

FIRST LIGHT

DECEMBER 2024

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First United Methodist Church

www.firstwichita.org | 330 North Broadway | Wichita, Kansas | 316-267-6244



Christmas Eve at First Church

**December 24, Christmas Eve Worship
Candlelight / Communion Services**

4:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m. | First Church Sanctuary

Check out what's
➔ happening this
month at First Church!

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ADVENT SERMON SERIES

Peace, Hope, Love and Joy are words that float around in the weeks before Christmas, inside and outside the church. If we use them just as pretty words on decorations or Christmas cards we are in danger of celebrating an "Almost Christmas" rather than truly welcoming the Savior of the world.

Join us this Advent as we search for ways to strengthen our faith and embrace how God's gift truly changes our lives.



HAPPY ADVENT!



Dear First Church,

Happy Advent! As we finish our Thanksgiving celebrations, full attention turns to preparation for Christmas. I love the family gatherings, the shopping, the decorating. But most of all I love the church season of Advent that starts on December 1. Advent is full of great music, meaningful traditions, and above all, an invitation to prepare spiritually for Christmas. I trust you will be blessed by our worship in the next month as we explore “Almost Christmas” and prepare for the gift of Jesus.

I hope in the weeks ahead you will pray and ask God to give you an idea of who you can invite to Christmas Eve worship this year. We will have two worship services, both with carols, communion, and candlelight. One will be at 4 p.m. for those who have evening family gatherings or who want to get home before dark. The other will be our traditional 11 p.m. service, broadcast on KAKE, where we end by welcoming in Christmas together at midnight. Invite someone in your life to come to worship with you. I want to meet your friends and family and I want us to celebrate the gift of Christmas together! Asking them to join you will bless them, bless you, and be a gift to us all on Christmas Eve night.

See you in worship!

Amy



BLUE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a season where joy and revelry are on full display. Unfortunately, not all of us are always feeling the same joy that surrounds us. Sometimes pain caused by the loss of a relationship, a loved one, or unfortunate circumstances can be magnified by the holiday season. Blue Christmas is a worship experience to help put this into focus, to allow space to acknowledge our grief, and offer hope for healing. Join us, Dec. 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.



United Women in Faith

• UWFaith Executive Committee

December 11 | 10 a.m. | First Church Parlor

• UWF Circles

December 11 | 2:00 p.m. | Parlor

This will be a "Christmas Tea" with our Music Director, Don Gray leading us in Christmas carols.

Annette Van Blaricum will provide wassill and the rest of us are to bring Christmas goodies to share.

• Coming in January

Beginning in January, we will be combining Ruth and Elizabeth Circles. Our new circle name will be Dorcas.

She is a person from the New Testament. Don't know her? Look up her information and check her out!

OUR FAMILY

We grieve with the family of Darlene Snyder in her death on November 1, 2024.

OUR GIFTS

GENERAL BUDGET

OCTOBER 2024 INCOME
\$43,330.96

RECEIVED YEAR-TO-DATE
\$833,758.88

BUDGET YEAR-TO-DATE
\$774,999.98

EXPENSES YEAR-TO-DATE
\$801,813.17

TELEVISION MINISTRY

OCTOBER 2024
\$21,962.00

RECEIVED YEAR-TO-DATE
\$215,934.50

BUDGET YEAR-TO-DATE
\$271,056.66

EXPENSES YEAR-TO-DATE
\$216,231.69

YEAR END GIVING

As 2024 comes to an end, a reminder that money received by the church after December 31, must be reported as 2025 giving for tax purposes. This is true even if the check is dated in 2024. The only exception is checks that are mailed and bear a 2024 postmark. Please contact the Business Office if you have any questions about year-end contributions. Thank you for your faithful support of First Church!

FIRST *under*
40

**Attention to our under 40 crowd!
Come hang out with Pastor Amy!**

Saturday, December 7 | 4:00 p.m.
Norton's Brewing Company | 125 S. St. Francis Wichita, KS

DRINKS, DEVOTION
& A DARN GOOD TIME!

