

# CHAPEL CHATTER

Open Hearts | Open Minds | Wide Open Doors!

## Hope, Love, Joy, Peace

There is a paradox in this season. The church calls it Advent and the world calls it Christmas. December 25th is the day Christmas ends in the secular world and is the day Christmastide begins in the church. The weeks before are considered the Advent season where we are waiting in expectation for the coming of Christ. This waiting begins with hope. Our hope is for the promised Kingdom of God. The scriptures point us to the second coming of Christ, the one for which we wait. Hope is a big word. It holds the faith we have in God's faithfulness to us. Hope reminds us that in the bleak midwinter of our lives there is the promise of spring.

Our second week of Advent is the week of love. God has sent messengers to remind us of his love for us. Prophets preparing the way for the coming of Christ. Christ commands us to love one another. Our waiting for the second coming is a waiting in love. When I think about God's love for us and a fallen world, I am filled with gratitude as there is nothing that will separate me from that love. The hard part is learning to live a life of love as my offering back to God for his love for me. We are the messengers to remind the world or maybe just our neighbor or friend or family member that they are loved.

Week three is the week of joy. Some advent wreaths have pink candles for week three. The world has been three weeks in their Christmas season and joy filled parties and gatherings are filling calendars. Carolers are out singing about Rudolph or Santa or sleigh bells. Houses are decorated and Christmas trees are framed by windows. The giving and receiving of Christmas joy includes some favorite Christmas movies. Church programs and cantatas are often the focus of week three. Joy is the rhythm of our heart that beats with hope and love.

Week four that ends on Christmas Day is the week of peace. On Christmas Eve we read Isaiah 9:2-7 which includes "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Jesus tells his disciples just before he is crucified, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives." World peace is the work of God not of humans. We are the instruments through which that peace may be proclaimed, but God will bring it to completion. We wait in hope filled expectation for that peace, anticipating a world redeemed by love where we celebrate with joy that the Kingdom will come!

Praying with you,  
Pastor Carolyn

*"Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign. In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ."*

Christian G. Rossetti, 1872 Hymn 221 - In the Bleak Midwinter



## SUNDAY SCHOOL



The Winter Quarter Has the Theme - Engage - Perhaps at no other time during the year is the call of our faith more at odds with culture than during Advent. The Christian season that calls us to wait is met with a culture that encourages us to decorate, entertain, buy, spend, and

entertain, with calendars booked from season's beginning to its end. Such ceaseless activity can blind us to the awe and wonder of God's presence all around us, leaving us spiritually parched, empty, and unable to join in the life and work to which God calls us. These Bible lessons call us to wait and to respond with wonder to the God who came to us in Jesus Christ, thus equipping ourselves to bear witness to our faith.

Class Meets in the Willing Workers Classroom at 10:00 A.M. Teachers: Tim Smith, Donald Rose McGhee

### December (Unit 1) - Wait for It

Advent is a time of anticipation and waiting. This unit invites us to explore waiting as an important element in three episodes in Luke's telling of the Christmas story. It ends with a reminder that as much as we are called to wait for the Lord, Jesus Christ waits patiently for us. Scriptures: Luke 1:5-25, 57-58; Luke 1:26-38, 57-58; Luke 2:25-38; Revelation 3:20-4:11

Spiritual Practice: Praying without ceasing

### Keeping Holy Time Bible Study

This Thursday morning group meets to study scriptures, share stories, pray for those in need, and often ends up laughing at something in the Bible. This month we will continue in the letter to the Romans. Join us at 10:00 a.m. on

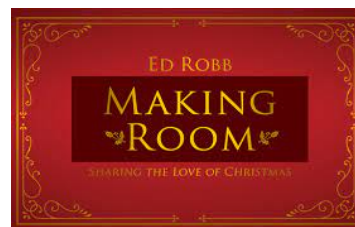
Thursdays. We each bring our Bibles. A good study Bible is also a great tool as we read ahead before we jump in at 10:00 a.m. We open our time together praying for the community and end each session in prayer.



### *Advent Begins - November 28th*

The Advent Devotion Book for 2021 is authored by Joe Kim. We have paper copies for those who do not have email access and as we did last year during Advent there will be a daily email with the devotion for that day. Should you wish to opt out of the daily email, let Pastor Carolyn know. The weekly emails with news and order of worship will continue to be sent on Saturdays, but the Advent email will only include the devotion.

