

# **B.J.U.M.C TOWER BELL**

December 2020

***PASTOR MATT ENZLER***



**Believers Joyously Unified in Mission with Christ**

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# FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR MATT

## “LOVE, unimaginable love!”

When I sit back and ponder the incarnation, the birth of Jesus, I am overwhelmed by a deep sense of love. That the creator of the universe would so humble themselves to take on a human form, and be born in such a lowly estate of a manger is inconceivable to me. Yet, we have countless pieces of information which help paint this event as part of a divine plan, written throughout history, the prophets of old, the appearance of a star and the interpretations of leaders from afar.

It can be hard, at times, to understand the incarnation, that the Lord our God, came to live among us, to teach us, and ultimately to take on our punishment for us. Romans 5 summarizes the theology of the event. I hope, as you recount the birth narratives from the scriptures this season, you take the time out to see the big picture, the divine plan, a plan of reconciliation, a plan of manifest love.

Often, we get so overwhelmed with gift-giving, and commercialism, that we lose sight of the real gift of Christmas. We know, somewhere in our minds, that Christmas is some sort of a gift. But we lose sight of what that gift really is. Although it seems strange, during Christmas, to

### ROMANS 5:12-21

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— <sup>13</sup> sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

<sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup> And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup> If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup> For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification<sup>[1]</sup> leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

think of the crucifixion, I encourage you to pause, to recognize that these two events go hand in hand, as part of the divine plan for reconciliation.

In Christmas, we recognize the joy of a messiah. The prophets had told of one who would come, to usher in a new era of holy justice, of righteousness, of peace. They had no idea how this messiah would accomplish these things. Based on the prophets, and world history up to that point, one would naturally assume this messiah would use our human institutions, power, war, and force, to usher in the new era. Instead, we got Jesus, born in a feeding trough, hardly the birth of such a leader. But Jesus accomplished in his life, what no human, even the most devout of humans could, he lived a life of perfection, in complete unity with the divine will.

This Christmas, let's pause, and recognize the fullness of this gift, that God came to us in our lowest, while we were still sinners (and still are), and came to provide access to God-self to all. Jesus opened the doors to the Kingdom of Heaven, that all who believe might come to know him, and live life in the eternal glory of our God almighty. Only through coming as he did, in humble mean estate, did he accomplish the world change so needed. Only through his ultimate act of humility on that cross did he take on the sin of the world, providing a new way forward for us, in the new covenant. Let's recognize the true gift of the incarnation, more than the birth of an infant, but truly, the true presence of the Lord for all eternity, made possible through this life, death, and resurrection. Then, we can fully recognize the true Love of our Lord, the Love that transformed, and continues to transform the world into yet a new creation.

In Christ,

Pastor Matt

# PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS BY ENGAGING IN ADVENT!

**ADVENT SERVICES AT BJUMC:** Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20: Each Sunday in the Season of Advent, we will have the traditional lighting of the Advent Wreath, focusing on different aspects of the advent season, culminating with the lighting of the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve. Additionally, we will have special musical offerings each week, including both a choir composition, as well as a duet. We have pulled all the stops to make this Advent season special

**DAILY DEVOTIONS:** Daily Devotions beginning on December 1 will focus in on several scriptures and a theme of the day to help us prepare our hearts for Christmas. Often we become overwhelmed by the cultural phenomenon of Christmas, and lose sight of the real meaning of the season. We encourage you to spend a moment each day this month on focusing on the reason for the season





The background of the entire page is a stylized illustration of a nativity scene. It features a dark, starry night sky with a prominent bright star in the upper right. Below the sky, there are silhouettes of rolling hills or mountains. In the foreground, a large, leafless tree stands on the left. To the right of the tree, a small stable or manger is visible, with silhouettes of figures (Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus) inside. The overall color palette is dark with hints of purple and blue, suggesting a night scene.

