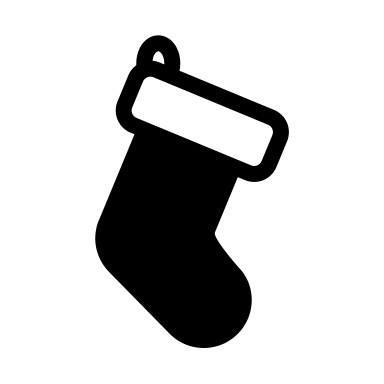
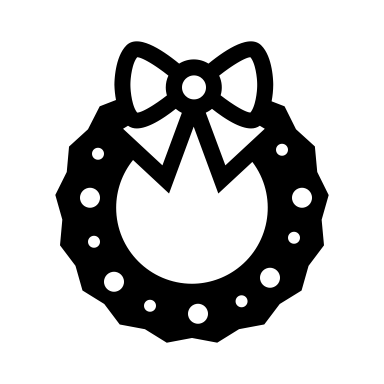
Shelbyville UMC: 29

Martin UMC: 38

**“Open Hearts,**

**Open Minds,**

**Open Doors.”**



Pastor Maggie’s Message

Sunday, December 19th, 2021

“The Blessing of Home”

﻿﻿**﻿** **Waiting for a Different Kind of King**

**DECEMBER 20–26, 2021**

**D. L. MAYFIELD**

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

**Psalm 96**

**Titus 2:11-14**

**Luke 2:1-20**

SCRIPTURE OVERVIEW: The boy Samuel worshiped and served God from a young age. He grows in stature and favor, the same description that will later be applied to the young Jesus in this week’s reading from Luke. The psalmist praises God for raising up a “horn” for the people. This “horn” is referred to elsewhere in the Psalms as being the True King from the line of David, identified later by Luke (1:69) as Jesus. Paul encourages the Colossians to let love rule in their community and to praise God with songs and hymns (such as the Psalms). The additional readings for this special week focus our minds on the Advent of the Lord, the amazing truth that “the Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14), as the prophets had prophesied long ago.

﻿﻿**﻿** **God with a Body**

**DECEMBER 13–19, 2021**

**HANNAH E. SHANKS**

**Isaiah 12:2-6**

**Zephaniah 3:14-20**

**Philippians 4:4-7**

**Luke 3:7-18**

SCRIPTURE OVERVIEW: As Christians we understand that our faith is rooted in the ongoing story of God’s faithfulness to God’s people. Micah celebrates this story, prophesying that the true king of Israel will one day come from the small village of Bethlehem, Jesus’ birthplace. Luke features women prominently throughout his Gospel. The two readings from Luke this week highlight the prophetic insights of Elizabeth and Mary. Mary visits Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John, God’s messenger. After Elizabeth identifies Mary as the mother of the Lord, Mary breaks into song, understanding that her story is tied to the fulfillment of God’s promises going back to Abraham. Little does she know that her son will one day offer his body as a sacrifice for all, as Hebrews tells us.

(From The Upper Room Disciplines – 2021)

**﻿** **Rejoice in the Lord Always**

**DECEMBER 6–12, 2021**

**JEAN CLAUDE MASUKA MALEKA**

**Malachi 3:1-4**

**Luke 3:1-6**

SCRIPTURE OVERVIEW: Reviewing the scripture passages for this week, the hymn title “Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing” might come to mind. The writers of this week’s texts advise us to do all these things. At this time of year, these responses often seem to come naturally for many of us. The prophet Zephaniah exhorts his audience to sing aloud and rejoice. The prophet Isaiah calls on the people of Judah to “give thanks to the LORD.” In the letter to the Philippians, Paul advises his audience to “rejoice in the Lord always.” The tone of the Luke passage for this week is more somber; through the words of John the Baptist, Luke challenges his audience to maintain right relationships with God and humanity. ﻿Taken together, these passages provide a number of life lessons.

(From The Upper Room Disciplines – 2021)

Pastor Maggie’s Message

Sunday, December 5th, 2021

“Afraid to Go Home?”

Pastor Maggie’s Message

Sunday, December 12th, 2021

“Home…Where the Joy Is!”

Pastor Maggie’s Message

Sunday, December 24th, 2021

“Welcome Home!”

Pastor Maggie’s Message

Sunday, December 26th, 2021

“What Now?

**Martin Missions Update December 2021**

22 blankets were delivered to “*Samuels Blankets*” thanks to all who brought and or prayed for the project. *Samuels Blankets* is a nonprofit created by a young man who is very dedicated to delivering blankets to the homeless as well as to rescue missions who are always in need. You may look him up on his Facebook page. Just search Samuels Blankets.

