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## *From the Pastor*

## In Paul's Footsteps

**V**isiting Greece and Turkey in November on a pilgrimage of the 12 steps of the Apostle Paul is an experience I will be unpacking for weeks to come.

I have a greater appreciation for the Apostle Paul's ministry, his diligence and perseverance in preaching and teaching the gospel despite the threats against his life, being jailed and stoned, continuing to make long journeys, walking hundreds of miles across parts of Europe and Asia Minor, and sailing the Aegean Sea.

He was the first to preach Christ in Greece in 49 AD. It was amazing to visit ancient archeological sites at Corinth in Greece as well as Ephesus in Turkey, just to name a

*(Continued on page 6)*



Pastor Franklin (right) and daughter Lydia on Mars Hill.

## Christmas Past

# Listen, Obey, Trust

*Editor's note: My friend and Greenwood's former pastor, the Rev. Dean Pittman, passed away earlier this year. I'm reprinting this pastor's letter from the December 2010 Twig Bender in Dean's memory, in his honor and because it's timely.*

**G**reetings in the Name of Jesus the Christ.

The road was dusty and the journey was not one that was easy. Time was against them as they walked slowly down the well-worn path. I am sure they questioned why at this time did they have to make such a trip as they were still wondering "why us?"

They decided to **listen, obey** and **trust**, not knowing what the future held in store for them.



Mary and Joseph started out for that little town of Bethlehem and the world would never be the same again. This Advent season, as we start our journey towards Bethlehem, let us **listen, trust** and **obey** God just as Mary and Joseph did so long ago. Listen for God to speak directly to you this Advent.

**Listen** for His voice to lead you towards the manger where the Christ child was born. Listen for His voice to tell you that your Savior, the Savior of the world, has come in to the world and to sing praises to His name.

**Obey!** Obey His Word and tell others of this glorious occasion. Obey His Word and love, as He loves you. Love came down at Christmas and we need to share that love with everyone, not just those that we like, but everyone.

*(Continued on page 7)*



*Greenwood's December Communion Offering:*  
**VA. INSTITUTE OF PASTORAL CARE**

## Greenwood Learning Center

# It'll Be A Busy December

By Trish Hayes, GLC Director

What a wonderful November we had!

We made Veterans Day cards for our church family as well as the Bee Club with whom we share the Fellowship Hall. We want to say thank you to everyone who has brought in donations for our sock, hat and scarf drive. It really means so much to us. We would like to say thanks to everyone who has given us donations for the daycare and our Arts and Crafts program. And we want to say thank you to the Food Connection volunteers for sponsoring our snack time.

We are so excited to announce that all the Greenwood Learning Center pupils made it onto the honor roll this quarter, how proud we all are! On Nov. 21 we sent up our paper lantern with our birthday wishes for the late Frank Miner, for a happy 100<sup>th</sup> and a special "thinking about you." We enjoyed helping decorate the Fellowship Hall for Greenwood's Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner and wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

In December, we will be hard at work in our "Santa's Workshop" making hand-



GLC Kiddos made Veterans Day cards.

crafted presents for our family and friends! I'm sure it is going to be all kinds of exciting and busy. I feel it is important that our GLC kids have something that

*(Continued on page 10)*

# What is Watch Night?

By Steve Stalnaker

**E**very year on the *Twig Bender's* December calendar "Watch Night" shows up on the last day of the month, also known as New Year's Eve. But for many of us, *Watch Night* is a mystery.

According to some sources, this observance was inaugurated by Methodist founder John Wesley. So, although I've been a Methodist all my life, I had never heard of Watch Night until I started working on the *Twig Bender*. So, what exactly is Watch Night?

The United Methodist Church Lectionary says:

*For some, this is a quiet observance, spent in prayer and reflection in anticipation of the new year to come. Others use the opportunity for a joyous celebration of the grace already shared and the promise of God's presence in the future.*

Watch Night on New Year's Eve is an opportunity to review the year that's ending and prepare ourselves for the New Year which God will bless us with the next day. Some churches and religious traditions hold a Watch Night service which might include Holy Communion.