First United Methodist Church Wichita, Kansas
connected. authentic. historic. faithful.

Family Ministries Event: "White Christmas"

Wednesday, December 18 | 6:00 p.m.

Mark your calendar for a night of family fun and connection! Dec. 18, the Family Ministry Council is joining with the Religious Nurture Center to have dinner and enjoy a live performance of "White Christmas" by The Forum Theatre. First Church families are invited to bring their children for an entertaining evening. We will meet in Meredith Hall at 6 p.m. for dinner before walking over to D Building to watch the show. First Church has free tickets available for this event – more details will be available soon! Contact Pastor Jeff for more information, jeffg@firstwichita.org.



Poinsettia FLOWER MINISTRY FUNDRAISER

The season of Advent is the perfect time of year to reflect upon our many blessings, and the special people who have blessed us. One of the First Church traditions is to deliver poinsettias to our homebound at Christmas time. For our homebound members, this ministry is a way to express how much we care for them, and strengthens their connection to First Church.

If you would like to make a donation to our Flower Ministry Fund, please complete the form below and return it with your check to the church business office by Dec. 15. Donors along with honorees/ memorials will be acknowledged in the January *First Light*.



Enclosed is \$ _____ towards the Flower Ministry Fund.

Donor Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Please complete the form along with your donation and return to First UMC, 330 N. Broadway, Wichita, Kansas 67202. Make your check payable to F.U.M.C. with Flower Ministry Fund' in the memo.



2025-26 Scholarship Applications Available

Each year, the Scholarship Committee of First Church awards scholarships to church members who wish to pursue a post-secondary education. This includes, but is not limited to, graduating high school seniors, students already attending college, other adults returning to college, and seminary students.

Scholarships are funded through named endowments and other gifts to the church specified for scholarships. Students are eligible to receive a scholarship for up to five years, provided they meet the scholarship requirements. A new application is required each year. Application forms are available at firstwichita.org.

The application due date is in January in order to help students who are applying for other matching United Methodist scholarships. If you have questions regarding the scholarship process, please contact Donna Fisher, Scholarship Committee chairperson, by phone at 316-393-6486 or e-mail her at dhypse@cox.net.



Completed 2025-26 Scholarship Application packets are due at the church by Friday, January 17 at noon.

“God’s Gift of Love”

Presented by the Chancel Choir | December 15

The Chancel Choir will offer a special gift of music at the Dec. 15 worship service entitled, “God’s Gift of Love.” The cantata, featuring seasonal anthems from modern composers along with scriptures and narrative text will tell the story of God’s amazing gift, His Son, Jesus

Christ, sent to the world for the salvation of humankind. The words and lyrics will take us on a journey as we long for the Messiah to rescue us from persecution, as we worship in awe at the birth of the Christ child in the Bethlehem stable, and rejoice in the light and glory of God’s love and grace.



Santa's Workshop Irving Elementary



The School Partnerships team was approached about supporting an annual event at Irving Elementary called Santa’s Workshop. The focus of the event is giving. The goal is to have every student experience the joy of giving by selecting one gift for someone they love. Please consider donating an item to this event. Our team has already purchased 129 items, but would appreciate your help in increasing that

number. Suggested items are household decorations, kitchen items, sporting goods, toys, games, jewelry, tools, hats, scarves, gloves, purses, wallets, perfume/cologne, heavy socks, neckties, and throws/blankets. They have asked for NO CLOTHES OR SHOES. They can also use wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, and scotch tape. The students will be “shopping” on Dec. 19, so we are asking for any donations to

be returned by Dec. 15. Please leave them with Santa in the AB entrance. If you have any questions, you may contact Laura Sherard at 518-9412. We appreciate your support in this effort.



