



MESSENGER

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF TITUSVILLE
206 S. HOPKINS AVE., TITUSVILLE, FL 32796
DECEMBER 2024

What is the history of Advent?

September 17, 2020

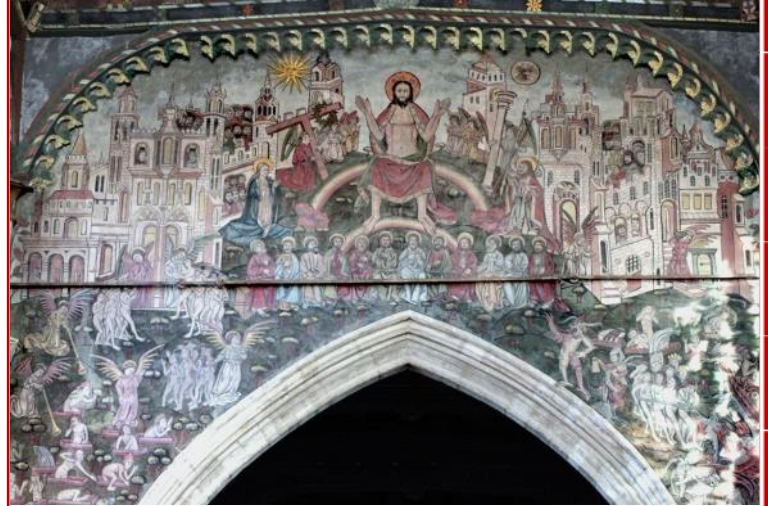
<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-is-the-history-of-advent-for-united-methodists>

Advent was developed as a season of the church year in the late fourth century. It was widely practiced across Christian churches worldwide by the sixth century.

The church developed [Advent](#) primarily to provide an alternative time for the final preparation of candidates for baptism. The normal three-year preparation period included a final forty days of intense preparation during Lent. Baptism would follow at Easter.

A second season was needed after the Roman Emperor Theodosius made Christianity the legal religion of the Roman Empire in 380. At that time, approximately 15% of the Empire was Christian. After 380, the vast majority of citizens sought to become Christian. A single season could not accommodate all of those preparing for baptism.

Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” The focus of Advent is on Christian life now in light of the culmination of all things at Christ’s second coming. By focusing on last things, baptismal candidates were



A medieval painting of the "Doom" or Last Judgment in St. Thomas Church, Salisbury, England. Photo by Nessino, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

reminded of the need for Christ to come again to make all things new as they prepared to begin their new lives in Christ.

Baptism would typically occur at [Epiphany](#), the end of the Christmas Season when Christians remember the

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coming of the Magi and celebrate the baptism of Jesus. This is why many older baptismal fonts include depictions of the Magi bringing gifts.

Similar to Lent, Advent developed as a penitential season of varying lengths. By the eighth century, Advent was generally observed for six weeks in the East (as it is to this day) and seven in the West. By the 12th century, it became shortened in the West to four weeks.

Advent was part of the practice of the Church of England when John Wesley was a priest. When he revised the liturgical calendar for use by American Methodists in 1784, he kept Advent and its four Sundays. So, Advent was part of Methodist ritual from the beginning.

However, the 1792 General Conference dramatically simplified the ritual, removing nearly all of the church calendar and the associated readings for each Sunday. As a result, Advent became a "lost practice" among most American Methodists for well over a century. While a few hymns related to Advent were retained, it wasn't until 1965 that specific ritual resources for Advent were included in The Book of Worship of The Methodist Church.

By the time Advent was restored to Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren practice in the mid-20th century, there were other significant developments in the cultural practices of Christmas that

impacted Advent in our congregations. The Christmas season as a cultural practice was no longer the 12 days beginning with Christmas Eve. Instead, it had become the nearly 30 days from American Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve. This meant that even though the 1965 Book of Worship included readings and prayers focused on the second coming of Christ, many congregations expected Advent to conform to the cultural Christmas focus on the birth of Jesus.

