Christmas Music Celebration - December 14th at 11 am
Please join us on December 14th during First Tradition at 11 am for a service of Christmas Music. Starting with the carol, Once in Royal David’s City, the celebration will move on to include many familiar carols and wonderful anthems of the season. The Ensemble and Chancel Choirs will combine for an outstanding mass choir, and our Center Street Ringers will offer their gift of song to the service. Every Choir has been working since September, so please come and show your support for our music ministry. With over 100 people ringing, singing and playing – this music celebration will be spectacular!

We hope that you, your family and friends will join us for worship during the entire Advent Season. Sunday the 14th, which highlights the joy of Christmas through word and melody, is a great time to invite someone to experience our faith community. Please join the celebration as we sing of the Christ child. “All the bells on earth shall ring on Christmas Day.” You will truly be blessed!

Children’s Christmas Pageant - December 21st at 9 am
On December 21st at 9 am during First Word in the Cokesbury Center, the children will present “A Play in a Manger.” The children have been working very hard during #downtownsundays on this program, and you will be inspired by their version of the Christmas story! Over 25 children have been memorizing lines and practicing their songs, so please come and support these talented young people!

*Kyle Linson, Director of Music and Worship Arts*
UPCOMING EVENTS:
December 7th - 20th
For a complete listing of on-going, recurring weekly activities, please visit our online calendar at www.fumclr.org.

Sunday, December 7th
1:00 pm - Cuba VIM Meeting (Rm 204)
5:00 pm - #downtownsundays Kids(Cokesbury Center)
5:00 pm - Round the Table Carol Sing (Gym)
7:30 pm - 11th & 12th Grade Basketball Practice (Gym)

Monday, December 8th
6:00 pm - Meditation Group (Prayer Room)

Tuesday, December 9th
5:30 pm - FANN Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, December 10th
4:45 pm - Board of Trustees (Rm 209)

Thursday, December 11th
7:00 pm - Ensemble & Chancel Choir Combined Rehearsal

Saturday, December 12th
9:00 am - Adult Choir Christmas Rehearsal

Sunday, December 14th
4:00 pm - 9th & 10th Grade Basketball Practice (Gym)
5:00 pm - #downtownsundays Kids (Cokesbury Center)
5:00 pm - Sunday Youth Night (Youth Studio)
7:30 pm - 11th & 12th Grade Basketball Practice (Gym)

Monday, December 15th
11:00 am - UMW Christmas Party (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, December 16th
4:30 pm - Stewardship & Finance Executive Comm (Rm 234)
5:00 pm - Stewardship & Finance Comm (Rm 210)
6:00 pm - Board of Stewards Executive Comm (Rm 234)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stewardship Update
Earlier this year, Billy Graham, who is now 92, was honored at a luncheon by leaders in his home state of North Carolina. After wonderful things were said about him, Graham stepped to the lectern and said he was reminded about the World famous Physicist, Albert Einstein. Dr. Einstein was traveling on a train, and when the conductor came by to punch his ticket, Einstein couldn’t find his ticket. The conductor said “Dr. Einstein I’m sure you bought a ticket, don’t worry about it.” When the conductor was about to move to the next car, he noticed Einstein on his hands and knees, looking under his seat for his ticket. The conductor raced back to the great physicist and said “Dr. Einstein, please don’t look anymore for your ticket, we all know who you are and that you bought a ticket.” He looked up at the conductor and said, “Young Man, I know who I am too, I just don’t know where I am going.” Graham continued, “You see this suit I’m wearing? It’s a brand new suit that I bought for this luncheon and one more occasion. You know what occasion that is? This is the suit I will be buried in. But when you hear I’m dead, don’t think of the suit. I want you to remember this about me. I not only know who I am. I also know where I am going.”

Each week, we find out more about who we are by growing together in our service and gifts and listening to God’s vision for First United Methodist Church Downtown Little Rock and the journey he is leading us on to know where we are going! All Aboard!!!!!

We are excited to report that as of Tuesday, December 2nd, 179 families have responded with Gifts Estimates of $937,916. If you have not return your Commitment Cards, please do so as soon as possible so that we can move forward with planning next year’s ministries.