After attending a Moravian Watch Night service on New Year's Eve 1738, Methodist founder John Wesley recorded that "as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily

*(Continued on page 9)*



John Wesley

## Greenwood's Women's Circles

The **RUTH CIRCLE** will meet Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 1 p.m. in the home of Betty Ritchie.

The **WILLING WORKERS CIRCLE** meets Thursday, Dec. 1 at 5:30 p.m. at the church. We'll be finalizing our plans for gifts for some Longdale Elementary School families.



| Greenwood Stewardship<br>November 2022 |         |            |
|--|---------|------------|
| Date                                   | Present | Giving     |
| 11/6                                   | 29      | \$2,638.00 |
| 11/13                                  | 36      | \$1,326.00 |
| 11/20                                  | 32      | \$1,511.00 |
| 11/27                                  | 27      | \$1,566.00 |

## GUMC Stewardship

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also – Matthew 6:21*

Each week we need \$2,489 to support Greenwood's missions and operating expenses. Last month we averaged \$1,693 weekly, or 68 percent of our budget (up from October's 47%). The table at left shows each Sunday's giving for last month.

## CHRISTMAS CARD EXCHANGE

Exchange Christmas cards with other members of the Greenwood/Laurel Park Charge. Bring your cards addressed to your Greenwood and Laurel Park friends by Sunday, Dec. 18 and leave them in the box in the narthex. Then we'll sort them and distribute them for you to pick up at the joint Greenwood/Laurel Park Charge worship service at Greenwood, 11 a.m. on Christmas Day.



## DECEMBER SCRIPTURES

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Dec. 4                    | Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12. |
| Dec. 11                   | Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11; Luke 1:46b-55.        |
| Dec. 18                   | Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25.  |
| Dec. 24:<br>Christmas Eve | Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20.                  |
| Dec. 25:<br>Christmas Day | Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14.         |
| Dec. 31:<br>Watch Night   | Ecclesiastes 3:1-13; Psalm 8; Revelation 21:1-6a; Matthew 25:31-46.  |

# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL

*(Continued from page 1)*

few. To walk and stand in the places where the Apostle Paul preached, like the low hill, Areopagus, also known as Mars Hill, northwest of the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens. I could only imagine as I **stood amidst ancient ruins** of the pagan temples the Apostle **Paul's deep distress** to see the city was full of idols and massive temples to the Greek gods (Acts 17:16). He even comments on one of the altars he sees while there noting the inscription "To an unknown god" and preaches that, "The God who made the world and everything in it, He who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things." The Apostle Paul's distress gave him a sense of urgency to confront the Jews in the synagogue and anyone who happened to be there every day, even in the marketplace.

Today as we look around at the world in which we live, are we distressed by what we see and hear? As believers, we should be distressed by the things we know God hates and want to do something about them. As disciples of Christ, we, too should have a sense of urgency to share the gospel of Christ, to confront and not shy away from questioning contradictions and hypocrisy in our churches and Christian ministries.

As we begin this Advent season and prepare with anticipation the coming of Jesus the Christ, my prayer is we will be more open to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the church and **not just be hearers and observers, but doers** who will repent, be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and go and share with anyone who happens to cross our path. My prayer is that we will **be courageous and step outside our comfort zone**, and outside the four walls of our churches to make disciples for Jesus the Christ. We have to go where the people are—neighborhood and county meetings, community gatherings and events, the local markets and grocery stores, and yes, walking the streets of our neighborhoods

Peace and blessings to all,

— Pastor Josette Franklin

# ***Listen, Obey, Trust***

(Continued from page 2)

**Trust!** Trust in God in all that we do. Mary and Joseph had to trust in God to start off on their journey to Bethlehem and we also need to trust as we start our journeys. God has promised us that He would love us always and from that love He sent His son to save the world. Trusting in God means following His Word, knowing that when we follow Him we are held in the palms of His hands, safe and secure.

