



The Messenger

First United Methodist Church, Quitman, Texas

December 2024
& January 2025

“Come expectantly seeking Jesus. Follow Him boldly. Go witness intentionally.”



It’s that magical time of year again where we celebrate Emmanuel (God with us) and the coming of the Christ Child.

Christmas shopping, decorating Christmas

trees, and trips to see family members, are all reminders to us that God has become flesh and dwelt among us in order to reunite creator back to creator again.

Christmas can also be a difficult or stressful time for many of us. A time when we are reminded of our loved ones that are no longer with us. A time when we are pressured to spend money that we don’t have or see family that are difficult to spend extended amount of time with.

This year we will have two services on Christmas Eve. Our 5:30 service in Joy Hall will be our “Christmas Remembered” service for those of us who grieve the loss of a loved one during the Holidays. Our 7:00 “Traditional Candlelight” service will be in the sanctuary and will combine some of the elements of the family service that we have done in the past.

I hope you will make us a part of your family Christmas by attending one or both services. Our sermon series for Advent is “The God who dwells among us” where we are looking at what God brought with Him when He came to

earth. How God’s peace, hope, joy, and love is transforming the world back to Him.

Our Wednesday night Bible Study is continuing to walk through the Gospel of Matthew, how does Matthew offer a unique perspective on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ?

Back when I was young this was my absolute favorite time of year. A time when the promise of good food and new presents kept me up during those long winter nights. As a child I would hear the Christmas story as the whole family gathered together each Christmas evening and wonder when we would get to “the good part” of opening presents.

As an adult I now know that the story was the good part, and the joyful associations of Christmas time that I had as a child continues on because Christ is the greatest gift the world has ever received.

I hope you will take time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and experience the joy of Christ with your family this year.

-Rev. Thomas Harper

*Come &
Worship*



| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Elaine Asmussen | Sandy Narkiewicz |
| Mickey Barnett | Pat Neel |
| Darlene Blair | Marilyn Odom |
| Betty Bozeman | Bobby Phipps |
| Ann Crawford | Mary Phipps |
| Lynda Gibson | Steve Rhodes |
| Mike Kostial | Gary Simpkins |
| Stella Lundy | Ron Wimp |
| Carolyn Manning | |



Welcome New Member Laura Robbins

Communion Rail Offering

Dec. 2024

Methodist Children's Home

Jan. 2025

Wood County Child Protection Board
Rainbow Room

Communion Preparation

Dec. 2024

John and Sally Seekins

Jan. 2025

Keith and Joann Zimmerman

***Mark Your Calendars**

Sunday

8:30 a.m. Worship Sanctuary
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship Sanctuary

Monday

9:00 a.m. Line Dancing
5:15 p.m. Bell Rehearsal

Wednesday

5:15 pm Youth Meal & Bible Study
6:00 pm Adult Bible Study
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday

9:00 am Line Dancing

Financial Update 11-25-24

(YTD) Giving: \$ 318,937
YTD) Expenses: \$ 401,111
(YTD) Loss: \$ (82,174)
(YTD) Budgeted Expenses: \$ 425,106



December 2024

8:30 a.m.

Becky & Bill McPherson

11:00 a.m.

Brad Floyd
Brady Floyd
Pam and Randy Henington

January 2025

8:30 a.m.

John and Sally Seekins

11:00 a.m.