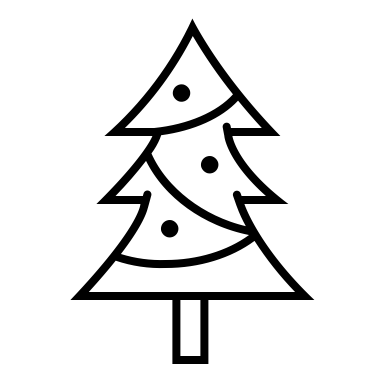
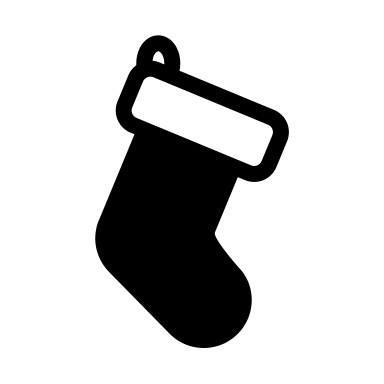
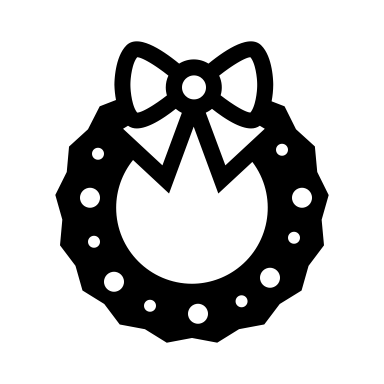
Other projects we are working on is the Christmas Baskets for local families in need. We have started to receive request calls. There is still time to donate gift cards for this project in the amount of $25.00 from Meijer or Walmart.

There are boxes left for the collection of your change. Your change will distribute audio Bibles called Treasures through *World Mission*. These Bibles come in up to 7000 dialects and are solar powered. They impact 144 people per year through listening groups. The money collected also goes for medical aid, disaster assistance, and clean water solutions. Their ultimate goal is to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20).

Thank you for your support in our efforts.

***Shout Out!***

***Thank you to all that participated in decorating both churches! Our churches look beautiful for this wonderful season of Advent!!***



﻿﻿**﻿** A person wearing glasses

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Please join us at 11:00 a.m. at Shelbyville UMC as we celebrate the birth and the life of our beloved Nancy!

Our Sunday service will be dedicated to remembering Nancy and celebrating her birthday!

Nancy Jensen, age 86, went to be with her heavenly Father on Thursday, November 12, 2020.

Confidential Pastor Email

umcpastormaggs@gmail.com

Bulletin announcements are due each week on Tuesday! Email to: martinshelbyvilleumcs@gmail.com

​ Updated: December 3, 2021

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* Families of those affected by COVID
* Tracy Buskirk – Cancer and COVID
* Blaine Anderson - Cancer
* Raina Oldebeken - Cancer
* Jeff Oldebeken - Health
* Marcia Marques - Cancer
* Molly Mentzer - Cancer Treatment
* Aerial Fox - Young woman diagnosed with lymphoma - Heart Surgery
* Orie Perry - Cancer
* Linda Kay Perry - Loss of vision
* Rose Oglesbee – Vision
* Deb Hilsbos & family - caring for mother
* Worship musicians for Martin UMC
* Jessie Rasnake - Cancer
* Vonda Christman - Under Hospice care
* Mark Ondersma - knee surgery
* Helene Genther-Todd - Health
* Danny Genther - health
* Shirley Vanderploeg - Cancer
* Patti Jarvis - Knee
* Dody Watkins - Stomach cancer
* Joyce McAllister – Health
* The Family of Grace Herbert – Grace passed away November 12, 2021
* Candy Fox – Covid
* Stacy Knorr – Cancer
* The Family of Jason Newman – Jason passed away on October 30, 2021
* Christopher and Jason – travel mercies
* Linda Kay Perry – Vision loss
* Chris Slouder – Heart Surgery
* The Family of Mike Gates – Mike passed away November 11, 2021
* Jerry Clemens – West Nile Virus
* Letty Sherry – Health
* Don Cleveland – Blood clots
* Daryl Slawson - Health
* The family of Edie Kilmer - Edie passed away on November 26, 2021
* ​The family of Grace Herbert - Grace passed away on November 12, 2021
* Matt Jager - Covid
* Priest Family - lost father Ron and daughter Shelly
* Rick Richmond - Kidney removed
* Chriss Orr - Covid
* David Smith – Recovering from COVID – Upcoming surgery
* Colleen - Friend of Helene - Cancer
* The family of Jason Moore
* Daryl Slawson - continued healing
* Mike Steward - Continued Healing

​​​*If there is anyone you would like to see added to our prayer list, please send an email to umcpastormaggs@gmail.com*

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The Treasure

*MUMC & SUMC Advent Project*

*Please considering participating in this important program!!*

*Boxes to collect change will be available on November 28, 2021.*

World Mission delivers the Word of God in audio format to oral learners living in unreached people groups. We believe that it is our responsibility as Christians to follow the Great Commission, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19-20). While it is always our desire to reach everyone, anywhere, we specifically focus our efforts on reaching the Unreached; those throughout the world who have never had the opportunity to hear the gospel and accept Jesus Christ.