By 1992, United Methodist liturgy and an expanded selection of Advent-specific hymns all helped United Methodists understand and reclaim the original focus of Advent on the second coming of Christ. And [Come to the Waters](#), the primary United Methodist resource for preparing candidates for baptism, includes guidance for using Advent as a season for final preparation for baptism.

United Methodists now have many rich resources to help us observe the fullness of what our Christian ancestors created the Advent season to do. We can help others prepare for baptism as we contemplate together the destiny of the universe when Christ comes in glory and then, during the Christmas Season, celebrate the gift of new birth and all that continues to unfold as we remember the birth of God with us.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

What do the candles in our Advent wreath mean?

December 12, 2019

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-do-the-candles-in-our-advent-wreath-mean>

The Advent wreath began as a German and Scandinavian home devotional practice used to mark the four weeks of Advent. Families would light a candle for each past week and the current week at their dinner or evening time of prayer. The configuration of candles, whether in a line or a circle, did not matter. Neither did the color of the candles (all colors are used in homes in Europe). What mattered was the marking of time and the increase of light each week in the face of increasing darkness as the winter solstice approached.

As Advent wreaths began to be used by congregations on Sundays in some places in Europe and America beginning in the late 19th century, several adaptations were made to make them work better in public worship spaces. Candles needed to be larger and more uniform than the "daily candles" handmade or purchased for home use. They also needed to be more uniform in color to fit with other décor in the sanctuary. That is why candles used in the Advent wreath are usually purple or blue, to coordinate with color of the paraments used during this season.

This shift in context from home to public use also made it important in the eyes of some for the candles to be given a meaning more than simply marking time and increasing light. This led to special ceremonies being developed for lighting these special candles each week.

As this practice began to catch on by the mid-twentieth century, several church supply houses who sold Advent wreaths and candles for public worship also developed resources, banners, and bulletin covers assigning a theme to each week, and thus each candle, based on scriptures from the one-year lectionaries used at that time. Those themes were Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace, in that order.

Today, almost no one uses those one-year lectionaries, so those themes may not always fit the scriptures we hear in worship. The one exception is the Third Sunday of Advent, where the current lectionaries have continued to support the centuries old observance of "Gaudete" or "Joy Sunday." That is why church supply houses often offer rose or pink colored candles for the wreath for use on this day.

So how may we talk about the meaning of the Advent wreath today?

We can reclaim the original home use of marking time with the hope of increasing light as we await

Christmas Store



DECEMBER 14TH
9AM-3PM
HENNESSY HALL

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

2 Dennis & Sherry Gant	21 Tom & Gay Hammond
16 Randy & Mindy Owen	27 Joe & Gloria Kendall

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

5 Gay Hammond	10 Beth Wise
7 Nora Drown	15 Pascale Daniel
7 HudsonHaile	22 Carl Breznik



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the return of Christ, that day when "The city no longer has need of the sun or the moon to shine upon it, because the glory of God illumines it, and its lamp is the lamb."

And we can develop meanings or themes for each week based on the focus of the scriptures themselves. After all, the candles and the wreath are an accessory, not an end in themselves. Their meaningfulness comes from how we use them to point toward Christ, the world's true light, who was, and is, and is to come.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.



Missionary walks where Jesus walked, even in time of war

By Paul Jeffrey

Sept. 30, 2024 | JERUSALEM (UM News)

<https://www.umnews.org/news/missionary-walks-where-jesus-walked-even-in-time-of-war>

Key points:

- † Decades after serving as a mission intern in Jerusalem, the Rev. Jane Eesley returned to the Holy Land in 2023 as a United Methodist missionary assigned to the Methodist Liaison Office.
- † Within weeks of her arrival, Hamas militants attacked Israeli communities near Gaza, killing about 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages. Israel responded with a campaign that has killed more than 40,000 Gazans to date.
- † Eesley started a weekly online chat, where people around the world could dialogue with Palestinian Christians on a regular basis.
- † She also works to identify where emergency grants from the United Methodist Committee on Relief could make a difference in the lives of people affected by the war.