For those who want to study a little deeper - there



is also a small group Advent Study at the Parsonage beginning November 27. It is at 4:00 p.m. and

the book is called "Making Room: Sharing the Love of Christmas." by Ed Robb. Dr. Ed Robb explores the warmth of welcome at Christmas following interactions with Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi. Just as Jesus made room in God's kingdom for a host of people that society wanted to leave on the margins, beginning with the appearance of the shepherds, we too should be asking ourselves who we can make room for this Christmas.

# Bible Year 2022 - almost here!!!!

One more month until Bible Year 2022. On January 1, 2022 we are embarking on the Bible Year. From Genesis to Revelation. Our goal is to read from cover to cover (even the dry books and chapters). We will saturate our lives with God's word and allow it to soak into the rich soil of our souls.

How will our life together as the Body of Christ be changed if we all covenant to read the Bible in a Year and all are reading the same passages each night/week.

Each week, the bulletins will include the readings for the week. The Saturday email will also hold the readings for the coming week. The monthly Chapel Chatter will provide the month's readings. Our Facebook page will include a Bible Year Group for discussion on the readings.

There is a Bible Year Journal that can be purchased. If you are interested, contact Pastor Carolyn. You do not need the journal to participate, but it offers insight into your daily readings and gives you places for notes.

In the planning is a week night or Sunday evening group to gather and study together. Worship planning will also have a Bible Year moment for witness to our journey together. Children and youth are encouraged to join in with the family with a nightly reading in a translation that will be easier for the children to understand.

Sign up sheets will begin to appear in December for those who want to be part of small groups.

Aren't you excited to be reading the scriptures together! Get ready - January is coming.

## With Deep Gratitude

*The United Methodist Men would like to thank all who participated in our annual BBQ. Many hands helped with the many tasks that make this a successful event for our church. Some of our volunteers are members of other churches, yet they come and chop or serve or pack or deliver. The work begins with ticket sales and ends with that final cleanup of the church.*

*Each of you who volunteer in any capacity have our heartfelt thanks.*

*Until Next Year,*

*Plank Chapel*

*United Methodist Men*



## Christmas Cards

The mailbox in the back of the sanctuary will not be put up again this year. We will wait one more year to return to that tradition - consider other ways to wish one another a Merry Christmas. You never know what new traditions we will start.

## Senior Circle - December 15



We are gathering December 15 for Senior Circle. It is our Christmas feast - join us for some wonderful food and Christmas caroling.

## The Longest Night

December 21, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

For some, Christmas is hard and in 2021 Christmas may be even harder. On the longest night of the year we will gather and share stories, prayers, and offer some light into the darkness of the night.

## Watch Night

December 31, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Gathering in worship as 2021 comes to a close we have a prayerful opportunity to let go of what we do not need to carry into 2022 and pray for the coming year to be one of peace, hope, love, and joy. Join us as we let go and let God!

## Community Partners of Hope

The Emergency Men's Shelter opens on November 1st. Plank Chapel's Outward Witness Team provides a meal on the 4th Tuesday every month it is open (Dec 28, Jan 25, Feb 22, Mar 22). Season is November - March. The United Methodist Women are planning to serve a meal, November 30th. Families can also reserve a date to offer a meal. The link for signing up is: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904of4aabad2da6fe3-mens>

If you want to help the Outward Witness team with their meals, contact Susan Sears.

## ACTS

The 1st Sunday of the month is our ACTS Sunday - Peggy Hernandez of our Outward Witness Team contacted ACTS for the needs of the community they serve.

**Backpack Buddies:** small cans of beanie weenies, pudding cups and fruit cups, microwave mac & cheese or other microwaveable pastas, small boxes of raisins, vienna sausages, packaged crackers (like nabs), juice pouches, instant oatmeal (cups or packages), individual packs of cookies or chips, individual sized boxes of cereal, individual packs of fruit snacks.

**Food Pantry Items:** canned diced tomatoes, canned chicken or tuna, packages of cookies, canned lima beans, greens or sweet peas, 18 oz jars of jelly, jiffy corn muffin mix, canned soup (any type), canned spaghetti sauce, canned dark and light kidney beans, 1 or 2 lb. bags of rice, boxes of pasta. (when possible flip top cans make it easier for families).

