



December 2023



The Twig Bender



A Message from Pastor TaeWon

Beautiful, Incredible Journey

Grace and Peace of Christ to you all!

It's December. This month has the season of Advent and Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin term "Adventus" meaning "arrival" or "coming". Who's coming? It's the Promised One, the Messiah, the Savior, that is, Jesus Christ. Therefore, the season of Advent is the time to expect and prepare for the arrival of Jesus. Christmas is the time to celebrate the arrival of Jesus, that is, the birth of Jesus.

The Advent season has four Sundays before Christmas. We light the candles of the Advent Wreath every Sunday of Advent. Each candle has its name and meaning: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. And, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, we light the White candle, named the Christ Candle, placed in the middle of the Advent Wreath. When every candle of the Advent Wreath is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, the Advent season is completed while Christmas begins. How beautiful and incredible this liturgical journey is!

I encourage and invite you all to join in this journey of Advent and Christmas. It makes your December much more different and meaningful. And you will stand on Sunday, December 31, which is the last day of this year, 2023. Of course, the day is also one of the twelve days of Christmas. Interestingly, the Christian liturgical calendar teaches us that Christmas does not mean one day but

twelve days until Epiphany, telling the story of the wise men.

On **Sunday December 31**, we, Greenwood UMC, plan to make that day more joyful by **singing our favorite carols and hymns together** during the service. Come

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Greenwood Prayer Ministry

Our Nation

The People of Greenwood and the Church's Missions
People in Harm's Way Around the World

Teresa Coleman, Roger Eckwright, Trish Hayes, Lori Lohr, Riley Patteson,
Lacye Ryan, Betty Ross, Juanita Sharpe, Robbie Smith,
Frances Stalnaker, Bob Stapleton, Tom and Lucy Stephens,
Karen Thomas, Catherine Wallace





A Message from Pastor TaeWon

Beautiful, Incredible Journey

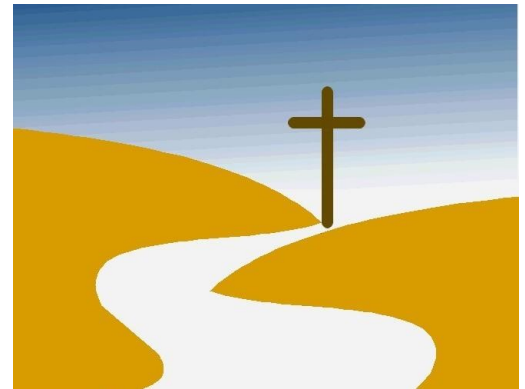
(Continued from page 1)

and join us. Tell us your favorite carol or hymn. We can make joyful sounds together to the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, let us complete the year 2023 together and prepare to welcome the following year, 2024, in God's wonderful hands and in Christ the holy infant.

Friends, the Christian liturgical calendar shows a **year-long spiritual journey** for Christians and churches to walk through. Its begin-



**Presented by
the Greenwood Choir
Sunday, Dec. 17**



ning is the season of Advent. Its end is Christ the King Sunday. Simply speaking, Christ Jesus is the beginning and the end of our spiritual life journey. And Christ Jesus is the center.

Where do you begin your life from? Where will you end it? Do not forget that Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning, and the end. Let us begin the Advent Journey toward Christmas. Jesus Christ willingly becomes your life goal and your life center. It's because Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, which means "God-With-Us." For those in this faith/faithfulness, Christ's coming is no longer a past thing but a present event.

Therefore, beginning the Advent season and longing for Christmas, the last word that I am to say is a Christmas greeting: **"Merry Christmas!"**



*Greenwood's
December
Communion Offering*



*Virginia
Institute of Pastoral
Care*



Christmas Gifts for Baby Jesus

By Lewis Daniel, GUMC Lay Leader

Here at Greenwood UMC, it has been our tradition to honor the birth of the Christ child with a special offering during the month of December — “White Christmas.”

For this special Christmas offering on Sunday, Dec. 10, we will take time, just as the Wise Men did thousands of years ago, to bring our gifts to the baby Jesus.

A representative of each Greenwood family is asked to bring their gift in a white envelope to be placed at the altar. This special gift will not be taken with the regular offering, but at a special time in our worship service.

We ask you to pray about this and respond as you feel led. These funds go to various needs both in the church and as part of our outreach to the community.



Holiday Musings

By Steve Stalaker, Twig Bender Editor

So, the Christmas Season is now upon us, much more quickly than we’d imagined as we made our way through 2023. What to write about?