Jim & Cindy Shenep, 2015 Stewardship Chairs

Christmas Poinsettias
In lieu of purchasing Christmas Poinsettias, we are asking you to make a contribution to two great ministries at First Church. The chosen ministries are scholarships for the Child Development Center and the #downtownsundays program. The contributions can be made in memory or in honor of loved ones and will be listed in the Dec. 21st bulletin. If you would like to make a contribution, please fill out a poinsettia card (in bulletins Dec. 7th & 14th) and place it in the offering plate or contact Kassandra Johnson in the church office at 372-2256 or via email at kjohnson@fumclr.org by Dec. 17th. Please make checks payable to FUMC and note ‘Christmas’ in the memo section. The poinsettias that adorn the church will be delivered to our hospitalized and homebound members the week after Christmas.

The Collective
The Collective: Early Edition
Join us each Sunday morning for an hour to gather, talk, relax and enjoy coffee & community in the Cokesbury Center. 10 a.m.

Bake for Good
December 14, 5:30-6:30 p.m. at FUMC
Tis the season for doing good! Please join the Collective as we bake cookies for the FUMC prison ministry AND to swap sweet treats with each other! Childcare will be provided; bring your favorite cookie dough and a festive attitude!
Paying Christmas Forward - Advent at First Church
This year at First United Methodist Church, we are celebrating the true spirit of season by Paying Christmas Forward. First Church believes that Christmas is for everyone! To live this out, we ask that you bring gifts which Endure, Hope, Believe, Trust, and Treasure.

December 7th
Bring seeds to donate to MacArthur Park Community Garden

December 14th
Bring new towels & pillowcases to donate to Family Promise

December 21st
Bring paper towels & copy paper for Harmony Health Clinic

December 24th
Bring a monetary donation for Methodist Family Health

Welcome Home Brunch - All College Students are Invited!
College students and college-aged young adults are invited to catch up with one another over brunch on Sunday, December 21st. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall around 10:00 am. For those not in this life stage, please feel free to stop by and say hello. For more information, please contact Austin Hubbard @ ahubbard@fumclr.org.

KIDS@FIRST

December Sunday School
Your child is invited each week at 9:45 am:
Toddlers- Jesus is Born
Preschool- Mary Hears the Good News, Baby Jesus, Shepherds and Wise Men
Kindergarten - Showing the Way to Bethlehem, Meeting the Christ Child
Grades 1 - 2- Celebrate His Birth, Announcing the Savior
Grades 3 - 4 - Journey to Bethlehem
Grades 5 - 6 - Tend the Sick

Preschool Chapel
Join us Wednesdays Dec. 10, 17 at 9:00 am as we experience our Journey to Bethlehem. It’s going to be fun!

Save the Dates....
Dec. 21st 9:00 am in First Word, Christmas Musical “A Play in a Manger,” plus a special whisker faced visitor from the North Pole!

MISSION & OUTREACH

Communion Fund - December 7th
Winter is moving in with a vengeance it seems. Those on the streets will be seeking shelter now more than ever. We will continue to provide transportation for the job search process, medical appointments etc. and we will give bus fare to those going to shelters open as “warming centers”. We are also getting requests for blankets, sweaters, jackets and other warm items. If any of you want to donate those kind of items, please let me know. I will get them into the hands of those in need. Thanks for supporting this ministry.

Anthony Falkowski, Director of Mission and Outreach

Service Opportunity - December 6th
You are invited to serve right here in our downtown neighborhood! On the morning of December the 6th, we have two opportunities: paint at the Firehouse Hostel or work in the community garden at MacArthur Park. Contact Donna Hanks-Hull (dhanks@fumclr.org) for more information.
FRIENDS & FAMILY

Congratulations to Weston and Lauren Ritchey on the baptism of their son, Weston Davis, on Sunday, November 30th during First Tradition.

Congratulations to Monica and Shawn Ormsby on the birth of their son, Owen, on November 25th.

Sympathy
To Roger Chinn and Janis Harrison and family following the death of Roger’s father, Bobby Chinn on November 21.