# **BJUMC PRESENTS: A LIVE NATIVITY**

**Saturday, December 5, 2020, 1-3PM in the rear parking lot. Please abide by social distancing protocol. We will have live animals in the manger, and a full representation of the nativity scene. Come and see our representation of the Birth Of Christ! A wonderful lesson for our children, and reminder for all.**



**BJUMC FAMILY MINISTRIES PRESENTS:  
GINGERBREAD HOUSE MAKING!  
SATURDAY, December 5, 5PM,**



**PLEASE RSVP TO LIZ ELLIOTT ASAP TO  
HAVE A KIT DELIVERED TO YOU, WHILE  
SUPPLIES LAST**





BJUMC PRESENTS: A SERVICE OF

# LESSONS AND CAROLS

This year, we will be combining scripture readings and prayers presented by current BJUMC members, with the carols and hymnody of years past, recognizing the presence of Christ in our church through time, as we look at the message of God throughout time, leading up to the incarnation of God in the Nativity. Join us for this special service, online only, on Saturday, December 12, 2020 at 3pm. The video will be posted for a live viewing at [www.facebook.com/bjumc](https://www.facebook.com/bjumc), but will stay available thereafter for those who wish to see it later.



A night scene depicting the birth of Jesus. In the center is a simple stable with a thatched roof, illuminated from within. Several figures are gathered around the entrance. To the left, three camels are walking towards the stable. The background is a dark blue night sky filled with many stars. A single, exceptionally bright star is positioned directly above the stable. The overall scene is set in a desert-like environment with some palm trees visible on the right.

# **BASKING RIDGE DOWNTOWN CHURCHES PRESENTS: A WALK TO BETHLEHEM**

**This year, join us all in an ecumenical service, VIRTUALLY! The downtown Basking Ridge Churches have worked together to once again bring you the Walk To Bethlehem, recounting the scripture of the birth narrative, combined with hymns of the season. Join us online for this special event. Information will be made available through the midweek minute, and our facebook, page but this is scheduled for the December 20, 3pm and will remain available online thereafter.**

WE NEED YOU!



### All age Christmas Eve Virtual Pageant

This year, the Christmas Eve family service will be virtual. So, we decided to have the whole of the BJUMC family, near and far, take part in a video. We want you to choose what you'd like to be – a shepherd, and angel or maybe a king. Your age is completely immaterial! We want all ages. 0-100+

Go to the church website – [BJUMC.org](http://BJUMC.org) and watch the story “A very Noisy Christmas”. Then, record yourself, or send a photo of the character you want to be. Use the words from the story.

If you were a shepherd, you might be asleep, (an easy one), or shouting “Wake up everybody” or “Jesus the rescuer has been born” etc.

An Angel might record “Shhhh” (you got it, another easy one), or “Peace on Earth” or “Glory to God”. Kings would say “Joy to the world” etc.

You've got the idea.

You can dress up, or not, you can film with your animals or be a modern angel - maybe cooking, or fixing a car! Anything that would be fun to watch.

Then, send your photos, or videos to: [office@bjumc.org](mailto:office@bjumc.org) by **December 5**, and we will hopefully make an amazing video for Christmas Eve.

Please please please record your video horizontally – it makes it much easier to edit! Any questions? Ask Liz at [erp.elliott@gmail.com](mailto:erp.elliott@gmail.com)



## **BJUMC CHRISTMAS EVE**

### **Children's and Family Service: 530PM**

Join us for a special service outlining the christmas story, especially for kids and kids at heart, bringing to life the "gift" of christmas!

### **Traditional Christmas Service: 7:00PM**

A more traditional service, walking through the humility of our Lord's incarnation. Join us as we sing praises to the Lord!



## United Methodist Women December 2020

**Tuesday, December 22nd, 9:30am, Grace Circle** will meet on Zoom. All are welcome to join in to share concerns and come together for devotion, prayer and conversation. Watch for the meeting link posted the week prior in the BJUMC Mid-week Minute. Contact person: Gloria Walker, gloriawalker1046@gmail.com

\*\*\*\*Please note on your calendar that Monday Walk and Talk at Harry Dunham Park will be suspended through December and January.

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As circumstances and the winter weather keep us all indoors a bit more, try something new to keep in touch with United Methodist Women.

Faith Talks are monthly conversations with United Methodist Women hosted by Jennifer R Farmer, Spotlight PR. Each conversation explores themes and resources that empower us to put faith, hope and love into action.

### Schedule

- **Thursday, December 3 at 2:00 pm ET • Faith Talks: *Advent***
- **Thursday, December 17 at 2:00 pm ET • Faith Talks: *Giving*** <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- **Thursday, January 7 at 2:00 pm ET • Faith Talks: *Creating a Sustainable Lifestyle with Emily Jones*** •

- **Thursday, February 11 at 2:00 pm ET • Faith Talks: Sustaining Faith with Emily Jones** Available as a podcast through the United Methodist Women website, [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org), or by subscribing through Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Spreaker or Castbox.

