



THE BEACON

"Making disciples for Jesus Christ to share God's love."

Newsletter of Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church • December 2024

The Advent Season has finally arrived. Some might have been waiting all year. However, for those here at Mt Nebo, we had a foretaste of this special celebration in July! It all started with an idea from our Music Minister, Dr. Rose Gamblin, during one of our weekly staff meetings. It was her idea to do something special - something different during the slow months of summer.

This special celebration would be Christmas in July. It was a foretaste of what we could expect in a short six months - the joy and anticipation of the birth of the Christ child.

During our celebration of Christmas in July, it gave us an opportunity to forget the cares of the world, to be lighthearted and to be able to look at the world with the awe and wonder of a child again. Sometimes we just need to stop and disconnect from the world for the benefit of our own mental health - to be freed from the complexities of this world to reflect on the importance of our faith in God.

It also reminds us of what God expects from us as adopted members of his family. It is a reminder of what it means to be a Christian. We are a called people - called to compassionately reach out to those that are marginalized in our society. We are called to sacrifice our own needs so that others may be served. We see this in the ministries we support, from Volunteers in Mission (VIM) to Micah's Backpack, and all the in-between ministries we support. Each year we have expanded this number and at times have gone far beyond the boundaries of Washington County. It reminded us that we are called to open our hearts for the joy that God has intended for all of us. We serve with joy - the joy that is God-given through His grace. Our Christ-

mas in July made a statement to our community that we are passionate in our faith every day of the year - not just during special seasons.

And now, once again, we are reminded as we approach the birth of the Christ Child, through the joining together of the wonder of childbirth with the wonder of God's saving work. It invites us to consider how the experience of "expecting" teaches us something about the ways of God's gracious work in human experience. We wait with great hope and expectation for what is to come. Every birth is a sign of salvation, of finding favor with God, of being blessed, of living with promise, and of realizing its fulfillment. It is a universally felt human experience. It is something each one of us feels when the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts and we feel ourselves overwhelmed with gratitude and joy and a feeling of deep assurance and love.

This same feeling was felt by Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, when Mary, the mother of Jesus, greeted her and Elizabeth exclaimed with a loud cry, *"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."* (Luke 1:42-45).

Elizabeth was not talking just about the baby growing in her womb. She was talking about the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. She was talking about the joy of being in God's holy presence. She was talking about the assurance of our faith. She was talking about the miraculous



EPISTLE & CHURCH INFO

EPISTLE CONTINUED....

uplifting we know when we consider the gift of Christ to this world and to each of us.

When have you felt the presence of God so deeply that you felt your heart leap for joy inside of you? Maybe it was during an Emmaus Walk weekend, or at a revival, or in a study group or a Sunday school class, or in worship, perhaps during the singing of a particular hymn. It is that sense of knowing that you are in the presence of God. It is feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit deep within your heart. Some have felt it at the moment when someone they loved was passing from this life into the next. Others have known God's presence during a particularly difficult time in their life, and they felt the prayers of their church family lifting them up. It can happen each morning when we wake up and find ourselves just grateful to be alive. It happens when we feel surrounded and held by people who truly love us. It's different for everybody. The Holy Spirit comes to us in many different ways. God always meets each of us in just the right place for us personally. Whatever way it comes to us, it is always a moment when we feel our hearts leap for joy because we know that we are in the presence of Christ.

Now that the time for celebration is drawing very near, let us await in patient anticipation for that joy that surpasses all joy - the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! Amen.

Pastor Bob



CHURCH INFORMATION

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Office Phone: 301-432-8741

Mt. Nebo Email: mt.nebo@myactv.net

Website: www.mtneboumc.com

Sunday Event Times:

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

10:00 a.m. Sunday School (for all ages)

Pastor:

Pastor Bob Ruggieri

443-994-9505

Email: pastorbob2017@gmail.com

Staff:

Administrative Secretary – Brandi Puzonia

Minister of Music – Rose Gamblin

Finance – Patty Watson & Shana Wolfe

Sextons/Maintenance – Dennis & Sallie Dorsey
and Sara Halbritter

Mt. Nebo Christian Learning Center

Hours: Monday – Friday 6 a.m.—6 p.m.