It’s traditional to write in December either about the meaning of Christmas or to reflect on the year that’s ending. The Spirit isn’t moving me to write about any of that, although lots has happened in the past year that has profoundly affected both the People of Greenwood, and many of us individually. Still, I don’t feel like writing about any of that; I’ll let others do so.

November is usually considered a month of thanksgiving (lower case, meaning giving thanks, not the turkey dinner). I reflect on that and I feel that I, individually, and my church, collectively, have a lot for which to

Church Volunteers



(Continued on page 4)



Holiday Musings

(Continued from page 3)

be thankful. Some of that gratitude will be written about next month when we reflect on the year 2023.

Something else that is often written about in December is the upcoming year. In 2024 the People of Greenwood will have a lot to look forward to and a lot to work on. We are still consolidating our church family with new members from other, now closed, United Methodist Churches and elsewhere. Greenwood has received an infusion of talent from these sources and we're making progress taking advantage of that talent. We've also taken on some new missions – like Aggie's Attic – that will help us continue to reach out to our community.

While we **welcome all the new Greenwood UMC members**, there's still an area where we fall short: young people. I've often written on this theme over the years and will continue to do so as long as it's an issue for Greenwood.

In the Navy, one of the tasks I had in each of my jobs was to **train my relief** – this meant that I was responsible for developing and training younger officers to take my place when or if the need arose. All the People of Greenwood have a **responsibility** to “train their reliefs” – that is, to **bring in new blood** to the Greenwood Church Family. Where is the next chairman of the Trustees Committee? Where is the next Financial Secretary? Where is the next *Twig Bender* editor? (Not that any of these positions are going to be vacated any time soon.)

What can you do, as a member of Greenwood UMC? Three things:

1. Pray
2. Volunteer.
3. Bring some new people to the church.

Pray for God's direction for Greenwood and that His Will would be done.

Volunteer opportunities abound. Start with the list of 2024 Lay Leaders on [page 7](#). Any position shown as “Open” or “TBA” could benefit from your God-given gifts of the Holy Spirit. See the Pastor if you want to step up for God and Greenwood.

Bringing in some new people can be just as simple. Ask your next door neighbor or a co-worker or someone you meet on social media or casually to join you at church. Don't be shy or afraid of rejection – **God will help you**.

With all that having been said, I hope each of you have a very **Merry Christmas** – remembering Whose birthday it is – and a blessed, **prosperous New Year**.

See you – and your guests – in church.





Christmas Card Exchange

This Holiday Season we continue a Greenwood tradition of exchanging Christmas greetings with our Greenwood bothers and sisters in Christ.

Bring your Christmas cards, addressed to other folks in the congregation, to the church by Sunday, Dec.

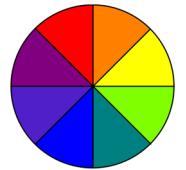
17 and drop them in the designated box in the narthex. You can pick up the cards other people have addressed to you on Sunday, Dec. 24 before or after worship services.



No postage required.

Twig Bender in Living Color

This month's paper *Twig Bender* in color is sponsored by The Willing Workers Circle. Want your group, class, organization shown as a sponsor for the paper edition in color? Contact the editor. The cost is about \$50/month. Thanks!



DECEMBER SCRIPTURES

| | |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 3 | Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37. |
| Dec. 10 | Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8. |
| Dec. 17 | Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28. |
| Dec. 24 | 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:46b-55. |
| Dec. 31 | Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40. |

Tuesday Prayer Call

8 a.m. every Tuesday

Dial in at (605) 313-5873, enter access code: 3108329, press #.

Please mute your phone unless you're adding a prayer.





Greenwood Learning Center

Sharing the Magic of the Season

Wow! What a wonderful month November was! All of us at The Greenwood Learning Center hope you and your family had a safe and happy Thanksgiving Day.

The kiddos are so looking forward to everything that the month of December has to bring. We are still collecting socks, scarves and mittens till the end of the year. When the kids come back in the new year we'll take the donations to The Salvation Army.

The kids and I would like to extend an invitation to everyone in our church family to share in the magic of the season with us. We'd love to share your Christmas traditions with us. Or, just come in and do an arts and crafts project with us.

Smiles, Miss Trish!



**GREENWOOD ON FACEBOOK:
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GUMCVA**



*We Wish You a Merry Christmas
And a Blessed New Year!*

All of us here at *The Twig Bender* — our writers, proofreaders, production staff and your humble editor — hope you enjoy this season celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus the Christ. We pray for God's abundant blessings on each of you in the New Year.

