

LAKEWOOD

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



PREPARE THE WAY

What is different or new about this Christmas for you? Advent is filled with expectant hope of the God with us. We are reminded that God is present with us. Advent opens our eyes and hearts to God's presence around us.

In a recent Life at Lakewood article, we encountered the fulfillment of Simeon's expectant hope. Simeon waited his whole life with an expectant hope of the Messiah's coming. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn't die without seeing the Messiah. He continued his lifelong journey towards the manger. He didn't travel to Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus laying in the manger. Rather, during his normal daily routine the Holy Spirit moved him to come into the temple courts. This was a break from his normal routine. It was here that Simeon encountered the Messiah. Expectant hope of the Messiah's coming was positioned in his hands. God's gift of salvation and grace he held. Joseph was a reluctant participant in the birth narrative and desired to release Mary from any responsibility. There are times that we are reluctant participants in the journey to the manger. Because of outside influences, loose of a loved one, isolation, and more we may be reluctant to participate in the narrative that surrounds us. Hopelessness can veil the anticipation of expectant hope. It can tarnish the reflection from the manger.

The Holy Spirit continues to prepare the way of Jesus' inbreaking into our narratives to reimage us. God continues to make a way in us to receive the gift of hope, grace, love, and mercy. Our eyes are opened to see what God sees. Our hearts burst with expectant hope.

We receive the gift of a new understanding. I opened with the question what is different or new about Christmas for you? Advent gives us a new picture of God, about each other, and purpose for living. There are times we desire to defend Christmas than to receive a new understanding.

We receive the gift of a strong foundation. We need something strong to lean into or

against. May you look for ways to receive the gift of Christmas that God offers us.

In this together,
Pastor Don

HAPPENING AT LAKEWOOD

FEASTING IN THE WORD

WEDNESDAYS AT 4:00pm, Church Library

We have begun our study of Luke and we would love for you to join us for this in-depth Bible study held each Wednesday in the church library. If you want to delve into Scripture, this is the place for you. For a set of pre-class questions (not required for participation), contact Stella at 463-0244 or Ree at 524-6071.

ENRICHMENT CIRCLE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS COVERED DISH DINNER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 6:30pm, Melanie Dunkle's home

Attention Lakewood women! Enrichment Circle will host its annual Christmas Covered Dish Dinner . Please plan to join in the fun (and bring a friend) for this much-anticipated holiday get-together! Bring your favorite dish and a \$10 gift to exchange. For questions and directions, contact Peggy at 733-1082.

YOUNG AT HEART FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 11:30am

We will be having lunch offsite at the Blackstone Grill. The church bus will leave at 11:30am. Reservations are needed for the bus and restaurant. Please call Ruth at 268-2936 to reserve your spot.

YOUNG AT HEART THIRD SUNDAY LUNCH

DECEMBER 16, after 11:00am worship, CAC Dining Room

Dane Coleman and Wayne Goodwin will provide our program on What Is Christmas? We invite visitors and newcomers to join us for this special treat.

OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The church office will be closed on the following dates:
December 24-26, December 31, January 1

2019 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes for 2019 have arrived. They will be available for pick up after worship services in December and in the church office. If you need assistance with receiving your offering envelopes, please contact Jennifer at jennifer.genton@lakewoodumc.com or call Jennifer at 733-8477.

ADVENT

[CLICK HERE FOR PRINTABLE VERSION OF THE ADVENT SCHEDULE](#)

SPECIAL ADVENT SERVICE

Sunday, December 2, 8:30am and 11:00am

1st Sunday of Advent with Youth-led music

FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AND SPAGHETTI DINNER

Sunday, December 2

5:00pm program in the Sanctuary

6:00pm dinner in the CAC Gym, face painting, bake sale, photos with Santa. Tickets are \$5.00 each. [Purchase tickets online](#). A limited number available at the door.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTLIFE

Wednesday, December 5, 5:15 pm

TESTIFY! CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

Saturday, December 15, 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Wednesday, December 19

Meal at 5:00 pm, family movie at 5:45 pm

MARCH TO THE MANGER

Sunday, December 23,

8:30am and 11:00am

4th Sunday of Advent

As part of our wonderful Lakewood tradition, you will be invited to bring a gift to honor Jesus at both Sunday morning worship services. Whether you want to help support the whole church with a donation to the General Fund, support a favorite local outreach program, or perhaps offer a gift to support one of our ministries, there are many great opportunities to bless people near and far.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Monday, December 24