301-432-6042

www.mtneboclc.org

Director – Kim Kelly

director@mtneboclc.org

Communications Team:

Toni Wetzel, Katie Smith, Pastor Bob,
Glenn deShazo, and Brandi Puzonia

IN THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Epistle	Page 1-2
Table of Contents/Church Info	Page 2
Lay Readers/Birthdays/Anniv./Thanks-living	Page 3
Youth News	Page 4
Christian Learning Center & Church News	Page 5
Church News	Page 6
Missions in Outreach	Page 7
Around Mt Nebo and Community Ministry Pics	Page 8-10
December Calendar	Page 12



DECEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS



BIRTHDAYS

Dec 1	Enzo Gerand	Dec 19	Wanda Lowman
	Charlotte Leach	Dec 20	Brittany Harding
Dec 3	Gary Pryor		Jane Lohman
Dec 4	Noah Gollogly		Jade Ruggieri
Dec 7	Jon Gollogly	Dec 22	Faithie Riner
Dec 10	Mark Parish	Dec 23	Jaxon Pugh
Dec 13	Sean Gollogly	Dec 25	Betty Jones
Dec 16	Amanda Mathis	Dec 31	Donna Furry
Dec 17	Bob Ruggieri		

ANNIVERSARIES

Dec 10	Dan & Genna Gerand
Dec 13	Tony & Dianna Basile
Dec 16	Glenn & Jannette deShazo



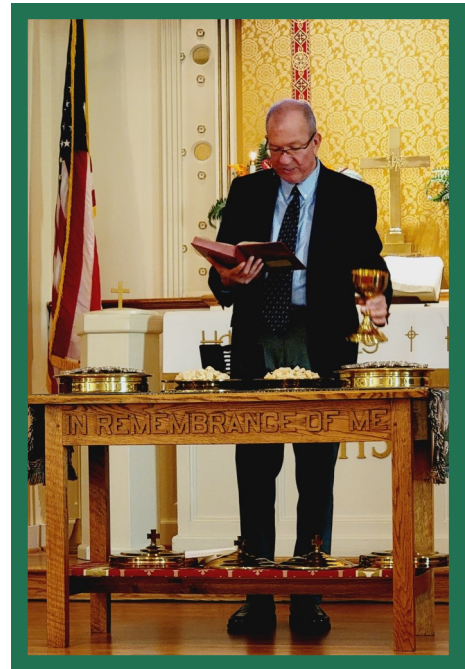
DECEMBER LAY READERS:

- Dec 1—Pugh Family
- Dec 8—Shank Family
- Dec 15—Harding Family
- Dec 22—Young Family
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve— Deatrich Family



OFFERING ENVELOPES/END OF YEAR STATEMENTS

2025 offering envelopes are in teh Gathering Room. If you don't have a box and would like one, please see Toni Wetzel. End of the year statements will be available by mid-January.



THANKS-GIVING FOR THANKS-LIVING

Special thanks to Cindy Kauffman and Ann Wright for organizing our project to provide flood buckets and health kits to folks who have suffered great loss in the floods in North Carolina, Florida, and Virginia. And to everyone who donated items to fill the flood buckets and health kits.

To each person who took the time to fill a Shoe Box and to Alyssa Berg for organizing this most meaningful mission that shares the love of God with children around the world.

Many thanks to each person who helped with the mission of sharing birthday gifts with Sterling residents each month this year.

To Sunny Meadows for providing pumpkins for our youth to carve for Halloween.

Thank you to each member of the church who donated to the United Methodist Student Day Offering.

To Lisa Hale for creating the art she adds to decorate the bulletin board.

YOUTH NEWS

MT. NEBO YOUTH NEWS

The past few weeks have been busy for the youth group! They took a trip to Dollar General and shopped for shoebox gifts for Operation Christmas Child. They continued working on the Clopper House, which included installing new flooring in the kitchen and bathroom, as well as a new toilet and vanity in the bathroom. Meghan Humbert, the Youth Coordinator for the Baltimore Washington Conference, visited the youth at the Clopper House to see the results of the grant. It was a nice visit and a great opportunity for the youth to share everything they've been working on for the past several months. The youth also helped with the Hanging of the Greens in preparation for Christmas.