When the Rev. Jane Eesley first came to Jerusalem as a United Methodist mission intern in the early 1990s, many people back in the United States thought she must be thriving in such a spiritually charged environment.

"I would get these sweet cards from people, saying things like, 'You're in Jerusalem walking where the saints walked.' And God bless them for thinking that. But in reality I was in Jerusalem dodging tear gas canisters," she said.

Eesley lived in an apartment with several archaeologists as neighbors, and she remembers that when she first arrived they could identify the kinds of munitions being used on the streets outside by the sound they made.



The Rev. Jane Eesley is a United Methodist missionary from the United States serving in the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem. Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.

"I was amazed at how they could tell the difference between the sounds made by firing tear gas canisters, rubber bullets or live ammunition. After a couple of months, there was noise on the street and I turned to them and said, 'Tear gas canisters.' And they nodded. Who would've thought that this nice suburban girl from Illinois would come to know the difference between the sounds of different munitions? But they do indeed sound different," she said.

Eesley's mission post was in a Greek Catholic clinic in the old city's Armenian Quarter, where she spent most of her time weighing babies. She said it was a great assignment. Unlike many foreign colleagues who worked in churches or nongovernmental organizations where English was common, Eesley had to learn Arabic to survive, and she was blessed with story after story of the hard life of her Palestinian coworkers and patients.

"When we got back to the States and talked to church groups, my friends could quote all the statistics from human rights organizations. But how do people respond to that? They fall asleep," Eesley said. "But I could tell stories about living and working in Jerusalem, and how my colleague the lab technician who

Grace Bag Supplies Needed



Ind. Peanut Butter Packs
Pop-Top Canned Food
(Ready-To-Eat)
Protein Bars
Toothpaste
Fruit Cups
Socks



Food Pantry Needs

Spaghetti Noodles
Pasta Sauce

14-15oz cans of:
Carrots
Beets

Chicken Noodle Soup
Pork & Beans
Mixed Fruits
Beef Ravioli
Corn

October 2024 Budget Summary

The Finance Committee appreciates your contributions and donations. With your support we will be able to continue sharing God's love with those around us.

Income

Total Income: \$41,320

Expenses

Church Programs: \$0

Finance: \$2,878

Church Administration: \$2,904

Facility Maintenance: \$11,465

Personnel: \$21,096

Conference Apportionments: \$3,244

Total Expenses: \$41,587

Income Under Expenses: (\$267)

The budget for 2024 is **\$487,654** which, divided evenly, makes each month's goal \$40,638 rather than being weighted differently throughout the year.

Thank you for your loving generosity in keeping this church operating! Only with the generosity of our congregation have we been able to weather the storms of the past and even the storms that will inevitably come.

2025 Annual Budget

Church Programs: \$5,500

Finance: \$16,200

Church Administration: \$19,625

Facility Maintenance: \$126,420

Personnel: \$294,697

Conference Apportionments: \$35,399

Total 2025 Budget: \$497,841

The budget for 2025 is **\$497,841** which will be divided evenly throughout the year making each month's goal \$49,784 rather than being weighted differently throughout the year.

Where, oh where does your money go?

Church programs consist of every activity and ministry that is not fully self-funded with donations. Due to the generosity of our members and our community, most of our programs are supported outside of the church budget.

Finance expenses are costs for maintaining fiscal responsibility (audits and stewardship) and interest for our loans.

Church Administration includes all basic church operations from office supplies to copy machine expenses and payroll administration.

Facility Maintenance is exactly as it sounds and more. Our properties cover 2 blocks as well as the pastor's parsonage and that can get expensive. This also includes property taxes and insurance because, yes, the church pays taxes and fees.

Personnel not only covers staff salaries, but also includes liability insurance, staff benefits, and payroll taxes.

Conference Apportionments are expenses paid to the United Methodist Church. The United Methodist Church has administrative and operational costs involved with governing the local churches and church directed ministries beyond our community and our district. Each local church is levied certain amounts based on many factors. We help keep them operating so that they can help keep us operating. Community is one of God's many blessings!

