

The Springs



Rev. Don Tabberer

November 26, 2018



“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and she will call him Emmanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)

Christmas can be a challenging holiday for faithful Christians. It is at once the celebration of the present and future kingdom of God, as manifest in the birth of Jesus the Messiah and King. This concept of the Kingdom of God, being both now and in the future, is a difficult theological concept to grasp. Emmanuel – God with us – is a reality many of us struggle with. How can God’s Kingdom be realized both now and in the life to come? Where is God in the midst of economic crisis, job loss, poverty and war? Why isn’t God’s presence obvious when my friend has cancer, or my family suffers grief? Isn’t God’s Kingdom about the reign of Christ as King? Then how come Jesus doesn’t take charge and fix everything?

John Dominic Crossan writes in **God and Empire**: *“The Second Coming of Christ is not an event that we should expect to happen soon, violently, or literally. The Second Coming of Christ is what will happen when we Christians finally accept that the First Coming was the Only Coming and start to cooperate with its divine presence.”* In other words, the Kingdom of God to which Jesus constantly pointed is as fully available now and always as it was 2,000 years ago. The question is whether we will choose to live as if the One in charge is God and not “Caesar.”

Now, I’m not sure I agree with Crossan’s lack of expectation for Christ’s return. However, he makes a valid point when he challenges us to accept the divine presence of God **here** and **now**. That is the once and future kingdom we celebrate – God came to earth in the Christ and remains here in the Spirit. The question is: Will we allow “God with us” to be in charge? Will we seek God’s counsel

and ask for God’s advice about everything in our lives? Will we allow our faith to inform our decision-making? Will we bring Jesus into the midst of every conversation and consider His opinions?

God’s Kingdom cannot be realized if we resist God’s authority over all aspects of this world. We will never recognize God in the midst of life until we are willing to take “me” out of the center of everything and focus on God. I believe that, when we allow God to be in charge, we gain clarity of purpose and peace of mind. All at once the pressure of trying to control our circumstances is lifted as we let God do what God does best – control our circumstances.

It’s difficult sometimes to see through the cultural trappings of Christmas to the reality of Christ. It can be a challenge to ask God to take charge of our gift-giving habits. Taking “me” out of the center of self-centered and self-serving advertising that began in October isn’t as easy as it sounds. You may not think that God has an opinion on how we celebrate this holiday; I believe that God does have an opinion and that it is our obligation to seek it and prayerfully consider it as we go about the busy-ness that consumes us this time of year.

Christmas is indeed a joyous time of year for Christians and we have much to celebrate. But even the most joyous celebrations can be filled with solemn meaning and thought-provoking reality. I pray that the joy of the season will prompt a new depth of understanding of your personal relationship with the reason for the season. May we all use this Advent season to be present in God’s Kingdom and seek the best God has to offer.

*May “shalom,” God’s peace be with you,
Pastor Don*

SPECIAL CHARGE CONFERENCE & POTLUCK LUNCH:

On Sunday, December 2 at 12:00 Noon (immediately following our second service), we will gather in the sanctuary with our District Superintendent for a brief Special Charge Conference. The only issue on the agenda is a Board of Trustees proposal to sell the property on the NW corner of 4th & McKinley. This is a small residential lot that we use for overflow parking. A Charge Conference is required to make a decision. After this meeting, we will move to the Fellowship Hall and enjoy a potluck lunch. This will also be our chance to celebrate all the great work our church has been doing over the past year. If you have a story to tell, a mission moment to celebrate, or any other celebration of ministry in our church, please plan to share it with the church at this lunch. NOTE: This is 100% Pot Luck - whatever y'all bring is what we'll eat. The Church Council will set up and provide drinks and paper goods. All the food is up to you.

Parents' Afternoon Out

Do you need to get some shopping done without the children? On December 9th from 1 to 4 p.m. you will have that chance! A Christmas movie, snacks, games and crafts will be offered to the children. Call the church or e-mail to reserve a spot for the kids (ages 4 to 12) or to volunteer to help. 918-245-5955 or office@sandsspringsumc.org.

Happy Birthday, Jesus

SSUMC Christmas Program

This year's Christmas concert will be on December 16 at 6:00 p.m. The Chancel Choir, Kingdom Kids, Chancel Bell Choir and other specials will be presented. A birthday party for Jesus will follow the program. Please bring some of your favorite Christmas goodies to share.

Blended Worship

Come Join Together for Worship

After Sunday's blended worship, we are excited to do it again... and again and again! Mark your calendar for December 30th at 11:00 a.m. when we will combine both worship services into one. Sunday School will still start at 10:00 a.m. We will continue to test this format for 2 or 3 more months on the first Sunday of each month which is Communion Sunday. Be sure to watch for any changes to this schedule through your newsletter, worship announcement slides, bulletin and the announcements in the narthex which scroll all week.

APPORTIONMENTS

As a reminder, Apportionments are funds that each local church is obligated to pay to the Annual Conference each year to help cover the cost of global missions. It is key to our "connectional system" that we work together with all United Methodist churches to make a difference in the world. Together we accomplish so much more than what any single church can do on its own. We are somewhat behind in our payments for 2018 and need to try hard to make up the difference by year's end. Please, consider an extra gift this year so we can make our goal of paying 100% of our 2018 Apportionments. We still need to raise \$28,920 to complete our obligation. Thank you for your prayers and your support of the church's mission in the world.

