



# The Grapevine

Clarksbury United Methodist Church  
15924 General Puller Highway, Hardyville, Virginia  
[www.clarksburyumc.com](http://www.clarksburyumc.com)

December 2016

Our Mission:

To receive and share God's love through worship, education, service and outreach.

## Pastor Ken's Corner

Luke 1:28-35, 37-38 (NRSV)

*<sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

Can you believe it? **November** is over...the foliage has changed and we are busy raking and bagging and burning leaves...and more leaves. We are only weeks away from a New Year!

We so often seem to be in a hurry for things to happen and in that rush miss out on some of the wonderful opportunities right in front of us. **Right!** I ALMOST forgot. ☺ ☺ ☺ We need to get through the entire month of December FIRST...before worrying about the New Year.

ADVENT is here. The Chrismon Tree (A Christmas tree decorated with explicitly Christian symbols in white and gold.) is up in the sanctuary as well as the garlands and wreaths and other greenery with their pretty red bows along with candles in the windows.

The Warming Tree is up in the social hall. Kathy Wright gave us directions Sunday and there are "posted directions" right beside the tree. If any other questions come up, ask Kathy or any one of the "soup ladies."

We have our last Mobile Food Pantry of the year on Saturday, December 3, and Philippi is scheduled to man the trailer and help in our three-church rotation. Anyone from any of the churches is welcome to come, see what is done and lend a hand; there is always plenty of work to go around.

😊😊😊 as always 😊😊😊

**Advent** signifies what for you? Are you ready for the coming of our Savior?

*<sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.*

When the Angel Gabriel visits Mary and informs her of God's plan for her, I imagine between the surprise and fear Mary certainly demonstrated, she did not understand how God was going to make this most improbable event occur. She knows how children come into the world. She knows the sequence and process certainly. What Gabriel is telling her is most IMPROBABLE. As if that were not enough, Gabriel continues...

*<sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

That is all well and good, even glorious and wonderful... but there is just one problem for Mary...

*<sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"*

Have you encountered at some time in your life an IMPOSSIBLE situation? Have you just marched on and expected the situation to just "work out" or have you worried about it until you are a nervous wreck? Mary asked out of wonder and concern, who wouldn't?

Gabriel tells her...

*<sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God."*

Did you get that? NOTHING is IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD!

That's where doubt is suspended ...and faith...(the hope for things not seen) kicks in. When we are without hope...in desperation, we can call on Our Lord and he is there with us. That doesn't mean that the problems disappear. Rather, come what may...God is there with you.

We trust in Him Just like Mary did...

*<sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."*

Jesus told the disciples at the Ascension that he was ascending to the Father but He would be back. As Mary surrendered her future to God's plan and so wonderfully declared herself the servant of the Lord, so WE, all of US, can and should dedicate ourselves to be God's servants this **Christmas** season and, more than that, ALL year long.

We need to have the celebration of Christmas with family and friends...BEFORE we get to the New Year. Celebrate **CHRISTMAS** with all your heart. Give thanks for so much more than the wrapped presents (gifts) under the Christmas tree this year, give thanks for Jesus' presence with you throughout all you encounter and do the entire year through.

Just in case we lose sight of whom it is we are getting ready for...it is JESUS...in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. We need to seriously pause, reflect, meditate, and search our hearts to find the strength to **surrender** our whole selves, completely... just as Mary did...TO HIM. God has reconciled us to Himself THROUGH that little child born of Mary... JESUS. Give THANKS for that LOVE, GRACE and SACRIFICE today and ALWAYS! AMEN!

I will urge and commend all of you over the next few weeks to PRAY, to MEDITATE on GOD'S WORD and to look to what you CAN DO for our Community and OUR CHURCH.

We together have pledged OUR prayers, OUR presence, OUR gifts, OUR service and OUR witness for Christ and His Church.

