



DISCIPLE EXPRESS

Vol. 26, No 11 December 2016 A Newsletter to Inspire and Celebrate Oakland United Methodists

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Worship Service Time:

10:00 Worship
11:00 Koinonia

September thru Mothers' Day
9:00 Children's Sunday School
9:00 Choir Practice



Sunday, December 18th during
10:00 Worship Service



May the God of hope
fill you with all **JOY AND PEACE**
as you trust in him so that
you may overflow with **HOPE**
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

*"We seek to grow in Christ and to share our love of God in
Word and Deed."*



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Six months ago Diana, Will and I came to Oakland and we have been blessed with adventure, excitement and the love of a whole lot of people. We are grateful that God has blessed us by bringing us to Oakland and all the faithful at Oakland UMC and anyone and everybody else that we have met in the community of Oakland. We thank you for letting us into your hearts and your lives and making us feel welcome. So, we say to you Merry Christmas and a big huge thank you for being you and the people of faith that you are. Diana, Will and Rev. Dennis Hopes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our coldest night since last winter has just hit us and over this last weekend we had a little bit of snow. But that little bit of snow amazed me as it seemed to have knocked out a lot dish systems and a lot of Sunday afternoon television viewing for a lot of people. At least that is what I heard from others as I moved around the city of Oakland on Monday.

Personally, I called tech support because I couldn't believe that what little snow we got could interrupt our television service. So when I called tech support we went through all the stuff to try to get my television going with no success. Our conversation ended with tech support telling me I could get a dish warmer or a visit from a technician and I declined both options.

So I got a ladder and climbed up on the roof and brushed the dish off and we had television! At least for the next three to four hours when the snow had once again started to cling to the dish. We love our screens, don't we? I've got a television in the man cave with the NFL Direct TV package, a laptop, a smart phone and a Kindle.

I know that in today's world and with the Iowa Annual Conference moving to almost 100% communication through e-mail, portals and web pages a device with a screen has become a necessity of life. Plus, the amount of resources that are out there through the world-wide web gives me an expanded library of opinions, thoughts and theologies from all over the world. And yes, you must be careful where you get your information from as

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it could lead to some very dangerous situations. As in the man entering a pizzeria with an AR-15 looking to be the lone ranger and breaking up a child trafficking operation in Washington DC this last week.

We already know that the screen can be a source of hours of entertainment and fun if used wisely. You can stream music, movies and television shows with just about anything that has a screen. Besides all that entertainment stuff we also have social media to keep in touch with people who we don't even say hello to in the grocery store (that really has happened to me more than once).

So what does this have to do with Advent, Christmas and the coming of Jesus Christ?

We are told through the prophets and scriptures that we are to keep watch and stay awake as we do not know the hour or the time that Jesus will come. When he did come so long ago he was not in a conspicuous place but he was found in a manger wrapped in swaddling cloths. Jesus came in a way that was not expected and the world but for the few missed his grand entrance. It is promised the next time the signs of his coming and the new age he will usher in will be so cataclysmic that there will be no question that this is the real deal.

But just in case, I pray when that time comes that Jesus sends us emails, text messages or puts a video on YouTube because we just might miss his second grand entrance if he doesn't give us a heads up (literally). When that happens I wonder what tech support would say if I called them up complaining I have no television signal? I know what Jesus would say. Take time to be holy!

See you Sunday!

Rev. Dennis Hopes



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Subject: Larry and Jane Kies Newsletter Dec 2016
Update from Mutare
Dec 2016

Dear friends and family,

"Tasvika" is the word Shona people use to say 'we have arrived'! It felt so good when we finally got back last week to be welcomed with smiles and hugs and questions - and we are happy to be 'home'. We are so grateful for safe travels, loving family and friends and the opportunity to visit so many places.

We stayed in the United States for 5 months with Iowa as our base. We appreciated a home with Larry's sister and our brother-in-law on their farm near Waterloo, and enjoyed family time, family fun and many Iowa sunrises and sunsets against the green and then golden corn fields.

We left Michael in the wonderful care of our nephew's family. He is attending high school, learning about American government and literature (all new for him!), playing band and piano and hopefully helping out with family chores! Our home here does feel empty without him.

We would both like to thank everyone who welcomed us on our 112 church and other visits. For spoiling us with hospitality, comfortable beds, great food and friendship. It was such an encouragement for us to experience this day after day. Thank you too for organizing meetings where you came to listen and hear about what God is doing at Africa University, and how young people are being equipped to become leaders throughout the continent of Africa. We saw how busy life can be for you, but you gave us your time, and we are so grateful.

