

# THE TIE THAT BINDS

Rocky Mount United Methodist Church  
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Our Mission: *"To Know Jesus and Share His Love"*



December 2019/January 2020

## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT RMUMC



### **Friday, December 6**

5:30 p.m., Our UM Men will sell their world-famous chili at the annual "Come Home to a Franklin County Christmas" on Franklin Street.

### **Saturday, December 7**

10:30-11:30 a.m., dress rehearsal for children's Christmas play. Note: children will give a "preview" of their play as they sing a selection during morning worship on December 8.

### **Sunday, December 8**

6:30 p.m., The children will present their musical "For the Glory of the King."

### **Friday, December 13**

6:00 p.m., Little Lambs Christian Preschool will present "The World Sings Noel."

### **Sunday, December 15**

10:55 a.m., our Chancel Choir will present their annual cantata. This year, it's entitled, "Have You Heard?"

Following worship, we will be having a Christmas party for the special needs adults in our community.

### **Tuesday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)**

7:00 p.m., Candlelight Christmas Eve Service - Bring your visiting family and friends with you to church for worship. This is a traditional time for families to be together and share in Holy Communion.



# ROCKY MOUNT

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

35 North Main Street  
Rocky Mount, VA 24151

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Telephone No. (540) 483-5338 Fax No. (540) 484-1698

*To Know Jesus And To Share His Love*

Dear RMUMC,

In November, a couple came into the office seeking assistance. They brought with them their two sons so the office was crowded. The boys were an inquisitive pair, wandering around the office and picking up items while the parents and I chatted about their situation. At one point, one of the boys held up the scallop shell, which was given to me after a "Remember Your Baptism" service at my seminary. I shared with them about the baptisms I've participated in as a pastor and about that particular service. Then, he found the cross and flame cross-stitch ornament in the shell. I shared with him that the symbol of our faith is the cross of Jesus, where the Son of God died so that we would have life. Then, he found my seahorse.

It's a small, bony seahorse, gifted to me from a man at the Peruvian church that hosted our mission team from 2014. It is one of my most prized possessions because it draws me back to that trip and the people of Peru. Furthermore, the species of the seahorse has always intrigued me. When I was a young boy and first heard of these creatures, I imagined horses that enjoyed galloping on the seashore. Perhaps at Zoo Atlanta or the Chattanooga Aquarium, my family introduced me to the real seahorses. A seahorse only gets to be a few inches long and in the grand scheme of the ocean, the seahorse is insignificant. With such mammoths as the blue whale or the Great White Shark, a seahorse would never be picked early in a sea basketball draft. Because of their tininess, seahorses often lock tails and swim in pairs rather than alone. But the most interesting fact about the seahorse? The male "gives birth" to around 2,000 individual seahorses after the eggs of the female have been transferred to the male. When the time comes, he will release the baby seahorses into the underwater water world that the seahorse calls home.

As the little boy held the seahorse, he looked at wonder at this tiny creature that had found its way to my office. We talked about the seahorse and how fascinating a creature it is, as well as the mission trip to Peru and how international missions planted its mark on my life. We talked about how seahorses are like people in church, they band together as they swim through the rough seas. You carry one another in church, just like the male seahorse carries the young in his frontal sack. I was able to blend the item they had found with my faith.

Before they left, I asked them a question that I don't normally ask: "What do you hope for your life?" (Do you ever ask questions that you just don't know where they come from? This question was highly unusual for me to ask). The boy who was still eyeing the seahorse said, "I want to go to Peru and help the people there." God was at work here.

(continued on page 3)

In the Bible, Simon Peter once denied Jesus 3 times. Later, he would write 1 Peter, and in it, he included these words in the book: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." He recognized that he had a second chance, a re-do, and with this book and the instruction it gives, he wasn't going to miss his second shot.

Friends, this period of time ahead is, outside of Easter, the best opportunity you have to share your faith. People will wonder why are we doing all this shopping/decorating/visiting/buying/gifting/chocolating/merry-making? So much of it can be stress inducing and mystifying. In the midst of it all, I'd imagine you'll have someone wondering why even do it in the first place. They'll be clutching the proverbial seahorse and asking, "Why is this here?" And you'll look them in the eye, and say, "Because Jesus came to Earth to bring hope & life."