And thank you all for your continued support of your church newsletter.



Communications Survey

By Steve Stalaker, Twig Bender Editor

As Greenwood UMC approaches 2024, I'd like to get some direct feedback about the church's monthly newsletter, *The Twig Bender*. Greenwood has welcomed a lot of new members in 2023, and I'd like to hear what they have to say about their new church's newsletter.

So, I've prepared a survey which you'll find in your *Greenwood Grapevine* bulletin every Sunday this month. Please take a minute to fill out the survey on the insert and drop it in the offering plate or the box in the narthex.



Even if you don't read *The Twig Bender*, please check the box on the survey form that says so and send in your survey. This helps me gauge how many members of the church family the newsletter is reaching.

I'll also post a PDF file of the survey on the Greenwood web site which you can download, fill out and mail or drop it off at the church at your convenience. I regret that Greenwood's web site is not — yet — sophisticated enough for us to build an online survey for the mouse-clicking convenience of the People of Greenwood.

Thank you for your frank feedback and constructive criticism which will help the church refine this important church communications tool for your reading pleasure.

One survey per person please; names not required.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

Greenwood's Women's Circles

THE RUTH CIRCLE meets Tuesday, December 5 at 1 p.m. in the home of Betty Ritchie. Be sure and bring your covered dish and a wrapped gift

THE WILLING WORKERS CIRCLE will meet at a later date, to be determined. We'll be working on supporting our Longdale families Christmas.





Greenwood Lay Leadership 2024

At Greenwood’s annual charge conference in October, the church elected these lay leaders. Additional volunteers are welcome, especially for those positions listed as “open” or “TBA.” See Pastor TaeWon or any member of the nomination committee if you’d like to help the People of Greenwood spread God’s Word.

The Church Administrative Council. Chair: Charley Banks; secretary: *open*; Church Treasurer: Gay Stapleton; Lay Leader: Lewis Daniel; Associate lay leader: Lucy Stephens

Annual Conference Delegate: *Open*; District Steward: Lewis Daniel or Charley Banks

Staff-Parish Relations Committee. Chair: Lewis Daniel; Members: Charley Banks, Lewis Daniel, , Susan Johnston, Lori Lohr, Adamarye Patteson, Glenda Stalnaker, Pastor.

Nomination Committee. Chair: Pastor; Members: Charley Banks, Lewis Daniel, Lori Lohr, Adamarye Patteson, Steve Stalnaker, Lawrence Stout, Libby Stout.

Trustees. Chair: elected by the trustees; secretary: elected by the trustees; Members: Charley Banks, Mary Culom, Dorothy Powell, Betty Ritchie, Raymond Ritchie, Bob Stapleton, Lawrence Stout, the lay leader, the Pastor.

Finance Committee. Chair - Adamarye Patteson; Secretary: Nancy Lloyd; Members: Charley Banks (Council chair), Lewis Daniel (lay leader) Lori Lohr, Gay Stapleton (treasurer), Bob Stapleton (trustee), Libby Stout.

Audit Committee: TBA

Worship Committee: Chair – *open*; Members: Charley Banks, June Brewster, Jim Calderone, Lewis Daniel, Roger Eckwright, Susan Johnston, Jean Mowatt, Betty Ritchie, Gay Stapleton, Libby Stout. This committee’s duties will include altar decoration, greeters, acolytes, ushers, communion, and other worship-service-related activities.

Mission/Outreach Committee. Chair: Glenda Stalnaker; members: Charley Banks (Men’s Breakfast Group), Lewis Daniel (Lay leader), Trish Hayes (Greenwood Learning Center – GLC), Susan Johnston (Aggie’s Attic), Adamarye Patteson (Ruth Circle), Glenda Stalnaker (Willing Workers Circle), Steve Stalnaker (Food Donation Connection). Committee duties include coordinating the mission works of the church groups and communicating among the groups if needed, connecting General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) missionaries to the church.

connecting General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) missionaries to the church.

Witness Committee. Chair: Jim Calderone; members: Charley Banks, Lewis Daniel,



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Greenwood Lay Leadership 2024

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Trish Hayes, Adamarye Patteson, Dorothy Powell, Lucy Stephens (lay servant). This committee will oversee adult Sunday School (Jim Calderone); children’s Sunday School, After School Ministry (Greenwood Learning Center), lay servant, etc.

