

The Church Tower
First United Methodist Church
2021 December



To be alive in Christian faith
To express our faith through service
To build a supportive fellowship

A Note from the Pastor ...

“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14)

As Christians we confess and proclaim this scripture. This is the “good news” of the incarnation, that Jesus was born into human history in the fullness of time for the salvation of the world.

Each of us has our favorite story, or memory of Christmas; it might be Charles Shultz’ Charlie Brown Christmas, it might be the long ago pageant when the words came to life, it might be a quiet evening of hymns in a candle-lit church. Perhaps it’s a bit of all of these.

Growing up with a German grandmother meant the tree didn’t go up until Christmas Eve and each year one of her grandchildren was given the precious task of hanging the tinsel, strand by strand, from a tissue-lined box. Christmas somehow happened as we slept, long after we were home from midnight church. In the morning there were presents and, best of all, breakfast with our whole family at Gramma’s after church. And there was singing, laughter, and great love overflowing.

It was many years later that I learned of the magic & mystery of Christmas Eve in our own home. And even more years before I realized the story of a young girl giving birth to her first child was truly God coming to life - to be with us!

This, beloved, is what the season is all about. God, infinite and infant, savior and servant, holy and humble.

Every Blessing!



Elizabeth

Wally

Organized chaos...that's what Sunday School Christmas pageants usually are, aren't they? Some of the preschoolers are crying because they can't see their parents; other little ones are waving madly at mom and dad; the shepherds bump into each other because their head dresses are slipping over their eyes; and Mary and Joseph often look highly disgusted at having to stand near each other...

Our congregation's pageant several weeks ago was no different. I heard one adult involved say that the experience was "like herding cats." At one point during the presentation, as the preschoolers sang a carol, it looked as if Mary and Joseph were arguing; and when Mary was talking to the wise men, she put baby Jesus under one arm and her other hand on her hip. organized chaos...and yet, wonderful.

Such was the case in a small church many years ago The Sunday School Superintendent was assigning speaking parts to the children—but what part to give Wally? Wally was a nice boy, big for his age because he had been held back a grade. His name would probably never appear on any school honor roll, but he was well-liked and tried hard to fit in with the other kids. Every other year, he had been relegated to being a shepherd, never saying anything, just kneeling in wonder at the manger. But this year, the superintendent decided to take a risk. Wally would play the inn keeper.

"Now, Wally," she told him. "You only have two lines to remember. When Mary and Joseph come to your door, you open it and say: "The inn is full. Go away!" The weeks of December passed. Every day, Wally would say to himself "The inn is full. Go away!...The inn is full. Go away!" Final rehearsal was a little crazy, but Wally got his lines just right. Then, finally the night for the

pageant arrived. The church was packed full of people. Familiar story unfolded, Mary and Joseph traveled down the main aisle to Bethlehem, looking tired and worn--and arrived at the innkeeper's door.

Joseph knocked and Wally opened the door to him, Mary, and a whole sea of faces watching him from the congregation. Wally froze. "Please, sir," Joseph said "my wife is going to have a baby soon. Do you have room for us to stay tonight?"

Seconds passed. Silence. The superintendent finally hissed from the side "The inn is full. Go away!" More seconds. The boy Joseph repeated "Please sir, do you have a room for us to stay tonight?" Then it came out, all in a rush: "The inn is full. Go away! The inn is full. Go away!" Joseph put his arm around Mary and they began to walk away with their heads down.

Maybe it was the music, maybe it was the candles, maybe it because Joseph looked so dejected, inside Wally, something clicked and he came to life. "Wait! Wait!" he called out in a loud voice. "Mary, Joseph, please come back. You can have my room!"



And everyone laughed. Everyone. Wally's face burned. He had messed it all up. For the rest of the pageant, Wally's eyes were glued to the carpet, his head down.

When it was all over and the congregation had finished singing "Silent Night," he rushed toward the back of the church. He couldn't wait to get out of there. Before he could make it to the narthex, the Sunday School Superintendent caught his arm "I'm...I'm sorry," he stammered. "I just got it all wrong!" "No," she said "no—you got it just right, Wally. Just right."

~ as told by James N. Earley, II



Undie Sunday & More

During December and the first three Sundays of January, missions will be collecting new children's and adult underwear, socks, and mittens/gloves. We will also be collect gently used sweaters, jackets and coats. There will be a basket in the narthex for these items.

January 16th will be Undie Sunday and the items will be distributed to those less fortunate after that date.