*10:00 am Family Christmas Eve Service and live nativity after service

*7:30 pm Candlelight & Communion, Chancel Choir, String Quartet, candlelight

11:00 pm Candlelight & Communion, music by Aglow and Testify!, candlelight

*Nursery provided

MISSIONS

SAN JOSE ELEMENTARY TEACHER/STAFF LUNCHEON

Monday, December 17, 11:30am

Lakewood UMC will host a teacher/staff appreciation lunch at San Jose Elementary. If you can help, please call or text Ree at 524-6071. Also, remember to keep collecting Box Tops4Education and deposit them in containers in the church office or CAC Lobby. Thank you Lakewood for all of your continue support for SJES!

SOCK-IT TO CRM

The Modern Family Sunday School class continues to collect *new* socks for men, women, and children to give to the City Rescue Mission. Any size and color is appreciated! Drop off socks in the collection box in the church office or in the jumbo stocking in the Modern Family classroom, CAC Room 201, by Sunday, December 16.

BLOOD DRIVE THANK YOU

All of us at Lakewood offer a heartfelt thank you to those who donated blood at our recent church-wide blood drive: David Boyd, Justin Geiger, Linda Fralick, Richard Grubbs, Tim Pardue, David Dinkins, Larry Figart, Melanie Fitzpatrick, and Terry Collins.

SJES FALL FESTIVAL WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

On November 17, San Jose Elementary hosted its first Fall Festival and LUMC was there to help. In preparation for the festival, SJES's principal, Paula Smith, reached out to Lakewood for help in obtaining 40+ pumpkins so each classroom would have a pumpkin to decorate for the "Best Dressed Pumpkin" contest. Lakewood was able to obtain all of the pumpkins needed through the generosity of River of Life UMC who donated them from their pumpkin patch sales. Many thanks to Jennifer Genton and Suzanne Biery for arranging the donation and to Suzanne and Linda and Fred Fralick who volunteered for the massive job of picking up and delivering all 47 pumpkins! Lakewood also helped man the game booths for the children to enjoy. Thank you to Lea Frazier, Jodi Pope, Jessica and Bill Killen and Ree Unterspan!





STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry is such a gift to folks who are receiving care. People who are going through a job loss, divorce, grief, or other difficulties receive comfort and find hope.

The relationships formed in Stephen Ministry become life altering. This becomes an immense opportunity for the church to be the church; to be a family for folks who are lonely, searching for spirituality, or in pain. But a church can't be a support system if it isn't equipped to help people during moments of pain. Stephen Ministry has helped us to equip people, so when somebody is in pain, we're able to say, "Here's someone who can come alongside you and love you."

If you, or someone you know, could benefit from a trained confidential Christian friend to walk with you, listen to you, and support you during a difficult time in your life, please contact Pastor Eric Williams at 733-8477.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Every Monday Night!
6:00 - 7:00 pm Dinner



Celebrate Recovery

7:00 - 8:00 pm Main Meeting
8:00 - 9:00 pm Small Groups
9:00 pm Cornerstone Cafe

Bring your kids ages 5 - 12 to Celebration Place! While adults explore topics that bring healing and wholeness, kids discover the same truths in age-appropriate ways! Celebration Place helps to lead kids as they make Jesus the enduring, rock-solid foundation of their lives and is designed to inspire kids with hope, joy, and happiness while they learn to rely on God.

WHAT IS CELEBRATE RECOVERY?

Celebrate Recovery is a biblical and balanced program that helps us overcome our hurts, hang-ups, and habits by experiencing the loving power of Jesus Christ through a recovery process.

WHO IS CELEBRATE RECOVERY FOR?

You and me! It's for people who've been hurt. It's for people who've hurt others. It's for any of life's struggles that we all have to deal with.

To volunteer, take a step study, or to get involved in any way, please contact Mark Biery (813-5669), Suzanne Biery (576-2755), or Cyndi Morphey (318-6539).

<http://www.celebraterecoveryjacksonville.com/>

E-Reflections

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, or would like to submit an article, contact Jennifer Genton (jennifer.genton@lakewoodumc.com). Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month. *All articles may be edited as necessary.* Copies of Lakewood UMC's E-Reflections are available in the church office, in the Sanctuary, and on our website (<http://www.lakewoodumc.com/>).

STAY CONNECTED:



