



From the Pastor's Perspective

"Christmas, Christmas time is near, Time for toys and time for cheer..."

More than likely, simply reading these words puts a specific melody in your head. You may even be thinking about looping planes and hula hoops. And as the high-pitched voices of the chipmunks harmonize, you begin to fall into the warm embrace of nostalgia. You can remember Christmas' of the past: grandmother's cooking, dad's light displays, the anticipation of opening the perfect gift...

Nostalgia is defined as "wistful affection for the past." This fondness is a good thing. It is a part of what makes this season the "most wonderful time of the year." We gather together with family to reminisce. We hear the same old stories, tell the same old jokes and read, once again, from Luke chapter 2. Longstanding traditions help make the season bright and this is especially true when it comes to the songs of Christmas.

Everywhere we go people have made the switch. Normal air fare has turned from chart-topping pop hits to ancient carols. In the stores, we hum along to songs about a hope and peace. The music on TV shows acknowledge a miraculous event that occurred 2,000 years ago in a little town called Bethlehem. Somehow the songs of Christmas are heard in both the church and the culture. Everyone knows them, everyone sings them. Whether it's Bing or Maria Carey, the good news of God's plan for salvation is being announced! No other season has such a defined and pervasive soundtrack.

Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

Dec 1	HOLY COMMUNION
	8:30 am Grow Group - A Study of Idolatry in Judges
	8:30 am Prayer
	10:00 am Worship - Pastor David
	11:15 am Grow Group - Meditation on the Hebrew
	11:30 am Summer Mission Trip Mtg
Dec 2	8:00 am Monday Morning Men
	8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters
Dec 3	5:30 pm UMW Christmas Party - Keys
Dec 4	5:30 pm Free Community Meal
	6:15 pm Echo Jr., Echo, Confirmation, and Youth Group
	7:30 pm Sanctify Rehearsal
Dec 5	10:30 am Bookclub
	12:00 pm Sarah's Circle
Dec 6	7:00 am Grow group - Prepared
Dec 7	9:00 am UMM Meeting
Dec 8	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK
	8:30 am Grow Group - A Study of Idolatry in Judges
	8:30 am Prayer
	10:00 am Worship - Pastor David
	11:15 am Grow Group - Meditation on the Hebrew
	1:30 pm Unexpected Company Concert
Dec 9	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK
	8:00 am Monday Morning Men
	8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters
Dec 10	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK
	4:00 pm Adult Fellowship

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Pastor's Perspective Cont'd

As the church in the modern age, we have a unique opportunity to come alongside our friends and loved ones with the songs we all share. We can help them dig past the dullness of nostalgia and show them the richness and true joy that Christmas brings.

As the world around us starts singing their favorite carols, our new sermon series, "The Songs of Christmas" takes a look at the biblical songs that created this season in the first place. Some of these songs come from the lips of prophets, some from angels and one from Jesus' mother herself. These inspired poems have much to teach us about this season, about ourselves and about the character of God.

Invite your friends and neighbors to join us this Advent season as we learn how to better live out the meaning of Christmas and not just sing along!

*"You have made the nation great; you have increased its joy.
They rejoiced before you..." Isaiah 9:3*

Date	Song	Singer
December 1st	Song of Hope	Isaiah
December 8th	Song of Faith	Zechariah
December 15th	Song of Peace	Angels
December 22nd	Song of Salvation	Simeon

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Andrew



Help needed! Christmas Camp is coming!

When parents have to go back to work, kids still need to play! Spend some time the week of Christmas playing games, doing crafts and spending time having fun with kids in our community. Pick one day or all three!

Monday Dec. 23rd, Thursday Dec. 26th, and Friday Dec. 27th

Calendar Cont....

Dec 11	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK 8:30 am Grow Group - A Study of Idolatry in Judges 8:30 am Prayer 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David 11:15 am Grow Group - Meditation on the Hebrew
Dec 12	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK 6:30 pm AMT
Dec 13	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK 7:00 am Grow group - The Thrill of Hope
Dec 14	ST ANDREW'S SHELTER WEEK 5:45 pm Adult Fellowship
Dec 15	8:30 am Prayer 9:45 am Hymn Sing 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David
Dec 16	8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters
Dec 18	11:30 am Romeo & Juliet's 5:30 pm Free Community Meal 6:15 pm Echo Jr., Echo, Confirmation, Grow Groups and Youth Group 7:30 pm Sanctify Rehearsal
Dec 20	7:00 am Grow group - The Thrill of Hope 5:00 pm Unload Food Truck
Dec 21	6:00 am Set-up Community Care 8:00 am Community Care
Dec 22	8:30 am Prayer 9:45 am Hymn Sing 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David
Dec 23	8:00 am Christmas Camp 8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters
Dec 24	4:30 pm Christmas Eve Service 11:30 pm Candle Light Service
Dec 25	CHRISTMAS DAY!!
Dec 26	8:00 am Christmas Camp
Dec 27	7:00 am Grow group - The Thrill of Hope 8:00 am Christmas Camp
Dec 29	8:30 am Prayer 9:45 am Hymn Sing 10:00 am Worship - Pastor David
Dec 30	8:00 am Monday Morning Men 8:30 am Prayer Shawl Knitters and Comfort Quilters
Dec 31	NEW YEAR'S EVE

Pastor David

Once In Royal David's City

Henry John Gauntlett, 1849 (England)



Once in royal Davids city,
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her Baby,
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little Child.