Advent - December 2021

UMC Readings

First Sunday of Advent - November 28

Jeremiah 33:14-16 / Psalter No. 756, Response 1, Psalm 25:1-10 / 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 / Luke 21:25-36

Second Sunday of Advent - December 5

Malachi 3:1-4 / No. 208, Canticle of Zechariah / Philippians 1:3-11 / Luke 3:1-6

Third Sunday of Advent - December 12

Zephaniah 3:14-20 / First Song of Isaiah / Philippians 4:4-7 / Luke 3:7-18

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 19

Micah 5:2-5a / No. 199, The Canticle of Mary / Hebrews 10:5-10 / Luke 1:39-45

Christmas Eve - December 24 Our Christmas Affirmation

We believe that God has come to us; that God brought us into being, that this God gave us breath and purpose, that we have been blessed to be a blessing to others, that we have fallen short of this commandment but that God has nevertheless loved us despite our brokenness. We believe that God is coming to us; that God is not happy to leave us alone, that this God will come to us as a particular human being, that God will be made known to us in flesh and bone like ours, that Mary will soon give birth and Joseph will soon clap his hands in joy, that Jesus Christ will be born and our salvation made complete. We believe that God will come to us; that God will have the final word and that Word will be good, that this God will give us the presence of the Spirit to continue our work, that we are called to be disciples to all the corners of the earth, that the day is coming when tears and pain will be no more, and all will gather at the Table to sing an endless and perfect "Alleluia!"

~ By Rev. Stephen M. Fearing





Order Your Poinsettias Now!

The Christmas Season is fast approaching, and the worship committee will be placing poinsettias in the church.

A list of names of those being remembered or honored and their donors will be printed in the bulletin on December 19, 2021.

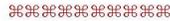
The cost of each poinsettia is \$10.00. All orders must be submitted with payment and orders turned in no later than Sunday, December 12, 2021. Please make your checks payable to: First United Methodist Church.

(circle one)

In Memory of / In Honor of: _____

Given By: _____

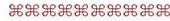
Want to order more than one poinsettia? Add additional orders in the sections below.
Cut off any unneeded sections.



(circle one)

In Memory of / In Honor of: _____

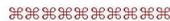
Given By: _____



(circle one)

In Memory of / In Honor of: _____

Given By: _____



(circle one)

In Memory of / In Honor of: _____

Given By: _____



(circle one)

In Memory of / In Honor of: _____

Given By: _____

December 2021

Dear Friends of the Foundation,

Your FUMC Foundation is so grateful for past donations which enabled us in 2021 to again more than double our annual charitable giving. These funds allowed us to meet community needs during these unprecedented Covid-19 Pandemic times.

Friends of the Foundation may rest assured that every dollar donated to the Friends Campaign will fund 2022 community grants, plus any additional Covid-19 emergency grants should they be needed.

The Foundation's **2021 Annual Report of Giving** is enclosed for your reference, along with a Friends campaign reply card. I have also taken this opportunity to include several yellow Foundation envelopes for your future use, as you may be aware Church pledge envelopes have been eliminated. Additional yellow envelopes are also available outside the Church's main office.

Thank you for your support of our annual Friends Campaign. May God continue to surround you with His **Love** and grant you **Peace** this coming Advent Season.

Blessings,

Mahla E. Swinford
FUMC Foundation President

Enclosures (2)

To God be the glory, great things He hath done!

FOUNDATION 2021 ANNUAL REPORT OF GIVING

FUMC Foundation is so very thankful to have been able in 2021 to donate a **TOTAL of \$51,000** in support of community missions in the name of Jesus Christ and First United Methodist Church. How blessed we are in these extraordinary times to have funds built over the years by Friends of the Foundation. Drawing deeply from these Capital Funds allowed the Foundation to meet unprecedented community needs due to the Covid Pandemic. Following is a list of Foundation donations made in 2021. These include: \$20,000 in COVID-19 and Emergency Grants, \$1,000 for the annual Virginia E. Preston President's Award, and \$30,000 in Outreach Mission Community Grants. *Foundation Friends, thank you for your continued support.*

TOTAL 2021 FOUNDATION GRANT DONATIONS: \$51,000

Alzheimer's Association – SE VA Chapter
2021 Community Grant: \$500

American Lung Association
2021 Virginia E. Preston President's Award: \$1,000

American Red Cross, Coastal Virginia Chapter
2021 Community Grant: \$2,500

Bacon Street Youth & Family Svcs, N News/Hamp
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