We want to thank the Lord above all- For the 'treats' along the journey- the refreshing swims in a lake, for being able to dip our toes in both the Atlantic and the Pacific (and Lake Tahoe the Magnificent), bike rides and walks, glimpses of small town (and city) life in so many places, special times with family and friends, and a chance to spend a week in the Badlands, SD with our four children and Ben and Pule's girlfriends..

We travelled thousands of miles (27,000 by air, 15,000 by road), and were kept in safety.

We are approaching Christmas, so we wish each of you great blessing!!!

AU Farm News

The new John Deere tractor arrived while we were away and has been 'healthy' and very busy.

Many improvements have been made at the dairy, including bringing in new heifers from South Africa.

Current focus on fundraising is for a center pivot irrigation system- to improve productivity and efficiency of water use, reduce costs... and to expose our students to this technology.

Africa University News

We look forward to AU's 25th Anniversary celebrations in late March. So do Albert and Precious and many others who are only able to be here with the help of scholarships.

As always, thank you for your support, love, cards prayers, thoughts, and emails!

Yours and His,

Larry and Jane Kies

U.M.C. Advance Special numbers:

Africa University Farm Development: 3021027

Africa University Scholarships: 3021028

Salary support: 09572Z (Larry) 10739Z (Jane)

Larry Kies, Lecturer and Technical Advisor (Farm)

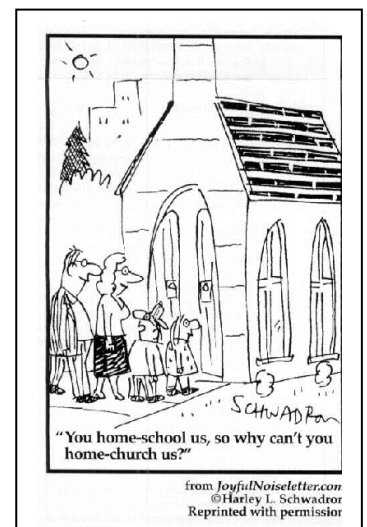
Africa University

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Mutare Zimbabwe

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phone- (263)-773-504-





Community Meal

A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

Come join us for a light meal.

Bring a friend

December 27

5:30—6:30 p.m.

Last Tuesday of the month



Getting to Know You

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Jeff & Bil Keane



"I'm glad we don't get too old for hugs."

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
Reprinted with permission of Bil Keane



Resolve to read your Bible each day

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December Birthdays

1	Calvin Duhachek
3	Gloria Gleaves
3	Don Applegate
3	Lindsey Henderson
5	Sonya Kinnison
6	Chase Roller
7	Chris Hamilton
8	Quintin Forrester
10	Joretta Johnson
11	Lauren Anderson
12	Bernie Bolton
12	Caitlin Wilson
13	Mary Galitz
13	Kelsey Hackett
15	Sean Ehmke
16	Austin Wright
17	Jessica Santiago
18	Barbara Schorsch
19	Bayylor Kalb
19	Virginia Pitt
20	Donna Kelly
20	Abby Taylor
21	Ross Stott
21	Kiley Bentley
24	Margaret White
27	Megan Gleaves
28	Bonni Hering
28	Tyler Putnam
28	Averi Jefferson
30	Peggy Bentley
30	Tiffany Schutt
30	Bergynn Kinnison

Daily Bible Readings for December

1	Daniel 9.1-27
2	Nehemiah 8.1-18
3	Esther 9.20—10.3
Second Sunday of Advent	
4	Job 42.1-17
5	Isaiah 7.1-25
6	Isaiah 8.21—9.7
7	Isaiah 44.1-28
8	Isaiah 45.1-25
9	Isaiah 48.1-22
10	Isaiah 62.1-12
Third Sunday of Advent	
11	Isaiah 65.17-25
12	Isaiah 66.1-24
13	Jeremiah 23.1-8
14	Malachi 1.1-14
15	Malachi 2.1-17
16	Malachi 3.1-18
17	Malachi 4.1-6
Fourth Sunday of Advent	
18	Mark 1.1-13
19	Matthew 1.1-17
20	Matthew 1.18-25
21	Luke 1.1-25
22	Luke 1.26-56
23	Luke 1.57-80
24	Luke 2.1-20
Christmas Day	
25	John 1.1-18
26	Luke 2.21-52
27	Titus 1.1-16
28	Titus 2.1-15
29	Titus 3.1-15
30	Revelation 21.1-27
31	Revelation 22.1-21

A SEASON OF PREPARATION

By Rose Taylor from *Ministry Maters*

Christians today (especially those who follow the liturgical calendar) observe the season of Advent as a time of expectation, preparation and celebration leading up to Christmas or Christmastide. Many may be surprised to know that the original observance of the Advent season had nothing to do with Christmas!

