
MOUNT COMFORT BLESSING

Mt. Comfort United Methodist Church

December 2018/January 2019

Pastor's Pondering By Reverend Alex Stone

Dear Folks,

The December/January newsletter is always a difficult one to write an article for – do I focus on Christmas or the New Year? I trust that you all could write something meaningful and appropriate for the upcoming celebration of the birth of Jesus and what it means for you. I know that the Sundays of Advent will be preparing you for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. I also hope that all the business of the season - baking, shopping, decorating, parties, watching Christmas movies on The Hallmark Channel, listening to Christmas music on 92.3, Pandora, SiriusXM Radio, or however it is you listen to the songs of the season – allows you the opportunity to experience a joyous celebration of the birth of Jesus.

With that in mind, I decided not to write about the birth of Jesus but to write about the birth of a New Year, instead. A new year filled with promise and possibilities – in each of our lives and in the life of our church. We get the opportunity to start anew, to wipe the slate clean, to “get a do-over.” You remember “do-overs,” right? When something you attempted didn’t turn out the way you had anticipated, and you get to do it again, you get a “do-over” – the opportunity to try it again. I remember playing Monopoly as a child and landing on the “Go to Jail” space, and my mom would let me get a do-over so I could try again.

That’s what the New Year can be for you. . . a do-over! What are somethings in your personal life that did not go as planned? What didn’t work out for you in your familial life? Your work life? Your

faith life? Maybe you didn’t lose the weight you wanted to – do-over! Maybe you didn’t spend the time with your family that you wanted to – do-over! Maybe you didn’t get that job you wanted, or you’re stuck in a job you don’t enjoy – do-over! Maybe you didn’t grow in your relationship with God through attending Bible studies, daily devotional time, or attending worship as frequently as you had wanted to – do over!

The same applies to our church. Our worship attendance didn’t improve – do over! Our finances are not where they need to be – do over! Our presence in the community isn’t all it could be – do over! The do-over possibilities are only as endless as we allow them to be. A new year brings with it an endless list of possibilities – we will increase our worship attendance by 20%, our tithing and giving will increase substantially, and we will be more active in the community! How will all these things, and more, happen?! I don’t know, yet. But know this, I am excited to get going. Are you?

Blessings,
Pastor Alex

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” - 2 Corinthians 5:17
New Living Translation (NLT)*

Christmas Services

December 23, Cantata, 10:30 a.m.
December 24, Candles & Carols, 7:00 p.m.



Celebrate Jesus

By Rev. Dr. John D. Abbott, Jr.
Interim Pastor, Mt. Comfort UMC

One of my favorite Contemporary Music artists is Don Moen. He is moderate in his music style, and all his songs are uplifting. As I was driving to work at MCUMC this past Monday, I turned on my CD player in the car, and this song came on and lifted me higher than I had been lifted in quite a while. Don was leading a crowd of several 1000 people in singing a song of celebration to our Lord.

Suggestions on how to celebrate Jesus should include thanking him for each meal we eat, since many people don't know where their next meal is coming from. Perhaps during this month of giving thanks, each person around the dinner table can share one or two things they are thankful for. Give some thought to these things since we often forget some because they seem so common place. Most people always mention family, friends, home, and food. Some children will give thanks for their pets, toys, and school. All of these things deserve thanks; however, we must not forget to thank Him for our salvation, the Bible, our church, our freedoms, our great country, those who gave their lives to keep us free. If you think hard enough, you could make a list of 25 things, out of the ordinary, that you are thankful for. Try it, and then celebrate the God of glory who provides us all these good things.

My daughter Lauren used to ask God to give her a fun day. The first time she prayed this, it seemed so trite to me. I soon learned that for her that encompassed so much, and it became an endearing part of her conversation with God. Not long ago I noticed a family in a restaurant teaching their little girl how to pray and give thanks for the food they were about to eat. When I was ready to go, I stopped by their table and let them know that it was such a blessing for me to see them pray over their food and teach their daughter to give thanks also.

If you would like to hear the song that uplifted me so much, just type Celebrate Jesus in your search engine, and it will pop right up. Let's use this month and next to find new ways to celebrate Jesus in our daily lives.



*Celebrate Jesus this Advent season with worship at Mount Comfort United Methodist Church.
(Photos courtesy Tom Seng)*



Mt. Comfort UMC's

Annual Holiday Bazaar

Saturday, Dec. 1st | 9am-3pm



- Craft Booths Galore
- Awesome Vendors
- Fantastic Food
- Silent Auction Items

Mt. Comfort
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SonShine Kids

The SonShine Kids after-school ministry continues to meet at MCUMC from 2:15 – 5:30 p.m. on most Thursdays when school is in session. Do you have a hobby or interest you are willing to present and share with the children? Can you make yourself available to be on call to be the second person in the room when one of our regular volunteers cannot be present? If yes, please contact Herb Hale (317-703-0495).