After-School Ministry (GLC) Committee. Trish Hayes, Adamarye Patteson, Dorothy Powell, Gay Stapleton.

Care/Nurture Committee. Chair: Betty Ritchie; Members: Charley Banks, Lewis Daniel, Lori Lohr, Glenda Stalnaker, Steve Stalnaker, Gay Stapleton, Libby Stout. Committee duties will include fellowship gatherings, card-sending and visits, prayer chain.




Communication Committee. Chair: Steve Stalnaker; members:

Charley Banks, Lewis Daniel, Jon Lohr, Lori Lohr, Jean Mowatt. Duties include bulletin, newsletter, church website, social media, live worship, marquee, etc.

Church History and Records. Chair: Adamarye Patteson; members: Charley Banks, Janice Banks, Lewis Daniel, Lori Lohr, Lucy Stephens, Arlene Shafer. Committee works: keeping church records for the history of the church.

Aggie’s Attic — a Greenwood UMC Mission Project
 6913 Lakeside Avenue, Henrico, 804-921-9385
 Hours: Wednesday through Saturday 11 a.m. — 4 p.m.
 Click [here](#) for Aggie’s Facebook page.




Prayer Request Email



For prayer requests only: greenwoodprays@gmail.com
 Monitored daily by Pastor TaeWon; all emails in strict confidence.



Food Donation Connection

During October we served 55 families. Thanks to everyone who has brought in fruit, cereal and other foods. It was greatly appreciated.

December Pick Up Rotation

Wednesday, Dec. 6: Charley Banks; Thursday, Dec. 7: Gay and Bob Staple
Friday, Dec. 8: Glenda and Steve Stalnaker.

Wednesday, Dec. 13: Jean Mowatt; Thursday, Dec. 14: Susan Johnston;
Friday, Dec. 15: James Calderone.

Wednesday, Dec. 20: Charley Banks; Thursday, Dec.21: Gay and Bob
Stapleton; Friday, Dec. 22: Glenda and Steve Stalnaker.

Wednesday, Dec. 27: Jean Mowatt; Thursday, Dec. 28: Susan Johnston;
Friday, Dec. 29: James Calderone.



Food Donation Connection “Advent” Calendar

Our pantry is almost empty of canned foods, pasta and cereal. So consider donating something from this “Advent” food countdown to Christmas:

December 2024

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | 1 Corn | 2 Vienna Sausage |
| 3 Cereal | 4 Fruit | 5 Rice | 6 Pop Tarts | 7 Green Beans | 8 Tuna | 9 Noodles |
| 10 Spaghetti Sauce | 11 Toilet Paper | 12 Peas | 13 Sugar | 14 Granola Bars | 15 Fruit Snacks | 16 Beans |
| 17 Paper Towels | 18 Soup | 19 Chili | 20 Beef Stew | 21 Can Opener | 22 Corn Beef Hash | 23 Sweet Potatoes |
| 24 Cleaning Supplies | | | | | | |



Greenwood Church Family Birthdays



Clarence Powell 12/9
 Jonae Shuler 12/10
 Betty Coleman 12/11
 Cindy Jo Daniel 12/11
 Janice Banks 12/13
 Mary Cullom 12/13

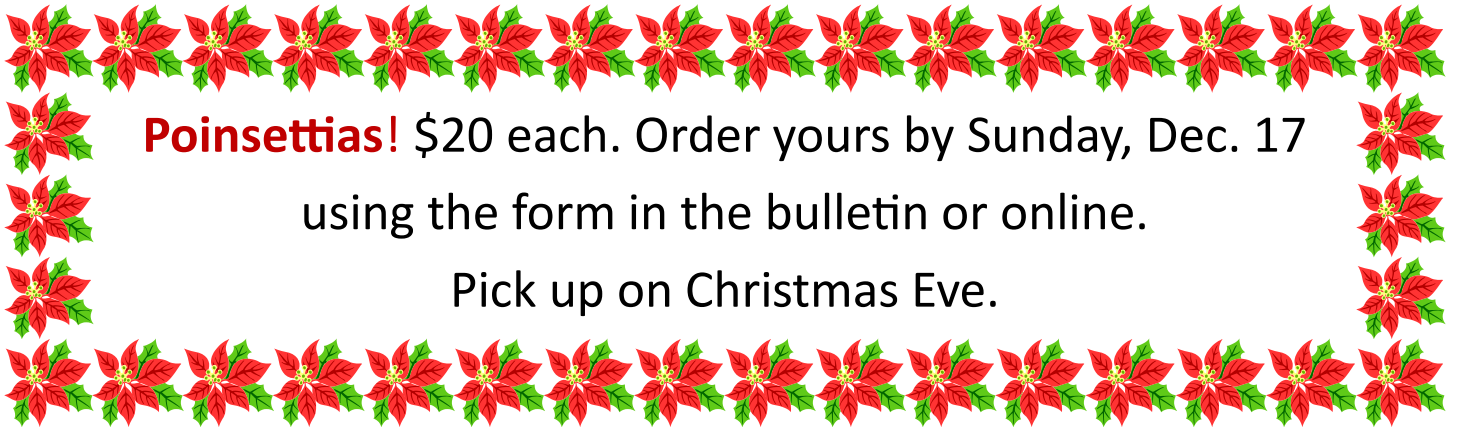
Jamie Smith 12/15
 Jon Lohr 12/16
 Kathryn Walker 12/21
 Gail Stanley 12/28
 Daniel Langston 12/28
 Jackie Schultz 12/31



