



THE MESSENGER

December 2017

First United Methodist Church of McAllen

4200 N. McColl Road
McAllen, Texas 78504

956-686-3784
Fax 956-664-0204

www.FUMCMcAllen.com

Weekday Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
8:30 - 4:30
Friday 8:30 - Noon

Worship at First Church

Service Information

8:30 Traditional Worship
9:00 Contemporary Worship
11:00 Traditional Worship
9:45 Sunday School

Nursery provided at all services.

Newsletter & Sunday Sermons

Our FUMC newsletter,
The Messenger, and our weekly
9 & a.m. sermons,
are available on the website.
www.fumcmcallen.com.

You can read current or past
issues of the Messenger, and
listen to the sermons. You can
also follow us on Facebook.

You may also use the website to
update your contact information.
You will find this link on the home
page. Your help in keeping our
records current and up-to-date is
very much appreciated.

Any changes in your life? Married? Moved? Or Moving?

Please let us know so
we can make changes on our
mail out data base.



Advent/Christmas Opportunities at FUMC McAllen



*We invite you to come along on this journey toward Christmas,
a time of joyous waiting as we prepare our hearts for the coming
of Jesus Christ, the new born King, Prince of Peace!*

Advent Bible Study for Adults

Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph

by Adam Hamilton

Sundays at 9:45 am in the Social Room

Beginning November 26

Wednesdays at Noon in the Koinonia Room

Beginning November 29

For Women on Thursdays at 6:00 pm in the Social Room

Beginning November 30

Children's Christmas Musical

A Red Letter Christmas

Wednesday, December 13

Program begins at 6:00 pm with dinner following.

Please bring a Christmas dessert to share.

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Pastor's Perspective

October 23. I made a note on my calendar. This marks the day this year when I heard my first Christmas commercial. The ad was on the radio hyping SiriusXM's Holly Christmas channel that plays nothing but holiday tunes. (sigh)

I remember as a child looking forward to Thanksgiving partly because it marked the beginning of the Christmas season. Holiday themed advertising began the weekend after Thanksgiving Thursday. For many, along with too much turkey (and for some too much football) we now have too much Christmas. I'm not referring to the real reason for the season, but too much build-up too long. By the time Christmas does arrive we are holidayed-out. Ready for it to be over. Get back to normal. Seek the simple.

Of course the motivation behind all holiday buildup by the retail establishment is financial. Dollars spent during the few weeks leading up the Christmas brings in a disproportionate percentage of income to retail businesses compared to the rest of the year. In fact, without the Christmas season, many stores simply wouldn't remain open.

As important as a strong economy is to everyone, it pales in comparison to the importance of God's Christmas gift of himself wrapped up in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. At Christmas, God came among us. God experienced life as a human with all the physical and emotional ups and downs. Without Christmas there is no Easter.

We find ourselves in the season of Advent. The term is a version of the Latin word meaning "coming". This is a time of expectant waiting and preparation to celebrate the coming of God in his son Jesus. How are you preparing for this momentous event? Prayer? Scripture reading? Serving others? Giving yourself away, because God gave himself away?

Save some of yourself to give to God as your spiritual worship and act of gratitude and thanksgiving for God's gift of Jesus. I pray this season will be a most blessed time for you and yours.

Grace and peace, Ricky



Senior Pastor,
Ricky Sanderford

Children's Ministry

November was packed with blessings as the children shared God's love with others. They put together RAK (Random Acts of Kindness) Bags. They packed needed food for four families at Escandon Elementary School, and got to spread good cheer, special music, and encouraging words to their friends at Bridges Assisted Living Center. We are thankful for so much, especially for opportunities to share the joy of Jesus with others.



The WOW teaching team is excited about a special Advent booklet which we hope will help families and their children draw closer to Christ during this season. This booklet was created by Barbara Wilkins with sweet words from the WOW children. Let Lee Ann know if you would like one, and she will be sure you get it.

On Wednesday, December 6 we will celebrate during WOW with a big birthday party for Jesus, cake and favors and all! We are going to thank God for His most precious gift, Jesus, by giving new toys to children who need them. Please send a new toy for a child, 3 years to 5th grade, with your child to WOW on Dec. 6. Send it unwrapped. The gifts will be given to the recipients of our church's Christmas Share ministry. The Good Word Store will also be opened for children who have memorized Bible verses this fall. Come Join Us!



Jesus, The Best Ever Gift!

The Sugar Plum Workshop

Sat., Dec. 9TH

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Reservations:

Laclemons@mcfirst.com or call 686-3784

\$15.00 child (scholarships are available)

All children, 3 years old (by Sept. 1, 2017) through 5th graders, are invited to journey through Bethlehem at the Sugar Plum Workshop. This is a fun day filled with gingerbread mangers, glitter, glue, and MORE as they learn about the Christmas story and prepare gifts for family and friends. \$15.00 per child, lunch is included. Register online on the Children's Ministry page of the church website, fumcmcallen.com.

