

Advent is the new Easter. Before you label me a heretic, let me explain a bit further. In terms of church attendance, the season of Advent which culminates on Christmas Eve, is the season in which we see more guests than any other time of year. This replaces the traditional Easter season in terms of number of new guests. Now, some of these guests are out-of-towners visiting family and friends. But many are looking for a church home and stop by to check us out. And I am never shocked when meeting new folks that

Let me say it again...a majority attend because you invite them!

they tell me about an invitation from someone who calls First Church-Downtown home. Let me say it again...a majority attend because you invite them! You are that friend or co-worker who shares what you have found with someone who expresses an interest in finding a place they too can call home. So, how about it? Now is a great time to plant the seed about *Lessons and Carols* or one of our three Christmas Eve services (3pm, 5pm, 7pm). These are compelling events to invite others and in so doing share the love of Christ.



Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Sunday, December 2

6:00 PM

A wonderful way to start your Holiday season, our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is a service of Christian worship celebrating the birth of Jesus. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns and choir music.

Longest Night Service

December 21, 2018

6:00 PM

For many it is difficult to find joy or hope in the Christmas Season. While the world around us continues in the hustle and bustle of the season, many of us find ourselves in a difficult place; the joy we normally feel is not present. This could be for many reasons: the loss of a loved one this past year (or years), long-term illnesses, mental illness, loss of job or dream.

If you are struggling to find joy this season, or if you know of someone who is struggling this season, please try and come to our Longest Night Service on Friday, December 21st at 6:00 PM. We will spend time in song, prayer, liturgy and at the Lord's Table together. We will seek to find our hope in the only One who can bring us hope, even when we feel hopeless. We will acknowledge our grief and pain before the One who also knows deep grief and pain.

Friends, if you know of someone who is struggling this Christmas Season, invite them to come with you to this service. It is one for all people, and offering to sit with someone through the Longest Night Service may be the best gift you can give this season.

If you or someone you know needs a ride to this service, please let Carol Cooper (carol@1stumc.org or 859.233.0545 x227) and she will arrange a ride.

Christmas Caroling
December 16, 2018
2:30-5:00 PM

Mark your calendars for a wonderful afternoon of spreading Christ's love and Christmas Cheer to many we know and love who cannot always make it out to church on Sunday mornings— we're taking the church to them! This is an event for friends of all ages—whether you think you can sing or not—all are invited to come and join us for an afternoon of fun.

We will meet at the church at 2:30 PM for Hot Chocolate and goodies and then head out to sing Christmas Carols. Wear your favorite Christmas sweaters, hats, scarfs, etc. and come for a blessed time.

Sign up at the Welcome Center so we know how many vehicles are needed. Questions, talk with Carol Cooper.

***If you would like us to come and Christmas Carol to you, please let Carol know and she will add you to the list (carol@1stumc.org or 859.233.0545 x227)

Crafting Community

Our annual Gingerbread build and Craft Night has come and gone. It was such a great time. Not only was it incredibly fun, but it was an opportunity to build and foster community within our church family and we took advantage of it. This was probably best exemplified by the two gingerbread houses connected by a candy bridge. Thank you all for showing up and leaning in. And a huge thanks to Paul and Sandy Shafer and their family for the tremendous amount of time and energy they put into baking gingerbread and mixing up icing. Also, thank you to all of you who took the time to set up craft tables and direct our Downtown kids in crafting Christmas keepsakes.

Serve

Decorating our church home: everyone is invited to help decorate for Advent on Saturday, December 1 at 9:00 AM.

Greetings Church Family!

A very sincere thanks to each of you that have contributed in some way to our Room In the Inn Ministry! We are off to a very good start....just in time for Winter weather to kick into gear! We do still have needs: See the list below for ways to help the men stay warm this winter. Also....we still are looking for someone to spend the night on Christmas Eve at our 323 House, with the men. Please contact Hunt, 859-333-7705, or Peggy, 859-806-9456, to help. *Hunt and Peggy Ray*

Room in the Inn is in need of the following supply donations: New men's thermal shirts and pants, underwear, undershirts, socks, hats and gloves, used coats, boots and jeans. We are also accepting toiletries including razors, shaving cream, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Please contact Amy Rutenberg with questions (859) 333-4260, amyrrutenberg@yahoo.com.