**Peace & Grace**  
**Pastor Ken**

Annual Budget for 2016 (Operating Funds) **\$108,223**

Total Received for Operating Funds as of November 27, 2016: **\$95,814.16**

Income Needed to Date to Meet Budget: **\$99,204.42**

While seeking happiness for others,  
we unconsciously find it for ourselves

### COFFEE HOUR FOR December

December 4  
December 11  
December 18  
December 25

Becky Foster  
Kathy Wright  
Luncheon  
Polly Van Benschoten



*If you would like to be a part of this ministry,  
please contact Polly Van Benschoten, 776-0569*

### UMM NEWS

By Warren Wright, UMM President



The United Methodist Men will not have a business meeting in the month of December. We will be hosting a breakfast for all men of the church on Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup> at 8 AM at Patti's Diner. Our next monthly business meeting will be Monday January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 at 7 PM. At this time we will continue planning for 2017. Remember that there are no membership or dues requirements to be a part of the United Methodist Men of Clarksbury, just a willingness to serve Jesus Christ within your church and community. **Mission-To Help Men Grow In Christ, So Others May Know Christ.**

## **A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LAY LEADER Why Jesus is Better Than Santa Claus**

**By Warren Wright**



**Santa lives at the North Pole...**

**JESUS is everywhere.**

**Santa rides in a sleigh...**

**JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.**

**Santa comes but once a year...**

**JESUS is an ever present help.**

**Santa fills your stockings with goodies...**

**JESUS supplies all your needs.**

**Santa comes down your chimney uninvited...**

**JESUS stands at your door and knocks, and then enters your heart when invited.**

**You have to wait in line to see Santa...**

**JESUS is as close as the mention of His name.**

**Santa lets you sit on his lap...**

**JESUS lets you rest in His arms.**

**Santa doesn't know your name, all he can say is "Hi little boy or girl, what's your name?"...**

**JESUS knew our name before we were born. Not only does He know our name, He knows our address too. He knows our history and future and He even knows how many hairs are on our heads.**

**Santa has a belly like a bowl full of jelly...**

**JESUS has a heart full of love.**

**All Santa can offer is HO HO HO...**

**JESUS offers health, help and hope.**

**Santa says "You better not cry"...**

**JESUS says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you."**

**Santa's little helpers make toys...**

**JESUS makes new life, mends wounded hearts, repairs broken homes and builds mansions.**

**Santa may make you chuckle but...**

**JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.**

**While Santa puts gifts under your tree...**

**JESUS became our gift and died on a tree...the cross.**

**We need to put Christ back in CHRISTmas, Jesus is still the reason for the season.**

**"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son"  
(John 5:11).**

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

By David Dobson, Chairperson



### Heal our Land

Greetings my fellow Church members, as 2016 draws to close, I wish to take a moment to thank all of you for allowing worship committee to serve you. When created in November 2014, the directive was to steer worship services in a manner that will be engaging and inclusive of all. We sincerely hope that everyone feels we have succeeded.

There are some things in the works for 2017 and efforts will continue to provide a thoughtful, enjoyable, and engaging Church for all who walk through the doors. We are always willing to hear new ideas from the congregation, so do not be afraid to share your thoughts.

Remember, to the world you are only one person, but to one person you may be the world.



### New Ministry! "Warming Tree"

By Kathy Wright, Chairperson

What exactly is "the warming tree"? It is a new mission opportunity for Clarksbury United Methodist Church to serve the people of the Deltaville and Hardyville area. When the church is decorated for the Advent and Christmas season, "the warming tree" will be set up in the fellowship hall. There will be "small cards" on the tree (similar to the "angel tree" in malls) that will indicate a child or adult "warming item" to keep them warm during the winter months. (1) You pick a card from the tree, which indicates what you are willing to purchase or it can be handmade, (2) take an ornament from the "ornament basket" and place the ornament on the warming tree where your "card" was hanging, (3) after purchasing or making your item, return it in a small bag (or we will provide one), and place it under the warming tree.

The "warming items" will be distributed to our "shut-ins" or those who come to our once-a-month food pantry (Cryer Center mobile truck). Pastor Ken will also be able to give a "warming item" to someone who comes to the church needing assistance. If you have any questions, please contact "The Soup Ministry" ladies, Lucy Blevins, Diane Faulkner, Helen White, or Kathy Wright, Chairman, 757-373-9166, email [kdwright@va.metrocast](mailto:kdwright@va.metrocast). THANK YOU for participating in yet another important mission opportunity at YOUR church...Clarksbury United Methodist. God Bless!