C. Waldo Scott Center for H.O.P.E.
2021 Community Grant: \$500

Community Brain Injury Services-Denbigh House
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

Community Knights, Inc. – COACH Program
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

CRU Military – Hampton Roads Ministry
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

First United Methodist Church
2021 Emergency HVAC Grant: \$5,000

First United Methodist Preschool
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

Four Oaks Day Service Center
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

Habitat for Humanity of VA Pen & Gr Wmsbg
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

Lackey Clinic
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

LINK of Hampton Roads, Inc.
2021 Community Grant: \$3,000

Lustgarten Foundation
2021 Community Grant: \$500

Peninsula Agency on Aging
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

Peninsula Pastoral Counseling Center
2021 Community Grant: \$1,200

Salvation Army -- VA Peninsula Corps
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

The Faison Center – Peninsula School
2021 Community Grant: \$500

THRIVE Peninsula, Inc.
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500
2021 Covid Emergency Grants: \$10,000

Tidewater Arts Outreach – Pen Art Programs
2021 Community Grant: \$500

United Campus Ministries @ CNU
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

United Methodist Family Services of Virginia
2021 Covid Emergency Grant: \$5,000

United Methodist Committee on Relief/ UMCOR
2021 Community Grants = \$2,000:
*Advance #901670 for US disaster relief @ \$1,000 &
*Advance #982450 for Haiti disaster relief @ \$1,000

VA Living Museum
2021 Community Grant: \$1,000

VA Peninsula Foodbank
2021 Community Grant: \$1,500

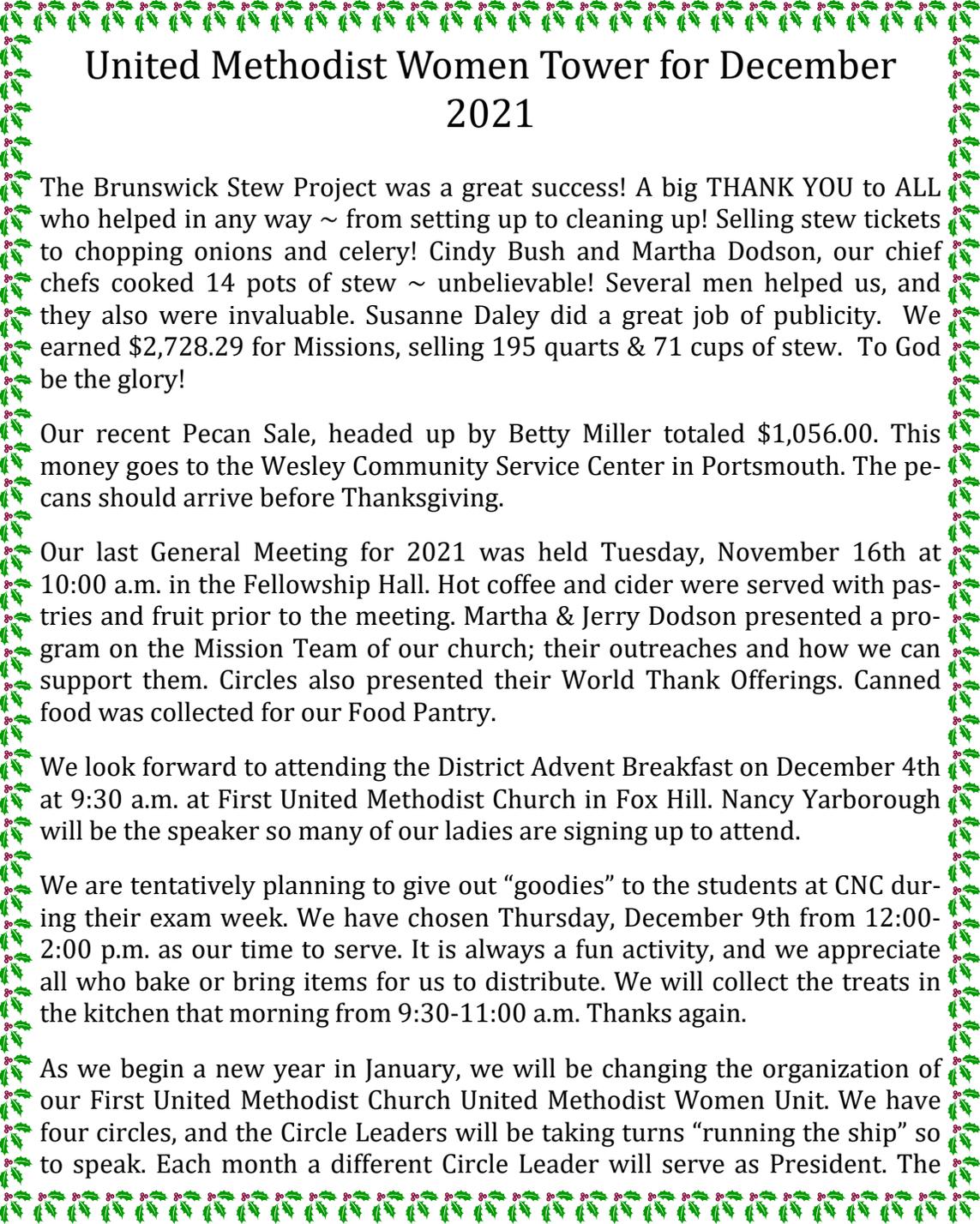
YMCA of the VA Peninsula -- Hunnicutt Center
2021 Community Grant/Youth Memberships: \$800