"And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above; and He leads His children on to the place where He has gone." -Once in Royal David's City, st. 4

December brings the great celebration of Christmas, and we mark the end of our calendar year by celebrating the coming of our Savior. As a church (and individually) this gives us a helpful perspective as we look back and look forward. All that we have done must point to Jesus. All that we are going to do must embolden us to follow Him.

We recently had our Church Conference, where we assess our work as a church together. Two years ago we embarked on a radical year of Jubilee in celebration of our church's 50th anniversary. We simplified our structure, paused many ministries, and sun-downed others. Out of that year we emerged with a new sense of our vision to Love.Grow.Serve. (everything we do as a church must include each of these three) and our values of genuine hospitality, inter-generational relationships, service in our communities, becoming a church of small groups, and a focus on making disciples who make disciples.

This has helped us focus around our core ministries of our church, particularly inter-generational Sunday worship, grow groups, and Wednesday evening programming for all ages. We have committed to better embody Love.Grow.Serve. in Community Care, Christmas Camp, inter-generational mission trips, and in launching life groups. We are also discerning for new ministry ideas that Jesus may be showing us.

As we look back, we see some long-term and key ministries have completed their life cycles. These include ASP, VBS, the Bluegrass Festival, Summer BBQs, YPA and the Dulac Mission Trip. We give God thanks for these ministries and take pride in the lives we have been able to touch for God. We commit with renewed passion to serve faithfully in our current signature ministries. Also, we are excited to see new energy and new passion for emerging ministries as we go forward into our vision.

This summer brought some upgrades to our facilities as well. We have updated our fellowship hall / event center, re-roofed our flat roofs, and improved the fire pit. Other minor projects continue, such as painting the education rooms and upgrading our internet service.

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Pastor David cont'd...

As we look forward, we have discerned that Jesus has given us a particular focus as a church on helping people grow spiritually. Although we strive to reach new people, what we do well is calling and equipping people of faith to mature and deepen their discipleship. Put succinctly, our goal is to help whomever God sends among us to take that next step closer to Jesus. Our specialty is helping people to live out their faith in their daily lives and to pursue holiness.

This is where we believe that Jesus is leading us as church. He is born at Christmas to be our Savior. Celebrating Christmas includes us choosing to follow where He leads us into the new year ahead. That year will be a year of growing spiritually, growing in Christian maturity, growing in holiness.

A year from now, we hope we will not be the same. We will be different, because Jesus will have led us through this next year, and He will continue to lead us still. He has committed to lead us all the way to heaven! As the Christmas Carol Once in Royal David's City ends, "He leads His children on to the place where He has gone."

Merry Christmas!
Pastor David

Youth Group



"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1

Though the Christmas story is very familiar to all of our youth, I still find it important to focus on it every year. This Dec we will be discussing the nativity story in a way we've never heard it before: with an 80s flair and from different areas of the Bible, not just the Gospels. Inspired by the titles of three iconic 80s songs, we'll take a look at the experiences of several primary players in the Christmas story to help your students understand the power of true faith in the Messiah.

Week One // Livin' on a Prayer
Week Two // Don't Stop Believing
Week Three // You Give Love a Bad Name

In keeping with the spirit of Christmas and church life, I have asked each of the senior high youth group members to volunteer one day at Christmas Camp, Dec 23rd, 26th or 27th. It's valuable to both their spiritual growth and the church's that we push for a spirit of service in our youth.

So, this December as we revisit the Christmas story, stop one of the teens and ask them how they are living out their faith this year.

Cassi - Director of Youth Ministries

Lay Leader Report 2019

God's goal is for us to become mature adults—to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ....By speaking the truth with love, we are to grow up in every way into Christ.” -Ephesians 4:13-15

As your Lay Leader for Forest Hills Church, I oversee the Action Ministry Team (AMT). It is our job to set the vision for our church and guide others to move that vision forward. God gave us a new vision and it is this: **Forest Hills church is Christ centered, with a focus on making disciples who love God and others, grow in Christ, and serve our wider communities.**

Motto: Love.Grow.Serve

Guiding principles for all ministries:

1. People are finding a personal relationship with Christ (LOVE)
2. People are growing in faith (GROW)
3. Christ's love is more visible in our community (SERVE)

At the beginning of the year, Pastor David asked us to reflect on discipleship. How is our personal journey with Christ? Are we listening to others and helping them to learn more about Christ? How can we pass His love on to others in our community?