**Edna Yankovich Circle**  
**By Fran Miller, Chairperson**



***Christmas Party!***

The Edna Yankovich Circle is having their annual get-together at the church on Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 6:00 p.m. All women of the church are invited. Just bring a covered dish to share. We will also be doing an ornament exchange again this year. If you wish to participate in it, please bring a wrapped ornament (\$5-\$10) when you come.

**NURTURE AND CARE COMMITTEE**

**By Jerry Dant, Chairperson**

The Nurture Committee would like to thank Pastor Ken and members of Clarksbury for letting us know when there is a need to send cards to the sick, both in the church and community, as well as those in need of comforting thoughts in moments of need especially because of a loss of friends or relatives. We feel this is a very important part of Clarksbury's ministry in the community. For Thanksgiving, cards were sent to all of our home bound church members. If you know of someone who needs help with a special card about the Christmas story, please let the Nurture and Care committee know about it.

**Pledge Sunday**

Pledge Sunday will be on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. Please start thinking about your commitment to our church for 2017. Pledge forms will be distributed on December 4 and 11

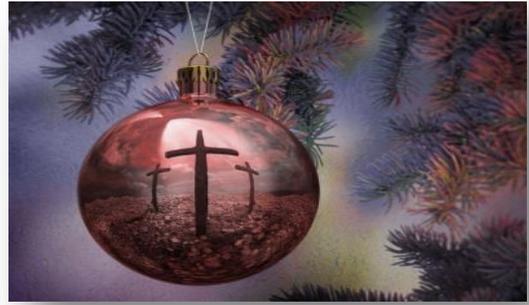
*1-Minute Bible Love Notes*

**6 Things  
to Believe in at  
Christmas**

1. Believe in Miracles  
- Isaiah 9:6
2. Believe in God's Purposes - Luke 4:18
3. Believe in Love, Grace,  
and Hope - John 3:16
4. Believe in Comfort  
- Psalm 147:3
5. Believe in Joy  
- Nehemiah 8:10
6. Believe & Seek Him!  
- Hebrews 11:6

*Another 1-minute devotion  
from BibleLoveNotes.com*

## POWER OF PRAYER



### Christmas Version of I Corinthians 13

*If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.*

*If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.*

*If I work at a soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.*

*If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.*

*Love stops the cooking to hug the child.*

*Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse.*

*Love is kind, though harried and tired.*

*Love does not envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.*

*Love does not yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.*

*Love does not give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who cannot.*

*Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.*

*LOVE {sent to earth as a tiny baby and placed in a lowly manger} Never Fails.*

*Let us rejoice in our Faith and Church Family everywhere!*

## Our Vision:

To be a spirit-filled and nurturing church family that reaches out and embraces the entire community.



# The Grapevine December 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	2	3 <b>Suzanne Ramsburg</b> 5-5:45 p.m. Contemporary Worship
4 <b>Sharon Tullos</b> 10-10:40 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship Communion	5 <b>Becky Foster</b> 11 a.m. Soup Ministry	6 7 p.m. Trustees	7 <b>Spencer Crittenden</b>	8 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	9	10 5-5:45 p.m. Contemporary Worship
11 Anna White 10-10:40 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	12	13 6:00p.m. EYCircle Christmas Party	14	15 7p.m. Chancel Choir	16 <b>Mason Duke</b>	17 5-5:45 p.m. Contemporary Worship
18 10-10:40 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship <b>Luncheon</b>	19 <b>Jenny Crittenden</b> <b>David Dobson</b> 11 a.m. Soup Ministry	20 Finance & Church Council 7 p.m	21	22 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	23	24 6 p.m. Contemporary Worship
25 10-10:40 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship	26	27	28	29	30	31

The deadline for the January 2017 Grapevine will be Monday, December 26. Send items to [pwalian@yahoo.com](mailto:pwalian@yahoo.com).  
**December Birthdays** (If you know of any additions, deletions or corrections that should be made to the birthday calendar, please let the newsletter editor know.)

**Counters** for December are Lee White and Tommy or Jenny Crittenden  
Val Bradley and Cacky Guill will serve as **ushers**.  
The **reader** is David Dobson