Backpack Program: In December, we suggest donations of peanut butter/cheese cracker packs. The collection basket is in the Gathering Hall near the Welcome Center. Contact Cindy Dominick, cdominick@twc.com or Lisa Oates, lisa.m.oates@gmail.com for more info. Thank you for caring for these students!

Altar Flowers – We are taking reservations for altar flowers for 2019. If interested in purchasing flowers or in volunteering with us, please sign up at the Welcome Center on December 2 or 9 or contact Mike and Sheila Green at 859-271-4789 (Home), 859-533-5282 (Cell) or greenlex1961@yahoo.com. God bless.

Our next God's Table meal will be on Tuesday, December 18, 2018. Please bring a dish and a friend to our Fellowship Hall around 5:30 pm. This monthly meal is open to anyone who is hungry. Plan to stay and help prepare and serve the meal, if you are able. For more information, contact Melinda Kemp, 859-333-8095 or melindakemp@twc.com.

The Belle Bennett Circle will meet at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 12, at the Gift Box Tea Room on Keithshire Place Shopping Center (off Clays Mill Road). This will be our Christmas luncheon and social, we would be glad to have you join us. For information or a ride call Joyce McKinney at (859) 224-4609.

Church Family

We celebrate these recent baptisms: Callihan Forrester, daughter of Rob and Stacy, on October 7; Benjamin Bibb, son of Cameron and Brittan and brother of Ellie and Elijah, on November 4.

Joining our church family through membership this fall: David and Kim Beitz; Bob and Mona Denham; Rob Forrester; Brendan and Chelsie Jacobson, Walker and Brooks; Dan Luther; Johnny and Lucy Massie; Sharon Moore. We are so glad you have made FUMC Downtown your church home!

Advent Devotionals

Our Advent at First Downtown guide includes devotionals written by Todd and Carol. Pick up a copy to share with a friend, or find the devotionals on Todd's blog: <https://jtoddnelson.wordpress.com/>

Upcoming

January's coming!

Learn more about your place in God's plan: Todd and Susan Nelson will lead a 10-week group on calling and spiritual formation. We'll have lots of discussion, read *The Call* by Os Guinness and *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, and do several other outside assignments. **This group is the first part of our 2-year Discipleship Intensive.** If, after these 10 weeks, you choose to continue, you'll learn about the Biblical narrative, Christian theology, and ministry in the Methodist tradition. Discipleship Intensive requires high commitment: a 2-hour meeting and 4-6 hours of reading and preparation each week. Those who have completed DI say you can't do it without that time commitment. They also say it was worth it for them. Please contact Todd, todd@1stumc.org, if you are interested or have questions. **Introductory meeting on January 13 at 6:00 PM in Todd's office.**

Financial planning for aging, caregiving and legacy leaving: 4 sessions beginning **Wednesday, January 16.**

Cassidy Baas
Downtown Fellow
cassidy@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 226

Cameron Bibb
Family Pastor
cameron@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 229

Carol Cooper
Assistant Campus Pastor
carol@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 22

David Cooper
Organist
davidcoopertls@yahoo.com

Chad Foster
Executive Pastor
chad@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 225

Debbi French
Director, KDO
debbi@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 233

Jennifer Gibson
Treasurer
Jennifer@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 223

Cassidy Hasty
Family Ministries Lead
cassidyh@1stumc.org
233-0545

Kris Hobson
Administrative Assist.
kris@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 246

Todd Nelson
Sr./Downtown Pastor
todd@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 224

Barry Prince
Communications/Assist
barry@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 237

Brock Terry
Director, Music Ministry
brock@1stumc.org
233-0545 x 240

Church office
M-Th, 8:30-4:30
info@1stumc.org
233-0545



First United Methodist Church
200 West High Street
Lexington, KY 40507

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lexington, KY
Permit No. 5

December 2018

[]

December Calendar

- 1: Advent Decorating, 9:00 am
- 2: First Sunday of Advent
 - Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, 6 pm
- 9: Second Sunday of Advent
 - Children's Christmas Pageant, 8:30 and 11:00 am
- 16: Third Sunday of Advent
 - Caroling, 2:30 pm
 - Downtown Students Christmas Party, 6:00 pm
- 23: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- 24: Christmas Eve
 - 3:00 pm Wear your Christmas sweaters and come ready to sing your favorite hymns.
 - 5:00 pm Candlelight, Chancel Choir and orchestra
 - 7:00 pm Candlelight, Communion, Chancel Choir and orchestra
- 30: One service only - 11:00 am