

*Lonoke First United Methodist Church***Holiday Season is Upon Us**

Hello Friends! I just returned from a trip to Kentucky to watch the beginning of my son's last year of college basketball. It was a great trip and a good start to the season. But as I was walking around Wal-Mart and other stores today I realized - the holidays are upon us! I saw Christmas shirts, wrapping paper, nut-crackers and Santa's everywhere. There have been times that I have complained to see so much Christmas two weeks before Thanksgiving. But if we have ever needed the magic of the holidays it's 2020!

So, I rejoice in the fact that the holidays are around the corner. They may look different this year with social distancing but if we have the right frame of mind they will be just what we need to end this strange year well. Today, let's focus on Thanksgiving. This is one of my favorite holidays because its simple but so rewarding. It is a time for families to connect and it ushers in the Christmas shopping season with Black Friday sales and craziness. Even if those things are different this year - what will not be different is the

reason we have Thanksgiving and that is to give thanks.

So let's make this a month of thanksgiving. During this month I have started every morning by telling God something I rejoice about. There have been some mornings that I have had to stretch - look for the good - but I have always been able to find it. I want to encourage you to do that with me. Let's start with rejoice. I read in a devotional last month that rejoicing and praising God opens up the communication pathway to God. I believe that. When you look at how the people of God have prayed and sought God it always starts with rejoicing. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray He started the prayer by saying "Hallowed be thy Name"!

I believe Thanksgiving is the perfect holiday to kick off the holiday season because we start in rejoice. So what do you rejoice in today? Will you walk the rest of the month rejoicing to start your day so that by the time you sit down to a holiday meal your list will be full and so will your heart.

**Stewardship Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020**

You will be hearing a lot more about this in the coming weeks, but I wanted to get this date before you. This is an important date for our church because we will be prayerfully considering our financial commitments for the coming year. I want to thank everyone for faithfully supporting the church this past year during a trying and confusing time. As we enter this time we will be sharing with you our financial goals for the church to help you in praying about your commitment for this next year.

As we enter this season of the year in our church it is also a time to think about where we might offer the talents God has given each of us. During the Pandemic we saw a many people set up in big ways to allow God to use the gifts and talents God has given them. Please be thinking about the different areas you would like to volunteer for ministry in the coming years. On December 6th we will also be offering you an opportunity to commit to a ministry opportunity either in the areas of Reaching (sharing about Jesus and our church), Growing (formation) and Serving. Please be praying about which area God is leading you to share your gifts and abilities.

If you are not able to be a part of an "in person" worship service at this time I will come by and bring you some materials to think about how you will support the church in the coming year. I will drop off the materials, wave and maybe we can talk in a socially distanced way. I will be contacting you in the coming weeks.

**Because of Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ is true in my life!**

This past week I asked people to think about the statement - "Because of Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ is true in my life. This statement highlights a key part of our witness for Jesus. We looked at John 9 and the story of Jesus healing a blind man who had been blind since birth. He was questioned about who healed him and why it was done on the Sabbath. The blind man finally told them that basically he could not answer his questions but once he had been blind but now he could see. That was the difference Jesus had made in his life.

So what is the difference Jesus has made in your life. I would like to invite you to fill in the blank and send it to me. We will be displaying these statements in the foyer as people enter the church. I want people to see the difference that Jesus has made in our lives. You can reply to the newsletter email, send it through Facebook or give me a call. I would love to hear how you would answer this question.

**Childcare Center Closed for 2 Weeks**

As many of you have probably heard, the Church Childcare Center had to close for two weeks because of a COVID test and teachers who had been in close contact with that person. The Childcare Center will be closed until Monday, November 23. I want to praise our Child Care Director, Stephanie Studer, and the whole team for working fast to communicate with the parents about the situation. I also want to praise Sharon Rudder and the Child Care Board for working through the situation and making decisions that will benefit everyone and keep the children safe.

Closing down due to positive results is a new reality all businesses and churches have to face today. Each situation seems like a new one because it continues to change. We are blessed to have a great Church Council who has been working hard during the pandemic to stay connected to news, together as a team and to God to make the best decisions possible. I appreciate the leadership Janette Boyles has shown us during these days. We are blessed to have so many great leaders at Lonoke First United Methodist.

**Prayer Time**

I want to thank everyone who joined us in our prayer vigil for the election. It was exciting that we were able to get all of the spaces filled for a full 24 hours of prayer. I want to thank JJ Gladden and the Growing committee for their leadership in putting it together. It was a great way for our church to come together as a church family to pray for our nation. As COVID 19 continues to get worse we may be doing another one during Advent. Be looking in your emails and on Facebook for news and how to participate.

We are continuing to meet for prayer before our services on Sunday Mornings. This past Sunday we moved inside because of the cooler temperatures. We will gather in the church and spend time praying against the virus. We will also spend time praying for each other and the different prayer concerns we have. As we talked about this past Sunday - when you are walking with Jesus you look at these difficult times not as insurmountable obstacles but opportunities for God to work. So, I am expecting to see our prayers answered and we will find a special way to celebrate when God moves within our midst.

So join me this Sunday either "in person" or online this Sunday at 8:40am.

# November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Morning Prayer 8:40am In Person or Virtual Service 9am	9	10	11 Youth Group 7-8pm	12	13	14
15 Morning Prayer 8:40am In Person or Virtual Service 9am	16	17 SPRC Meeting, 6pm Childcare Meeting, 7pm	18 Leadership Team Meeting, 5:30pm Youth Group 7pm-8pm	19	20	21
22 Morning Prayer 8:40am In Person or Virtual Service 9am	23	24 Church Office Closed	25 Church Office Closed	26 Thanksgiving Church Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 Morning Prayer 8:40am In Person or Virtual Service 9am	30					

## Prayer List

Our prayers are with:  
 Neal Anderson, Patsy Goode, Willie Glover,  
 Olivia Chambers, Rev. Jim Linderman, Louann Miller and Jessica Bridges

If you have any changes or additions to the prayer list, please call or email the church office.

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Church Office Info:  
 Monday-Friday, 9am-2:30pm  
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