The word Advent means “coming” and is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. In the fourth and fifth centuries Advent was a season of preparation — not for Christmas but for baptisms that would take place at Epiphany. It was a season (40 days) of fasting, prayer and penance. Roman Christians in the sixth century began to tie the season of Advent to the second coming of Christ. It was not until the Middle Ages that Advent was celebrated in anticipation of Christmas.

In the modern-church era, Advent is a memorial of Christ’s first coming and an anticipation of the kingdom to come. In fact, the first two Sundays of Advent point to the return of Christ in judgment while the last two Sundays remember his first coming into the world.

Reflection

Advent is intended to be a time of reflection, penance, fasting and praying. Ironically, the weeks leading up to Christmas are filled with parties, food and shopping. The secular commercialism of Christmas, which begins even before Thanksgiving, can distract the faithful from taking time to reflect during this holy season.

Amid the activities of the season, reflect on the Scriptures for each week in Advent. Also, reflect each day of the week on the themes for each Sunday: hope, peace, joy and love.

Reflection often prompts one to action, and many wonderful gifts of kindness and compassion are expressed during the season of Advent. After all, during the first Advent, God gifted the world with a Savior and Jesus gifted the world with salvation. The second Advent promises eternity with Christ for those who receive his gift of salvation.

Question of the day: What events have you expected and prepared for with celebration?

Focal scriptures: Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:41-45

What would Jesus share?

November 8th, 2016

By Nance Hixon

One of my professors in seminary, Sam Wells, compares living faithfully to doing improv. That's because, he says, "we face new circumstances in each generation that the Bible doesn't give us a script for." There's no eleventh commandment about how to vote, online pornography, carbon footprints, or even gambling. The direct commands in scripture just don't always speak directly to our day-to-day struggles following Jesus in the 21st century. So we have to take what we do know, take how our faith has shaped us, and then improvise when the world presents us with new challenges.

Well, I believe one of those new challenges for Christians in America has become painfully clear over the course of this election season. Brian Stelter wrote a short piece for CNNMoney last week that everyone should read, called "The plague of fake news is getting worse — here's how to protect yourself."

Fake news?

Stelter explains:

The rise of social media has had many upsides, but one downside has been the spread of misinformation. Fake news has become a plague on the Web, especially on social networks like Facebook.

Have you ever seen someone share an article with a title like "Trump's Worst Nightmare Just Came True..." or "Hillary's Campaign Will Be Over When This Video Goes VIRAL"? That kind of stuff is circulated on social media constantly (it's on my Facebook news feed, and I doubt I'm special). It's called "clickbait." These are sensational headlines designed to draw in web traffic to increase a site's advertising revenue.

But often these articles go beyond outrageous, exaggerated titles. Have you seen the article about Pope Francis endorsing Donald Trump for President? Or the one about Pope Francis endorsing Hillary Clinton for President? I've seen both. Both of them are totally false — the pope doesn't endorse political candidates — but both of them were nevertheless shared widely on social media as if they were true.

Fake news.

And that wasn't a fluke. Just last week Sean Hannity, who works for an actual news station, had

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to apologize after he read a fake news article on his live radio show (I understand he got it from Twitter). That's how wide-spread this problem is.

Stelter again:

But the B.S. stories hurt the people who read and share them over and over again. Many of these fakes reinforce the views of conservative or liberal voters and insulate them from the truth. The stories prey on people who want to believe the worst about the opposition. [emphasis added]

Sure, lying is bad, but this is the heart of the problem: these fake stories only tell us what our "itching ears" want to hear, not the truth. As social media users imbibe more and more of this as if it were true, it reinforces their prejudices and shapes their opinions and even their worldview, and it can then have real-world ramifications that materially affect other people: friends have an argument; someone buys another gun; a business is boycotted; a vote is cast. All influenced by lies.