Stephen Fulce
Teresa Fulce
Peyton Kruckner
Carol Denson



12/01 Parker Simpkins
 12/02 Stephen Rhodes
 12/03 Beverly Sawyer
 12/06 David Dobbs
 12/09 Thomas Harper
 12/13 Mikayla Hubbard
 12/14 Heather Marcee
 12/14 Brenley von Reyn
 12/15 Kevan Burroughs
 12/16 Vanessa Simpkins
 12/16 Jan Lumley
 12/18 Jentri Jackson
 12/21 Selby Tackett
 12/22 Charles Sawyer
 12/25 Stephen Fulce
 12/31 Allie Medlin
 12/31 Elissa Harper

01/06 Rita Reed
 01/07 Carley Goodson
 01/08 Venita Holbrook
 01/08 Keaton Cameron
 01/09 Sue Bonnette
 01/09 Sarah Medlin
 01/10 Bill McPherson
 01/10 Ron Wimp
 01/12 Marilyn Robinson
 01/12 Sandra Grider
 01/13 Tammy Gilmore
 01/19 Bryan Swenson
 01/19 Jeff Young
 01/19 Anna Stone
 01/22 Pat Kostial
 01/27 Sherri Young
 01/28 Sue Edwards
 01/30 Jim Gould
 01/31 James Goodson

Quitman First United Church's Backpack Buddies program was awarded \$10,000 to give impoverished school children a weekly backpack filled with nourishing food to ensure their nutritional needs are met over the weekend.

FUMC, in partnership with Quitman Rotary Club, is currently packing 92 backpacks a week. The cost for the school year is approximately \$170.00 per backpack.

Thank you Wood County Electric Charitable Foundation for this generous funding.

Fun, Rewarding Opportunity!

The FUMC-Q Board of Trustees has recognized that our church property needs a 'facelift'! We have met twice to pull weeds, clean-up the outside JOY Hall area, trim bushes, etc. Now, we are hoping to continue the maintenance work by asking church members to form small groups and sign-up for a 'once a month' work day. Another opportunity to fellowship!

There will be a sheet in the foyer each Sunday beginning January 2025 to sign up-either single or as a group. We hope to meet once each month and take care of light trimming, weeding, and general clean-up. Mowing will continue to be outsourced.

Advent Series: The God Who Dwells Among Us

Dec. 1 (no early service)
First Sunday of Advent
Peace

John 14:27
John 14:27 I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

Dec. 8
Second Sunday of Advent
Hope

Ephesians 1:18
Ephesians 1:18 so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints,¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

Dec. 15 (no early service)
Third Sunday of Advent
Joy

Luke 1:39-49
Luke 1:39-49 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Dec. 22
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Love

John 15:9
As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.

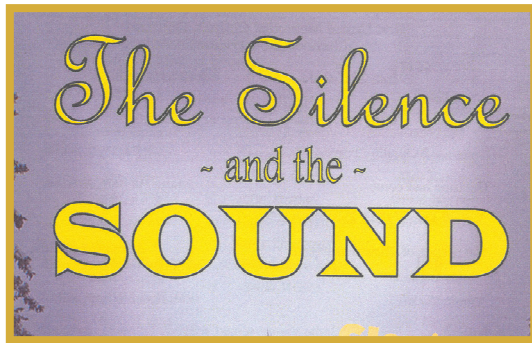


Two Services...

5:30 Christmas Remembered
JOY Hall
For those who grieve

7:00 Traditional Service
Candlelight & Communion

Luke 2:1-7
Luke 2:1-7 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.




Get ready for “The Silence and the Sound!”

The choir wants to share a celebration of Christmas on December 15th at 11:00 a.m. worship service.



We need volunteers to both help decorate on Thursday afternoon, Dec. 5th, from 2:00-4:00pm and to help serve pancakes on Dec. 7th.

Volunteers should plan to arrive at 8:15am on Saturday morning, Dec. 7th to serve from 9:00-11:00am.

The 'Breakfast with Santa' logo is a green, circular emblem with a white border. It features a red and white Santa hat on the left side. The text 'BREAKFAST WITH Santa' is written in white and red fonts across the center of the emblem.

If you wish to order a Poinsettia in Memory of or to Honor a loved one, please pick up an order form at Sunday services and place it in the collection box. You may also call the church office at 903-763-4127 to place your order.

The Poinsettias will be displayed in the sanctuary and can be picked up after the Christmas Eve service.