The Mt. Comfort UMC Handbell Choir performed in worship November 11 and will play again on December 16. Above, Sean Gilliland leads the Handbell Choir in the Introit.

Indiana Conference UMC

MCUMC joined with sixteen other churches to conduct annual business at District Charge Conference on November 11. Rev. James Bushfield, District Superintendent, reviewed the Wildly Intentional Goals of the UMC.

2017 – Clergy & Laity understand what it means to be missional.

2018 – Discipleship in Training: 100% identify personal & corporate mission fields.

2019 – Discipleship in Training: 100% build relationships & faith conversation

2020 – 100% of our churches/pastors engaged in life-giving changes for Jesus Christ in their mission field.

MTC's Christmas Pajama Party

MTC has extended an invitation for everyone to attend a fun-filled Christmas Pajama Party on December 9 at 5:00 p.m. Your whole family is invited to come in pajamas and join in the fun, as you make Christmas crafts, enjoy breakfast for dinner, decorate cookies, and so much more! This event will also feature a Christmas performance by the award-winning Celebration Puppeteers. A special invitation has been extended to friends and families with autism, as MTC has prepared for alternative activities and space, should they be desired.



Like and follow us on our new Facebook page.

Mt. Comfort UMC



Music Notes By Shawn Gilliland

The Chancel Choir is hard at work in preparation for the annual Christmas Cantata, which will be sung on December 23. This year's cantata is entitled, *The Glory of Christmas – Celebrating Christ's Birth*, by Lloyd Larson. This cantata is full of well-known Christmas music. Narration will be read between songs to help tie everything together. This is one that everyone should enjoy.

The handbell choir is scheduled to play again on December 16.

Once again, the choir will be singing for the Christmas Eve service. December as always will be a special month for our musicians. I hope everyone is able to hear us perform the sacred music of the Advent season.



Shepherding Committee By Cindy Kendall

In the month of October, the Shepherding Committee continued to honor the lives of our loved ones who have passed recently. On October 14, the life of Suzanne Israel was remembered with a white flower on the altar. Suzanne was the sister of Kathy Aldrich. Chad Abbott's life was celebrated on October 21 with a flower on the sanctuary altar. Chad was the son of Pastor John and his wife, LeAnn. Our church family extends our deepest sympathy and prayers to the Aldrich and Abbott families.

We ask that you continue to keep us informed of the needs of our church family. Please contact Pastor John at the church office or Cindy Kendall at 317-326-8193 with any church information. Thank you.

The Shepherding Committee can always use volunteers. Could you send a card, take a meal, or drive someone to an appointment? Please see Cindy Kendall for more information.

DAYTIME MINISTRIES

By Staci Wilson

Hello, Church Family.

The children of Joyful Days Preschool and Childcare would like to wish each of you a Happy Holiday Season! Things have been very exciting and busy in Joyful Days, as I am sure you can only imagine.

The children enjoyed having our Read-a-thon reading visitors, and we would like to thank you for reading to us. Special thanks to Jo Sullivan, Sandy Abel, Pat Ringer, Rose McKinney, and Carrie Smith from MCUMC, also Sarah Maple, MaryAnn Crisman, and Pastor Ethan from MTC. All of you were a wonderful contribution to the children's day. The children love having visitors, so if you want to help in the future, please contact Staci Wilson.

The children have enjoyed learning about and celebrating Thanksgiving in the month of November. They are now looking forward to the advent season, and all the joy and excitement that this time of year brings. They will be learning about the nativity story most of the month. They will also learn about Gingerbread houses and will be making one in each class. They will also learn about angels, trees, giving, and will prepare for their Christmas program. We would like to invite you to come down and visit the Joyful Days hallways to see all of the children's fun artwork and creativity.

As the children prepare for their Christmas program, we would like to extend an invitation to everyone. We hope you will consider joining us for a performance. The children will be sharing their joy of the season with their whole hearts!

We wish you all a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

The Children and Staff of Joyful Days

Christmas Break

Pre-School: December 21 – January 4

Return January 7

Childcare: December 24 – January 1

Return January 2



**YOU ARE CORDIALLY
INVITED TO ATTEND:
JOYFUL DAYS PRESCHOOL
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19
PERFORMANCE AT 9:30 A.M.
OR
PERFORMANCE AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE MOUNT COMFORT
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH SANCTUARY**



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in the Preschool hallways! Above, Mrs. Messier displays the start of the Pre-K Christmas tree project. Below, Mrs. Duncan displays a gingerbread project for 3's.



