

# GREENWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## DECEMBER 2022

*Ready or not, It's here!*

I often tell myself, "Ready or not, Sunday comes!" It is the same way—ready or not, Advent comes right after Thanksgiving! I know it is a hectic season to many of you... but I pray that you have some moments to think about the meaning of the season, what it means that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son," what it means that Christ came to this broken world, and what it means that the same Christ, who knows our joys and pains, walks with us today.



May you have a blessed Advent season! Hope to see you in person! Peace, Keiko

**Mark Your Calendar NOW!**

***A Fun Afternoon Out for Students/Children***

Sat, December 3. Please contact Steve & Judy Mills for details.

***Children's Christmas Program***

Sunday, December 18 at 5:00 pm

***Christmas Eve Service  
(Lessons and Carols)***

Saturday, December 24 at 5:00 pm

***Christmas Day Worship***

December 25 at 9:00 am

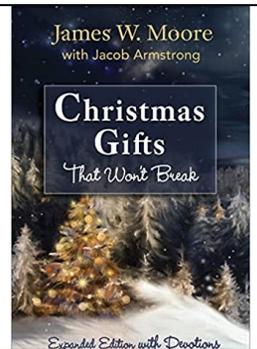


***Advent Study continues!***

***Christmas Gift that Won't Break***  
By James W. Moore with Jacob Armstrong

Classes offered:

Sunday evening at 7:00 pm (ZOOM class)  
Tuesday morning at 10:00 am at Greenwood  
Contact Keiko for Zoom link



**THANK YOU for your service!**  
**WATTS dinner (below) and Church  
Cleanup Day (right)**



## Let us Prayer for One Another...

### CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS & BEYOND

Those who have health challenges, Those who serve others, All schools (students, teachers and staff)  
Those who are lonely, All ministries in Winchester—including WATTS, CCAP and others  
Those who are impacted by hurricanes, The peace in the world—especially people in Ukraine  
Our friends and family at Greenwood:

Paul Haltzl, Coleman Lauderback, Paul Helsley, Harold Anderson, Larry Crane, Gary Sibert, Tasha Moomaw, Liam Starr, Don & Monti Vanness, Phyllis Tinsman, Laura Jahnke, Quick Family, Carolyn York, Joe Ganci, Megan Eileen Davis, Charlotte Mae Brasnan, Dora Bell Lowe, Daniel Schneide, Amber Calvert, Connie Tilley, Barbara Kern, Farrah M, Susie & Larry Bell, Susie Sencindiver, Gary & Brenda, Linda Clem, Kaiden Wright, Shaw Family, Robbie Swartz, Barbara Ritter, Mossy Stemberger, Nancy Orndorff, Dan Roach, Mable Carter, Larry Powers, Harry Powers, Daniel Whitney, Bonita White, Carrie Eichelberger, Marion Clowser, Beverley Soule, Donna Belle, Donna Kay Stemberger, Steve Jones, Kara Stemberger, Marshall Lorant, Larry Braithwaite, Ashlee Saxon, Ed Lambert, Brenna Taylor, Roger Stover, Bob Saville, Jace Anderson, Jay Hepner, Family of Bobby Anderson, Shirley Pierce Family, Caitlyn Roy, Pat Dunn, Linda Fenner, Dixie Townsend, Eva Moxley, Remy McDonough, Ryan Hardy, John Brill, Rodie Zubrack, Jeff Stickley, George, Sonja, Diane, Joanne, Kimberley, Linda B, Dana, Laurie, Tami & Ronnie Light, Kim Renner, Loretta Jahnke, Frank & Brenda Powers, Green Valley, Greenwood UMC



“Christmas time is here! Happiness and cheer! Fun for all that children call their favorite time of year!” That’s the opening to “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” a favorite Christmas special that many people live to watch this time of year.

When I was very young, my Mom and Dad would use our VCR to record all of the Christmas specials that came on T.V. so I could watch them throughout the season. Of course among them were the classic “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” and “Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer,” but there were also some less well known ones such as “Nestor, the Long-Eared Christmas Donkey,” and “Pinocchio’s Christmas.”

One of these lesser known specials that I loved, and still love and look for today, was called “The Stingiest Man in Town.” It tells the familiar story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his famous visits from three spirits on Christmas Eve. My favorite part of this special, however, is a song that comes towards the end of the special called “The Birthday Party of the King,” and serves to remind Scrooge, and the audience, that Christmas is really about the birth of Christ. It asks the listener, “Do you have a birthday present for the birthday party of the King?” The song goes on to talk about the gifts the wisemen brought Jesus, but then says, “but what is gold to a ruler who has all the stars to hold?” The song concludes with the lyrics “Do you know what gift will please Him? Please Him more than anything? Bring a heart that really loves Him to the birthday party of the King.” I think about the message of this song often during the Christmas season. It is so easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season and lose sight of why we do what we do during this time of year.

There are many opportunities to celebrate the wonderful gift of Christ’s birth at Greenwood this month and we invite you to join us for them, including the weekly Advent Bible Study, “Christmas Gifts That Won’t Break,” the Children’s Christmas Program on December 18th, Adult Bible Study after Worship on Sundays, our annual Christmas Eve service, and this year on Christmas Day for Worship. Let us all remember this holiday season that we are celebrating the very best gift: the birth of Jesus.

Wishing you the Merriest of Christmases and Blessings for a Wonderful New Year,

Heather Littleton, Lay Leader



# Health Minute

## *An interesting way to deal with stress/anger!*

John Iams, PT is a mentor of mine. I first met John in San Diego when I took several courses he taught on a unique technique he developed over 30 years of his career. I use his method daily when treating patients. I would be lost without it. John also came up with a technique he calls the Iams Maneuver to help deal with anger and stress. It has a physiological and anatomical basis. I'll try to give you some background as to why it works.