Anniversaries

Clarence & Kaye Powell 12/19

Don't see your birthday or wedding anniversary in The Twig Bender and would like to have us publish it? Send your dates to admin@qumcva.org or call the church office at 804-266-5341; likewise, let us know if you'd like your birthday or anniversary **removed**.



Poinsettias! \$20 each. Order yours by Sunday, Dec. 17 using the form in the bulletin or online.

Pick up on Christmas Eve.



Greenwood Stewardship

At right is last month's attendance and giving.

| November 2023 Attendance and Giving | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Date | Present | Giving |
| 11/5 | 27 | \$4,475 |
| 11/12 | 28 | \$1,791 |
| 11/19 | 29 | \$2,135 |
| 11/26 | 40 | \$1,885 |



Greenwood United Methodist Church December 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p>DECEMBER IS SAFE TOYS & GIFTS MONTH</p> | | | | | <p>1 6 p.m. Food Distribution</p>  | <p>2 World Computer Literacy Day</p>  |
| <p>3 First Sunday of Advent; Communion Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship</p> | <p>4 Santa's' List Day</p>  | <p>5 8 a.m. Prayer Call 1 p.m. Ruth Circle</p>  | <p>6 Mitten Tree Day</p>  | <p>7 Pearl Harbor Day Hanukkah Begins 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice</p> | <p>8 National Brownie Day 6 p.m. Food Distribution</p>  | <p>9 8 a.m. Men's Breakfast</p>  |
| <p>10 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship and Gifts for the Baby</p> | <p>11 UNICEF Birthday</p>  | <p>12 Poinsettia Day 8 a.m. Prayer Call</p>  | <p>13 National Guard Birthday</p>  | <p>14 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7 p.m. Richmond Beekeepers</p> | <p>Friendship Quilters</p> | |
| <p>17 Wright Brothers Day 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Wor-</p> | <p>18 Bake Cookies Day</p>  | <p>19 8 a.m. Prayer Call</p>  | <p>20 Go Caroling Day</p>  | <p>21 Winter Solstice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice</p>  | <p>22 Nat'l Short Person Day 6 p.m. Food Distribution</p> | <p>23 Nat'l Christmas Movie Marathon Day</p> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>RIVER CITY RUG HOOKERS</p> </div> |
| <p>24 Christmas Eve 11 a.m. Worship</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 2em;">31</p> <p style="text-align: right;">New Year's Eve/Watch Night</p> | <p>25 Christmas Day</p>  | <p>26 Thank You Note Day 8 a.m. Prayer Call</p> | <p>27 National Fruitcake Day</p>  | <p>28 Pledge of Allegiance Day 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice</p> | <p>29 6 p.m. Food Distribution</p>  | <p>30 Bacon Day</p>  |



Mark Your Calendars

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Jan. 1 | New Year's Day |
| Jan 15 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day |
| Feb. 14 | Ash Wednesday/St. Valentine's Day |
| Feb. 19 | Presidents Day |
| March 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| March 24 | Palm Sunday |
| March 29 | Good Friday |
| March 31 | Easter Sunday |
| April 15 | Tax Day |



Greenwood UMC Mission

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. — Matt. 28:19

Greenwood Vision

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Loving | | Growing | | Serving |
| Learning to love and connect with God and People | » | Acquiring tools for being transformed into the image of | » | Participating in church ministry and community outreach |



The Twig Bender

is a publication of Greenwood United Methodist Church

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