**Soup Kitchen Items:** gallon cans of vegetables, fruit or spaghetti sauce, mayonnaise (regular size or gallon), imitation vanilla extract, Awesome brand cleaner (Dollar Tree or Roses), brown sugar, white sugar, lemon juice, bags of cornmeal or boxes of muffin mix, cans of beef, chicken, or vegetable broth (or cubes), Ketchup, mustard, mayo packets (available at Henderson Fruit and Produce), large cans of tuna or salmon, gallon jugs of cooking oil.

**Christmas Eve Candle Light Communion**

**December 24, 2021**

**8:00 p.m.**

# Community Prayers

For... Rod Inscoe Jr, Toni Smith, Lori Litton, Marvin Daniel, Brandi Dickerson, Kay Deans, Lillian Robbins, Skip Brown, Susan Babicz, Addison Rowan, Brandi Dickerson, Terry Rose (Karin Driver's sister), Nancy Nieto, David Driver, Mike Hicks, John Allen, Natasha Aiken, Alice and Ted Finch, Martha Rowland, Tilly Hughes, Freddie McGhee, Faye Young

- For... healing and reconciliation
- For... those facing medical procedures
- For... medical professionals and first responders
- For... those grieving
- For... those without food, jobs, shelter
- For... the lost and afraid
- For... Plank Chapel
- For... God's church
- For... Our local cities and counties
- For... Our state
- For... Our military, families, and veterans
- For... all in harms way
- For... Our nation
- For... God's world

## From our Finance

**Chairperson: Mac Wilson**



Your continued support of the ministries of Plank Chapel United Methodist Church are greatly appreciated. Thank you for what you have done and as you are able may continue to do. You are more than welcome to drop offering at the house or mail it to Plank Chapel, c/o Financial Secretary, Mrs. Judy Wilson, 3969 Bobbitt Road, Kittrell, NC 27544.

**From our Treasurer:** The Treasurer reminds Plank Chapel leaders that church financial data is available online. COVID 19 may have precluded periodic church leadership meetings but a current financial report is always available to all church members. Contact Pastor Carolyn or Scott Ritchey for login credentials.



**United Methodist Women to meet Sunday December 19 at 3:00 p.m. new to UMW - come and join us!**



## Virtual Plank Chapel Continues

Live streaming of the 11:00 Sunday service is on Facebook. Go online to: [facebook.com/plankchapelUMC](https://www.facebook.com/plankchapelUMC) about 10:55

Our website: <http://www.plankchapel.org> is one of the easiest ways to connect. If you are still having trouble contact Scott Ritchey or Pastor Carolyn for assistance.

Breakfast, a devotion, and ministry planning. Join us Sunday Morning!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 Happy 1st week of Advent!  12:00 PM Inward Formation Team	29 Hanukkah	30 6:30 PM UMW shelter meal  Giving Tuesday	1	2 10:00 AM Keeping Holy Time Bible Study	3	4 4:00 PM Advent Study
5 8:30 AM Awakenings 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	6	7	8	9 10:00 AM Keeping Holy Time Bible Study	10	11 4:00 PM Advent Study
12 8:30 AM Awakenings 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	13	14	15 10:00 AM Senior Circle	16 10:00 AM Keeping Holy Time Bible Study	17	18 4:00 PM Advent Study
19 8:00 AM UMM 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 3:00 PM UMW	20	21 7:00 PM The Longest Night	22	23 10:00 AM Keeping Holy Time Bible Study	24 Christmas Eve 8:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight	25 Christmas Day
26 Kwanzaa 8:30 AM Awakenings 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	27	28 6:30 PM CPOH meal	29	30 10:00 AM Keeping Holy Time Bible Study	31 New Year's Eve 7:00 PM Watch Night Service	1 New Year's Day

**Advent Events at a Glance**

4th - 4:00 p.m. - Advent Book Study @ the Parsonage  
 11th - 4:00 p.m. - Advent Book Study @ the Parsonage  
 15th - 10:00 a.m. - Senior Circle  
 18th - 4:00 p.m. - Advent Book Study @ the Parsonage  
 21st - 7:00 p.m. - The Longest Night  
 24th - 8:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion  
 28th - 6:30 p.m. - CPOH meal  
 31st - 7:00 p.m. - Watch Night Worship



Feeding the Community

**ACTS**  
**1st Sunday of the month**  
**Nonperishable Goods**

COVID-19 and Variants: Prayerfully consider the habits we have learned: washing hands, sanitizer, safe distance, masking, and staying home when not feeling well