The **3rd Annual Parents' Night Out** is scheduled for **Saturday, December 7th**. Parents can drop off their children (ages 2 through 5th grade) and the youth group will entertain them for a few hours with games, crafts, dinner, and fun! See the bulletin board at church for more information and registration forms.

Please contact Alyssa Berg or Don Dorsey for more info about the youth group - all youth in 6th-12th grade are always welcome!

Alyssa Berg

YOUTH OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, DEC 8

Please join the youth on Sunday, December 8th for an Open House immediately following the end of the service from **10:30am to 11:30am** by taking a tour of the Clopper House. See all the hard work they have put into the rehabilitation. The youth will have some silent auction items to raise additional funds that will go toward the Clopper House and other youth activities. Miss Darce graciously donated one of her beautiful handmade quilts that will be part of the silent auction. There will be some snacks and treats to enjoy as well. Please come and join us in this milestone of an event.

Don Dorsey



CLC NEWS

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER

As usual, we have December packed with events. If you are anything like me, your own calendars are filled with holiday shopping, parties, and get togethers. The holidays are supposed to be fun – for everyone! As we rush around this holiday season, we need to be mindful of the effect of our hectic schedules upon our children. Dinners on the run, crowded stores, and long lines are not young children's idea of a good time. These events are often-times stressful for children. You may see changes in your child's behavior such as teary good-byes, aggression, and acting out. So, as you're making your plans, be sure to maintain that quality time with your children too!

Santa's Workshop will be available from **December 9th – December 12th** for the children to find gifts for family members again. We are excited to help our kids shop this year!

Christmas Spirit week will be from **December 16th – 20th**! We are looking forward to a fun-filled week to get us in the Christmas mood!

On **Friday, December 13th** we will be having our next **PNO – Parent's Night Out from 6 pm to 9 pm**. This will be for infants through school age students and will be a great opportunity for the parents to do some Christmas shopping or a date night!

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER CONT..

Our **Christmas program, The Christmas Blessing**, will be on **Thursday, December 19th at 6:15 pm** in the sanctuary. The children in toddler 2, 2's, 2/3's, 3/4's, outdoor and school age classrooms will be participating in this event.

As Christmas approaches, we will be teaching our students about Holiday Traditions Around the World, and the celebration of God's great gift to us – the birth of Christ! I pray that each of you will discover the best gift of all this season!

Mt. Nebo CLC will be **closed from December 23rd through January 1st**. We will re-open on **Thursday, January 2nd**. This break is a great time for the parents and their kiddos to spend time with friends and family, as well as get some much-needed "R&R." During this time, the simplest thing that you can do for your child, is just to make sure that they are balancing their screen-time with fun and healthy activities, such as riding bikes, playing outside with friends, or spending quality time with their families.

Our MNCLC family wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a safe & Happy New Year!

Hugs and High Fives, Ms. Kim, Director

CHURCH NEWS

MT. NEBO WELLNESS

10 POUNDS MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

Losing weight just to look good is missing the point. Sure, if you look good you feel better about yourself and your self-esteem increases. However, you can also feel better about yourself when giving to the needy, planning a great party, completing a college course, etc.

Losing weight is so much more. With a healthy weight you reduce your chances 30% in different cancers. You can also reduce your chances of getting type 2 diabetes. Most importantly, your body, especially your knees and feet, will appreciate weight loss the most!

Did you know 1 pound over your ideal weight puts 4 pounds of pressure on your knees and 6 pounds of pressure on your feet? So just by losing 10 pounds of unwanted weight, you will reduce 40

MT. NEBO WELLNESS CONT..

pounds on your knees and 60 pounds on your feet. Could you imagine carrying around a 40 or a 60-pound child all day? Focus on losing that first 10 pounds and see what a difference it will make.

Patty Watson



CHURCH NEWS CONTINUED

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

At our recent meeting, Alyssa shared a devotion about Thanksgiving. We were reminded to be thankful in all circumstances, regardless of what we are facing in our lives. It is important to have a heart of thankfulness.

