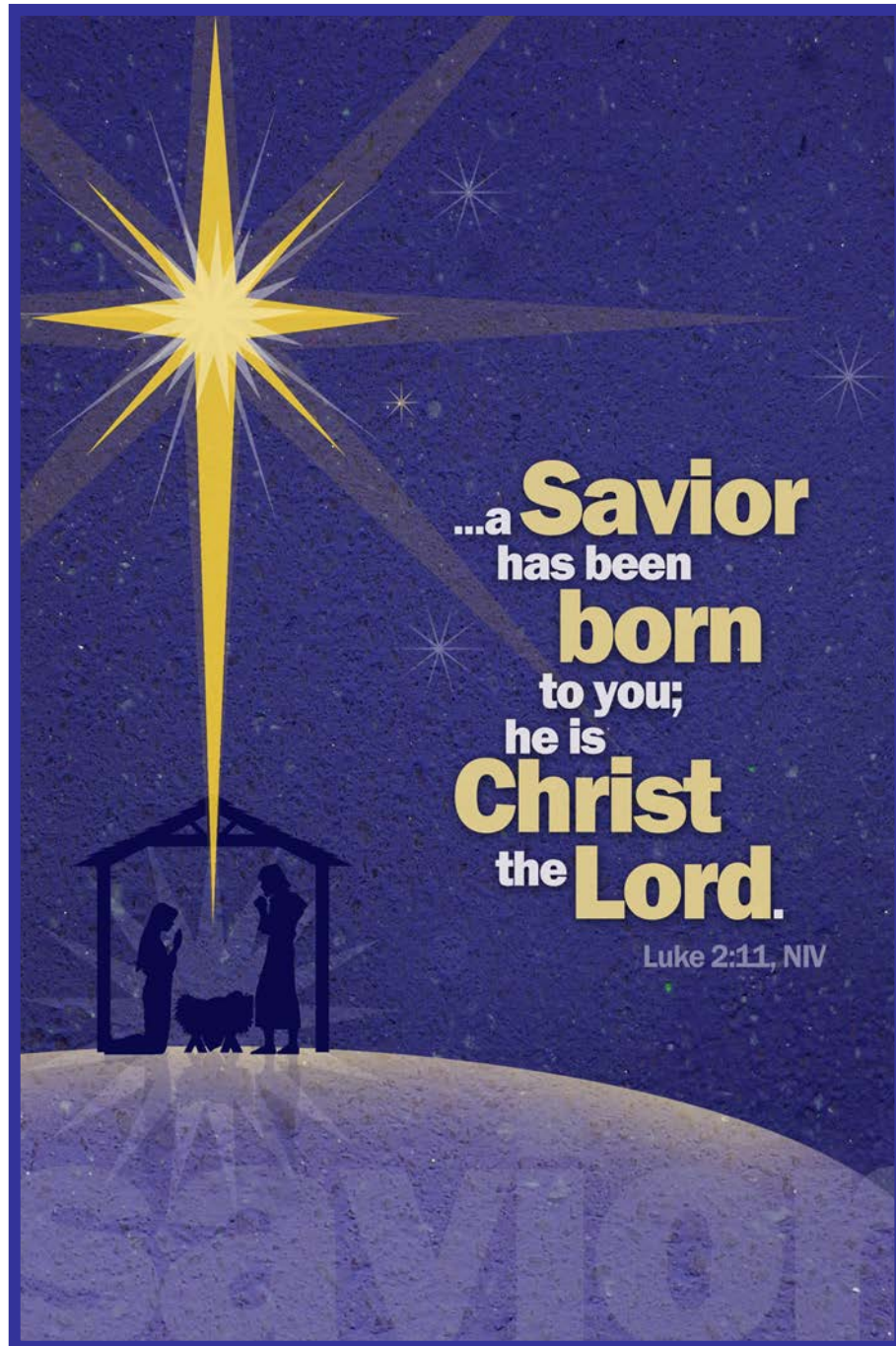


# December 2022 Newsletter



## First United Methodist Church

Pastor Mike McInnis

974 6<sup>th</sup> Street

Windom MN 56101

507-831-3284

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## #Christmas #End Times

When people find out I'm a pastor, they have questions for me... and some of those questions come up repeatedly. I'm no longer surprised by most of them.

One of the most common questions is, "Do you think we're living in the end times?" They usually ask this along with a comment about a tragic or ominous current event—could this be a sign of "the end times" they wonder?



In almost 40 years of ministry, there have been numerous national or world events that have triggered this "end times" question. Every generation since the time of Jesus has been asking this question. Even the biblical writers, like Paul, were pretty sure they were living in "the last days" and that Jesus was coming soon to establish his kingdom.

Paul's letters have an urgency in them about living in such a way that you are ready for the return of Christ. In one of his letters, he had to reassure believers that their loved ones who had died recently would still have eternal life, so strong was their conviction that "Jesus is coming soon" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)! Then he admonishes them to remember "that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5.2). So be ready for "the end times"!

So be ready! But *how* can we be ready? Here's the good news: God has made a way for us to be ready! It's called Christmas—the coming of a Savior who has made the way straight and even before us. Christmas is God's gift to us so that we can be ready for "the end times" – no matter when they come.