All are invited to the children's Christmas program at 6:00 pm on Dec. 13th. We will have no regular WOW that day. The children are to come to church at 4:30 pm. They will have a last rehearsal before the program which will begin at 6:00 pm. The program will be followed by a delicious dinner (\$3 per child, \$5 for teens/adults, \$15 max per family) prepared by Donna Gibson and her crew, with desserts made by YOU! Please bring a Christmas dessert to share. Make reservations through the church office or on the church website, fumcmcallen.com.

Children's Ministry Christmas Musical

Wed., Dec. 13th
Musical begins at 6PM

Followed by Dinner
children-\$3, teens/adults-\$5,
& \$15 max per family

Please bring a Christmas dessert to share.
Call 686-3784 for reservations.





Annual Youth Christmas Share Event December Communion Offering

The Communion Offering for the first Sunday of December will go to the Annual Youth Christmas Share Events: Christmas Share Part 1 & Part 2. This event is so huge it is divided into two parts; part 1 allows our FUMC McAllen church family to share and give by choosing a name from the "Glitter Tree" to shop for a gift, or with their communion offering that allows our youth to go shopping at midnight for the



rest of the gifts, while part 2 gives our church family the opportunity to host a festive Christmas party for the families we shopped and wrapped gifts for. Sharing and giving is what makes up Christmas Share and it can't be done without your monetary donations. Thanks to your generosity, last year, 44 of our youth were able to participate in this annual event and had fun wrapping 129 gifts for 59 families.

This year, Christmas Share Part 1 will take place on Friday, December 15th from 8PM to 8AM, registration fee is \$25 and it includes a t-shirt, a Starbucks drink, snacks, door prizes, and breakfast. Please RSVP by Wednesday, December 6th! And the Christmas Share Part 2 Celebration will be taking place on Sunday, December 17th from 12:30PM to 4:30PM. The youth will help load all the wrapped gifts and go to AVANCE in Alamo. They will set up and decorate, and also help Santa pass out the gifts, serve cookies & hot chocolate, and help children with crafts and games.

The Youth Ministry would like to invite you, our church family, to join us in the spirit of Christmas by sharing your time to help out with the shopping at midnight or with the delivery of the gifts for 50 plus families.

We also, want to thank you again for allowing the Youth Ministry to experience the joy of giving and for allowing them to touch the lives of our community.

Your offering during Communion on Sunday, December 3rd, will help make Christmas brighter for these families. This is such an exciting opportunity to share not only in service, but in celebration of the greatest gift of all!




Christmas Share 2017
Part 1
FRI- SAT
DEC. 15-16TH
8PM - 8AM
Games, Music by Room 205, Shopping at
Midnight and a lot of Gift Wrapping!
\$25 per student


Christmas Share 2017
Part 2
SUNDAY, DEC. 17TH
12:30PM - 4:30PM
Help us host a Christmas Party for the
children we shopped for. We will provide
games, refreshments, and a photo booth too!
Come volunteer to deliver the gifts!



Mat Ministry

People from all over the community, woven together in Christ, are gathering to weave plastic bags into blessings for those living on the streets in need of a mat to sleep on. Initiated by Susan Turlapati and the Woven Women of FUMC McAllen, God is using this ministry to bring people together from all different walks to take care of those who have so much less. People in mobile home parks and neighboring cities are weaving. Our friends at C.A.M.P. University

and Bridges Assisted Living are sorting and cutting bags. High School and Scout groups are weaving. All are welcome to come join us in this opportunity to serve others and recycle plastic grocery bags. Bring bags to the church office and come on Tuesdays, November 28th, December 5th and 12th, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, to weave.

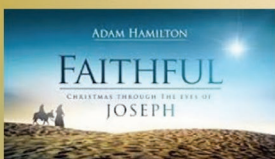
Emily's Meals

FUMC McAllen is privileged to be a part of Emily's Meals, a ministry which began as a young girl's Lenten project almost three years ago. This ministry feeds a meal every single day of the year to 40 homeless people in McAllen. We are thankful for the opportunity to help share God's love through the kindness of a meal to those who need one. Pictured are the cooks and delivery people from FUMC McAllen. Anyone interested in being a part of this ministry is welcome. The next days we will be cooking and delivering are November 30th, and December 14th.