To Austin and Taylor Hubbard and family following the death of Austin’s grandfather, Norman Martin, in Hot Springs, AR.

To the family and friends of Larry Kelly, youngest son of Alice and Harold Kelly, who died in Ozark, AR. There will be a Memorial in the Chapel at FUMC on December 13th at 2 pm.

YOUTH

Ozark Mission Project
Though we are entering the holiday season, I know many of you are already planning your schedules for next summer. One of the opportunities our youth have each summer is OMP. We have reserved 5 spots for Sr. High (current 8-12) for the week of June 21-27 at the Hot Springs camp. We have also reserved 5 spots for the Sr. High camp in Jonesboro on July 12-18 and 5 spots at the middle school camp at Wayland Springs on the 12-16. We are asking that you register now for the week you would like to attend. We will reserve more spots if available when these fill up. If you are interested in attending a different week of OMP, contact Austin. There is a $50 deposit which will go toward your final payment. The total cost for the middle school camps is $215 and the cost of the high school camps is $250. As a fundraiser, $25 will be taken off of your camp fee for every new Kroger card link-up form you turn in. Limit 5 per registrant (that’s $125 off!). Register online by going to fumclr.org/registrations

Youth 2015
YOUTH 2015 is the national gathering for United Methodist Youth. The YOUTH event happens every four years and moves around the USA. YOUTH 2015 will take place in Orlando, FL from June 24-28, 2015. Our Conference is organizing a charter bus for youth and adults from Arkansas to ride together. The conference is also providing scholarships of $200 for 2 youth per district. If your child is interested in going next summer, contact Austin Hubbard for more details.

Christmas Party
Mark your calendar for December 14th as the date for our First Youth Christmas party! It will be from 5:00-7:30 pm at

Christmas Eve Services
4 pm - Family Celebration in Cokesbury Center
6 pm - Traditional Candlelight Service in the Sanctuary
11 pm - Traditional Candlelight Service in the Sanctuary

Memorials & Honorariums

In Honor of Weston Davis Ritchey, II’s Baptism
by Mabel Harris Webb

In Honor of Van Drivers
by Mabel Harris Webb

In Honor of Bill Lewis
by Darlene Scheibner

In Memory of Winston Faulkner
by Betty Wallace (Winston Faulkner Gymnasium)

In Memory of Bill Bowen
by Dick & Sue Blake, Joe & Mimi Hurst, Nan Ellen East, Dot Brown, Ruth Emerson, Patsy Frost, Bob & Dana Ritchie, Buddy Benafield, Tracy & Bryn Bagwell, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, President William J Clinton, John Gann, Margaret Dicocco (Communion Fund), Bob & Mary Ann McKuin, Bowen Hefley Rhodes & Stewart Orthopedics, Ben Vaughan, Mrs. James Stuckey, Kenneth & Pat Blanchard, Simmons First National Bank, Daniel & Susan Nicholson, Scott & Pam Van Horn, Bud & Janet Jones, Mary Ellen Murray, Jane Moses, Michael & Jessie Burchfield, Jo Clair Hays, Wally & Julie Allen, Laura Smith, Jim Newell, Eloise Allen, Joe & Sharon Locke, Lynda Lewis, John Morchert Jr., Garth & Joann Martin, Robert Pugh, Irma Jewell, Medical Facilities Holdings, Chris & Kathy Cooper, George & Irene Davis, Bob & Lee Cress, Marie Hurst Gunti, Johnny & Julie Morgan, Shoptaw Labahn & Co, Arthur McLean, Bo & Shirley Gateley Jr, William Davenport, Whit & Carol Stephens, University of Arkansas Foundation Clinton School of Public Service, Virginia Boyd, Julian or Sybil Smith, Darlene Scheibner, Fred Oswald & Sarah Spencer (Windows Fund), Mr. & Mrs. Bob Nelson, Kelsy & Marcia Caplinger, Eddie & Melinda Martin, Dr. & Mrs. Rex Enoch, Martha Faulkner, Bill & Sue Lewis, Georgann Ozment