Have you noticed when someone is really angry their head is "locked" in a straight-ahead posture. Eyes are looking forward. Animals do the same. Think of an aggressive mad dog. Their head is locked straight ahead, eyes forward. There are a couple of muscles in the neck that contribute to this "locked position". For the sake of naming them, they are the upper trapezius (muscle on top of your shoulders and goes up the side of the neck to the base of the skull on each side). We tend to react to stress by tightening this muscle up by raising our shoulders up in a slight shrug. The other muscle is the sternocleidomastoid which courses diagonally from the base of the skull just behind your ear(s) to the collarbone and sternum. These muscles are innervated by a cranial nerve that originates in our brain and has contributions from another cranial nerve called the VAGUS nerve. The vagus nerve innervates our heart, organs, gastrointestinal tract, and voice box. When you are really mad or stressed out (or even scared) have you noticed how your voice changes? Does your mouth get dry and do you feel "choked up" when you try to talk? That is all the vagus nerve at work. At the same time, your neck muscles stiffen up and lock your head "straight ahead" thanks to the two muscles I mentioned above. Stress hormones are released and stick around for a while even after we have calmed down. If this is happening frequently our health will suffer over time. We weren't designed to have our stress hormones released constantly. Maybe that's why Jesus told us to not worry!

The Iams maneuver is simply to turn your head to the right if you are right-handed, to the left if you are left-handed and let your shoulders drop. In doing so the neck muscles I described earlier are "unlocked" and the vagus nerve is inhibited. The head turn can be for several seconds or a minute or two. You can do it as much as you feel necessary during the day. Simple! Try it. John feels that things that would have normally bothered you before will not have the same impact as before. Hope you found this useful. See ya in church! Jeff



**Shenandoah River District & Charge Conferences** took place on November 6 at Randolph-Macon Academy. Approx. 400 persons gathered in worship and discuss business of the church.



Virginia Conference will receive a new Bishop, Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson (left), in 2023. Bishop Lewis, will be serving in Mississippi.

Bishop Tom Berlin (middle) will be serving in Florida.



Thanks to Mary Lou, Pat and Kim for decorating the sanctuary! Looks beautiful!



## **Advent (Prayer from The United Methodist Hymnal 201)**

*Merciful God you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may celebrate aright the commemoration of the nativity, and may await with joy the coming in glory of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. Amen.*



## **MONEY MATTERS** by Andy Stanley



Greed is a dirty word in our society, but only because we define it as actively harming others by refusing to meet their needs when we have the resources to do so. But that definition is too narrow. Greed isn't just about harming others. It's the assumption that if it's placed in my hands, it's for me. If it goes in my 401(k), it's for me. If it's part of my paycheck or my bonus, it's for me. If it's part of my inheritance, it's for me. If I win the lottery, it's for me. **Greed is an assumption that it's all for my consumption.**

That assumption can lead to a "consume now" mentality. The tragedy is that when you live that way, you live as if there is no God. You live as if this life is all there is. You might as well eat, drink, and be merry because tomorrow you will die. And then it's over. Who cares about your legacy? You're gone.

But if there is something in you that thinks, *There must be more to this life*, then don't allow your life to be driven by consumption or hoarding. Don't live as if there is no God. Don't live as if it's all about you

When you live as if there is no God, trouble eventually comes along and causes you to reevaluate your choices. You bought too much house or took out too many loans. Or maybe somebody laid you off or took the money and ran. And when trouble comes along, what do we do? We pray.

It may be a whispered prayer on the way to the bank or a full-throated, "Oh, God, please rescue me!" Either way, we invite God into our finances when we have problems. We offer an invitation to our heavenly Father when we need a job, a consolidation loan, or a little grace on the mortgage payment.

So, the question is, if you would pray and invite God into your finances when there's a problem, why not invite him in now, before there's a problem? The way you do that is by reprioritizing your finances. If you're like most people, you live on the first portion of your earnings, you save a little, and then, if there's any money left over, you might give. Your top priority is spending your money on you. That's human nature—me first, me second, and then everybody else.

But if you don't want your finances to master you, flip the order. Give first, save next, and live on the rest. When you prioritize your finances that way, it breaks money's control over your life. It prevents you from living as though there is no God.

Jesus addressed this idea in the gospel of Matthew 26:24, 31-33 *"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

*"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

You can't be a slave to consumption and serve God. It's impossible. Jesus knows our inclination is to worry about our money. So, he reminds us that God knows what we need. And when we believe that strongly enough to live as though it's true, God replaces money as our master.

The moment you wrap your heart and your belief system around the truth that God knows what you need, you will begin to build your capacity to live with your hands wide open.

**And when you live with your hands wide open, you're able to prioritize others' needs over your wants.** You're able to trust that your generosity toward others today won't turn into regret tomorrow.

That kind of trust begins with a simple but powerful truth: everything you have belongs to God. You don't own it, but he's given you an opportunity to manage it in a way that demonstrates your trust in him and your love for other people. The way you do that is to establish guardrails against greed:

**Give first**—prioritize others over yourself.

**Save second**—make sure you're prepared when trouble arrives.

Then **Live on what's left.**



**Thank you for your ongoing support to Backpack Ministry!!**

We continue to support families from Redbud Run Elementary School.

You may donate funds (check payable to "Greenwood UMW" with "Backpack")

OR Donate Items: Individual mac & cheese Individual cereal boxes & bars

Individual Peanut Butter crackers Individual fruit cups, applesauce

**THANK YOU for your support!**