We made donations to Samaritan's Purse for Operation Christmas Child, as well as to Christmas Outreach. Both ministries are important to UMW because they support women and children, both locally and globally. Several of the women will be making cookies for the upcoming Christmas church tour.

Join us for our next meeting on **Wednesday, December 18 at 10:00am**. We will have a \$5-\$10 gift exchange and enjoy a Christmas luncheon together.

Alyssa Berg

FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

As we approach the Advent Season, let us count our many blessings. We have so much for which to be grateful. Our church has also been blessed. This year we collected 88 shoeboxes, made 18 hygiene kits, and 16 flood buckets for Hurricane Relief. Five families will also be blessed with Christmas gifts and meals. Many, many thanks to our Christian Learning Center and their school agers for making 31 hygiene kits. We are truly blessed to have them here at our church.

This year on **December 15**, the Town of Boonsboro is once again hosting the Historical Church Tour from **2pm-5pm**. Mt. Nebo is a very historical church, tracing its roots back to 1868. For that reason, we will be participating. Dr. Rose

Gamblin is planning a variety of musical selections for the afternoon. If you are interested in seeing the other churches, those who will be open are St. Mark's Episcopal Church, St. James



FROM YOUR LAY LEADER CONT...

Catholic Church, First Christian Church of Boonsboro, Trinity Reformed UCC, and Mt. Nebo UMC. Enjoy walking around town to enjoy the sounds of the season and view each sanctuary.

Please be sure to join us on Christmas Eve for our worship service at 7 pm.

Cindy Kauffman, Lay Leader

UNITED METHODIST MEN

Mt. Nebo's men gathered for a delicious breakfast on Sat., Nov. 9. Included was French toast, sausage, donuts, scrambled eggs, orange juice, and coffee. Last year in December, the men decided to skip our monthly breakfast and just pick up



the shut-in Christmas cards and gifts and deliver them to the shut-ins on Saturday or the following Sunday. This system worked well last year, so I suggested that we do it again this year. The cards and gifts for shut-ins will be on the counter in the Gathering Room on **Saturday, Dec. 14**, so that the men can pick them up and deliver them. Please plan to help on either Saturday, Dec. 14 or Sunday, Dec. 15 to help share the meaning of Christmas with this meaningful mission of Mt. Nebo UMC. Thank you.

Bruce Smith

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING...

It is hard to believe that another year has passed, and we are now in December. The 21st of the month is the shortest daylight day of the year. I find that somewhat depressing. But the good news is that on the 25th, we can celebrate the birth of Christ! We that truly believe will hear the bells ringing in jubilation. Mt. Nebo becomes more vibrant and busy. The spirit is alive! I am always writing and talking to you about our church's financial condition. It's real. But I believe that we all can hear the bells of Christmas and will respond, as we do, when we hear the Salvation Army bells at Christmas! Merry Christmas!

Skip Kauffman, Finance Chair

MISSIONS IN OUTREACH

MICAH'S BACKPACK

Micah's Backpack service continues to serve students in South Washinton County to children in need of food nourishment on the weekends. On the 7th of November, Mt. Nebo helped pack and deliver 135 packages to assigned schools for students. Mt Nebo will continue helping on the **1st Thursday of each month** at Trinity Lutheran Church. There will be a date change in December to **Tuesday, Dec 3**, due to the early school dismissal that week. It was suggested that just 2 items be collected per month. The items we will collect will be oatmeal packs and popcorn packs. As always, thanks to our many volunteers.

Ruth Resh

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

The posters are up in the Gathering area. There are 12 children from five local families that can use our help this Christmas. You may participate by signing up for some or all the needs of a child by adding your name to the line items you would like to purchase. Please return gifts, wrapped or not, by **Sunday, December 8th**, mark with Post-It notes {not scotch tape} that state the family number and child with age. For example, [family 3, girl 9]. Presents may be taken to the third floor where you will find tables marked with the family number for your child.

If you would like to participate in this ministry but shopping is not possible, then you may make a check out to Mt. Nebo and mark Christmas Outreach in the memo area or put cash donation in the special envelope from the pews. We will use these funds to purchase items left blank on the posters.