Seahorses, scallop shells, and crosses; Christmas trees, wrapped gifts, and fudge brownies. I don't know what the item will be, but I'd imagine that whatever it is, that item will become a springboard to share the reason for the hope that is within you.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,  
Pastor Will

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Each year, the youth group leads the charge to provide Christmas gifts to our special needs adults in Rocky Mount and Franklin County group homes. This year is no different. Like last year, there will be a small Christmas tree located in the narthex with envelopes attached to it. These envelopes contain the names and the requested items for these ladies and gentlemen. Pick a name; buy the gifts listed inside the envelope, and return wrapped gifts to the Fellowship Hall on December 15. Sign your name on the form next to the tree so that we know who is going to be providing for which adult. On December 15, after the Cantata, there will be a catered lunch for those who took names, the youth, and of course, our special needs neighbors. It's going to be a special time for all, but we need your help to ensure that our neighbors have a blessed Christmas!

## Advent Friends

Again this year during the season of Advent, you will be given the opportunity to select an Advent Friend. Envelopes will be available on Sunday, December 1, containing the name of a church family member, “an Advent Friend,” who is either shut-in or in need of some special care during the Advent season. You will be asked to pray for this person and extend other kindnesses such as a personal call, a greeting card, or other special treats.



In December and January, our church is in charge of serving lunch at Stepping Stone Soup Kitchen the following days:

- Thursday, December 26
- Thursday, January 23
- Tuesday, January 28

Please sign-up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board located at the steps going down to the preschool. Thanks!

### 2020 Offering Envelopes

The 2020 offering envelopes will be available December 15 for pickup on a table in the Atrium. If you are interested in using envelopes and do not have one assigned, please call the church office. Likewise, notify the office if you were assigned envelopes and will not be using them. Thank you.



### Flower Chart

The flower chart for 2020 is here. Reserve your “special Sunday” now to provide altar



flowers during the worship service. Also, remember that the piano is available for an arrangement should there be two individuals interested in the same date. You will be responsible for ordering the flowers. Call the church office or stop by the chart on the bulletin board that is located at the steps that go down to the preschool to reserve your special date.

### Confirmation

In the late winter and early spring, we'll be offering Confirmation



for the youth that can go through the process. It is typically for 6th-8th graders. Confirmation is the opportunity to confirm your faith. For many, baptisms take place when you are a young infant. Because of this, some that are baptized haven't made a public declaration of their faith yet. Confirmation allows you to go through scripture and creeds of Christianity to ultimately ask your child the question, "Do you affirm that you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, that you put your full trust in his grace, and reject the spiritual forces of wickedness." This is one of the most important points in a young person's life and one not entered into lightly.

If you'd like your young person to participate, please contact [will@rm-umc.org](mailto:will@rm-umc.org) for more details on start time.



### **Recruitment Luncheon**

You are invited to come to a Recruitment Luncheon for the Rocky Mount United Methodist Women's Organization on February 3 at 10:00 a.m. The history of our beloved Rocky Mount United Methodist Women will be shared by several speakers at the meeting. Following the meeting, a light luncheon will be shared with all who can stay for the meal. Please come and look us over!

RSVP for the luncheon is requested. Please contact Debbie Caulder ([debra.caulder@yahoo.com](mailto:debra.caulder@yahoo.com) or call or text 540-204-2255), or Phyllis Lavinder ([virginiaheartgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:virginiaheartgirl@yahoo.com) or text 540-420-8381).

Please plan now to attend this meeting. We hope you will consider joining this important organization in our church.

### **Snow Closing Schedule**

It's getting close to "that" time of year when winter-weather may have an impact on the church being open. For weekday church ministries, we will copy the school-closing schedule for Franklin County Public Schools (i.e., if the schools are closed, all daytime/nighttime ministries and programs at the church will be cancelled). As far as Sunday worship when there is inclement weather, an announcement will be posted on the church's answering machine, Facebook and local television stations by 9:00 a.m. concerning Sunday school and worship. In all cases, please let safety and safe-driving guide your individual decisions about traveling to the church.