But people *still* want to know—when will the end times come? Are we—*am I*—living in "the end times"?

And the answer for each one of us is, "Yes—you are living in the end times." Because your clock is ticking; your days are numbered; you will go the way of all flesh: "ashes to ashes, earth to earth, dust to dust". You are living in your own end times simply by being human. Death for all of us is inevitable. *"On a long enough timeline, the survival rate for everyone drops to zero."*

Christmas is God's gift to you because you are living in the end times. Jesus came because you are living in the end times.

Therefore, Christmas is not a once a year holiday, and sometime around New Year's Day we just pack Christmas up and put it back in boxes till next year. Christmas is one of two central events in history (the other being Easter and Jesus' bodily resurrection) that really does offer "peace, good will toward people". That's a daily need—a lifetime need. Don't put it back in the box.

In spite of your sin and my sin—in spite of our ambivalence toward God, God is not ambivalent toward us; God always pursues us, always reaches out with goodwill, always tries to "seek and save that which is lost". His mercy is unending and his grace truly is amazing!

Our interest in #End Times should lead us to embrace #Christmas. They go together. If you have anxiety, fear, worry—even numbness or despair, you can open God's Christmas gift of salvation in Jesus. Rest in him; trust him. In opening that gift, you open the way to a life that's ready for anything, even "the end times".

*Pastor Mike*



## Church Office Hours

Monday—Friday

9:00am—Noon

1:00—4:00pm

Closed Holidays

No in-person worship service December 25th  
Closed December 25th, 26th & January 2nd

## Church Family News

**Congratulations** to Andrew Pfeffer and Amanda Muller who were united in marriage, Saturday, November 19th in Okoboji, Iowa. Parents of the couple are Greg and Peggy Pfeffer and Steve and Brenda Muller.

**Worship Leader**—First UMC is seeking a worship leader to join our team and help us grow in worship. Starting at 5-8 hours per week. Contact the church at [umcoffice@windomnet.com](mailto:umcoffice@windomnet.com).

**Church building** will be closed on December 25th, 26th and January 2nd for the holidays. There will be no in-person worship service on December 25th. There will be something available on our Facebook page.

**Contact Information**—We will be updating our church directory soon. Do we have your current contact information? Please call the church office at 831-3284 or email at [umcoffice@windomnet.com](mailto:umcoffice@windomnet.com). If you are in a warmer location for the winter, and would like mail sent to your winter address, please contact the office.

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### Weather Announcements

Please check your email and the following media for weather-related church announcements:

**Jackson KKOJ radio 1190AM**

**Windom TV cable channel 3**

**Windom KDOM radio 1580AM**

**[Facebook.com/FirstUMCWindom](https://www.facebook.com/FirstUMCWindom)**

When school is canceled due to weather,  
the church office is also closed.

Church services and activities are automatically cancelled if there is a BLIZZARD WARNING or a WINDCHILL WARNING. Lesser weather conditions are decided on a case by case basis. Please check ahead before venturing out if you are unsure. The safety of our church family is our first priority.



Join us

Saturday, December 24th

4:00pm

For a traditional Christmas Eve Service of  
Candlelight and Carols

We will be taking an offering at our Christmas Eve service.  
This offering will go to the Windom Backpack Program.

Thank you for your continued generosity in helping  
those in need.

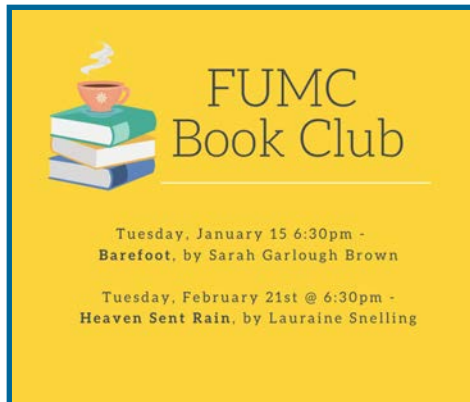


As we go to print, our church is not yet decorated for Christmas, but we say a big **Thank You** to all who always decorate our church so beautifully! We appreciate you!



Thank you to everyone who placed an order for a poinsettia plant. They are so beautiful and we appreciate their beauty in our sanctuary. Poinsettias can be picked up any time after the Christmas Eve Service.

**December 25th—**  
No in-person worship. Church building will be closed. Online service available.



Join us for Book Club! Read the designated book for that night. We will discuss the book and share in fellowship and have refreshments. Our next book club will meet on January 17th to discuss Book #3 of the Sensible Shoe Series—Barefoot—for those of you who have been reading that series. We will also meet on February 21st to discuss the stand alone book—Heaven Sent Rain by Lauraine Snelling. We meet at 6:30pm at First UMC. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 831-3284. There is no sign up but if you need help getting the book, please let the church office know and we can get that ordered for you.

## *A simple act of kindness....*

Years ago, Ilene's preacher noticed the family standing in front of him at a New Orleans convenience store did not have enough money to pay for their few items. He tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "You don't need to turn around, but please accept this money." The man took the money without ever seeing the preacher.

