



# The Grapevine

Clarksbury United Methodist Church

15924 General Puller Highway, Hardyville, Virginia December 2020

[www.clarksburymc.com](http://www.clarksburymc.com)

Our Mission:

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

## Pastor Ken's Corner

Mark 1:1-8 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" <sup>4</sup> John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.

<sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

December is here. Christmas is just a few weeks away...too few for some of us. I pray you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and celebrated all God's gifts to you this year with family and friends.

Most of the trees have shed their leaves; yet a few of those leaves remain to fall, if only to keep us raking for a few more weeks.

Now let us focus on the real reason for the season....

The season is ADVENT and the reason is Jesus and His eagerly expected return. Sunday, November 29, was the first Sunday of ADVENT. The first candle of HOPE was lit and Warren preached us into this season of our anticipation, of our expectation and of Jesus coming back and our reaffirmation of who Jesus is and our faith in Him.

To assist us in understanding more fully the hope that comes with ADVENT we will start an ADVENT Bible Study, *Because of Bethlehem Love is Born and Hope is Here* by Max Lucado, beginning on Wednesday, December 2, from 1-2 p.m. for four sessions each Wednesday finishing on the December 23.

The four sessions are as follows: *God Has A face; Worship Works Wonders; God Guides the Wise; and Every Heart a Manger*. We did this Bible Study a couple of years ago and some of you probably still have your books. Come Wednesday with your book if you have it; if not, we will order more if needed and we could just follow along with our Bibles and let Max lead us. We will meet in the social hall. Sign in and fill out the Health Statement, social distance, and wear masks per CDC COVID protocols.

If we need to adjust times please let me know as soon as possible; we can be flexible to a degree as I know this is late notice for most.

The *Cryer Center Mobile Food Pantry* is scheduled to be at Clarksbury on **Saturday, December 5**. Our church has the lead again. The Food Pantry and the Soup Ministry have modified the way these ministries are conducted to be in compliance with the CDC and Virginia COVID-19 requirements. Warren and Kathy Wright will supply additional directions to the participants. For the rest of you...we always need prayers; so even if you can't be here to work the Food Pantry, pray for us and the people we serve.

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Advent, from the Latin ADVENTUS (coming, arrival) refers to the coming of Christ. ADVENT names the season where we prepare and make ready for the coming of Christ as predicted in Isaiah. The preparation begins with our baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of our sins. We can take these four weeks to meditate, pray, delve into the scriptures, and share our understanding of the readings as we prepare ourselves for an appropriate attitude for this season.

Let us concentrate on preparing our souls and our minds for this precious blessing and gift we receive because of Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago. Let us look to our friends and our community to find the signs of just how Jesus is calling us to live out our baptism, repentance, and His forgiveness. Most of all let us prepare for His return through worship and prayer.

*<sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*

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As we are **IN** the world and called to **NOT** be **OF** this world, let us show to the world around us the Jesus who is **IN** us is NOT like this world . Let us study, confess our sins and ask for His **FORGIVENESS**. The generations of John the Baptist needed him to proclaim Jesus' coming. We have the prophets as well as the apostles, the Holy Spirit and the saints before us throughout these 2,000 plus years to show us what we need to do to be prepared for Jesus Christ's **ADVENT**, or second coming.

Let us really pause, take a deep dive into this Advent Bible Study and make our personal preparations for His position in our hearts and our relationship with the Creator of the universe and His Son our Redeemer and the Holy Spirit.

I am so proud of the great generosity and efforts of our **Prayer Warriors/Prayer Partners** in providing delicious Thanksgiving meals, cards, letters and calls to many of our members.