The solution is pretty simple: verify that a story is true before you pass it along. Stelter's advise it to "triple check before you share." All it takes is a quick Google search to substantiate a story (or not). If you can find it being reported by a legitimate news outlet (NBC, FOX, CNN, The New York Times, etc.), then it's safe to share.

Yet, we don't do that, either because we aren't aware of the lies, or we're too lazy — or we just don't care.

But Christians have to care.

Because we're commanded not to bear false witness (Ex 20:16).

Because we're called to put away falsehood and speak the truth to our neighbors (Eph 4:25).

Because we worship a man who said, "I am the truth" (John 14:6).

And because the devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). When Christians participate in all of this, when we don't take thirty seconds to check a source or verify a quotation, we're doing the devil's work for him. We not only deceive people, but, as Stelter pointed out, we appeal to a person's urge to believe the worst about others, to denigrate and vilify and pour scorn on her opponents. The devil's been called "the

deceiver of the whole world" (Rev 12:9), and, with a job title like that, mass communication and social media must come in pretty handy. Also, it probably helps when God's people volunteer to spread falsehoods for you, which is what happens every time we share a fake news article, post a meme with a fabricated quotation, or retweet made-up statistics.

I've seen pastors perpetuate political lies on Facebook and leave them up even after they're proven false. There's no way around it: that's a snare of the devil. And, again, these lies can have real effects on real people in the real world.

I can't speak to the situations in other nations, but for Christians in America the internet is the new frontier of discipleship. We have to learn how to follow Jesus online — in the obvious ways, like staying away from pornography, and in the less obvious ways, like fighting the temptations to troll, to shoot off emails in the heat of the moment, to indulge in impulsive spending, or to thoughtlessly spread lies in news's clothing.

This is when believers need to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matt 10:16), because these traps are as abundant as they are novel. Thankfully, the example of Jesus and the teachings of scripture are more than rich enough to equip us to face these new challenges. If we recognize the dangers and seek wisdom from above, looking to Jesus and letting scripture correct and train our speech and conduct, the Spirit can guide us through the ethical minefield.

But right now, we've got work to do. Because, from what I'm seeing, wise and innocent we are not.

If you want to learn more about the epidemic of false and misleading "news" on social media, you can read this article from BuzzFeed.

This article originally appeared on the author's blog. Reprinted with permission.

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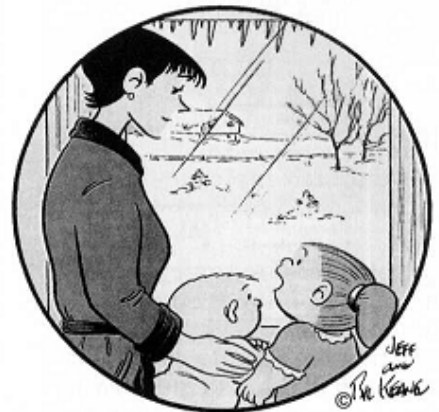
Question of the day: What events have you expected and prepared for with celebration?

Focal scriptures: Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:41-45

December Calendar

Sun, 4th	9:00 a.m. Sunday school/Choir Practice 10:00 a.m. Worship/Communion/ 2nd Sunday of Advent 11:00 a.m. Koinonia
Wed, 7th	6:30 p.m. Youth Groups
Thu, 8th	6:30 p.m. Zumba Class in Fellowship Hall
Sat, 10th	7:00 a.m. Men’s Prayer Breakfast
Sun, 11th	9:00 a.m. Sunday School/Choir Practice 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Koinonia
Wed, 14th	6:30 p.m. Youth Groups
Thu, 15th	6:30 p.m. Zumba Class in Fellowship Hall 7:00 p.m. Ad Board Meeting
Sun, 18th	9:00 a.m. Sunday School/Choir Practice 10:00 a.m. Worship/3rd Sunday Offering/Children’s Choir 11:00 a.m. Koinonia
Wed, 21st	Youth Groups
Sat, 24th	9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
Sun, 25th	10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Koinonia
Tue, 27th	5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Tasty Tuesday
Wed, 28th	NO YOUTH GROUP

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Jeff & Bil Keane



“Remember last summer when we prayed for cooler weather, Mommy?
I think we overdid it.”