"UNDIE SUNDIES"

Every Sunday in December we are collecting new underwear and socks to be donated to the Homeless Mission - "City Lights". We need all sizes from child to adult, male and female. New, clean underwear and socks are a highly valued item for the homeless population. A small effort on our part can really make a significant difference in the lives of people who find themselves without a permanent home this winter. Also, clean, gently used blankets and clothing that can be layered will be appreciated. Donations can be brought to the church during December.

Building Fund

Please, remember that we still have a Building Fund that is needed to pay the mortgage for The Well, our building in Prattville. This facility is essential to the growth of our mission in Sand Springs and we cannot risk missing a mortgage payment. Please, if you have previously given to this fund and have stopped for some reason, consider starting your monthly contributions again. If you have never given to the Building Fund, consider including this as part of your monthly giving. If you want more information about this fund and how you can help, please contact the pastor or a member of the Board of Trustees. Thank you for all you do in ministry with our church.

SSUMC Angel Tree

Once again, we are adopting a family and buying their Christmas which always includes gifts, gift cards, and groceries. Please pull an Angel off the tree starting this Sunday and purchase the gift, return it to the tree, wrapped with the angel attached. This is one way to feel those Christmas Blessings!

What's Going On?



Hi from KidZone!

What a great time we had yesterday filling 70 Christmas stockings for Sand Springs Community Services. Many thanks to the Youth for their help. We will be delivering the stockings soon. Thanks to all in the congregation who supported our fund raiser. Be sure and come next week as we are getting ready for our Christmas program on December 16th.

😊 Have a great week and see you next Sunday
Miss Debbie & Miss Marty



UMW News

Happy December Birthdays to Karen Wilder, Heide Bostwick, Jami Warkentin, Juanita Jack-

son and Mary McGowan.

Reminder: We will pack Goodie Bags Friday, November 30th at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Stay safe in your travels over the holidays.

Cynthia Alex

25th Annual Community Thanksgiving

Another year is in the bag for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner deliveries and once again, you showed up!!! Pies, turkeys, money, volunteers... The list is endless and without all of you, the job is endless! Our community served over 1,100 meals this year. Every year, we want to see this number go down—it means everyone has a place to go on Thanksgiving. But until then—THANK YOU! You make it happen!!

SUNDAY LISTS

Head Ushers

8:45am-Amanda Honeycutt

11:00am-Eddie David

Children's Church

8:45am-Kingdom Kids

11:00am-Jami Warkentin

12/2-Communion

12/9-Kat Katzung

Sunday Counters

12/2-Sondra Allen & Dick Ford

12/9-Bob Barnes & Jami Warkentin

Youth Dinners, Served 6:30, Wednesdays

11/28-TNT

12/5-Ruth Esther Circle

12/120-Seniors In Action

Welcome Center

Harmony-October

Discovery-November

TNT-December

Fourth Monday Community Dinner

5:30-12/24-Fellowship Hall

All Church Mission Strategy Team (MST) Event

12/9-Parents Afternoon Out, 1 to 4 p.m.

Prayer List... "The Prayer Box"

Jim & Vi McAllister, Martha Scudder, Charlene Reeves, June Brown, Jody Seaman, Mary McGowan, Mary Lea Forsythe, BW Proft, Sue Shaw, Michael Bostwick, Greta Green, Bob & Cathy Hula, Bill & Clare Caldwell, John & Sylvia Johnson, Barbara McClintock, Montie Box, Owen Johnston, Ruth Weaver, Darin Grayson, Pauline Hanigar, Frank Slane, David Allen, Bruce & Mona Warren, Last Week's Prayer Chains & Unspoken Requests

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR SAND SPRINGS UMC

***-Not sponsored by SSUMC but welcome**

Monday, November 26

10:00am-Al-Anon-Upstairs
5:30pm-4th Monday Community Dinner-Fellowship Hall
6:30pm-Bible Study
7:00pm-Boy Scouts-The Well

Tuesday, November 27

7:00pm-Praise Team Practice

Wednesday, November 28

7:30am-Men's Breakfast-Crescent Café
5:30pm-Chancel Bell Choir
5:45pm-Y4Y
6:30pm-Youth-The Well
7:00pm-Chancel Choir Practice

Thursday, November 29

*7:00pm-Collins Karate-The Well

Friday, November 30

9:30am-UMW Packing Goodie Bags-Fellowship Hall

Saturday, December 1

UMW Santa Operation-OK City
1:00pm-*The Well in use

Sunday, December 2

8:45am-Contemporary Worship
10:00am-Sunday School
11:00am-Traditional Worship

Monday, December 3

10:00am-Al-Anon-Upstairs
6:30pm-Bible Study
7:00pm-Boy Scouts-The Well

Tuesday, December 4

6:30pm-Priscilla Circle-Home of Norma J.
7:00pm-Praise Team

The Well-SSUMC Family Life Center...Not sponsored by SSUMC but welcome

Sand Springs United Methodist Church

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