December 2021

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given..." Isaiah 9:6-7

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
Sunday School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am					3 Make a Gift Day 		
5	6 FUMP Music, 10am, PMR Bible Study, Zoom, 10:30am PPRC Meeting May we pray for our Hope (Matthew 12:21)	7 FUMP Music, 10am, SA Bible Study, 6pm, via Zoom	8 FUMP Chapel, 10am, SA Bible Study, 6pm, via Zoom	9 FUMP Music, 10am, PMR	10	Parents Day Out 10am-2pm	
Sunday School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am	May we pray for our Hope (Matthew 12:21)	Circle 2, Al Fresco, 11:30am 14 Roast Chestnuts Day 	FUMP Chapel, 10am, SA Circle 5, Parlor, 11am Bible Study, 6pm, via Zoom	CNU Snack Prep, 9:30 am Kitchen FUMP Music, 10am, PMR		Hilton Village Gingerbread Celebration / Main Street Lighted Parade	
12	13 FUMP Music, 10am, PMR Bible Study, Zoom, 10:30am May we pray for our Peace (John 14:27)	14 Roast Chestnuts Day	15 FUMP Chapel, SA, 10am Blessing of the Animals Christmas Staff Lunch 12:00 Bible Study, 6pm, via Zoom	16 Missions Peck Lunches 9:30am FH FUMP Music, 10am, PMR	17	18	
Sunday School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am 1pm Circle 5 (Parlor)	19	20 FUMP Music, 10am, PMR Bible Study, Zoom, 10:30am May we pray for our Joy (Philippians 2:25)	21 FUMP Chapel, SA, 10am Bible Study, 6pm, via Zoom	22 Missions Food Packing 8:30- 11am FH	23 24 25	25	
Sunday School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am	May we pray for our Love (Hebrews 10:24)	Church Council 1:00 pm, FH	28 29 30 31	30 31	31 Christmas Eve Worship 7pm Sanctuary	31 	
Sunday School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am	May we pray for our Love (Hebrews 10:24)	Church and Preschool Closed for Christmas Break – Returning Monday, January 3, 2022					



United Methodist Women Tower for December 2021

The Brunswick Stew Project was a great success! A big THANK YOU to ALL who helped in any way ~ from setting up to cleaning up! Selling stew tickets to chopping onions and celery! Cindy Bush and Martha Dodson, our chief chefs cooked 14 pots of stew ~ unbelievable! Several men helped us, and they also were invaluable. Susanne Daley did a great job of publicity. We earned \$2,728.29 for Missions, selling 195 quarts & 71 cups of stew. To God be the glory!

Our recent Pecan Sale, headed up by Betty Miller totaled \$1,056.00. This money goes to the Wesley Community Service Center in Portsmouth. The pecans should arrive before Thanksgiving.

Our last General Meeting for 2021 was held Tuesday, November 16th at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Hot coffee and cider were served with pastries and fruit prior to the meeting. Martha & Jerry Dodson presented a program on the Mission Team of our church; their outreaches and how we can support them. Circles also presented their World Thank Offerings. Canned food was collected for our Food Pantry.

We look forward to attending the District Advent Breakfast on December 4th at 9:30 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Fox Hill. Nancy Yarborough will be the speaker so many of our ladies are signing up to attend.

