

# Life at Cokesbury

November 25 - December 8, 2019

## Calendar

- Joan will be out of the office on Tuesday.
- The office will be closed Wednesday and Thursday. Happy Thanksgiving!
- Sunday, December 1, First Sunday of Advent – Light lunch following worship.
- Prime Timers will meet Dec. 5 at 11:00 a.m. for their Christmas luncheon.
- The UMW Banquet is Dec. 7 at 12:30 p.m
- Room in the Inn begins Dec. 7.

## Prime Timers

The Prime Timers will enjoy their Christmas luncheon on Thursday, December 5 at 11:00 a.m. You are invited to join them when they will have a devotion and Christmas music followed by a complimentary lunch and a time of fellowship. No reservation is necessary.

## Coat Drive

The Prime Timers are collecting coats to be donated to Crisis Assistance and Samaritan House. Please bring your gently used coats and place them in the box in the narthex.

## Poinsettia Sale

If you would like to order a red poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one, please be sure to place your order as soon as possible. They are \$8 and order forms can be found in the bulletin or call or email the office.

## Sunday, December 1 – First Sunday of Advent

Please join us following the worship service for a light lunch consisting of vegetable soup, grilled cheese sandwich, and cookies. Donations will be accepted.

## Saints & Sinners Class

The Saints & Sinners Class will begin an Advent Study December 1 entitled The Journey by Adam Hamilton. Anyone is invited to attend.

## Advent Discussion Series

Beginning the first week in December and continuing for three weeks, Pastor Jonathan will lead discussions around some of the deeper spiritual themes of Advent, the church season that leads up to Christmas. The exact curriculum will be announced in the coming weeks, but go ahead and make plans now. Jonathan will lead a daytime group on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. and an evening group on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

## Bethlehem Birthday Party for Jesus - by Tom DeVries

On **Saturday, December 14**, we will be hosting the Bethlehem Center Birthday Party for Jesus for about 25 children. Over the next few Sunday's, we will be handing out envelopes for donations or you can simply write a check to the United Methodist Men and note Bethlehem Center Party and place it in the offering plate or get it to the church office and we will make sure your gift is used on Dec. 14. This is a wonderful mission project that is a *Joy* for Cokesbury and the children and staff from the Bethlehem Center. We will be making up the goodie bags for the Bethlehem children this year and again giving a quality stuffed animal/toy. Please continue to give generously.

## Weekly Room Reservation Calendar

This calendar can be found in the Work Room next to the copier. It lists the different meeting groups that take place here at Cokesbury.

### **Financial Commitment for 2020**

If you have been so far unable to present a “pledge card” with your anticipated giving amount for 2020, it’s not too late. Simply get one from the ushers, fill it out, then place it in the offering plate.

### **Holiday Festival**

East Meck High School is having a Holiday Festival on Saturday, December 7 from 5-7 p.m. There will be music and caroling, food drive, raffle prizes, food from the Famous Toastery (\$5), wine & beer available for purchase, and free hot chocolate. Pets welcome.

### **From the Pastor**

Thanksgiving is my favorite national holiday. Don’t misunderstand and think that I don’t love July 4, MLK, Memorial Day, or Veterans’ Day. It’s just that Thanksgiving is about being thankful that we can be part of something bigger than ourselves.

The “pilgrims” who first landed on Plymouth Rock had faced some challenges to their faith that motivated them to brave an ocean voyage. However, they had a bigger vision of creating communities modeled on biblical images of God’s kingdom as they saw it, the City on a Hill. Granted, later on problems arose and the vision got mangled and distorted, but early on they embodied their faith by trusting God and who or whatever might meet them in the New World. To them, the vision was worth the risks.

The quaint image of the pilgrims sharing that first Thanksgiving with the native inhabitants of the land still inspires me. It’s about people sharing a meal as a way of saying “thank you” to a God they couldn’t see – it was community, friendship, and sharing that told God they were thankful. Thanksgiving wasn’t an abstract prayer or isolated, personal feeling. It was tangible. It embodied the dependence on one another and it embodied the shared belief that we are all needy, we are all struggling to survive, we are capable of pulling each other through.

The vision of a City on a Hill was a vision of peace and generosity. It was not a vision of domination or exploitation. That vision was, at least in my idealized imagination what Thanksgiving was all about. It was a vision bigger than Puritan theology, bigger than land grabs, bigger than the lust for power. It was God’ vision laid out in the book of Isaiah.

Every year at Thanksgiving, I try to imagine more than the great taste of favorite foods. I make myself take a minute to dwell on the goodness of God, not in giving me, my family, or my friends food or things. I’m really more thankful that God chose to make me part of God’s work to make a peaceable kingdom come true in this life, on this earth.

May God’s dreams be realized through each of us – and may we give thanks for it!

Happy Thanksgiving!

*Jonathan*