Some gifts will need to be wrapped and labeled before being given to the families and we have set aside **Thursday, December 12th at 9 am** for the wrapping. Paper, tape, and labels are provided, but we ask you to bring your scissors. There will also be snacks for the sweet elves that will come to help.

This wonderful ministry of Mt. Nebo has brought so much joy to many local families, and

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH CONT...

they seem very grateful for your help. If you have any questions, you may contact Ann Wright at 301-992-7216. May you and your family be abundantly blessed as you spread God's Joy this Christmas.

Ann Wright

SHOEBOX REPORT

THANK YOU to everyone who filled shoeboxes, donated items for shoeboxes, donated money for shipping, and prayed for the children who will receive the shoeboxes! This year, Mt. Nebo collected 88 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child! Your generosity will touch children throughout the world this Christmas season!

Alyssa Berg



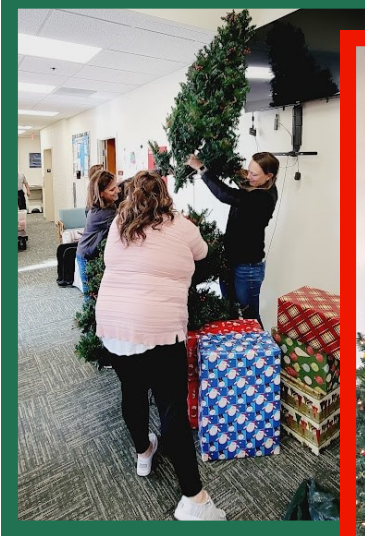
MISSION MOUSE

During the month of December, we will be concentrating on the celebration of Christ's birth. What an amazing event. God's gift to the world of his Son is almost beyond belief. God gave his Son as a special gift, so that we could learn to live lives of caring and sharing. We each can share a special gift this Christmas by participating in the Christmas Outreach Mission. This mission provides clothing and toys for children of families in our area who would go without a Christmas celebration. Check the posters that are in the gathering area and pick a child and one or two or more of



the needs for that child. Take time to purchase items and say a prayer that the child who receives the items you purchased will be blessed during the coming year.

HANGING OF THE GREENS



HANGING OF THE GREENS CONTINUED



ol Volleyball team!



Congrats to Anna Jackson,
Sidney Turner, and the entire
Girls' High School Volleyball
team!

They are 1A MD State
Volleyball Champions after
winning states.
Show them some love next
time you see them!



PICS AROUND MT. NEBO




Blessing the Flood Buckets



All Saints Sunday



DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 1st Sunday of Advent 9a Worship 3p Advent Bible Study	2 630p BAAA BBall	3 1p Micah's Backpack JW Bball 630p-830p	4 630p BAAA BBall	5 6p Girl Scouts 6p Choir 7p Bells	6	7 9a Pickleball 11:30a VIM Meal 5-8p Parents Night Out
8 2nd Sunday of Advent 9a Worship Christmas Outreach Gifts Due 3p Advent Bible Study	9 630p BAAA BBall	10 JW Bball 630p-830p	11 630p BAAA BBall	12 9a Christmas Outreach Wrapping 6p Choir 7p Bells	13 Newsletter Articles Due	14 830a UMM Shut-In Gift Deliveries 9a Pickleball
15 3rd Sunday of Advent 9a Worship 1030a Micah's Backpack 3p-5p Church Historic Tour	16 630p Advent Bible Study 630p BAAA BBall	17 JW Bball 630p-830p	18 10a UMW Meeting 630p BAAA BBall 6p Choir 7p Bells	19 6p CLC Christmas Program (Sanctuary) 6p Girl Scouts (Clopper House)	20	21 8-9a SHARE Pickup 9a Pickleball
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9a Worship 3p Advent Bible Study	23 6p CLC Christmas Program (Sanctuary) (Snow Date)	24 7p Christmas Eve Service	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!	26	27	28
Office Closed						
29 9a Worship	30 Office Closed	31 New Year's Eve				

Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church
134 S. Main Street
Boonsboro, MD 21713

Change Service Requested