*Join us for the Women's Advent Study on Thursdays,
November 30, December 7 and 14, 6-7 p.m.,
in the Social Room.*

Advent Bible Studies Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph



PURCHASE BOOKS IN THE CHURCH OFFICE (\$13.00)

FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS,
SUNDAYS AT 9:45 AM IN THE SOCIAL ROOM
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 26

WOMEN'S STUDY, THURSDAYS AT 6:00 PM IN
THE SOCIAL ROOM BEGINNING NOVEMBER 30

BROWN BAG BIBLE STUDY, WEDNESDAYS AT
NOON IN THE KOINONIA ROOM
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 29

**Support the Youth Ministry
Order Poinsettias**

It is the time of year again! Poinsettias in MEMORY or in HONOR of loved ones.

\$15.00 each

Fill out your order form and return to the church office

Silent Night in the Park

**Tuesday, December 19th
5:45 p.m.**

Bill Schupp Park, 1300 Zinnia Ave., McAllen

An informal worship service at dusk with a reading of the Christmas story, music, candles, hot chocolate and cookies

Thank You!

We had a very successful rummage sale this past week-end. A very big thank you to those who helped set-up, worked the day of the sale, donated items, and shopped. Thank you so much for sharing your time, energy, love, and stuff to make this a successful event.

We made around \$6,200, welcomed many people, and had a great time working together. God Bless and thank you.





"First Fruits" Thanksgiving Baskets A Thanksgiving Blessings!

Sunday, 11/19, our church family gathered to sort and pack Thanksgiving boxes overflowing with food, a gift card, and a blessing to neighbors in our surrounding communities. We partnered with the Area Agency on Aging, missions of El Divino Redentor UMC, four Escandon Elementary families, and ARISE ministry where the youth delivered to families in need. Still more were given through the Manna Food Pantry of our church! **A total of 155 individuals and families were blessed with our First Fruits Thanksgiving Baskets!**



What a blessing it is to be part of such a wonderful and generous church family...one that comes together to serve and share the love of Christ! The simple act of sharing our gifts and/or a visit from someone who cares, is a blessing from God!



Thanks to Christine Morley, Pat Mills, Carol and Dan Dearth, Mary Ann Garza, Tom Hellums, El Divino Redentor UMC, Veronica Dillon and our youth, Walmart, Matthew and Francy Bradley, Roland Pecina and our custodians (Erasmus, Silvia and Martin)!...and, a VERY SPECIAL THANKS to all of YOU! **TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

Trunk or Treat 2017 THANK YOU!

A huge THANK YOU goes to each and everyone for their time, energy and love that helped to make Trunk or Treat a special evening for all. A hardworking team of people setting up, cooking, serving, providing music, donating candy and prizes, handing out candy, greeting, leading games and hayrides, cleaning up and so much more, combined with God's blessings of wonderful weather, LOTS of visitors, a great space for us to welcome our neighbors, and His love to share provided awesome memories and time together.



Pearls of Wellness Wisdom

By Perla Rivera, RN, Wesley Nurse

*"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge
fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

Proverbs 31: 8-9

As we near the end of the year, many of us begin to reflect on the year-the ups and downs, challenges and victories, and goals and accomplishments met or unmet among other things. I would like to invite you to take some time to think about new goals, journeys and endeavors you would like to take on in 2018.

Here at First United Methodist Church McAllen, we are very blessed to have an active Health Ministry Team that meets on a quarterly basis and partners with various agencies in the community to bring holistic health and wellness. One such partnership is with the South Texas Institutes of Health. They do a lot of health education, some health services and provide many resources to low-income families and the homeless in our community. We have provided hygiene packs along with clothing and blankets to help support the work they do. I was also invited to do a nutrition class for the community members they serve.

You may be wondering what a health ministry team is and why it is needed. It is simply a group of people from the congregation and community with a passion to promote holistic (body, mind, and spirit) health. Some of the functions of a Health Ministry Team include identifying community and congregational assets and resources, utilizing assets and resources toward the promotion of health and prevention of illness in the community and congregation, develop a plan of action, carry out the plan of action and then evaluate outcomes and effectiveness of the plan.

On behalf of the Health Ministry team, I would like to invite you to join our team. If you have a passion for health, desire to advocate for the underserved, and you simply want to share the gifts and talents the Lord has endowed you with, then please contact Tanya Perales, our Health Ministry Chair or Perla Rivera, Wesley Nurse. You do not have to be a health care provider/professional to join. The only requirement to join this team is to have a heart to serve and bring holistic health to our community. We hope that you will prayerfully consider this. I declare that 2018 will bring about greater victories and impact for our Health Ministry Team.

Have a Joyous and Blessed Christmas!



Perla Rivera, RN, is a Wesley Nurse with Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, Inc.. Methodist Healthcare Ministries' Wesley Nurse program is a faith-based, holistic health and wellness program committed to serving the least served through education, health promotion and collaboration with individual and community in achieving improved wellness through self-empowerment. Learn more at www.mhm.org.