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lives in Bethlehem couldn't get to work because she couldn't get through the Israeli checkpoint."

Eesley believes she was experiencing the spiritual richness of the Holy Land.

"The Bible comes alive here because Jesus grew up under military occupation. He experienced leaders who were compassionate and thoughtful, as well as other leaders who were in it for themselves. Jesus grew up amid the human conditions and political brokenness that people experience today. And so the Bible came alive for me, but not in some romantic way. My experience here both strengthened my faith and broke my heart," she said.

Encouraged by her experience in Jerusalem, Eesley went to seminary, was ordained and served churches in the Northern Illinois Conference for almost three decades. The plight of her Palestinian friends remained close to her heart, however, and she lobbied at General Conference and elsewhere for church policies that would support justice and peace in the region.

As a long tenure at Christ United Methodist Church in Rockford, Illinois, was coming to a close, some colleagues urged her to consider missionary service again. She reluctantly agreed to give it a try, and the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries eventually asked her to take a position in Jerusalem.

"When I got the call asking me to come back, my stomach dropped, because I know how hard it is here, how grinding day-to-day life can be," she said. "Palestinians have hard lives, and with all my privilege I experience just a portion of it. It's not easy. I went home and cried. But the next morning, I was laying in bed and Arabic vocabulary words started coming back to me. Tomato. Cucumber. And I thought, 'Oh no, God is giving me back my Arabic.' It was a sign."

She arrived back in the Middle East in August 2023, assigned to the Methodist Liaison Office, which coordinates a regional focus for The United Methodist Church, the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the World Methodist Council. Along with a British colleague and a Palestinian office manager, her main job is to amplify Palestinian voices within the Wesleyan community worldwide.

Whatever ambitious plans she may have had, within weeks of her arrival, Hamas militants launched a brutal attack on Israeli communities near Gaza, killing about 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages. Israel's current government responded with a ferocious campaign that has killed more than 40,000 Gazans to date. Restrictions on movement throughout the West Bank, and at times outright repression, grew more common. Eesley was back to dodging tear gas canisters.

Because of fears the West Bank might be

completely locked down, Eesley left her home near Bethlehem and moved into an Anglican guest house in Jerusalem, where she remained for five months.

With heightened tensions, tour groups canceled their trips to the Holy Land and Palestinians found their movement restricted more than ever. So Eesley launched a weekly online chat, where people around the world could dialogue with Palestinian Christians on a regular basis. Other voices are also included. The Aug. 28 call featured Eszter Koranyi, the Israeli executive director of Combatants for Peace, a nonviolent binational force working to defend the victims of occupation.

Eesley also worked to identify where emergency grants from the United Methodist Committee on Relief could make a difference in the lives of people affected by the war.

One project Eesley recommended for funding is run by the Shepherd Society, the outreach arm of Bethlehem Bible College, which delivers food to individuals — initially all Christians — in the Bethlehem area who don't have enough to eat. It's one meal, delivered three times a week, but Shireen Awwad, the Shepherd Society's director of outreach, said recipients often spread each meal over two days or share it with their hungry neighbors.

Yet it's about more than food. Some of the recipients are elders or people with disabilities whose families have fled the country since the war broke out but were unable to take everyone along. So they live alone. Others are simply devastated financially. Bethlehem's economy has long revolved around tourism, and since last October there are no tourists.

The man who delivers the food, Ramzi Qubrosi, is from Gaza and worked in a popular Bethlehem restaurant. In the absence of tourists, it closed, so now he delivers food to lonely people. At night, he attempts to talk over the internet with his two children, who have taken refuge in a Catholic church in Gaza.

"One woman's spirit has changed simply because Ramzi brings her food and he stays and visits for a while. She has a fig tree so she gives him figs. The visits have changed her spirit. It's not only about providing meals for people, it's about caring for them. We want people to know that we care," Awwad said.

Providing the meals isn't cheap. As unemployment in Bethlehem has soared to over 60 percent, food prices have also risen dramatically. "Strawberries and tomatoes used to come from Gaza. Increased restrictions on movement within the West Bank have made it difficult for farmers to get their crops to the city. Settlers have attacked farmers and destroyed their crops. All that chaos has meant prices have gone way up," Awwad said.