Keep the small groups and gatherings in your prayers as weather is changing and we are finding new locations to enjoy some safe, socially distant conversations and wonderful music. Thank you, Randy, Eileen and Jim, and now Sandy, for such great music which adds so much to the joy and the nurturing aspect of these groups for us all as we continue the **social distancing and semi-isolation**. Thank you, Linda Bartz, for spearheading this project. Anyone interested in more information about this, please contact Linda or Warren. **It is so good to see each other and be with friends and brothers and sisters "in person" again.**

Our online services, both Facebook and YouTube, continue to garner over 300 views each week. **THANK YOU** to all who are part of this effort. All of you have contributed so much to each service, even you at home when you give us such uplifting feedback. **We are a Church**, in the truest sense of the word...**Together**, through the power of our Lord Jesus, through the grace of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

I pray that we continue to get some comfort and joy from these online services. Until the time we can be together in person, we will continue to hold each other close through the **common connection** we have amid our **bonds of worship, service, and prayer**.

I am very proud, beyond words, with how **faithful and loyal** you all have been in supporting the church with **prayers, tithes, gifts, talents and witness** in spite of our inability to be able to support with our presence.

Our **Healthy Church Team (HCT)** (*Pastor Ken Cleveland; Warren Wright, Lay Leader; Suzanne Ramsburg, Financial Secretary; David Dobson, Worship Committee Chair; Eileen Crittenden, Medical; Cheryl Teagle, Nominations and Leadership; Jerry Dant, Nurture Chair; Lee White, Trustees; Becky Wilhite, Trustees, Worship; Betty Tate, SPPRC Chair*) has met several times to look at the COVID protocols for resuming in-person services. **We will continue to meet as there are changes in guidance or other changes.**

Based on inputs from other churches and the composition of our congregation and the restrictions in the protocols which are MANDATORY for each Phase/Stage per Bishop Lewis's direction, Clarksbury's HCT has determined that we still see that our best avenue is to continue **on-line services** until we are moved into Phase/Stage 3, which is the closest to normal worship. If you have questions or would like any more information on our move to resume in-person services, contact me or any of the other HCT members.

If you have entered the church lately you will have seen the new Health Acknowledgment forms for **single person** entries, the Health Acknowledgment poster, and the excel sign-up sheet for **group gatherings and meetings**. Fill them out as appropriate and put them in the box on the counter.

We will use the 4 UVC lights to cleanse the social hall and sanctuary using ultraviolet light. Ask Warren, Lee or Don Bartz if you have a question about them and their operation.

Our ultimate spiritual obedience is owed to Jesus. He is the Way, He is the Truth, and He is the Life. We give to the world that which is the world's, and give to God the things that are His.

How dangerous and perilous are our times? In the country? In the county? From COVID-19? From the social unrest? Even in times such as these we can count on **Jesus** to be a calming and PRESENT presence in our lives and in the world around us.

Help me keep the Prayer Warrior/Partners e-mails updated as information and changes become available. Let us continue in faith and hope to be children of God infused with the Holy Spirit throughout all the travails and trials of life in this world.

Let us resolve to not let COVID-19 define who we are...let us be defined by the words, the example and the glory of our **Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!** I take great joy in how each of you, as a congregation, has reacted to this ever changing situation.

When you and your family prepare for and gather for **Christmas**, continue to praise and give your thanks to the Lord for His bounty and love. May his GRACE, MERCY and LOVE be with you every day, and may every day your awareness of HIS presence through HIS unbreakable gifts to YOU grow.

It is His **Presence IN** you, not the **Presents** you get under the tree, that will really make you feel blessed.