### **The Recovery Connection**

Tim Gearhart, Pastor of Wesley Memorial UMC and Chatham Heights UMC in Martinsville, invites you to participate in "The Recovery Connection." It is a weekly recovery celebration for those beginning or long-standing in recovery from addictions. A typical "Recovery Connection" evening will begin with dinner at 5:45 p.m., followed by worship for about an hour, and then breakout into small groups with the evening usually concluding around 8:45 p.m. They have a wonderful team that is very supportive and very available. This group will focus on areas that will help one's recovery become lasting and filled with joy, as well as providing a means to "connect" with God, one's self and others, as well as the community in which they live. These areas of focus are: Trusting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and participating in the Lord's Supper on the first Thursday of each month (Connect with God); working the 12 Steps (Connect with self); getting a sponsor (Connect with another for accountability); attend other support group meetings and church (Connect with recovery and faith communities); and, serving the community and its people (Connect with your neighbor). Most families (even church families) are affected by some form of addiction. If someone you know would benefit from this program, please let them know and contact Pastor Tim at 540-598-1137 for more details.



**United Methodist Women**

(Linda Walters, President)

UMW

The UMW met on Monday, November 4. Our speaker was Flo Brown from The Essig Center. She shared good information about offerings for 55+.

The UMW Christmas luncheon is Monday, December 2 in the Atrium at 11:30 a.m. for fellowship. We will be treated to a delicious lunch followed by a Christmas Carol Sing-Along. Spouses and friends are invited to attend.

Our first meeting of 2019 is Monday, January 6 at 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room. This will be a business meeting only followed by lunch. We invite all women of the church to join us.

The 2019-20 UMW Reading Program has begun. You may check out any of the books on the bottom shelf labeled UMW Reading Program in the Assembly Room. Please take a brochure to keep track of your reading. Simply sign each book out in the yellow folder and sign it in when you return it. 2020 titles as well as titles from 2015-2019 are eligible. If you take the children's books, please keep track of the names of the children to whom you read. Children count as readers too!

The UMW will continue to collect Box Tops for Education, soda can tabs, and stamps. The box for these collections is in the hall to the left of the narthex on the windowsill near the mailboxes.

We have a crew of new faces stepping into the leadership for the RMUMW. They have planned many exciting programs for next year.

Our #1 goal for 2019-2020 is to continue increasing membership. We welcome all women of the church to join us the first Monday of each month at 10:00

a.m. in the Assembly Room. If you cannot attend daytime meetings, but would like to be a member, Linda will be happy to communicate all meeting and project information to you by email. We are willing to explore the possibility of an evening or Sunday afternoon meeting for those who work during the week as well. Please contact Linda Walters (540-346-2004, lindaw@shentel.net) or any other United Methodist Woman if you are interested or have questions.



**United Methodist Men**

(Mark Newbill, President)

UMM

The United Methodist Men will again be selling their "locally famous" chili along with hot chocolate and coffee for the "Come Home to a Franklin County Christmas" in downtown Rocky Mount on December 6.

The next scheduled breakfast meeting will be on December 15 at 8:45 a.m.

We will have dinner at Ippy's in January.



On Saturday, December 21, The Wallers invite you to an Open House at the Parsonage for a pie night. We'll have an assortment of pies freshly baked for you to enjoy. Join in fellowship with all the church. Don't bring anything, but yourself and Christmas cheer. No RSVPs, just show up. We'll be offering pie between 5:00-6:30 p.m. Yummy!



## Vital Congregation Statistics for October

### I. Finances—Church Operating Budget

Amount Brought Forward From 2018	\$44,972	
Budgeted Offerings Expected to Receive through 10/31/19		\$248,330
Actual Offerings Received through 10/31/19	\$212,059	
Budgeted Expenses Expected to Spend through 10/31/19		\$245,170
Actual Expenses Paid through 10/31/19	<\$221,997>	
Ending Balance, 10/31/19	\$35,034	

- II. Average Worship Attendance = 123  
 Average Online Viewers = 22  
 Average Small Groups' Attendance = 28
- 



### Little Lambs in the News

(Jan Mohler, Director)

In November, our class families collected paper towels for the Family Resource Center. With joyful hearts, we were able to donate over thirty rolls of paper towels. The children even decorated the rolls with pictures and messages of love. They were so happy and proud to help others!