## Homespun Holidays

The United Methodist Women are not able to host their annual Homespun Holiday Bazaar this year, but that has not stopped Bonnie Artell from canning her delicious homemade jams. Current flavors available for purchase: Strawberry, Ginger Peach, New Jersey Cherry, Strawberry Rhubarb, Peach Lavender, and Cranberry Orange Marmalade. Call or email Bonnie to place your order and arrange for pick up at her home at 98 Spencer Road, Basking Ridge. Email: [bonnieartell@gmail.com](mailto:bonnieartell@gmail.com) or phone: 908-251-3886. Prices are \$4 (4-oz), \$7 (8-oz) and \$11 (12-oz).

Bonnie also has hand sewn Thanksgiving and Christmas themed table runners and placemats for sale. Contact her for more information



## Women's Clothing Collection

The United Methodist Women are seeking donations of clothing that will be taken for consignment at **Erby's Elite Repeat Boutique** consignment shop. Proceeds will support the UMW mission giving budget.



Items sought include seasonally appropriate (winter) women's clothing of any size that is current and gently used including dresses, sweaters, tops, pants, jeans, coats, jackets, shoes. We will also accept accessories such as belts, hats, pocketbooks and jewelry. This will be an ongoing collection through the end of the year. Please contact Linda Cargo, [cargoph@aol.com](mailto:cargoph@aol.com) or 908-903-1834 with questions or to arrange for clothing donation pick-up. Clothing that is not consignable or does not sell will be donated to the thrift shop at Greenstone United Methodist Church in Washington, NJ.

**Erby's Elite Repeat Boutique** is located at 916 Kemble Avenue, Morristown, NJ and is open to shoppers Wednesday through Friday, 11am to 6pm and on Saturday, 10am to 4pm.



Serve the World Through Missions  
In  
DECEMBER  
United Methodist Communities at  
Covenant Place, Plainfield, N.J.



We are delivering 60 Christmas Goodie Bags to the residents here and are asking for Christmas cards for each bag. Please either make or purchase a Christmas card and enclose a simple, heartfelt Christmas greeting for a senior resident. Cards can be placed in the God's Co-op bin in the church narthex no later than **December 14**. (This will leave the elves time to assemble and deliver the gifts!)





## ***IT'S TIME TO SPREAD CHRISTMAS JOY TO THE CHILDREN of CAMP YDP***

As in years past we at BJUMC are planning to provide a bit of happiness at Christmas by giving gifts to the children of CAMP YDP in Paterson NJ. Given all of the stresses of this year, Sherise Alleyne, the Director of CAMP, is anxious, with our help to provide a measure of stability and hope to the 60 children enrolled in the after school program.

The process of giving a gift is much the same as in years past, but with a few new ways to cope with Covid 19.

A CAMP Christmas tree is set up in the Narthex, as in years past, with stars containing information about each child and their gift request. Please enter the Narthex directly from the rear parking lot.

A child's star can be taken from the tree any day, from 11:30am to 4pm. Please remember to sign out any stars taken in the gift register next to the tree.

### **IMPORTANT COVID 19 RULES**

5 persons can be in the Narthex at once Masks are required Use the hand sanitizing station when you enter the Narthex before touching **anything**

Please purchase and wrap the gift, securely attach the star, and place the gift under the tree in the Narthex by December 16th.



If you need help selecting a star, or buying the gift, contact Peggy Shurts by email at [peggyshurts4@gmail.com](mailto:peggyshurts4@gmail.com) or by phone at 908-546-0164. Indicate gender and age preference and she will select a star from the tree for you, and give you the name, age, gender, and gift request information. Please purchase and wrap the gift, put a small sticker with the child's name on the gift, and place the gift under the tree in the Narthex by December 16th. If you would like to have the shopping for the gift done for you, Peggy will contact Gail Patterson who will arrange to purchase and wrap the gift for you, and drop it off under the Narthex Tree.

The gifts will be taken to Paterson on December 21st and distributed to the children at their Christmas party on December 23rd.

If you have any questions please contact Arthur Martin on 908-766-7275, or by Email on [amartin405@aol.com](mailto:amartin405@aol.com).

The Serve The World Team thanks you for participating in this ministry of joy and love as we reach out to the children of CAMP YDP.





## **TOWER CLUB CHRISTMAS TREE SALE**

Our annual Christmas Tree program for Missions will proceed again this year as planned. A detailed protocol has been prepared to ensure that we can set up racks, accept delivery of trees and sell them as safely as possible.