Advent/Christmas Opportunities at FUMC McAllen

(continued from page 1)

Silent Night at the Park

A reading of the Christmas story,
music, candles, hot chocolate and cookies

Tuesday, December 19 5:45 pm

Bill Schupp Park, 1300 Zinnia Ave., McAllen

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Sunday, December 24

5:00 p.m. Family Candlelight Worship Service

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service
with Holy Communion

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service
with Holy Communion
In the Fellowship Center

Christmas Day Luncheon

Monday, December 25 • 12 Noon

Join the Mann's and Stolley's for a Christmas Day luncheon in the Social Room. Please bring a salad, vegetable or dessert to share. Call the church office, 686-3784, to let us know if you will be attending.



CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sympathy to ...

Betty Soderlund, following the death of her daughter,
Carla Anderson on Monday, October 30th in Garland, TX.

Betty's address is:

501 W. Owassa Rd., Lot #122, Pharr, TX 78516.

Janice Johnson following the death
of her husband, **Joe Johnson**,
on Friday, November 3rd.

A service was held on November 8th.

Janice's address is: 1524 Orchid Ave, McAllen, TX 78504.



Calendar of Events

First United Methodist Church
4200 N. McColl Rd. • McAllen, TX • 956-686-3784

DECEMBER 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
For calendar updates, visit fumcmcallen.com .					1	2
3 Early Traditional Service New Spirit Worship Holy Grounds Fellowship Late Traditional Service Conf. Parent's Mtg Aldersgate Christmas Luncheon Light Seekers	4 Tai Chi Exercise Class	5 Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Women's SEED Group Tuesday Noon Women's Group Mat Ministry Co-ED SEED Group	6 Breakfast & Devotionals Tai Chi Exercise Class Brown Bag Advent Study WOW (Word On Wednesday) Children's Choir Truth Seekers Witness Band Rehearsal Motet Choir Rehearsal	7 Breakfast & Devotionals Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Disciple II Bible Study Women's Advent Study Young Adult Group	8	9 Sugar Plum Workshop El Valle District Youth Christmas Party 2017
10 Early Traditional Service New Spirit Worship Holy Grounds Fellowship Late Traditional Service Friendship Class Christmas Party	11 Tai Chi Exercise Class	12 Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Women's SEED Group Tuesday Noon Women's Group Parkinson Support Group Alzheimer's Support Group Mat Ministry Co-ED SEED Group	13 Breakfast & Devotionals Tai Chi Exercise Class Brown Bag Advent Study WOW (Word On Wednesday) Witness Band Rehearsal Children's Christmas Musical, Dinner, and Desserts Motet Choir Rehearsal	14 Breakfast & Devotionals Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Disciple II Bible Study Women's Advent Study Special Needs Support Group Young Adult Group	15 Christmas Share 2017 Part 1	16 Christmas Share 2017 Part 1
17 Early Traditional Service New Spirit Worship Holy Grounds Fellowship Late Traditional Service Motet Choir Cantata Christmas Share 2017 Part 2	18 Tai Chi Exercise Class Manna Food Pantry at First UMC McAllen	19 Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Circle of Friends Women's SEED Group Tuesday Noon Women's Group Silent Night in the Park 2017 Co-ED SEED Group	20 Breakfast & Devotionals Tai Chi Exercise Class Prayer Shawl Ministry Children's Choir Witness Band Rehearsal Motet Choir Rehearsal	21 Breakfast & Devotionals Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Disciple II Bible Study Young Adult Group	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Services Early Traditional Service New Spirit Worship Holy Grounds Fellowship Late Traditional Service	25 Christmas Day Luncheon	26 Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Women's SEED Group Tuesday Noon Women's Group Co-ED SEED Group	27 Tai Chi Exercise Class Children's Choir Witness Band Rehearsal Motet Choir Rehearsal	28 Morning Walkers Exercise Tai Chi Exercise Class Disciple II Bible Study Young Adult Group	29	30
31 Early Traditional Service New Spirit Worship Holy Grounds Fellowship Late Traditional Service Aldersgate Class Party						



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*Thank you to all
who supported
SOS 2017
with prayers,
donations and
gifts of service!*



Building and Design Update

The excitement continues to build for our new Sanctuary and office space. On Sunday, October 29th, tours of the new facilities were given to anyone at church that day who desired to see the progress. Many members took advantage of the opportunity to observe the unfinished insides of our new home and ask questions to the knowledgeable tour guides (contractors/supervisors). You could feel the joy, excitement and anxiousness in everyone from little children to guests, seasoned members, and even staff.

Then on Tuesday the 31st, our church opened its campus to the community for Trunk or Treat. As hundreds, possibly thousands of community members entered the event, they all passed by our new Sanctuary in awe of its progress.

The project remains on schedule. There is still plenty of work to be done. We continue to pray that pledges will come in on time and new donations will surprise us. We also pray that this new tool will lead us to our ultimate goal of spreading the Good News!