DECEMBER 2024



1 Sunday
 9:00 AM Religious Nurture Center - 100D
 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School- Church Wide
 9:30 AM K-12th Sunday School - 206B, 301B
 9:30 AM Nursery - 204B
 11:00 AM Morning Worship - Sanctuary
 12:00 PM Broadcast Reception
 12:00 PM Building Tours - C/D buildings
 12:15 PM The Gathering/Small Talk - 103B
 1:00 PM Wichita Choral Society - Sanctuary

4 Wednesday
 9:00 AM Poinsettia Delivery Pick-Up - 106B
 9:00 AM Quilters (Hand Quilting)-304D
 10:00 AM Apple Core - Zoom or 302B
 11:00 AM Quilters at First (Machine Work) - 300D
 5:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-Choir Room
 7:00 PM Bell Choir Practice - 305A

5 Thursday
 10:00 AM Bible Discussion Group - 101B

8 Sunday
 9:00 AM Religious Nurture Center - 100D
 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School- Church Wide
 9:30 AM K-12th Sunday School - 206B, 301B
 9:30 AM Nursery - 204B
 11:00 AM Morning Worship - Sanctuary
 12:00 PM Chancel Choir Lunch and Rehearsal - MH, Sanctuary
 12:15 PM The Gathering/Small Talk - 103B

11 Wednesday
 9:00 AM Quilters (Hand Quilting)-304D
 10:00 AM Apple Core - Zoom or 302B
 10:00 AM UWFaith Board Meeting - Parlor
 11:00 AM Quilters (Machine Work) - 300D
 5:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-Choir Room
 7:00 PM Bell Choir Practice - 305A

15 Sunday
 9:00 AM Religious Nurture Center - 100D
 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School- Church Wide
 9:30 AM K-12th Sunday School - 206B, 301B
 9:30 AM Nursery - 204B
 11:00 AM Morning Worship - Sanctuary
 12:15 PM The Gathering/Small Talk - 103B
 12:30 PM Leadership Board Meeting - 101B

18 Wednesday
 9:00 AM Quilters at First (Hand Quilting)-304D
 10:00 AM Apple Core - Zoom or 302B
 11:00 AM Quilters at First (Machine Work) - 300D
 12:00 PM Staff Soup Lunch - 106B
 5:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
 7:00 PM Bell Choir Practice - 305A

19 Thursday
 10:00 AM Bible Discussion Group - 101B
 7:00 PM Blue Christmas Worship - Sanctuary

22 Sunday
 9:00 AM Religious Nurture Center - 100D
 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School- Church Wide
 9:30 AM K-12th Sunday School - 206B, 301B
 9:30 AM Nursery - 204B
 11:00 AM Morning Worship - Sanctuary
 12:15 PM The Gathering/Small Talk - 103B

24 Tuesday
 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary
 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary

25 Wednesday
BUILDING CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY

29 Sunday
 9:00 AM Religious Nurture Center - 100D
 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School- Church Wide
 9:30 AM K-12th Sunday School - 206B, 301B
 9:30 AM Nursery - 204B
 11:00 AM Morning Worship - Sanctuary
 12:15 PM The Gathering/Small Talk - 103B



Are you interested in helping others? The Mission Committee Needs YOU!



This is the season of Thanksgiving, blessings and joy. We usually remember and celebrate with friends and family, but there are many more that need to be included all year. Because of that, the Missions Committee at First Church searches out people and organizations in our community and around the country that need assistance. We have Mission Lunches and Food Drives that benefit this cause. If you have a desire to be a part of this group or have questions as to how you can help, join us for a monthly meeting the third Wednesday of the month. For more information contact Pastor Jeff Graber, jeffg@firstwichita.org.

FIRST LIGHT

First Light is published monthly by the First United Methodist Church of Wichita, Kansas.

ARTICLES FOR FIRST LIGHT

We welcome content and story ideas for First Light. They can be submitted at firstlight@firstwichita.org

Please include your name, phone number and e-mail address when submitting material.

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WICHITA FIRST

www.firstwichita.org
330 N. Broadway • 316-267-6244
On Broadway between
2nd & 3rd Streets
in downtown Wichita.



Merry Christmas!