### **Here are opportunities to help with the program:**

Unloading 2nd load PA Trees    Saturday, December 5    8:00 am

Sign up to sell trees- Help is needed through the month of December!

## Around Bishop Janes UMC – December



### Around Bishop Janes UMC

By Ted Schroeder

Through the years, Bishop Janes UMC has celebrated the Christmas season in many ways. Most notable is the Christmas tree sales. They have gone on since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century; I don't remember a time when we didn't have them. One story that sticks in my mind: a woman rode up on a bicycle, bought a tree, stuck the trunk in her bicycle basket, and rode home, one hand on the handlebars, the other on the tree!

We have often had three different Christmas Eve services, working around the traditional carol singing on the green outside. Church members have also contributed to many causes, including Camp YDP in Paterson.

When I was young, Bishop Janes did a 'live creche' at Christmas, with a couple from the church playing Mary and Joseph, who could provide a newborn infant to portray Jesus. The same couple – I don't remember their name! – managed to provide the newborn for two years in a row! There was some discussion in the congregation if they would make it three in a row, I remember – they didn't, missing by a few months. (That was the Baby Boom era.)

Christmas has often been enlivened by pageants, such as the ones that Kim Dial has arranged for us. Of course, she had help, not only from the many participants,

but from backstage helpers (Carol Lutes comes to mind). Pageants also existed long ago; my sister reminds me that our mother directed one.

Bishop Janes has a long history of special musical events at Christmas, led by numerous music directors. I remember Mabel Davis, in my youth, and John Kaefer, in this century, creating memorable music extravaganzas.

We have also benefited from many hands working to create beautiful decorations for the church, most recently under the direction of the talented Richard Blauvelt. I remember Pastor Dave Dutcher telling story of one time, during a service, when a candle, carelessly handled, set the decorations behind him on fire – but I think that that was at a different church! Each church celebrates Christmas in its own way.

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## Winter 2020 Adult Small Group Studies



### **Winter 2020/2021 Adult Small Group Studies**

This winter we have a wide variety of education opportunities for adults and interested youth. Our gatherings are held on Sunday mornings from 11am until 12 noon. All of our fall classes will be virtual sessions via Zoom. You're encouraged to join the Fellowship Time after worship and at 11am you'll be moved into the class session. Here's what we have in store for the winter:

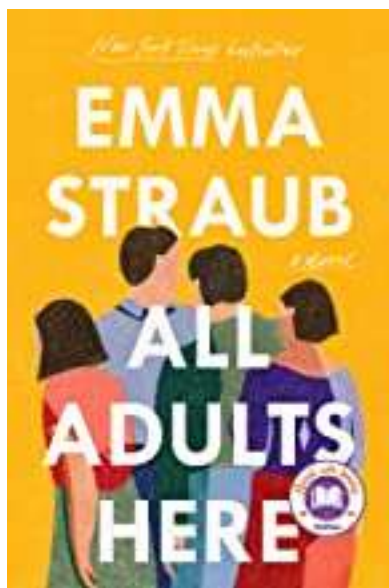
- **Advent Study - Almost Christmas: A Wesleyan Advent Experience:**  
In *Almost Christmas: A Wesleyan Advent Experience*, video segments led by author and pastor Magrey deVega provide a springboard for exploration of Advent. In this four-week study we are encouraged to follow Christ wholeheartedly during Advent, connecting the Wesleyan heritage with traditional Advent themes of Love, Hope, Joy, and Peace. This DVD features four authors discussing the key ideas in each chapter of the book, including personal stories, conversation and insights on the Advent season. This program begins on the **first Sunday of Advent, November 29<sup>th</sup>** and **ends on December 20<sup>th</sup>**.
- ***There will be no programs on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> or January 23<sup>rd</sup>*** for the Christmas/New Year's weekend.
- Beginning on **Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>** we begin a 5-week study of John **Wesley's 22 Questions** for self-reflection. As part of the United Methodist Church you may have heard someone ask, "How is your soul?" John Wesley actually developed a series of 22 questions that he used with his "Holy Club" at Oxford University as a means of daily personal reflection. In our discussions we will focus on how they apply to modern Christians.
- We'll explore another ***Spiritual Discipline on Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>***. The following week begins ***Lent which runs from February 21<sup>st</sup> through March 21<sup>st</sup>***. The course will be announced at a later date. We hope you'll consider joining some or all of our small group discussions. If you have any question, please contact Kevin Dresely at [ddresely@comcast.net](mailto:ddresely@comcast.net).