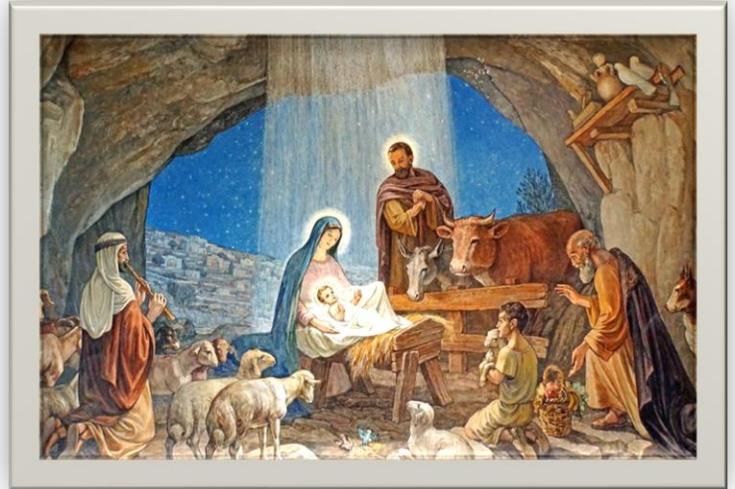
**Peace & Grace,**

**Pastor Ken**

## *A Message from Your Lay Leader*

### *Why Jesus is Better Than Santa Claus*

*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.

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

## *United Methodist Men News* *Warren Wright-UMMM President*

The UMM will not meet during the month of December. We wish a Happy Christmas to all of our Brothers and Sisters.

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.**

### *Soup Ministry*

*Kathy Wright; Lucy Blevins, Val Bradley, and Diane Faulkner*



Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the soup ministry has continued to distribute soup to our recipients, but only the third Monday of each month. This is because we now deliver groceries from the Cryer Center Mobile food pantry the first Saturday of each month to our recipients.

### *Warming Tree and Coat Rack Ministry*

*Kathy Wright; Lucy Blevins, Val Bradley, and Diane Faulkner*



Our warming tree ministry and coat rack ministry will not be available as in previous years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions will not allow use of the church for these ministries, therefore; we will not be putting up our **warming tree** or **put out our coat rack**. We **DO HAVE** some warming articles and coats if needed. You just need to contact Pastor Ken and he will be able to help you out.

THANK YOU for supporting these very important ministries of your church. If you would like to help in any way, just contact one of the committee members listed above, or myself, Kathy Wright (757-373-9166) or email [kdwright@va.metrocast.net](mailto:kdwright@va.metrocast.net). God Bless.

## NURTURE & Outreach

Jerry Dant

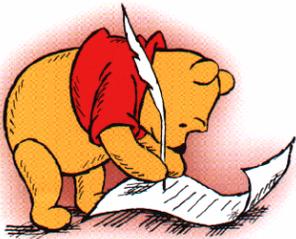
### NURTURE

Well, time has flown by and we still are not able to visit except by cards, calls and drive-by visits. Thanks to all, who sent good wishes and made signs for Alans and Frans return home after being away for so long. Thanksgiving is coming and don't forget to send cards to our friends to let them know how thankful we are for the Blessings we have from God.

Please think of someone in the community you can help during Thanksgiving. If we look around there must be someone that would appreciate some help during the holidays. Please let's share our love with others during the holidays. Happy Thanksgiving to all from the Nurture and Outreach Committee



### Mail a letter or card of happiness to our home bound members!

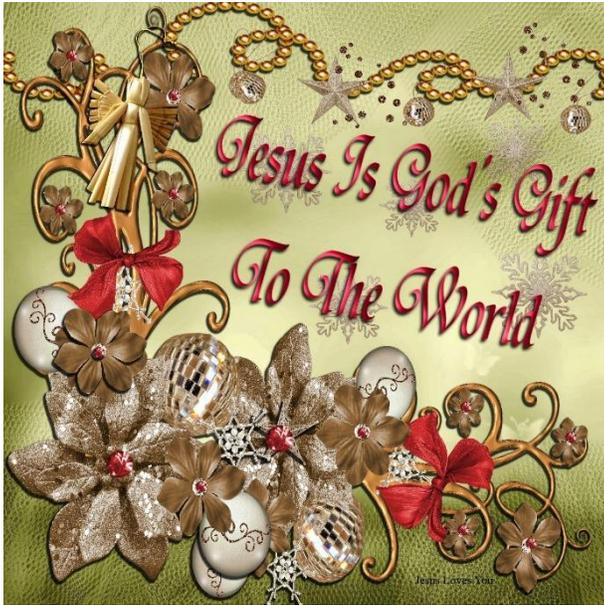


If your last name starts with the letter listed below, please send a card or note to the shut-ins listed.