We are tentatively planning to give out “goodies” to the students at CNC during their exam week. We have chosen Thursday, December 9th from 12:00-2:00 p.m. as our time to serve. It is always a fun activity, and we appreciate all who bake or bring items for us to distribute. We will collect the treats in the kitchen that morning from 9:30-11:00 a.m. Thanks again.

As we begin a new year in January, we will be changing the organization of our First United Methodist Church United Methodist Women Unit. We have four circles, and the Circle Leaders will be taking turns “running the ship” so to speak. Each month a different Circle Leader will serve as President. The



Gifts Given to the Foundation for the Glory of God:

- * Martha and Jerry Dodson in memory of John Crumpler and in honor of Miriam Sandstrom;
- * Susan and Doug Foltz

Thank you for your gifts!

Leaders are Betty Miller, Jane Waters, Cathy Nicholson, and Jeanette Leslie. Shelby Noble will be the hub of the wheel as she will receive news from the District, which she will forward to the Leaders. This opportunity will give other ladies experience in Leadership. It has been a privilege to serve as your President for twelve enriching years. I have learned much, but it is time for a change. Since we had no Presidential volunteer to serve in this capacity, we are trying a new approach. So keep us in your prayers as we, under God's direction will try to do the best we can to keep us united in a supportive fellowship for missions.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not on your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy ways.”

Jane Waters
UMW President

Virginia Handbell Consort presents

Holiday Traditions



Alan Reese, Director

**St. Luke's
United Methodist Church**

300 Ella Taylor Road
Yorktown, VA 23692

Sunday, December 5

7:00 pm

www.vhcbells.org
info@vhcbells.org

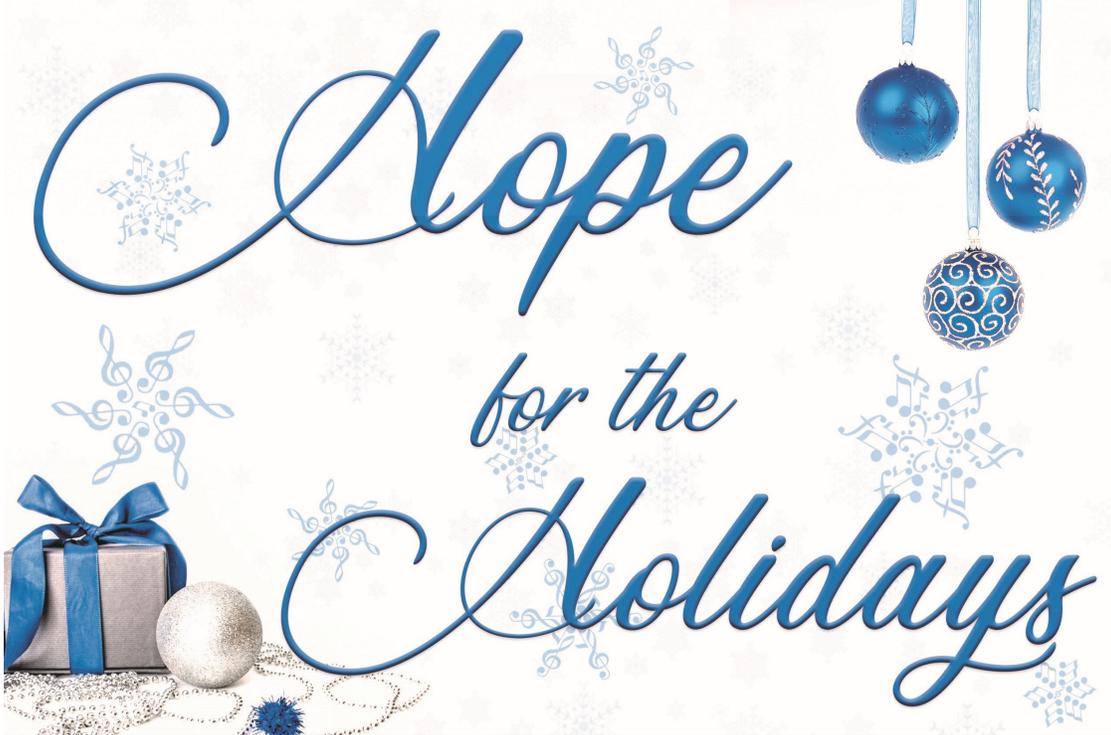


☆☆ UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ☆☆

HERITAGE of AMERICA BAND

JOINT BASE LANGLEEE-EUSTIS, VIRGINIA

Nope for the Holidays



DECEMBER 6, 2021

6:30 PM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NEWPORT NEWS
12716 WARWICK BLVD, NEWPORT NEWS, VA 23606



FOR FREE TICKETS VISIT
[EVENTBRITE.COM](https://www.eventbrite.com) AND SEARCH FOR
"HERITAGE OF AMERICA BAND"





Saturday, December 11th beginning at 5:00P.M.