United Methodist Church Mission Statement

We are committed to making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Youth Group Update

By George Winterstein

The Mt. Comfort Youth Group remained active during the fall, meeting regularly, having fun, praying together, and building their faith.

Since our last update, we spent a fun fall afternoon at nearby Piney Acres. We took over an hour trying to locate all the check-in points in the giant corn maze, enjoyed a hayride through the Christmas tree farm, and used the remaining energy on the giant bounce zone. We capped the cool fall day with a snack of hot chocolate and popcorn in the Piney Acre barn.

After two days of strong winds in the area, the youth spent their October 21 meeting picking up all the downed sticks and branches on the church property. Picking up branches and sticks may be chore, but with a bunch of young folks full of energy and active imaginations, it was just another fun event.

The renovation of the youth room is underway. Much of the furniture that has accumulated over the years has been removed, and the kids spent two days painting. Our own interior decorator, Neetra, is now planning the final design to make the room fun for the youth.

The kids also contributed to MTC's pitch-in dinner by making and packaging over 60 caramel apples. Nothing makes a more fun mess than a group of young people and hot caramel. It was a wonderful dinner attended by over 100 people, and we were blessed to be a part of it.

Our plans for the Christmas season include attending the Christmas PJ party at the church, delivering cookie trays and hand-made cards of appreciation to the local police and firefighters, and enjoying a Youth Christmas Party with the MTC youth group. After the party the combined youth groups will be caroling at homes of church members that have difficulty getting to church.

Although very early in the planning phase, we are planning to join Mary Ann Crisman and the MTC youth on another mission trip next summer. Watch for more details as they are available.

While not always visible, our youth group remains an active and important part of the church mission. We are always looking for new members and fun activities and service opportunities for the church and community. Any suggestions that you have would be gratefully received as we help our young people along their path and relationship with God.

God bless and MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!



Members of the Mount Comfort Youth Group have been busy this fall. Above, youth pick up sticks after gusty winds littered the church property with fallen branches. Right, youth members apply paint as part of their efforts to renovate the church's youth room.



MISSIONS

By Rose McKinney

CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES – The Mt. Comfort UMC congregation donated sixty-five (65) Christmas shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child. Thanks to all of you who participated with packed boxes or donations. This is one way to increase the disciples for Jesus Christ throughout the world. Let us know where your box ended up if you follow your box online. Our church is a drop-off location for our area, and we collected 2,041 boxes packed in 129 cartons to take to Heritage Christian for transport of our boxes throughout the world. Thank you to those who assisted in the week's activities and to the men who loaded the cartons into the trailer and delivered them.: Sandy Abel, Pat Ringer, Karen Stumph, Jack McKinney, Dennis Stang, John Stumph, Herb Hale, Steve Ringer, and Ev Zarse. A special thanks to Roger Hudson who helped me every day.

FOOD PANTRY – The grocery carts are always available in the foyer for any donations of food for the local food pantries: canned fruits, vegetables, and meats as well as pasta and other boxed products. The pantries always welcome paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent and soaps and toothpaste, and other hygiene products. You have been very generous through the years with your donations, and your efforts are greatly appreciated. Think about Rev. Alex's suggestion to contribute a can for each day of Advent.

FLETCHER PLACE – Our Missions crew fed about eighty people at our October visit to Fletcher Place. The crew this time consisted of Sandy Abel, Rick and Kathy Aldridge, Roger Hudson, Janet Kleine, Rose McKinney, Barbara Olin, and Jo Sullivan. Thanks to them and to those of you who help pay the bill with donations to Missions.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT – We can show our Christmas spirit with our annual assistance to five families at Christmas time. Look for the Mission Christmas tree in the foyer for the cards with the names of each family member and suggested gifts. The gifts need to be under the tree by Sunday, December 16, so that they can be delivered before Christmas. These are families with children at Mt. Comfort Elementary School.



CHURCH HOLIDAY BAZAAR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

Don't forget to come to the Church Holiday Bazaar, Saturday, December 1, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. If you have not yet signed up to donate crafts, baked goods, food items, or to help, it's not too late. We need greeters, cashiers, and booth sitters the day of the bazaar. Also, please plan to join us for lunch, which will feature homemade soups, chicken salad croissants, drinks, and desserts. Call Pat Zarse at 317-496-1009.