Prayer Concerns:

Email [martinshelbyvilleumcs@gmail.com](mailto:martinshelbyvilleumcs@gmail.com) to update or to add!

﻿﻿**Important Dates**

**-December 6 - 6:00 p.m. Charge Conference (Zoom)**

**-December 8 – UMW Meeting – 10:00 a.m. – sack lunch – Shelbyville**

**-December 12 – Celebrating the birth and life of Nancy Jensen**

**-December 19 – 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Community Breakfast – Martin**

**-December 24 – Christmas Eve Service – 7:00 p.m. – Martin**

**-January 2, 2022 – New members - Shelbyville**

**Do you have a meeting or an event you would like to see here? Email: martinandshelbyvilleumcs@gmail.com with the details.**

*Message from Bishop Bard*

*Dear Friends in Christ in The United Methodist Churches of Michigan,*

As we begin this Holy Season of Advent, I greet you in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the peace and power of the Holy Spirit.  
  
The Gospels share the story of shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night, protecting them from unseen danger. During Advent, we are also called to watch over each other. And so, I continue to urge you to promote public health, further the common good, care for the well-being of others, do no harm, do good, and love your neighbor, all in the name and spirit of Jesus.  
  
On Monday, the number of hospitalized adults in Michigan with confirmed COVID-19 cases reached a new record high, near 4,200. This exceeds Michigan's previous record set seven months ago.  The federal government has deployed military medical staffers to help Michigan hospitals overrun by this fourth surge. With the emergence of new variants, we need to do all possible to protect those around us.

**if you are eligible to receive a vaccine or booster, please do so.**It is the single most important thing you can do to care for yourself and others. Those not vaccinated remain the most likely to be hospitalized and suffer severe illness or death because of COVID. They are also capable of spreading the disease for longer periods of time. Get vaccinated. Encourage your fellow church members to get vaccinated.  
  
**To our pastors, I particularly encourage you in the strongest possible terms to get vaccinated.** Even if you have had COVID, health officials still encourage vaccinations to maximize your immune response and prevent a new infection. The very word "pastor" means shepherd. As pastor, you lead your people in the love of our neighbors. As a pastor, you are vulnerable as you stay connected with the people with whom you are in ministry. As a pastor, you have the unique risk of being able to spread the disease widely if you are sick.  
  
**Given record numbers of COVID cases across the state, it still makes sense that our churches strongly encourage masking by everyone when meeting in person and indoors.**Vaccinations, when combined with indoor masking, are proven to slow the spread of the coronavirus and keep the virus from developing into new variants. Together, masking and vaccinations will help us stem the rising tide of the coronavirus.   
  
Some of you have asked if gathering in person is still advised. **Each congregation should assess their local COVID infection and hospitalization numbers, vaccine rates, adhering to mask wearing indoors, and other risk factors to determine if holding in-person worship is still advisable.**  Certainly, there are those who will be at greater risk for infection that will appreciate being able to safely attend Advent and Christmas services online.   
  
Finally, let me also say a word about The United Methodist tradition and religious exemptions for vaccinations.**The United Methodist tradition of the Christian faith does not provide much support for a religious exemption for vaccinations.** John Wesley promoted the best cures and preventative measures of his day in his work “Primitive Physick.” Founding hospitals was a significant part of our history as Methodists. Our Social Principles assert that “health care is a basic human right.” I have consistently encouraged Michigan United Methodists to get vaccinated. It would be extraordinarily difficult to use our United Methodist tradition to substantiate a religious exemption claim for a COVID vaccination.  
  
Friends, I continue to believe that by God’s grace, we can muster the resilience, the kindness, and the determination to do what needs to be done to get past this pandemic. **As followers of Jesus, we can lead in promoting public health, furthering the common good, and caring for the well-being of others.**  When we act out of love for neighbor and care for our community, we offer a powerful witness to the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

*Blessed Advent,*  
A picture containing text

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David Alan Bard  
Michigan Area Bishop

Martin UMC Food Pantry Collection

December – Personal hygiene products – deodorant, shampoo, soap, etc.

Please place items in the grocery cart outside of fellowship hall.

The Connection - next issue announcements/articles/ testimonies are due December 16th, 2021. Email to:

martinshelbyvilleumcs@gmail.com

Shelbyville UMC Food Pantry Collection

December – Personal hygiene products – deodorant, shampoo, soap, etc.

Please place items in the container and they will be transported to the pantry.

Martin UMC Missions

Christmas Project

Gift cards are needed for our Christmas families – We are asking that you donate $25 gift cards from either Meijer or Walmart for Christmas family gifts.

We are hoping to help many families, so if you can grab a card while you are out shopping, you can drop it off in the church office or you can give to Sharon Buys, Patsy Hoekstra, or Kristen Ash (missions team members) when you see one of them.

We are also planning to help families with a holiday meal, any help you can give is appreciated!

The last day to turn in gift cards for families is December 13th, 2021.

Thank you, in advance, for your support!