“The World Sings Noel” will be a fantastic Christmas program if you would like to come praise God with us on December 13 at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Our thirty Little Lambs will be dressed in the traditional attire of our brothers and sisters around the world. After that, there is one more week of school and then we will all be taking a much-deserved rest. We will reopen the school on January 2.

As we start the new year, the preschool is thriving. We continue to add students. The four-year-old class is full with 20 students again and the three-year-old class will start the new year with 11. We will also be adding two high school students as part of the high school's Volunteer Public Service program. We are looking forward to some extra hands in the classroom.

Ms. Jill is a wonderful teacher! The children love her. She is patient, creative, and energetic. Little Lambs is lucky to have her. We are also blessed that Ms. Rebecca agreed to stay on two mornings a week with us. Her help, wisdom and sense of humor have been a gift to both our classes.

As always, if you have a free morning and could use a little joy in your life, come by and visit with us! You will be glad you did.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Jan



(Lynn Meeks, Director of Music Ministries)

December is full of music! The children will have a dress rehearsal for the Christmas play on Saturday, December 7 at 10:30 a.m. We will meet upstairs and rehearse in the Wonderful Wednesday area. The children should be finished by 11:30 a.m. They will give us a “preview” of their play as they sing a selection during morning worship on December 8. (Parents, we will meet upstairs at 10:45 a.m.) At 6:30 p.m. that evening, the children’s choirs will present their musical, “For the Glory of the King.” (All children should be dressed and in the church parlor by 6 p.m.) *...The stage is set in red and green, the Kids Christmas Choir is waiting in the wings, the script is written, and the narrators for this year's Christmas concert are all set and ready to go – well, all but two. I wonder what presents I'll receive for Christmas...?! With all the decorations and bright lights, the scrumptious candies and cookies, and the fun days with no school, this is the burning question most kids have in the days leading up to Christmas. And it's the same question that Bradley and Brent, two of the narrators in **For the Glory of the King**, is dealing with. Join Abigail, Emily and Alex as they help remind them of the real meaning of Christmas and why we worship the Christ-child today! Add this date to your calendar! You'll receive a real Christmas blessing!*

The Jubilant Ringers will play a beautiful medley of familiar Christmas Carols during worship on December 22 and don't miss the Chancel Choir presentation of the musical, “**Have You Heard?**”, **during worship on December 15**. This cantata calls on Celtic musical traditions and

instrumentation to deliver a refreshing sound for Christmas! The orchestration incorporates Irish flute, drum, bells, and piano to paint vivid imagery of a beautifully lush and green Irish countryside. Familiar Christmas carols appear, as do some familiar Christmas texts set to beloved Irish and Welsh folk songs. An ethereal opening sets the stage before breaking into an exuberant rendition of "I Saw Three Ships;" "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus;" "Away in a Manger;" "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child;" and the beloved "Angels We Have Heard on High" all make appearances as the work progresses, culminating with a rhythmic re-imagining of "O Come, All Ye Faithful" set to the traditional Scottish melody "Loch Lomond." One of the highlights of this musical is "O Holy Night," written for soloist and choir and set to the timeless tune, LONDONDERRY AIR. Join us for this very special celebration on December 15!

And finally, join us on December 24 at 7:00 p.m., for our annual Christmas Eve Service. Trumpet music will greet you as you arrive, we'll have special solos and instrumentalists, and of course “Silent Night.”

Mike, the girls, and I thank you for another wonderful year together. Each one of you means so much to us. We wish you a joyous holiday season and many, many blessings in the new year!

January Music Notes...

Wonderful Wednesday will take a break and resume on January 8. I will be making up the full volunteer schedule for the rest of the school year to be circulated by the first of January. If you are a volunteer and don't receive a list, please check in the Wonderful Wednesday area on the fourth floor for extra copies. If you would like to be a new volunteer, please let me know. We can always use more help!

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Chancel Choir will also resume rehearsals on January 8 and handbells will begin the new year with practice on January 7. If you are thinking about joining any of our choirs, January is a great time to start. We can always use more singers and ringers!