Why not make a home bound member smile by sending them a card often as well as on their birthday.

If we all participate, our home bound members will get a card frequently from church members, and will have more great memories of Clarksbury.

<b>A-C</b>		
Roegean Speight <b>09/10</b> James River Convalescent ctr Aberthaw AVE Room 118 Newport News, VA 23601-4199		Jane Crittenden <b>8/22</b> P.O. 30 Hardyville, VA 23070
<b>D-G</b>		
	Reggie Jackson <b>7/12</b> 672 Gloucester Road Saluda, VA 23149	
<b>H-L</b>		
	Myrtle Clark <b>10/2</b> P.O. Box 302 Deltaville, VA 23043	Pastor Jim Salmon <b>5/24</b> 26306 Mattaponi Trail Milford, VA 22524
<b>M-Z</b>		



*Lord,*

*Bless the families of the  
earth*

*As Christmas comes this  
year,*

*Bring hope to all your  
children*

*Raise their spirits,  
bring them cheer.*

*Remind us that we're not  
alone*

*No matter what we do,  
For you brought Baby Jesus  
to connect our hearts to You.*

*Amen*

<b>Annual Budget</b> for 2020 Operating Funds:	<b>\$118,339.00</b>
<b>Total Received</b> for Operating Funds as of November 30:	92,701.69
<b>Total Income Needed to Meet Budget</b> by end of November:	<b>98,615.83</b>

# DECEMBER POP

## Power of God, Privilege of Prayer



*Phil. 4:19* says, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus."

A woman tells of a time when, in desperation, she put this to the test. In her mid-20's, left to raise two children on her own, her income from providing child care had evaporated. Well-meaning family encouraged her to go on public assistance, and they got angry when she said she would trust God.

One Friday evening, she was led to lay out all her monthly needs before the Lord and pray, citing the above promise in faith. Saturday passed in a sense of peace that her prayer had been answered, and it was Sunday that a friend called with news about a job possibility.

The woman asked her friend what the job paid, and the amount mentioned matched exactly the figure she had put before the Lord Friday night. She had prayed specifically, leaving no room for doubt that this was His answer. She took the job, of course, and got to watch as her income doubled within a few months.

**James 4:2** reminds us, "You don't have because you don't ask God."

James, in Chapter 1, also says, "When you ask, you must believe and not doubt."

Finally, humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and, as it says in **Proverbs 3:5-6**; "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Submitted to His Glory by Bob Huff



# The Grapevine December 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Elijah West Noon Prayer  AdventBible Study 1pm-2pm	3 Suzanne Ramsburg Noon Prayer	4 Sharon Tullos Noon Prayer	5 Becky Foster Mobile Food Pantry Clarksbury Noon Prayer
6 Noon Prayer	7 Spencer Crittenden Noon Prayer	8 Noon Prayer	9 Noon Prayer AdventBible Study 1pm-2pm	10 Noon Prayer	11 Anna White Noon Prayer	12 Noon Prayer
13 Noon Prayer	14 Noon Prayer	15 Noon Prayer	16 Mason Duke Noon Prayer AdventBible Study 1pm-2pm	17 Noon Prayer	18 Noon Prayer	19 Jenny Crittenden David Dobson Noon Prayer
20 Noon Prayer	21 Alyssa West Soup Ministry  Noon Prayer	22 Noon Prayer	23 Noon Prayer AdventBible Study 1pm-2pm	24 Noon Prayer	25 Merry Christmas!	26 Noon Prayer
27 Noon Prayer	28 Noon Prayer	29 Noon Prayer	30 Noon Prayer AdventBible Study 1pm-2pm	31 Noon Prayer		

The deadline for the **January 2021** Grapevine will be **Monday, December 28**

Send items to: [pwalian2@gmail.com](mailto:pwalian2@gmail.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.)