In Memory of Mary Alice Calcote
by Constance & William Busa

In Memory of Margie Miller
by Chris & Kathy Cooper

In Memory of Jim Foster
by Jane Cazort, Martha, Franklin & Annette Shirrell

In Memory of Bill Eberle
by Jane Cazort
Cookies and Cards for Prisoners
The UMW Sarah Circle is coordinating, “Cookies and Cards for Prisoners.” Our goal is to make 250 dozen cookies by Monday, December 22. The cookies will be delivered on Christmas morning, and we want each prisoner to receive 3 cookies. In addition, Betsey Hoffman has already made sufficient Christmas cards for the prisoners to receive a Christmas card and for them to send a Christmas card to their family.

We need your help to make the 250 dozen cookies! Please e-mail Jean Rols at jcondogirl@gmail.com with how many dozen cookies you will bring to the church. It’s a fun family project and a great way to get into the Christmas spirit. You can deliver your cookies to the church anytime between now and Monday, December 22. Take them to the front office or to the kitchen --church staff will make sure they are carefully placed into the freezer. Try to bring them in shoe boxes or on extremely sturdy paper plates, so they remain unbroken while being stacked in the freezer. Thank you for participating!

CUBA Volunteer In Mission Team
FUMC members will lead the first ever Arkansas Cuba Volunteer in Mission construction team to Havana, January 1-12. Rev. Cooper, Steve Shults, Dr. Jerril Green and Nechi Fullerton will travel on religious visas with the 12 member team to build housing for the Methodist Seminary.

For the past 15 years the Methodist Church has experienced a tremendous revival increasing annually 15% to over 50,000 members. There are more than 350 churches and over 700 Wesleyan ‘house churches’ with a Methodist church in 92% of Cuban municipalities. To address the needs created by rapid church growth, the Evangelical Methodist Seminary was established and now more housing is needed.

Mission teams help with construction, visit churches to establish relationships and take supplies as permitted. With limited access to printed material and Internet, the seminary has a database of curriculum to download making laptops, iPads, Kindles and USB drives essential. There is an urgent need for life saving prescription and non-prescription medicines that we will leave with a church physician. In addition to your prayers, please consider the church in Cuba when you are Christmas shopping. Bring the items or donations to the church office the first two Sundays in December so we can bring orders and begin packing. Make checks to Cuba VIM.

- Tylenol or ibuprofen
- Prenatal or iron vitamins
- $20 to purchase 500-1000 doses of life saving medicines
- $100 will purchase a Kindle with power cord
- USB (flash) drives

New and Improved Online & Mobile Giving
First Church is now offering new and improved online/mobile giving for members and friends. If you find this method would benefit you, please visit fumclr.org/give and ‘Click to Give Online at Simple Give’. Follow the simple steps to set up an account. You will be able to make a one-time gift, set up a recurring gift, and even make your yearly pledge online. We hope you will find this new method convenient! If you have any questions, please contact Paige Mann (pmann@fumclr.org or 501-372-2256 Ex. 209).

Sanctuary Flowers - Reserve Today!
Providing sanctuary flowers is a beautiful way to celebrate loved ones. Not only do the flowers provide beauty on Sunday morning, they also provide a powerful ministry through the Flower Girls. On Monday morning the flowers are re-arranged into smaller vases and delivered to our hospitalized and homebound members and friends by the Flower Girls. In an effort to provide this opportunity to our entire church family, all dates in 2015 are currently open. If you would like to place flowers in honor or memory of loved ones on a specific date or occasion, call Kassandra Johnson in the church office at 372-2256 or send her an email, kjohnson@fumclr.org.
December 7th - 5:00 pm

Round the Table Carol Sing

Bring your singing voices, a potluck dish and your Christmas spirit to Round the Table Carol Sing!
The church will provide meat and drinks for this event.

Potluck directions: Families with last name A-F bring desserts, and families with last name G-Z bring salads and sides. Please bring dishes that are ready to serve or be prepared to help out in the kitchen until your dish is ready.

The next issue of In the First Place will be published on Dec. 17th, 2014. Submission deadline is December 14th.