Eesley says the initial UMCOR grant covers

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the program's outreach in Beit Sahour, traditionally believed to be where the gospels say shepherds watched their flocks by night.

"It's exciting for us as United Methodists to provide funds that feed the hungry and accompany the lonely, all in the area where the humble shepherds heard the good news of Jesus' birth," Eesley said.

Despite carrying a U.S. passport, Eesley says she's never suffered for her citizenship.

"Thank God the Palestinian people are wise, so I don't get blamed for everything my government does. I don't feel unsafe here. People are very good to me and look out for me," she said.

"Yet it has been a difficult time to be an American here because of the actions of the U.S. government. Our leaders talk about compassion, but they send weapons."

Eesley admits she gets frustrated by the ignorance among many U.S. Christians about what's happening with their

faith siblings in the Holy Land.

"Back when tourists still came here, many were surprised to meet a Palestinian who was Christian. And they would say, 'You're a Christian? Really? Who evangelized you?' And the Palestinians would respond, 'Peter,'" she said.

"We owe our faith to Palestinian Christians. They are the ones who kept the flame of faith burning. When my people were still painting themselves blue in Britain, Palestinian Christians were keeping our faith alive. They are our forbearers. We owe them everything in our faith. Even in the midst of occupation and repression, God has blessed them with amazing steadfastness and persistence."

Jeffrey is a photojournalist and founder of [Life on Earth Pictures](#). He lives in Oregon.

News media contact: Tim Tanton or Julie Dwyer at (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umnews.org.

CITY OF LIGHT TOUR

*Westward
Road*

January 25th @ 6pm

First United Methodist Church

206 S. Hopkins Ave.

Titusville, FL



A love offering will be collected



Brevard Chorale Presents

HOLIDAYS

In Harmony

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2
AT 7:30 p.m.

SIMPKINS FINE ARTS AUDITORIUM
EFSC Cocoa Campus, Building 4
1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, FL 32922

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4
AT 7 p.m.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
206 S. Hopkins Ave.
Titusville, FL 32796
Free Admission, Donations Accepted

To purchase tickets,
go to efsc.booktix.com
\$10 for adults/seniors
\$5 for students with ID

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BUY TIX!**



*Tickets also available at the door.
Cash and card accepted.
Ticketing and credit card fees
are charged over and above the
published ticket prices.*

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Eastern Florida
STATE COLLEGE

A white silhouette of a nativity scene set against a red, starry background. It includes three camels on the left, a manger with the infant Jesus and Mary, two palm trees, a donkey, and three shepherds on the right.

CELTIC CHRISTMAS

25th Anniversary

Rehearsals

Thursdays @ 6pm - 1st UMC

Starting Nov. 14, 2024

(No Rehearsal Thanksgiving Week)

Performance Dates

Fri., Dec. 20th @ 7pm

**St. Andrew United
Methodist Church**

3380 Dairy Rd.
(321) 269-7321

Sat., Dec. 21st @ 7pm

**First United
Methodist Church**

206 S. Hopkins Ave.
(321) 269-7631



NO AUDITIONS REQUIRED & FREE TO PARTICIPATE! Join First United Methodist Church and St. Andrew United Methodist Church for the 25th anniversary performance of our annual Celtic Christmas Concert! Sing with an amazing band of live Celtic instruments as we tell the story of the birth of Christ through scripture readings and music.