Advent is the time to prepare our own hearts to receive the gift that God sent to all of His children. A gift that is the right size, perfect in every way. A gift that lasts for ever, never breaking down or wearing out. A gift wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger in a little town called Bethlehem. Enjoy the gift, embrace it, hold it tightly in your heart and it will make the season truly meaningful.

Shalom

Dean



## ***Brunswick Stew Sale and Fall Fair***

Once again, through God's grace and the efforts of the people of Greenwood, our signature annual fundraiser was a rousing success. The finance committee is still deciding where these funds will go.



|            | Brunswick Stew Sales | Bake and Book Sale | Peanuts       | Silent Auction | Honey Sales  | Total             |
|------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Sales      | 4,000.00             | 227.30             | 121.00        | 661.00         | 75.00        | 5,084.30          |
| Expenses   | (1,065.81)           | -                  | -             | -              | -            | (1,065.81)        |
| Net Profit | <b>2,934.19</b>      | <b>227.30</b>      | <b>121.00</b> | <b>661.00</b>  | <b>75.00</b> | <b>\$4,018.49</b> |

# Food Donation Connection

## *Thank You!*

A big thank you to everyone who has picked up food this past year. Also thank you to Trish Hayes and her son Nick for distributing the food every Friday evening. Thanks also to the pupils and staff at Chesterbrook Academy who donated over 100 food items from their November food drive. And, thanks to Doug Stalnaker for picking up the food for his Mom and Dad on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

### ***December Pick Up Rotation***

Wednesday, Nov. 30: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Dec. 1: Susan Johnston; Friday, Dec. 2: Josette Franklin.

Wednesday, Dec. 7: Charley Banks; Thursday, Dec. 8: Gay and Bob Stapleton; Friday, Dec. 9: Glenda and Steve Stalnaker.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Dec. 15: Susan Johnston; Friday, Dec. 16: Josette Franklin.

Wednesday, Dec. 21: Charley Banks; Thursday, Dec. 22: Gay and Bob Stapleton; Friday, Dec. 23: Glenda and Steve Stalnaker.

Wednesday, Dec. 28: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Dec. 29: Susan Johnston; Friday, Dec. 30: Josette Franklin.



## **Prayer Request Email**



For prayer requests only: [greenwoodprays@gmail.com](mailto:greenwoodprays@gmail.com)

Monitored daily by Pastor Josette; all emails in strict confidence.

# What is Watch Night?

(Continued from page 4)

upon us, insomuch that many cried for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground."

John Wesley adopted Watch Night services in 1740, sometimes calling them Covenant Renewal Services and providing early Methodists with a Godly alternative to times of drunken revelry like New Year's Eve.

Today, a Methodist Watch Night service may include singing, prayers, testimonials, scripture readings and Holy Communion; the liturgy for such a New Year's Eve service can be found in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*.

Greenwood has often observed the Wesley Covenant Service in January of previous years.

But New Year's Eve Watch Night has another significance to all freedom-loving Americans: *EMANCIPATION*. On the night of Dec. 31, 1862, enslaved and free African Americans gathered, many in secret, to ring in the New Year awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. Earlier, on Sept. 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln declared enslaved people in the rebelling Confederate States legally free by executive order. However, the decree would not take effect until the clock struck midnight at the start of the New Year: 1863.

Noted abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass wrote on Dec. 31, 1862: "It is a day for poetry and song, a new song. These cloudless skies, this balmy air, this brilliant sunshine . . . are in harmony with the glorious morning of liberty about to dawn upon us."



Abraham Lincoln

Sources: *The United Methodist Church website*, *the National Museum of African American history and Culture*, *Wikipedia* and other references.

# GLC Kids Busy in December

(Continued from page 3)

they made themselves with their two hands to give their family for Christmas.