Join us for an evening of Holiday Magic!

**Hilton Village Main Street Lighted Holiday Parade
5:00P.M.**

Bikes, trikes, strollers, wagons-

Light them up, decorate those kiddos and assemble along the side of Hilton Presbyterian- down the River Rd. sidewalk.

Classic cars, floats & civic groups -

Interested in participating? Email hiltonvillageevents@gmail.com
Parade begins at the intersection of River Rd. and Main St. and proceeds down Main St. towards Warwick Blvd.

RSVP at the email above or text 757-753-7926!

**Gingerbread Celebration
& Historic District Merchant Open House 5-8:00P.M.**

Starting in front of Silverman Furs, at HHV, Inc. Info tent- Grab your Gingerbread Passport and visit every gingerbread contest entry as you wind through the Hilton Village Merchant District. Return to the HHV, Inc. tent to cast your vote when you are finished! See @hiltonvillageevents FB page for further details.

The Hilton Village Merchants will be hosting an evening of after-hours shopping to kick off the season.

Support our merchants & BUY LOCAL!



2021 Application

Entry Name/Title as it should appear:

Individual/ Family/ Child/ Professional Baker/ Business/ Church & Community Group

Baker's Name:

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Approximate size of base: _____ Approximate height of entry: _____

Application contd.

I understand, that to be eligible for the contest, I must agree to the following - this bit of formality ensures that the merchants will not be left without a gingerbread to display during the event.

(Really, just an agreement that the merchant will be ready to display your gingerbread and that you will show up to deliver one.)

- Please snap a photo of your form and return to hiltonvillageevents@gmail.com by Friday, November 19th.
- I *must* deliver my completed gingerbread by 5pm, December 9, 2021 (or at a prior time agreed to by the assigned store owner at the location where it will be displayed).

The only Gingerbread RULES:

1. Major components and base structure of entry must be constructed of gingerbread. All visible decorative bits must be edible and free from any packaging.
2. Any structure – real or imaginary – is eligible to win! (house, North Pole, character, building, etc). Your creativity can run wild. We have had gingerbread robots, ramen noodle bowls, you name it!
3. Entry may have lighting and mechanics (motors). All houses must be resting on a solid base. Edge of base may be decorated with ribbon or paint or other non-edible finish. Not every gingerbread will be lit from the inside, don't feel pressured to pull that off!

- Entry will be in place/presented for display from Thursday, December 9, 2021 through the pick up date arranged with the business owner/display location. **Winners will be announced on December 11, 2021- LIVE- just after the voting closes at 8:00pm!** Entries not picked up on the agreed upon date will be donated to a local nursing home/treatment facility.

- Permission is hereby granted to Village Gingerbread Celebration to print or otherwise duplicate the picture or likeness of my entry and/or me with my entry for either internal or external release- this includes print and online publications.

****Most of all, I agree to have a GREAT time, participating in this FUN and FRIENDLY competition!**

Name

Date

Contact Information:

JB Brown-Crowley

Telephone- 757-753-7926 (text is best, especially the night of event)

Email- hiltonvillageevents@gmail.com



Holiday Schedule 2021

12/24 Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 p.m.

12/23 returning Monday January 3, 2022: Christmas and New Years' Day Holiday—Church Office and Preschool Closed.

Please share the First United Methodist Church Tower with your friends, family and neighbors!

Anyone who has a computer or smartphone can sign up for a monthly electronic version! Just visit our website at:

FirstUMCNewportNews.com

Scroll to the bottom of the page, add your email address, and click 'Subscribe'.

This could provide an encouraging and needed means of interaction and devotion while we are struggling with health and social matters. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Lutz, *Pastor*
Kim Webster, *Pre-School Director*
Kevin Wilson, *Business Administrator*
Debbie Wolff, *Administrative Assistant*
Rick Clifton, *Custodian*



Church Office: (757) 595-0383
10246 Warwick Boulevard, Newport News, Virginia 23601
Website: www.firstumcnewportnews.com
Pastor Elizabeth: pastor@firstumcnewportnews.com
Pastor's phone: (cell) 757/335-2649 (home) 757/595-5630