Remember if Franklin County Public Schools are closed or dismiss early on a choir practice day due to bad weather, we will not meet. When in doubt, call me. (483-9799)

Love and Peace,  
Lynn



Hey Church, here's a riddle: YO-TH. What's missing? U are.

The greatest fear many of us harbor is the fear of the unknown. Maybe because you don't know exactly what happens at youth group, you've been afraid to participate. To dispel some of those fears, here are some of the things working with the youth group will get you:

- Someone who can program your phone so that when you go to take a selfie, your face is replaced with that of a moose (this happened in November).
- An intense feeling that that was time well spent.
- An opportunity to dispense all that well-earned wisdom that you've accrued from your days back in the '80s.
- The gift of knowing a young person
- Eating beaucoup amounts of pizza, Mexican, and candy

- Seeing a young person eat a cookie from an open container that was at least 9 weeks old
- Seeing a youth eat a burrito bigger than his torso (we eat a fair bit; we're Methodists)
- Hearing the hopes and fears of people that are shorter than you, but have just the same doubts and worries that you do
- A polar-bear plunge in mid-December where you can hold a warm towel for them and feel extremely helpful
- Talk about your faith and how it has gotten through the toughest of times.
- Swing a hammer on the mission trips in mid-Summer.

Does that make serving easier now that you know what to expect?

Contact Will Waller for more details for how you can add your help to this mighty group of young people.



December 1 – Youth Meeting

December 22 – 4:00 p.m., Polar Bear Plunge and Christmas Party

December Mission Project:  
Sunday, December 15, Following worship  
Special Needs Luncheon

### Perfect as is

Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that he gave his only Son. The only requirement is to believe in him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.

–Corrie ten Boom



**Prayer Concerns:**

Our country, those serving in our armed forces, and our church; Sonny Vaughn; Peggie Foster and daughter, Sarah; Vickie Schroeder; Jennifer Cooper; Eva

Prillaman; Jim Henderson; Johnny Guilliams; Tim & Sandra Funk; John Cooper; Jeanette Singleton; Arnold Dillon, Sr.; Mark Singleton; Christy Long (Cindy Smith); Don Applegarth (Martha Collins); Maria Snyder (Rodney Cundiff); Mary Jane Esperti (Kelly Peterson); Shelly Bagwell (Martha Collins); Marion Pritchett (Pam Pritchett); Regina Stanley (Rebecca Dillon); Stephen Youmans (Linda Davis); Brenda Akers (Shirley Vaughn); George Perdue (Jill Perdue); Debbie Ford (Ben Whitesell); DJ Snider (Patsy Swain); Shirley Funk (Tim Funk); Dennis Holland (Cyndee Holland); Jennifer Tatum (Tracy Jenkins); Tiffanee Anderson (Judy Anderson); and Martha Williams (Will Waller).


**Forget-Me-Nots:**

Marion Higgins and Eleanor Woody



The family of Ben and Chris Angle would like to thank you for all your support during this very difficult time. Thank you so much for the beautiful service by Rev. Waller, the lovely music by Lynn Meeks, the delicious meal following the service and your prayers.


# Just for Kids



## Symbols of the *season*

Many traditional decorations convey the meaning of Christmas.

*Directions: Use the picture clues to the right to complete the words. Then write the boxed letters in order to complete 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV.*



shepherd's staff    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

tree that keeps its leaves    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

shines to lead the way    \_ \_ \_

green for eternal life,    \_ \_ \_ \_ &  
red for Jesus' blood    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

sounds to announce    \_ \_ \_ \_  
good news

has no beginning or end    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Thks b to od fo is  
indescba le gif!

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15, NIV

Answer: candy cane, evergreen, star, holly & berries, bell, wreath, Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV

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**ROCKY  
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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Open Hearts...**

**Open Minds...**

**Open Doors...**

*The People of the United Methodist Church*

**CHURCH STAFF**

**Reverend Will Waller, Pastor**  
**Lynn M. Meeks, Director of Music Ministries**  
**Jeanne Banks, Music Accompanist**  
**Valerie Latimer, Administrative Assistant**  
**Jennifer Ardis, Nursery Attendant**

**(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.)**



**SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

**10:00 a.m. Small Groups**  
**10:55 a.m. Worship**