Each month in The Edge, I try to highlight what's going on with updates and new developments. Be sure to tune in and read all the articles each month. In the first quarter of the year, our leaders at Forest Hills were invited to attend 4 video workshops about Discipleship Pathways. From this we created a task force to pitch ideas about our own Pathway. People come to us in all walks of life and we need to meet them where they are and help them grow to maturity. Discipleship is what being a Christian looks like. First disciples follow, then disciples grow, and finally disciples make more disciples. The work of the church is not just to win people for Jesus, but to make disciple-making disciples. This radically changes what we do as Christians. This means time, relationships, mentoring. This means worship, fellowship, grow groups and life groups. Life groups are small 4 to 6 people groups for accountability. These people we share our daily struggles with, pray with and encourage. We have several Life Groups now and want the whole congregation to step up and create their own. We hope to have guidelines for Life Groups coming first quarter of 2020. The Action Ministry Team has also been working on a self-assessment tool that will help each of us determine where we are on our journey as a disciple. Each person would answer questions on a private survey and get an email back with ideas crafted especially for them. This is also coming first quarter of 2020.

One of our goals for 2019 was to create a “New Idea Proposal Form” and a “Ministry Evaluation Form”. We want all ministries to meet the guiding principles I mentioned before. To help facilitate that, the idea was brought forth to have a ministry fair in January. It is called Vision 20/20 and will be held on Sunday January 19 the following worship. AMT will provide refreshments and table set-up. Each ministry team is invited to participate. Create your own table display to show what your ministry is, show pictures of past events, and invite new people to join in the team. All teams will be getting information about this asap. Please let Amanda Lucas or myself know that you want to participate.

During our AMT meetings we talk a lot about God and how to become better Christians. But we don't want to just talk about it, we want to do it. We are excited to hear people's new ideas for passionate ministries, as well as helping our current ministries get refreshed and renewed. Won't you join us? If you are God is good, all the time!

Marilee Leonard - Lay Leader

UMW Today

The United Methodist Women (UMW) is a mission group formed in 1869 by group of dedicated women that saw a need for mission work in foreign countries. Saving pennies and working they accomplished their goal. This group has grown for the last 150 years until it is active all over the world. Forest Hills United Methodist Church is very fortunate to have a wonderful group of women to carry on the mission for women and children.

These are just a few of our mission efforts;

In our church:

Fund camper and nurture scholarships
Pray Shawls (both financially and physically produce)
Comfort Quilters (both financially and physically produce)
Program supplies
Special projects

In our community:

St. Andrew's Shelter (both with supplies and volunteer hours)
Single Mothers group (both with supplies and financially)

In our state:

Emma Norton Residence (both with supplies, Christmas gifts and financially)

In our country:

Dulac (both with supplies and financially)
UMC Special offerings for women and children

We raise money for these projects through serving, quilts, donations, rummage sale and craft fair. You will see us around church serving at receptions, making quilts and scarves and attending study groups. We are very, very thankful to all of you at Forest Hills UMC that support our work with your donations, money and time. Without your help it could not be done. We ask for your continued help. UMW is a wonderful Christian group of women and great fellowship opportunity at Forest Hills. All women of the church and their friends are invited to join us.

Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Cheery New Year!

Kay Bergerson
UMW President



Ministry Fair is set for January 19th, immediately following the service. This is an opportunity for all ministries within our church to get involved, create their own booth, explain "Why Should We Buy That" (how Love.Grow.Serve is a part of the ministry) and invite new people to join in the excitement. More details will be coming.

Summer 2020 Mission Trip



"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can as long as ever you can." – John Wesley

Join us this summer for our Inter-generational mission trip! This past summer, 12 of us headed out to the last frontier to be the hands and feet of God in the broader community. In 2020, we are serving those in our own state. We are again partnering with Praying Pelican, a Minnesota based missions group, to serve the poor and marginalized in Minneapolis and the surrounding urban communities. Our primary partner will be [Good in the Hood](#). Their desire is to inspire individuals, families and entire neighborhoods to take responsibility and ownership for the growth, improvement and well-being of their personal lives and community. Through partnerships and kindness-based initiatives they believe the physical, emotional and spiritual climate of an entire community can be changed for good.

The trip will cost \$400 per person. This will cover transportation, food, lodging and supplies. Sign-up sheet for the mission trip is on the clipboard in the lobby.

Cassi

Director of Youth Ministries

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!
Dec Birthdays

Lillian Truax 12/3

Marilee Leonard 12/3

Matthew Berglund 12/4

Lynn Ruter 12/7

Cathy Sanderson 12/8

Misty Thoen 12/9

Cassi Betker 12/11

Donna Gustafson 12/19

May your special day be blessed and filled with joy! If your birthday isn't listed, please call the office and let us know so we can add you to the list!