The Poinsettia order is due by Tuesday, December 18 and the cost is \$12.00 per plant.

A vibrant red poinsettia plant with green leaves is shown in a brown pot. The plant is the central focus of the section.

ANNUAL FLORA MASONIC LODGE
FISH FRY
FUNDRAISER!

\$15 PER PERSON

Dec. 14th, 2024
4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Includes fried catfish, french fries, coleslaw, iced tea & dessert

Benefits Christmas Sharing Plus

Dine-in or Take out
915 Hwy 37 South, Quitman TX

The poster for the 'Fish Fry Fundraiser' is primarily red and white. It features a large white fish icon above the words 'FISH FRY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below this, it says 'FUNDRAISER!' in a smaller white font. A white circle with a dollar sign and the number '15' is positioned to the left of the main title. The event date and time are listed below. A list of included items is provided in a smaller font. At the bottom, it states the event benefits 'Christmas Sharing Plus' and provides the location and contact information. The background of the poster shows a festive scene with wrapped gifts and pine branches.

Quitman Christmas Sharing is preparing for the holidays! Each year, we ask you to give towards helping make Christmas a special one for the unfortunate in the Quitman area.



Your gifts and gifts from individuals have made this possible year after year. Donations can be mailed to:

Quitman Christmas Sharing
P. O. Box 1116
Quitman, TX 75783

Or use the QR Code above.

May you be blessed as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Two gift boxes are shown: one is green with a white ribbon, and the other is red with a white ribbon. A QR code is located to the right of the gift boxes.

Jennifer made a comment the other day that I have been mauling over for a while. The comment was intended to relieve the tension of the moment and perhaps it did. However, I found the comment interesting enough that it has brought me to some clarity for the holiday season. Jennifer stated, "Parenting teenagers is like riding a roller coaster."

I don't like roller coasters. The twists and turns are unexpected, and you could hardly gather yourself before the next surprise. And then, after mere seconds, the ride seemingly ends, and you assess your condition. Did I throw up on myself or anybody else? Are my pants wet? My head is still spinning, can I walk, or will I collapse as soon as I stand up? For me, I swear to all things holy that I would never ride another coaster as long as I live.

Parenting kids is a fast and wild ride of irregular ups and downs. Sometimes it feels more like a never-ending jostle than a smooth and steady journey. Just when I think I've got a handle on it, the ride starts again.

It's during the unpredictable moments, and the highs and lows of their emotions, that it's easy to become frustrated with our kids. We tend to focus only on the harrowing obstacles in front of us. Perhaps, like me, you've had a fruitful conversation with your teen, where you sense some real maturity –only for that same child to plunge into sassy immaturity the next morning. When we assume we have control over the direction of the ride, we can become overly frustrated when our child's attitude or actions do not follow our expectations. It's then that we forget to be grateful for the child God has given.

In our frustration we forget the Savior who has gone before us, and the work God is doing even despite us. But it's also in these bumpy seasons that we find profound hope in the gospel. Enjoying this amazing grace and reorienting our perspective on Jesus causes us to grow in gratitude rather than revert to frustration. That grace-filled appreciation empowers us during difficult seasons with our kids and pushes us to love them more deeply as an opportunity to mirror God's love.

Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Praying for Perspective

In trying seasons, it's easy to remember to pray for the difficult situation at hand, but it's more difficult to remember to pray for perspective. Sometimes what we face with our kids seems so much greater than what others are facing with theirs. Without proper perspective, this can lead to anger or jealousy, and our teens will sense that.

The single most valuable parenting advice I've ever received came in the form of two words from a seasoned mother: "Don't panic"0.

She explained that what we deem disturbing, God is never surprised by, panicked by, or frustrated by. It is all in his control no matter how jolting the ride may feel. Don't panic. Pray for perspective. We put our trust in a God who is lovingly in control of every single detail in our teenager's life.

Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Giving Thanks for the Growth

Give thanks because even during challenges, growth occurs. Ask the Lord to help you recognize small victories, no matter how minor they seem. And don't forget to celebrate these moments with your teens. God graciously gives us glimpses of their spiritual and emotional maturity, and of the unique work he is doing in them. These glimpses don't mean the difficult ride is over, but they are a kindness from God in which he reminds us that he is working.

Dec. 7

9:00-11:00 am Breakfast with Santa, JOY Hall

Dec. 15

5:00-7:00 pm Youth and Children's Christmas Party

Dec. 24

Youth service project before 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service

Dec. 28-Jan. 1

Xtreme Winter Conference Gatlinburg, TN

Jan. 8

Resume WNL activities

Continued on page 7

Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Cherishing the Moments

I will never forget one night when my child casually walked in the door well past curfew. What followed was a lengthy argument, many tears, and a sleepless night. As the sun rose, I prayed, will this difficult season ever end?

The teenage years are not forever. The whirlwind of childhood and adolescence is fleeting, and it is precious. One of the ways we cultivate gratitude in the more trying seasons is by deliberately making connections with our kids. This might mean planning ahead for a trip to Top Golf, or a concert, or dinner out to a special restaurant. It might mean being spontaneous with your child. Boy, does it take sacrifice in a busy season, but if you notice your teen seems a bit “off,” divert from the evening’s plans. Take them out for ice cream or play a game of cards.

These connections during hard seasons force us to step off the craziness of the ride and simply enjoy the uniqueness of the kid whom God has given to us. Ask and then listen to their stories, dreams, and fears. Intentionally connecting shows your child that they are valued and loved, not just for what they’ve done, but for who they are in Christ.

In these moments of connection, we catch glimpses of God’s grace in our lives and in the lives of our kids. These moments remind us why the roller coaster ride of parenting is worth every twist and turn. Connecting with our kids anchors us in gratitude and strengthens our resolve to navigate the challenges ahead with faith and love.

As you navigate the ups and downs of parenting, pray the Lord will give you a heart of gratitude for the child or teen that God has purposefully and lovingly put into your care. Every page of our child’s story has God’s faithfulness shining through. His faithfulness will continue to guide us through the roller coaster ride of parenting..

Joseph

I want to personally thank each and every one of you who packed shoeboxes and to those who volunteered at the OCC Drop Off location. I am pleased to provided you with the following summary: FUMC Quitman collected 79 shoeboxes. Our Wood County Drop-Off Center collected 1,452 shoeboxes. What a wonderful thing to be thankful for this coming holiday! THANK YOU ALL AGAIN!

Pat Kostial, OCC Volunteer






“Be the church we are called to be!”

First United Methodist Church
406 E. Lane Street
903.763.4127
Sanctuary Worship 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sanctuary Worship 11:00 a.m.
YouTube Delayed Recording 6:00 p.m.
fumquitman.org

Help Us Reduce the MESSENGER Cost!
If you are receiving this newsletter by mail and you have access to the web, please consider switching to the on-line version of the MESSENGER. It will reduce printing and postage costs and get it to you several days sooner, and in color! Call 903-763-4127 to opt in.

HAVE YOU MOVED, CHANGED YOUR PHONE NUMBER OR EMAIL?
If so, please contact the church office.

DONATIONS MADE EASY
Want to simplify your giving of tithes, memorials, and other offerings? Then consider using the “Make a Donation” link on the Church’s secure web-site, fumquitman.org. or simply focus on the QR Code on the right.
PayPal is very safe and reliable and will allow you to Add Special Instructions that specify how your offering is to be applied. It will also provide you with an emailed receipt for your bookkeeping and tax records.
The Quitman First United Methodist Church is a 501(c)3 non-profit religious organization. Your donations are tax deductible, and all are sincerely appreciated.

OFFERINGS

DONATIONS



First United Methodist Church
P O Box 1643
Quitman, TX 75783

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“Transforming God’s Children Into Disciples”