December 2024

First United Methodist Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	2	3 7:15am Rotary Club Meeting 6:00pm Stud. Min. Sm. Group 6:00pm Soliloquy Rehearsal 7:30pm Broadstreet Rehearsal	4 9:30am Patchwork Friends 4:30pm Chancel Choir 5:30pm We Gather Dinner 7:00pm Brevard Chorale Christmas Concert	5 9:00am PEO Mtg 10:00am Ladies Day Out 5:30pm Vivos Voco Reh. 6:00pm Celtic Christmas Reh. 6:00pm PEO Mtg	6 1:00pm Food Pantry	7 7:30am Garden Club 8:00am Comm. Breakfast 10:00am Moonlight Quilters
8 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee Fellowship	9 10:00am Sara Fernandez Bible Study	10 7:15am Rotary Club Meeting 6:00pm Stud. Min. Sm. Group 6:00pm Soliloquy Rehearsal 7:30pm Broadstreet Rehearsal	11 9:30am Kids' Playtime 4:30pm Chancel Choir 5:30pm Vivos Voco Reh. 6:30pm CrossPointe Reh.	12 4:00pm Leadership Team Mtg. 6:00pm Celtic Christmas Reh.	13 1:00pm Food Pantry	14 8:00am Comm. Breakfast 9:00am Christmas Store
15 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	16	17 7:15am Rotary Club Meeting 4:00pm Conn. Kids Christmas Concert 6:00pm Stud. Min. Sm. Group 7:30pm Broadstreet Rehearsal	18 10:00am ADK 4:30pm Chancel Choir 5:30pm Vivos Voco Reh. 6:30pm CrossPointe Reh.	19 9:00am PEO Mtg 12:00pm Ladies Day Out 6:00pm Celtic Christmas Reh.	20 1:00pm Food Pantry 7:00pm Celtic Christmas @ St. Andrew UMC	21 8:00am Comm. Breakfast 7:00pm Celtic Christmas @ FUMC
22 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	23	24 Christmas Eve 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service 	25 Christmas Day 	26 — OFFICE CLOSED —	27 — OFFICE CLOSED — 1:00pm Food Pantry	28 8:00am Comm. Breakfast
29 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	30 — OFFICE CLOSED —	31 New Year's Eve — OFFICE CLOSED — 7:15am Rotary Club Meeting 				

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FUMC Staff

Reception Desk	Ext 201
Rev. Wayne Cook - Pastor	Ext 202
Mario Davis - Administrative Assistant	Ext 203
Glenda Waring - Membership Secretary	Ext. 204
Leah Patterson - Finance Secretary	Ext. 204
Lauren Good - Family Ministries	Ext. 205
Tom Mosier - Facilities Manager	Ext. 206
Leah Patterson - Custodian	Ext. 206
Carol Henn - Music Director	
J.D. Daniel - Organist	
Steve Rossi - Sound Tech	
Josh Henn - Lights and Visuals	

First United Methodist Church

206 S. Hopkins Ave
Titusville, FL 32796

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.

Worship Services: 10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours: 8am – 4pm, Monday - Friday
Closed from 12:00 – 12:30 p.m.

Phone: (321) 269-7631

Fax: (321) 269-8359

E-mail Address: office@fumctitusville.com

Website: www.fumctitusville.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/682694095204027

Instagram Handle: [@UnitedChurch321](https://www.instagram.com/UnitedChurch321)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChscOclDe-wGkXHftvzGX9Q>



1st UMC Ministries

OUTREACH

Bags of Grace	Patchwork Friends
Christmas Store	School Outreach
Community Breakfast	<i>(Apollo Elem., Madison MS, Andrew Jackson MS, Astronaut HS, & Titusville HS)</i>
Community Garden	Shoe Ministry
Cuba Missions	Stop Gap Community Dinners
<i>(Santa Cruz Methodist Church in Holguin, Cuba)</i>	
Food Pantry	
Good Shepherd	
<i>(Funds to help the community with bills & other needs)</i>	

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Celtic Christmas	Handbell Choirs
Church Choir	Holiday Cantatas
Evensong Services	Special Concerts

FAMILY MINISTRIES

1st Wednesday Dinners	Summer Youth Camp
Bus Ministry	Theater Programs
Children's Ministry	<i>(Children & Adult)</i>
Fall Festival	Vacation Bible School
Open Play	Youth—Longest Day of Your Life
<i>(1st Monday, safe playtime for parents & kids)</i>	Youth Ministry
Rock the Universe	

NURTURE MINISTRIES

Bible Studies	United Women of Faith
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