



# THE UNITED

## *South Avenue United Methodist Church*

A UNION OF CHRIST, ROSS AVENUE AND SOUTH AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES



**December 2021/January 2022**

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www.SouthAvenueUMC.org  
Conference web site: www.wpaumc.org

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National web site: www.umc.org

### FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART DECEMBER 2021

Greetings in the name of the Christ Child,

As we step into the Advent/ Christmas Season we are beginning to hear some of those familiar and oh so beloved hymns that touch our hearts and souls. There are those pastors who absolutely refuse to sing any Christmas hymns during the Advent Season, insisting upon immersing the congregation in a month long season of anticipation, longing, preparing and waiting as they sing: 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,' 'All Earth Is Waiting,' Hail to the Lord's Anointed,' to name just a few. All are beautiful and convey a message we need to hear deep within our souls.

I confess, it is difficult, at least for me, to not jump ahead to the glorious Christmas songs and hymns and prematurely sing them during the Advent Season. I rationalize that the Christmas Season seems so short and there are so many marvelous hymns and I am just so eager to hear the heart-touching melody and celebrate the Good News that I never tire of hearing.... "And the angel said to them (shepherds) out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said, 'Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'"

And so if you don't mind I am going to cut this letter short that I might listen to one of my favorite Christmas hymns....and oh yes, prayers for a hope filled, peace filled, joy filled, , love filled and SONG filled Advent and Christmas.



#### O Holy Night

The stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth  
Long lay the world in sin and e'er pining  
'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees O hear the angels voices.  
O night divine O night when Christ was born  
O night divine, O night, O night divine.

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming,  
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.  
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,  
Here came the wise men from Orient land.  
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger;  
In all our trials born to be our friend.

He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger,  
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!  
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!

Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and His gospel is peace.  
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;  
And in His name all oppression shall cease.  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful raise we,  
Let all within us praise His holy name.

Christ is the Lord! O praise His Name forever,  
His power and glory evermore proclaim.  
O night divine, O night, O night divine.

Christmas Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Russel

## FOUR WEEK ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Russel will be leading an Advent Bible Study via Zoom starting on December 1, 2021 at 7:00 pm. Mifflin Avenue will be the zoom host.

Below is log in information:

[https://zoom.us/j/4127312511?](https://zoom.us/j/4127312511?pwd=M091MnJ6WjhmbDloTWcxbmFmTFFlQT09)

pwd=M091MnJ6WjhmbDloTWcxbmFmTFFlQT09

ID 412 731 2511

PASSWORD 123456

Use Your Phone (312) 626-6799

## WCM HOLIDAY FOOD BAGS

Wilkinsburg Community Ministry is looking for donations for their holiday food bag project. For sanitary reasons, they would prefer bulk or packaged donations. An easier solution would be a monetary contribution to their bulk food fund. Checks can be made payable to South Avenue UMC with WCM on the memo line. They are also looking for volunteers to help pack the bags. For details, please see the information leaflet on the bulletin board at the Action Table.



## DECEMBER CHURCH OFFICE CLOSING/HOUR

December 27	Office Closed
December 28	Office Closed
December 29	Open 12:00 pm- 3:00 pm
December 30	Open 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

## UNITED DEADLINE

The deadline for the February United will be Monday, January 24. Leave articles in the church office or email them to Helen McAfoos at [hmcafoos@comcast.net](mailto:hmcafoos@comcast.net).

## "INTENT TO GIVE" CARDS

There is still time to return your "Intent to Give" card for 2022. You will find additional cards with an envelope at the Action Table or in the Narthex. The card can be placed in the offering plate, brought to the Church office or put in the mail. Your participation is much appreciated as we prepare the church budget for the coming year. Thanks to all who have returned their cards.

## 2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Your personalized 2022 offering envelopes will be available for pickup at the Action Table on Sunday, December 19. By using these envelopes, you help the counters and the accounting team process your contributions more efficiently. For those who are unable to pick up their envelopes, we will mail them to you by the end of December.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Human Trafficking Awareness Day - January 11

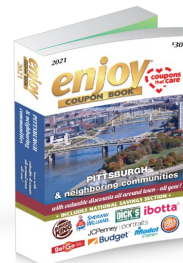
Human Relations Day - January 16

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday - January 17  
OFFICE CLOSED

## ENJOY BOOKS ARE ON THEIR WAY

Just in time for Holiday giving the Enjoy books have been shipped and should be here this week. Look for them the next time you are in church.

Women's Ministries is selling the 2022 Enjoy Book to earn extra money for missions. The cost is \$30 each, same as last year. This book full of coupons can be a big savings for you!! You can start using your book immediately! It also makes a great Birthday, Anniversary and/or Christmas present.



## ORDER POINSETTIAS



Poinsettias will adorn the altar beginning Sunday, December 19 for our Worship Services. If you would like to place a poinsettia on the altar, please complete the form located at the Action Table and return it to the Church Office by Sunday, December 6. The cost is \$9.00 per plant.

## DECK THE HALLS

Hard as it is to believe, it's time to welcome in the Christmas season by decorating our church sanctuary and Wesley Room. Please join us on Thursday, December 2 at 9:30. Thanks to the earlier efforts of a helpful Christmas elf, our job will be easy and fun with your help.



## CHRISTMAS CANTATA BY THE CHOIR

The choir will present Joel Raney's Christmas cantata, "Have You Heard" at the combined 10:30 service at South Avenue on December 19. This choral work is based on Celtic carols with additional music. The music is presented with narration.

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE Sunday, December 24, 2021

A Christmas Eve Candle Light Service will be held in the church sanctuary at 8:30 PM. The service will be a service of lessons and carols and will conclude with singing Silent Night as each participant lights a candle. Mifflin Avenue's service will be held at 7:00 PM for those who need an earlier service.



## ANGEL TREE "2021"

Hello South Avenue Angels! I missed you last year and was missing you this year when I saw the invitation from Mifflin Avenue UMC to join Toys for Tots sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps at Mifflin.



The Angel Tree is up and has angels (no names or child info). Take an angel as a reminder. Please bring only new toys (no clothes) unwrapped by December 5th to Mifflin or South Avenue. We will be happy to take your gifts to Mifflin.

Enjoy the beginning of Christmas!  
Bless you,  
The Large Angel

## "HOLIDAY HAPPENING"



Is this something new? The Board of Women's Ministries would like to invite all the women of the church to join them for a celebration on December 9th at 1 pm in the Wesley Room. There will be a program, "Legends of Christmas", light refreshments and a time for fellowship. If you plan to attend, please sign up at the Action Table or call the church office. We look forward to seeing you!

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

You may distribute your Christmas cards to your church Family using the "Mailbox" located in the Library and/or you may bring in one card for your Church Family and Friends signed by you and put it on the paper Christmas Tree that will be across from the Action Table on the bulletin board.

You are encouraged to contribute a monetary gift representing the amount of postage you saved in the collection box on the "Mailbox." The proceeds benefit WCM.

## UNDECORATE

It's all over for another year and time to take down Christmas 2021 decorations. Please help out on Thursday, January 6 at 9:30. With many hands the job goes quickly.