If anyone would like to come and spend some time doing arts and crafts with us or just sharing stories about this time of year with us, please let me know.

The GLC kids made pipe cleaner and bead ornaments in October and sold them at Greenwood's Brunswick Stew and Fall Fair in October. We'll use the money we made to buy presents for a boy and a girl in the Fox/Salvation Army Christmas Stockings program.

We also made and sold dog treats — the same kind we made and took to the Henrico animal shelter. The money we made selling our dog treats will go towards gifts for the dogs when we go back to the Henrico Animal Shelter next year.

Because we are only open when the kids are in school. December will be a very fast month, but oh, what a busy month it will be. We never forget how grateful we are for everyone who has helped make this all possible for us!

The GLC kids and staff wish you all a very Merry Christmas and God Bless!

## 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**

Learning to love and connect with God and People



### **Growing**

Acquiring tools for being transformed into the image of Christ



### **Serving**

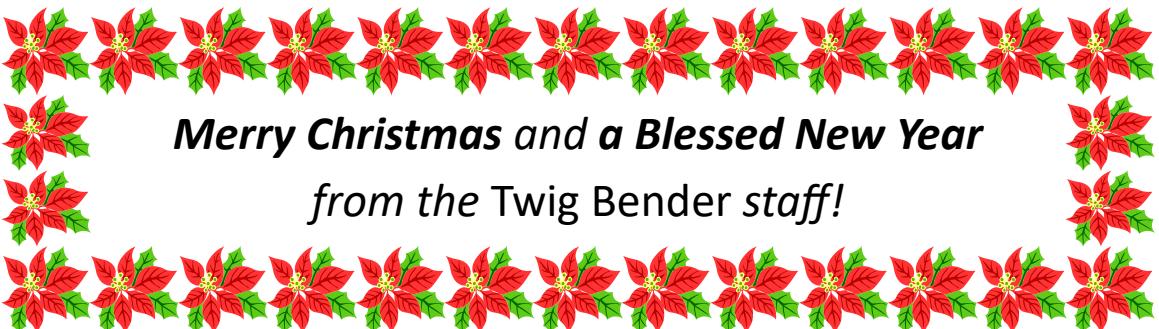
Participating in church ministry and community outreach



# LET'S GO CAROLING!

Join the Greenwood-Laurel Park Charge for caroling and fellowship on Friday, Dec. 23, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. We won't be caroling house to house; instead, we'll visit four or five locations where some Greenwood and Laurel Park senior shut-in folks reside.

Carolers will meet at Greenwood at 4 p.m., and either ride in the GUMC van or drive their own vehicles in convoy. Then we'll end up at the Greenwood Fellowship Hall for finger food and treats with hot drinks (hot chocolate or hot cider) and finger food.



***Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year  
from the Twig Bender staff!***



## Sunday Worship

Every Sunday at 11 a.m. at Greenwood

And on Zoom ([click here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 829 5710 1589; password: 929829

Also on Facebook Live



## Tuesday Prayer Call

Every Tuesday, 8 to 8:15 a.m. on Zoom ([click here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 851 1374 4202; password: 452446



# Greenwood Church Family Birthdays

|                       |       |                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| Clarence Powell ..... | 12/9  | Jamie Smith .....     | 12/15 |
| Jonae Shuler.....     | 12/10 | Kathryn Walker.....   | 12/21 |
| Betty Coleman .....   | 12/11 | Gail Stanley.....     | 12/28 |
| Cindy Jo Daniel.....  | 12/11 | Daniel Langston ..... | 12/28 |
| Janice Banks.....     | 12/13 | Jackie Schultz.....   | 12/31 |
| Mary Cullom .....     | 12/13 |                       |       |

## 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@gumcva.org](mailto:admin@gumcva.org) or call the church office at 804-266-5341; likewise, let us know if you'd like your birthday or anniversary removed.*