## BOOK GROUP

If you like to read and discuss books, join the BJUMC Book Group. It meets monthly, usually on the 2nd Thursday of the month from September-November and January-May at 7:00 p.m. in classroom 3 /4. We take the month of December off as that is usually a busy one for most. Since social distancing is still required due to COVID, we will be meeting in January virtually on Zoom. Members suggest which books are discussed- all types and genres are considered. New members are welcome! Please bring suggestions for books for March through May 2021. The log-in link with the password will be emailed it to all current attendees of Book Group prior to the meeting. Contact Janet Kaefer at [jbkaefer@optonline.net](mailto:jbkaefer@optonline.net) for additional information, or if you also want to receive an email with the link. Our pre-discussion dinners at The Ridge Restaurant are still on hold. Enjoy the Holidays- and Happy reading!

**January 12, 2021:** All Adults Here by Emma Straub (Led by Janet Kaefer)



A TODAY SHOW #ReadWithJenna BOOK CLUB PICK!

"In a time when all we want is hope, it's a beautiful book to reach for." -Jenna Bush Hager

"Literary sunshine."—New York Times

"Brimming with kindness, forgiveness, humor and love and yet (magically) also a page turner that held me captive until it was finished. This is Emma Straub's absolute best and the world will love it. I love it." —Ann Patchett

“An immensely charming and warmhearted book. It’s a vacation for the soul.”—Vox

A warm, funny, and keenly perceptive novel about the life cycle of one family--as the kids become parents, grandchildren become teenagers, and a matriarch confronts the legacy of her mistakes. From the New York Times bestselling author of *Modern Lovers* and *The Vacationers*.

When Astrid Strick witnesses a school bus accident in the center of town, it jostles loose a repressed memory from her young parenting days decades earlier. Suddenly, Astrid realizes she was not quite the parent she thought she’d been to her three, now-grown children. But to what consequence?

Astrid's youngest son is drifting and unfocused, making parenting mistakes of his own. Her daughter is pregnant yet struggling to give up her own adolescence. And her eldest seems to measure his adult life according to standards no one else shares. But who gets to decide, so many years later, which long-ago lapses were the ones that mattered? Who decides which apologies really count? It might be that only Astrid's thirteen-year-old granddaughter and her new friend really understand the courage it takes to tell the truth to the people you love the most.

In *All Adults Here*, Emma Straub's unique alchemy of wisdom, humor, and insight come together in a deeply satisfying story about adult siblings, aging parents, high school boyfriends, middle school mean girls, the lifelong effects of birth order, and all the other things that follow us into adulthood, whether we like them to or not.

**February 11, 2021:** [The Dutch House](#) by Ann Patchett (led by Barbara Kleinert)



# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Over the last year or two, our church has switched from a staff led model to a volunteer led model. We still have a lot of things around the church which need volunteers, in order to maintain our ministries. Most Ministry teams have modified a lot of their programming to make them more volunteer friendly. As a church, we uplift and thank all of our volunteers for the work they do to make this a wonderful place to worship, fellowship, and be a part of the body of Christ in Mission!

## ***Just a few of the places we need more volunteers:***

- **AN URGENT NEED FOR ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS TO RUN THE SOUND DESK, TO ENABLE LIVESTREAMING OF OUR WORSHIPS. We are seeking 3-4 new people interested in running the live-stream component.**
- **Counters**
- **Family Ministries Team (Event Planning and execution)**
- **Local Missions Teams: Foodbanks, Mask-Making, Contact/Service Team, and more!**
- **Director of Reconciling Ministries, Team Member**
- **Sell Xmas Trees**

## *Share with your Friends!*



Inviting your friends to church has never been easier. With so many options to choose from: daily devotions, worship services, small groups, all you have to do is share the link with a friend.

- “Liking” is different from sharing. We appreciate the likes, it makes us feel all warm and fuzzy inside, and lets us know people appreciate our work, but sharing is a way you can profess your faith, and invite others to join you. It’s really that simple!
- To share just click the **share** button on the Facebook post, and it will be on your page, so your friends know what your interests are. It’s a simple way of sharing your faith. No longer can you say, “I don’t have the words,” all you have to do is click the **share** button, and you’re done. It’s that simple