



December 2018

“Yucca Breeze”

T H E U N I T E D C H U R C H E S O F H O T S P R I N G S

Happy New Year Everyone!

Now I know many of you are thinking I misread my calendar this morning, but I can assure you I have not. In the life of the church we are about to celebrate the beginning of a new year. The first Sunday of Advent is the beginning of a new *church* year.

On Sunday, December 2nd we will light the first candle of the Advent wreath. As we begin this four-week period of preparation for the birth of Jesus, during these days we are encouraged to make room in our hearts and lives for the coming of God’s son, our Savior. This is an opportunity for us to examine our lives or as the prophet Isaiah says, it is a time for us to prepare in the deserts of lives “a highway for our God.” Advent provides a time for us to examine how we live as disciples of Jesus Christ, to fill in the valleys and smooth out the rough places so we might open our hearts and lives for God to be truly present. Far too often the days of Advent are filled with a whole lot of hurrying: the cookie making, the present shopping, the social gatherings, and decorating to the extent that when Christmas arrives, we are actually ready for it to be over, and thus we almost miss the main event, the birth of the Savior.

There are many exciting events which take place in the coming weeks in the church and community: parades, cantatas, concerts and parties. There is no doubt we will all be very busy preparing and practicing making each of these special events uplifting and successful. During this Season of Advent, I pray each of you will take a few moments each day in the midst of preparations to pause, pray, and ponder the great mystery of God appearing in the manger of Bethlehem as a helpless infant, who will be the salvation of all. Instead of getting lost in all the outside influences of society, may you find yourselves in the mystery of God’s incarnation.

It is a great privilege to be with you during this season in the life of the church, and on behalf of my family, I want to wish you and your families a holy Advent and a very Merry Christmas.

Peace and Grace to all,
John McKnight, Jr.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention Presbyterians!

The Annual Presbyterian Denomination Session Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 11:15 am in the United Churches fellowship Hall.

— *Stefanie*

Attention Baptists!

The American Baptist Annual Denominational Meeting will be held Sunday, December 16, at 12:30 pm in the Fireside Room. We hope to see all denominational members there! Thanks. — *Garry*

Stewardship News

The Stewardship/Budget Team is asking for the members of our church family to again faithfully consider their part in the annual fall stewardship program of The United Churches.

Confidential pledge cards and envelopes will be made available at worship services on Sunday mornings, beginning November 25, and may be dropped in the offering plate or returned to the church office by mail or in person. If you can't get a pledge card at the church, please call the church office (745-5640), and we will see that you get one. We are asking to have the pledge cards back by December 12th.

We appreciate your vital help in ministry to our church congregation, our church's work, and our community.

Thank you from the Stewardship/Budget Team

Happy Holidays To You From The Christian Education Team

There will be two children's church Sunday's in December, the 2nd and the 16th.

Thank you to all for a successful children's ministry in 2018. As we wrap up this year, the Christian Education (CE) team would like you to know that an average of 12 children per Sunday received our ministry during the 36 children's church sessions in 2018.

On behalf of the CE team and the children, I look forward to your continued support of the children's ministry in 2019. Thank you! — *Sharon Kalvels*

The Presbyterian Women's Group is still taking a break and will not be meeting the first Tuesday of this month. They are "regrouping" and considering how they can better meet the needs of today's women. ***Please call the church office with your ideas and input.***

REMINDERS:

1) If you have an email address (or a NEW one) and you are *not* receiving the weekly "Reminders & News" emails from the church office, please let us know so we can add you to the Contacts list.

2) Remember to let the office know whenever your mailing address changes. This is especially important if you are one of our "snow birds" and you have two addresses on file with the United Churches. ***THANKS SO MUCH!***

DECEMBER Birthdays:

3 Duke Mower
8 Gordon Brooks
10 Nancy Cuckler
Bill Waxler
13 Pat Collogan
15 John Johnson
16 Lynn Buchholz
17 Jean Meadows
18 Mike Buchholz
20 Mark Posthumus
24 Don DeVries
26 Claude Bent



DECEMBER Anniversaries:

19 Jerry/Jeanne Wyatt

PAGE 3



If your name is not included on the Birthdays and Anniversaries list and you would like it to be added, please contact the church office by email: uc@gwtc.net or call 745-5640.

Upcoming Events

November 30th—The Missions Team will have a wonderful selection of Soups & Bread for the fundraiser immediately following the “Journey of Lights” Parade (*part of Christmas In The Hills*)

December 2nd—*Advent Begins*

December 8th—The UC choir will sing at the Episcopal Church “Lessons & Carols” Service at 4:00 p.m.

December 9th—Choir’s Christmas Cantata, “*Christmas Presence*”, will be at 10:00 a.m.

December 24th—Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service @ 5:30 p.m.

(See your Calendar for other important dates)



“An Ode to Christmas Lights”

Bursting through December nights
That could be long and cold,
Our Christmas lights bring warmth and joy
With colors soft or bold.

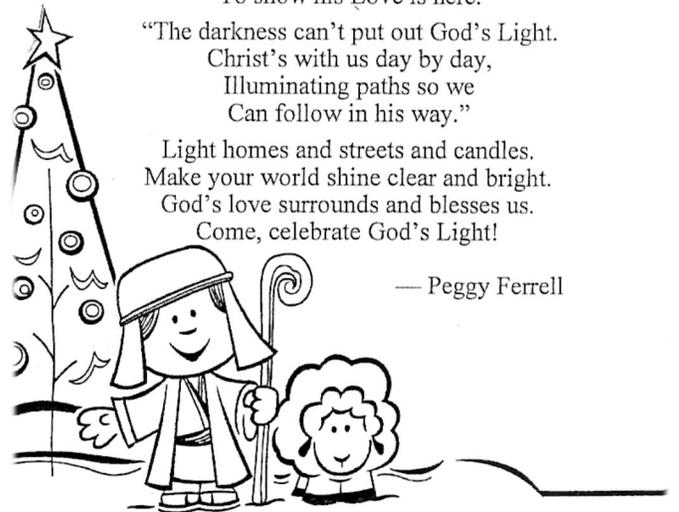
Cascading from the rooftops,
And from trees both small and tall,
The lights cry out, “We have good news!”
We want to shout to all.

“You’ve seen the darkness earth can hold,
The sorrow, war and fear;
But God has sent his Son for all,
To show his Love is here.

“The darkness can’t put out God’s Light.
Christ’s with us day by day,
Illuminating paths so we
Can follow in his way.”

Light homes and streets and candles.
Make your world shine clear and bright.
God’s love surrounds and blesses us.
Come, celebrate God’s Light!

— Peggy Ferrell



THE “BEARLY USED BOUTIQUE” Team will have a meeting on Sunday, December 23rd at 11:15 a.m. in the Fireside Room. We will be setting up the Thursday Work Schedule for 2019. All members should plan to attend... And, we would LOVE to have a few more members to share in this rewarding ministry! Contact Sally for more information—745-3802. Thanks!!

The United Churches
342 N. Garden St.
Hot Springs, SD 57747
605-745-5640
Email: uc@gwtc.net
www.unitedchurcheshotsprings.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #84
(Return service requested)

UNITED CHURCHES



HOT SPRINGS, SD