## Twig Bender

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# Greenwood Poinsettias 2022

*Order Poinsettias through Friday, Dec. 16.*

*Clip out this form, complete it and then mail it, with your payment, to the church office at the address on page 14, or drop your completed form, along with payment, in the church offering plate at Sunday worship services.*

**Take home your poinsettias after worship on  
Christmas Day, Sunday, Dec. 25.**

Number of poinsettias: \_\_\_\_\_

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of:

---

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In Honor of:

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***Each poinsettia plant is \$15; payment must accompany order. Please make checks out to Greenwood UMC with "poinsettias" on the memo line.***

Thanks for helping decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas!





# Greenwood United Methodist Church

## December 2022



| Sun  | Mon   | Tue   | Wed  | Thu  | Fri   | Sat   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|
|  |   |   |  | 1<br>5:30 p.m.<br>Willing<br>Workers<br>Circle<br>meets  | 2<br>6 p.m. Food<br>Distribu-<br>tion<br>   | 3<br>Make a Gift<br>Day<br>8 a.m. Men's<br>Breakfast  |
|  | <b>DECEMBER IS SAFE TOYS AND GIFTS MONTH</b>  |   |  |  |   |   |
| 4 Communi-<br>on Sunday<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Sunday<br>School<br>11 a.m. Wor-<br>ship | 5 Repeal Day<br>                 | 6<br>8 a.m. Prayer<br>Call<br>1 p.m. Ruth<br>Circle<br>Meets  | 7 Pearl Harbor<br>Remem-<br>brance Day<br>Medicare<br>Open En-<br>rollment<br>Ends   | 8<br>7 p.m. Rich-<br>mond<br>Beekeepers<br> | 9<br>Christmas<br>Card Day<br>6 p.m. Food<br>Distribu-<br>tion  | 10<br>Worldwide<br>Candle<br>Lighting<br>Day<br> |
| 11<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Sunday<br>School<br>11 a.m. Wor-<br>ship                      | 12 Poinsettia<br>Day<br>        | 13<br>Ice Cream<br>Day<br>8 a.m. Prayer<br>Call<br> | 14<br>Roast Chest-<br>nuts Day<br>              | 15<br>Bill of Rights<br>Day<br>            | 16<br>6 p.m. Food<br>Distribu-<br>tion<br> | 17<br>Wright<br>Brothers<br>Day<br>Friendship<br>Quilters   |
| 18 Chanukah<br>Begins<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Sunday<br>School<br>11 a.m. Wor-<br>ship   | 19 Nat'l Hard<br>Candy Day<br> | 20<br>8 a.m. Prayer<br>Call<br>                    | 21 Winter<br>Solstice<br>Winter Be-<br>gins<br> | 22<br>Nat'l Re-<br>Gifting Day<br>        | 23<br><i>Twig Bender</i><br>Deadline<br>4 p.m. Carol-<br>ing<br>6 p.m. Food<br>Distribu-<br>tion                              | 24 Christmas<br>Eve<br>                        |
| 25 Christmas<br>Day<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Sunday School<br>11 a.m. Wor-<br>ship        | 26 Thank You<br>Note Day<br>   | 27<br>8 a.m. Prayer<br>Call<br>                    | 28<br>Card Playing<br>Day<br>                   | 29<br>St. Thomas<br>Becket Day<br>        | 30<br>Bacon Day<br>6 p.m. Food<br>Distribu-<br>tion   | 31 New<br>Year's Eve<br>Watch Night<br>        |

# Mark Your Calendars

Jan. 1..... New Year's Day 2023  
Jan. 16..... Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
Feb. 14..... St.. Valentine's Day  
Feb. 20..... Presidents Day  
Feb. 23..... Ash Wednesday  
March 12 .....Daylight Saving Time Starts  
April 2 .....Palm Sunday  
April 7 .....Good Friday  
April 9 .....Easter Sunday  
May 14.....Mother's Day

