

*Lonoke First United Methodist Church***Christmas Eve**

As we announced on video and in Rob's Ramblings this week, Christmas Eve service is still planned for 6pm on Christmas Eve. The service will be a little different this year. Several of these changes are to create a safer environment so that more people will be safe to worship with us in person. Below are the differences you will see this year.

RSVP for attendance. We felt it is important to help us know how many services we will need to have this year. If we have our normal numbers for Christmas Eve we would be looking at approximately three services. But as in person attendance is down we are not sure what to plan. The other reason for RSVPs is to allow us to place families together but away from other families or persons. We will decide on what pews and areas to use based on the RSVP responses. Our music will be from local musicians within the church. We have decided not to bring in the musicians from outside like we normally do. There are several reasons but one is to not put someone from outside of

the community on the stage without masks.

We will be using electric lighted candles this year instead of real ones. This will keep people from extinguishing the candles by blowing, which we have been asked not to do at this time.

We will not offer a children's time for children to gather but we will have a special children's moment that kids will be able to enjoy from their seats.

Advent and Christmas look and feel a little different like everything else in 2020. Please know that we are working on planning a special worship service for you and your family to experience the presence of God on this special night. If you have questions please do not hesitate to call pastor Rob on his cell phone which is 501-676-1718.

We will stream the 6pm service like our Sunday services. I look forward to worshipping with you on this special and holy night.

A Different Kind of Advent

We are now entering the second week of Advent. This has been quite the year hasn't it? We continue to enter seasons and times that are the same but very different. I can already tell the differences of our Advent season. Last year, we kicked it off with winning all the awards we could in the Lonoke Christmas parade and at each service people were making space to come together for worship as the Advent services got larger as we prepared our hearts for Christmas. This year is radically different as we wonder if we will be able to even gather with family and friends to celebrate this year.

So there are many things that we could hang our heads about. But part of the blessing of knowing Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior is we know what this season is all about, don't we? In a way Covid is a lot like the Grinch. It has come and taken away not everything but many of our precious traditions that we hold dear. Different things about Christmas that we may think - its not Christmas unless....

But if you will lean in - the manger is still there. Mary and Joseph are still awaiting the miracle - and the reason Christmas is Christmas will still be true. This season is about preparing our hearts and then receiving God's greatest gift to us. This season is about receiving and rejoicing that Jesus came into this world to make possible a relationship with God that brings peace, joy, direction and life.

So it is a different Advent season. It is OK to admit that and mourn the things we love that are missing. But let's not hang our heads. Instead rejoice that Christmas is still Christmas because we matter so much to God that He gave His son for us. And let's look for how God is going to move during this different season to leave us in awe of who He is.

Epic of Eden Bible Study

At the beginning of February we will begin a new Bible study on Tuesday nights called The Epic of Eden. This will be a little different than the other studies that we have been doing on Tuesday nights but it is one that you will not want to miss. I have had the privilege of teaching this class four times in the past and I have loved it each time. It is a comprehensive study of the Old Testament by organizing the material under the key covenants between God and humans. The study is based on the book Epic of Eden written by Dr. Sandra Richter. There will be a book, a video component, discussion and teaching from me. Each session will take about an hour and 15 minutes.

We will make this available on Zoom and in person because we will need to show the video each week. We can easily do this with Zoom's ability to share the screen. Please consider joining us each Wednesday as organize our Old Testament closet so that we can see what God is wanting to teach us in this powerful testament to God's faithfulness to bring redemption to humanity.

We will need to have sign ups for this study. Look for information on how to sign up and obtain a copy of the study book. This study opened my eyes to an understanding of the Old Testament that not even seminary helped me to see. I want as many as possible to join me in this powerful study of God's Word.

**Advent Meditation Moments**

Be on the look out each week for an Advent Meditation Moment on Facebook Live. Greg is coordinating different specials to be presented during each week of Advent. The first week featured the Grady's singing a special Christmas song at the Youth Group. It was a lot of fun watching Gaston Fletcher introduce the first Advent Moment. All of the specials will be on our Facebook page in case you miss the live.

December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 <i>In Person or Virtual Service 9am</i>	7	8 <i>Bible Study 6-7</i>	9 <i>Youth Group 7-8pm</i>	10	11	12
13 <i>In Person or Virtual Service 9am</i>	14	15 <i>Bible Study 6-7</i>	16	17	18	19
20 <i>In Person or Virtual Service 9am</i>	21	22 <i>Bible Study 6-7</i>	23 <i>Church Office Closed</i>	24 <i>Christmas Eve Service 6pm Church Office</i>	25 <i>Christmas Church Office Closed</i>	26
27 <i>In Person or Virtual Service 9am</i>	28	29 <i>Bible Study 6-7</i>	30	31 <i>Church Office Closed</i>	1 <i>Church Office Closed</i>	

Prayer List

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

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

(501)676-6767
 funclonoke@sbcglobal.net

Church Office Info:
 Monday-Friday, 9am-2:30pm
 (501)676-6767
 funclonoke@sbcglobal.net