Thanks to all who packed shoe boxes or made donations for Operation Christmas Child. MCUMC collected 65 boxes and processed a total of 2,041 shoeboxes at the Mt. Comfort UMC Drop-Off Location. Special thanks go to Rose McKinney, Missions chair, for leading the project. OCC is an outreach of Samaritan's Purse, which also provides each child with a storybook, The Greatest Gift, which shares the story of salvation as told by the Apostle John. The Christmas shoeboxes are distributed in over 100 countries.

Cooperative Ministry Reports

The Mount Comfort UMC and MTC Cooperative Ministries Executive Team met November 6, 2018. Following is a summary of the meeting.

Family Ministry – The Fall Festival was a success, with an estimated 230 people attending. The family Christmas Pajama Party is scheduled for December 9 at 5:00 p.m. and will include many fun activities as well as a Christmas performance by Celebration Puppeteers.

Trustees – Completed projects include interior lighting, kitchen repairs, and restroom work. A quote for exterior maintenance and repair work, which includes replacing the Exterior Insulation & Finish System (EIFS), power washing, and gutter work, came in at \$8,000. It was agreed that recycling bins will be placed in the church parking lot with recycling services purchased from CGS Services. The Trustees will identify some church maintenance and capital improvement projects that people can adopt and help fund.

Mission and Outreach – Joint Christmas projects (shoeboxes and gifts for local families in need) were reviewed. In January, each church will identify its own collection project.

Vision Pathway – The Thankfulness Bible Study met in November; and the Advent Message series, 1st Christmas Gift Guide, will be a unified theme, presented by each pastor during worship service. An Advent Bible study will be led by Mary Ann Crisman for both congregations on Sundays after worship, which will include a pitch-in lunch.

Other Business – It was agreed that a cooperative photocopier be leased, as the MCUMC copier needs replaced, and the MTC copier lease will soon expire. It is estimated that such a set up would save each church \$1,000 a year.

<i>BIRTHDAYS</i>	<i>BIRTHDAYS</i>	<i>ANNIVERSARIES</i>
<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>1 Clover Boyd 2 Tiffane Brown Linda Triarsi 4 Janet Nylund 5 Tracy Henry Norietta Miller 7 Christina Bundy Nancy Holder Nash Ziegler 8 Terry Beeson 11 Amalia Moss 12 Hope Bassett 13 Ruth Carder 14 Jerry Henry Madelyn Ludlow 16 Tom Hillsman Blake Johnson 18 John Phillipp 20 Bruce Heckman Debbie Hice 30 Conner Jones 31 John Abbott, Jr. Sharon Allen</p>	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>1 Elizabeth Hampton Gregg Henry Jane Jarrett 8 Pat Zarse 9 David Gioe 11 Kenneth Fry 13 Calyn Ashley Malloy Alysin White 16 Douglas Hampton Suzanne Stricker 18 Amy Marie Foddrill Taylor Gibson 19 David Parry 21 Terri Grimm 22 Maureen Bowery Nicole Gibson 23 Tena (Hampton) Jones 26 Nalani Vasquez George Winterstein 29 Matthew Thompson Jake Yanan</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>15 Dave & Elaine Holloway 18 Bill & Linda Yates 26 John & Maureen Bowery</p> <p>JANUARY</p> <p>3 Jack & Rose McKinney 7 Austin & Nicole Gibson 12 Steve & Pat Ringer 17 John & Libby Bales 26 Michael & Candy Adkins</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

Mt. Comfort United Methodist Church
3179 North 600 West
Greenfield, IN 46140

Mark Your Calendars for These Important Dates!

Women's Bible Study, Thursdays at 10:00 a.m., Room 107

Advent Study, Noon – 1:00 p.m. on December 2, 9, 16

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| December 1 | Holiday Bazaar, 9 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. |
| December 2 | Advent begins
MTC Ladies' Christmas Tea, 5 – 7:00 p.m.
(advance purchase ticket required) |
| December 6 | Infant Memorial Service, 7:00 p.m. |
| December 9 | Christmas Pajama Party, MTC/MCUMC, 5:00 p.m. |
| December 15 | Optimists Club Breakfast with Santa, 8:00 a.m. – noon |
| December 16 | Youth Christmas Party |
| December 19 | Joyful Days Christmas Program, 9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. |
| December 23 | Christmas Cantata during worship service, 10:30 a.m. |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve Candles & Carols, 7:00 p.m. |
| February 9 | Central District Leadership Day training, details TBD |

Visit our website: <http://www.MCMethodist.com>