



The LUMinary

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Pastor's Corner—Understanding the Advent Journey

It was the night before Christmas... and a man name Scrooge was visited by three ghosts—the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Future. No doubt you know this man's story better than I, as I have yet to read the story nor watch one of the countless films, although I am sure that I will see one or more before Advent comes to a close.

I have been recently enlightened to the light Scrooge's story has to shed upon the mysteries of the season of Advent. Just as Scrooge was visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future, Advent is a season that inspires us to look more closely at the past, celebrate the work of God in the present, and look with hope to the future. Our task during Advent is threefold. First, we must look to the blessings of God's world already done in the world—the gift of Christ's birth in a little town called Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago.

Second, we must look to the blessings of God's work in the world today. This might be the hardest task before us. It can be difficult to see God's hands through the fog of our personal sorrows. It can be difficult to see God at work in the midst of a world that seems to be more divided than ever before or a world in which children and adults alike go hungry. But God is at work in all of the little blessings from the sunrise (or sunset if your prefer) to the glimpses of God's Kin-dom we see in the kindness and generosity of our neighbors.

Finally, we must look to a future filled with hope toward when the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace dwells among us once more. We must look with hope today when God will judge between the nations and arbitrate for many peoples; when the people will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; and the day when nation shall not lift up sword against nation and neither shall they learn war anymore (Isaiah 2). What a glorious and blessed day that will be!

Blessings,
Pastor Tiffany

Finances—Ministry Shares

What are Ministry Shares? Where do they go? What are they used for? Where do we stand?

Every year, during stewardship season, the leadership of the church asks each of you to consider a step up in your commitment to support the congregation financially. We often refer to this as a tithe. A tithe can be understood in one of two ways: 1) As a commitment to give 10% of our income. 2) Simply, as our commitment to give. While we encourage you to strive toward a tithe of 10%, we understand that is not possible for everyone and that there are some of you who feel led to give beyond 10%. So, for the purposes of this article, we will utilize the second definition of tithe as a general commitment to give.

We often receive questions regarding what Ministry Shares are, so we are here to attempt to answer that question. Your tithe is your share in the ministry of our local church. Our church's Ministry Shares are our share in the ministry of the broader United Methodist Church. In short, Ministry Shares are our church's tithe to the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church around the world.

Our Ministry Shares go to one of two places to serve a variety of purposes. First, our Ministry Shares go to the Michigan Conference, where they, combined with the Ministry Shares from other Michigan UMC's, provide for 75% of the Conference Budget and are divided into three Conference Funds: Conference Benevolence, Clergy Support, and Administration.

Secondly, our Ministry Shares contribute to the Michigan Conference's tithe to the worldwide denomination. This tithe makes up the remaining 25% of the Conference Budget and is referred to as General Church Apportionments. These apportionments are divided between seven funds: World Service Fund, Africa University Fund, Black College Fund, Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, Episcopal Fund, Ministerial Education, and General Administration Fund.

Some might wonder, why do we do this and what difference does all of this make for our local church? The answer is simple. It extends the mission and ministry of LUMC beyond the walls of our church and beyond the borders of our community, and it gives us a part to play in furthering our denomination's mission of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

It is a wonderful thing to know that when you give to your church, you are not only making a difference in your community, but also around the world! That said, we are falling short of our Ministry Share tithe this year. To date, we have sent 67%. We would greatly appreciate your help to reach our goal!

Worship and Fellowship Events

Below you will find a list of dates, sermon titles, and scripture lessons for the coming month.

Worship time is 10:30 am.

Dec 3: <i>The End We Need to Come</i>	Isaiah 64:1-9 and I Corinthians 1:3-9 and Mark 13:24-37
Dec 10: <i>Getting Ready for the End to Come</i> Second Sunday Breakfast 9:30 am	Isaiah 40:1-11 and 2 Peter 3:8-15a and Mark 1:1-8
Dec 17: <i>The Good News for the End to Come</i>	Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 and John 1:6-8,19-28
Dec 21: Longest Night Service 7:00 pm	
Dec 24: <i>Glorifying in the Promised End to Come</i>	2 Samuel 7:1-11,16 and Romans 16:25-27 and Luke 1:26-38
Dec 24: Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm	Candlelight and Communion
Dec 31: <i>To Begin Anew</i>	Wesley Covenant Renewal

Coffee Hour Hosts:

- Dec 3: Joe & Nancy Robinson
- Dec 10: Second Sunday Breakfast: Robinsons
- Dec 17: Clint & Carrie Rathbun Hawks
- Dec 24: Please bring a plate of goodies to share
- Dec 31: Please bring a plate of goodies to share

Service

Looking Glass Monthly Report.

August: 2 families with lodging	\$ 700.00
3 clients with rent	<u>1,100.00</u>
August total	\$1,300.00

Sept: 6 families with lodging	\$1,760.00
1 client with rent	300.00
1 client with utilities	<u>262.52</u>
Sept total	\$1,322.52



Open 1:00-3:00 pm Mondays
6:00-8:00 pm Thursdays
Open to all Laingsburg residents

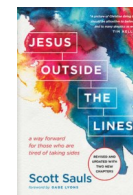
Change for a Change for November went to HAPI (Haitian Assets for Peace International) Total was \$154.00

Change for a Change for December will go towards our Ministry Shares.

Special Events in December:

Women's Bake Sale at Winterfest	Dec. 2, 3-8:00 pm
Community Singers Concert	Dec. 3, 4:00 pm
Longest Night Service	Dec. 21, 7:00 pm
Christmas Eve Services	Dec. 24
Morning Service	10:30 am
Evening Service	7:00 pm
Blood Drive	Dec. 26, 2-6:30 pm

Discovery



Bible Study
Thursday at 10:00 am.
New study
begins in January



Do you know what Chrismons are?
Go to Chuck Knows Church.com to let Chuck help you. Here is a link for the Youtube video.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oXuLwNoBdA>



The Core enjoyed another year of being elves at Santa's Workshop at the North Pole during Polar Express season in late November. All of the kids were together – including one guest – for a fun time helping the little ones make wooden toys (well, put the wheels on the toys to make them "go."). Kudos to the Head Elf, Pete Eisinger, and his Sawdust Santas for making it all happen. The proceeds of the toys that families buy go right back into making wooden toys for families in need in Shiawassee County.



In February, we'll be trying a new location for our winter retreat: Camp Michawana in Hastings. The group is very excited about this! (We'll see how they feel after walking through the cold and snow at 7 a.m. to take a shower or brush their teeth in the community bath house!) Hopefully, we'll work with the Greater Laingsburg Food Bank to do another food scavenger hunt in the spring. Oh, and the Classical Bells group will return in the spring to celebrate its 40th anniversary with us and help raise some funds for Core! Their Christmas schedule was full as early as August. As always, thank you for supporting our youth!