©

from *JoyfulNoiseletter.com*
Reprinted with permission of Bil Keane

November Trivia Answers This Quiz: Judas Iscariot

This Quiz: Judas Iscariot

1. What was the name of Judas' father? See: John 6:71 *Simon*
2. When Mary anointed Jesus, why did Judas say, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" See: John 12: 3-6 *Because he was a thief*
3. How much was Judas Iscariot given to betray Jesus? See: Matthew 27:3 *30 pieces of silver*
4. What did Jesus give to Judas as a sign that he was to betray Him? See: John 13:26 *Bread*
5. How did Judas betray Jesus? See: Matthew 26:47-4 *He kissed him*
6. Where did Judas betray Jesus? See: Matthew 26: 36-50 *Garden of Gethsemane*
7. How did Judas, the betrayer, die? See: Matthew 27: 3-5 *He hung himself.*
8. What was the name of the field that was purchased with the betrayal money Judas returned?
See: Acts 1: 15-19 *Aeldama*
9. After Jesus' ascension, which two men were proposed to replace Judas? See: Acts 1: 23-26
Joseph & Matthias
10. Which one was finally chosen by the other eleven to replace Judas? See: Acts 1: 26 *Matthias*

December Trivia

From *ChristiansUnite.com*

1. According to Paul, who takes away the "veil" over the Old Testament? 2 Corinthians 3:
2. What group of Christians examined the Scriptures every day to see if Paul was telling the truth? Acts 17:
3. To what young pastor did Paul address his famous words on the divine inspiration of all Scripture?
2 Timothy 3:
4. What apostle claimed that the prophets, in writing of the coming Christ, were writing for later generations? 1
Peter 1:
5. Who told the Jews that the Scriptures had testified about him? John 5:
6. Where was Jesus when he taught two people how the prophets had predicted his death? Luke 24:
7. To what church did Paul say the Old Testament was written as a set of examples and warnings for the
church? 1 Corinthians 10:
8. In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, what does Abraham say to the rich man who wants to keep his
relatives out of hell? Luke 16:
9. To whom does the writer of Hebrews attribute Psalm 95? Hebrews 3:
10. What apostle claimed that no Scripture had come about through the prophet's own efforts, but by God's will? 2
Peter 1:

Remember those in Nursing Homes with cards and visits.

Oakland Manor

Margaret Alff
Lucille Bentley
Erma Cleaveland



Oakland Heights

Janice Harris
Neuonia Timberman
Anita Killion



Lord,
Hear Our
Prayer



Pray for Our Military Family

Kristie Copenhaver, John & Mary Lou Copenhaver's daughter; **Jared Myers**, son of Robert Myers and Sid & Tami Skank; **Sonja Husz**, Niece of Butch & Velda Husz; **Lucas Smith**, Addie Mae's grandson; **Brian Thornton** from Avoca; **Tyler Clark**, Marvin & Carolyn Clark's grandson; **Brad Grosvenor**, Cathey Grosvenor's son stateside, and other area service men and women.

Landen Pedersen, son of Tab and Lorie Pederson; Bryan Santiago, Carol

Prayer Chain List Update

If you are not on the prayer chain list and would like to be, please contact the office to be added. You may be on either the phone list or the email list. Just furnish your phone number or your email address.

In Our
Hearts &
Prayers



Blessed
to
Give



Annual Coat Drive

There is a receptacle for coat collection in the entry of the church. Please donate your clean, slightly used coats for all ages. If your family has outgrown their coats, they can keep someone else warm this winter.



Reverend Dennis and the rest of the Oakland United Methodist Church,

Thank you so much for sponsoring two of our families in need of some extra gifts under their Christmas trees this holiday season. Your kindness is only eclipsed by your generosity. We would like to have presents wrapped and delivered to either the elementary or the intermediate school by December 19th. This will give our families a chance to pick them up before we go on Christmas vacation.

The angel tags should be on the hall tree this week. If you wish to support this ministry, take an angel tag, purchase one item (or more), wrap it, attach the angel tag and bring to the church **before** December 19th.

See the church web page for the college ministry articles.

www.oaklandiaumc.org

See us at:

Web page: www.oaklandiaumc.org

Facebook.com/oakiamethchurch

Disciple Express

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Sheryl Sindt, Secretary

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"We invite all persons to be a part of our Community of Faith by participating in worship, education, fellowship and Christian service."

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STAIN GLASS WINDOWS THE MEANING OF THE SYMBOLS

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

Stain Glass

Baptism - Font with Chi Rio and Dove descending above it.



TASTY TUESDAY COMMUNITY MEAL

December 27

5:30 - 6:30