Nine years later, the pastor was invited to speak at a church in New Orleans. After the service, a man walked up to the preacher and shared this story about how he had come to faith in Christ: "Several years ago, my wife and our child were destitute. We had lost everything, had no jobs, no money and were living in our car. We also lost all hope, and agreed to a suicide pact, including our child. However, we decided to first give our son some food, so we drove to a convenience store to buy him some food and milk."

"While we were standing in line at the store, we realized that we did not have enough money to pay for these items, but a man behind us asked us to please take the money from his hand and not look at him. This man told us that 'Jesus loves you.'"

"We left the store, drove to our designated suicide site, and wept for hours. We couldn't go through with it, so we drove away. As we drove, we noticed a church with a sign out front which said, 'Jesus love you.' We went to that church the very next Sunday, and both my wife and I were saved that day."

He then told the pastor, "When you began speaking this morning, I knew immediately that you were the man who gave us that money." How did he know? The pastor was from South Africa and had a very distinct accent. He continued, "Your act of kindness was much more than a simple good deed. Three people are alive today because of it."

**A gentle challenge:** Maintain your spiritual antennae, remembering that God can multiply the smallest gift many times over.

**During this season of giving people are sometimes looking at some special projects that they can make donations to. A couple of upcoming projects you may consider donating to are the roof repair project and the sound system upgrade. Thank you again for your generosity.**

# December 2022 Missions



Thank you to all who helped with and prayed for the Dinner Table last month. We have been blessed by your prayers. Thank you to the Windom Lions Club for donating the pumpkin pies for our meal. Also thank you to the Windom FFA group who helped distribute the meals.

Our next Dinner Table will be December 27th.  
Serving begins at 5:30pm @ Presbyterian Church  
Volunteers are needed, contact Kathy Jo McInnis or church office at 831-3284.  
Thank you for your continued support of this ministry!

First Things Radio Ministry airs Sundays at 11:30am on KDOM AM 1580. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast, contact the church office. The cost is \$34, payable to First UMC Memorials—First Things. You can also donate any amount of money to help support this ministry. Your donation would go into the account for a Sunday when we don't have a designated sponsor. It can be \$5, \$10, \$15....whatever you choose. If you choose to give in the form of a check, please write the check to First UMC Memorials with a memo—First Things.



As of our newsletter publishing date, there are sponsorship openings in the month of January, 2023. Thank you to everyone who has made this radio ministry outreach to our community possible.



## **Christmas Cheer Box**

For Infant to age 18 years old in Cottonwood County - Our church is collecting unwrapped NEW toys, clothes, mittens, hats, blankets, games, stuffed animals, etc. Cash donations can be made out to the church with Christmas Cheer Box in the memo. The collection deadline at the church is Monday, December 5th.

The 2022 Hope 4 Christmas Giving Guides are available in the church lobby, or by email on request. There are suggested prices in every range to bless others through this mission outreach.



Ruby's Pop-up Pantry is America's Rural Food Shelf. This is for anyone! The next distribution date is Monday, December 19th. Bring \$25 **cash** to the Regional Worship Center located at 2 Crossroads Drive in Sherburn MN from 5:30—7:00pm. Volunteers will place food in your trunk. Please make sure you have made room in your trunk for your food share. More information about Ruby's Pantry is available on their Facebook page at Ruby's Pantry-RWC-Sherburn.

DECEMBER 2022

### Special Points of Interest:

- Dec 4th—Jr. High Youth group meets from 4-6, Sr. High meets from 5:30-7:30.
- Dec 7th—KFC meets from after school until 7:15 for Christmas Program practice
- Dec 7th—Christmas Program practice for grades Pre-school-6th grade from 6:00-7:15.
- Dec 10th—Youth group fundraiser! Free-will donation for gift wrapping at the church from 1:00-3:00pm. Refreshments will be served.
- Dec 11th—*Get The Story Straight* Children's Program at 10:30am.
- December 18th Youth group Christmas party. 4:00-6:00pm
- December 25th No Sunday School classes.
- December 29th—Church wide sledding from 2-3pm. Hot chocolate following in the Fellowship Hall.

# Christian Education

No Sunday School  
December 25th and  
January 1st  
Classes resume  
January 8th.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

## THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!

The Sunday School classes Prek—6th grade will be having their Christmas Program, *Get The Story Straight*, for our church family on Sunday, December 11th at 10:30am.

Our Sunday school students will present a Christmas musical, a

musical that celebrates the birth of our Savior! Remembering that Christmas is a blessing to all of us.

The children and Sunday school volunteers are busy preparing for this special day.

Thank you to all who are sharing their time in helping to prepare for this program! Special thanks to Marcia Smith, Sarah Jeffrey Sena, Lindsey O'Brien, our Sunday School Teachers, and of course, our Sunday School Students.



**KFC (for 3rd, 4th, & 5th graders) meets Wednesday, December 7th after school until 5:30. Supper is provided.**

**We will be caroling for the Nursing Home residents, so please bring a mask.**

**If you have any questions, please contact Robin.**







The youth group will be wrapping Christmas gifts for a free-will donation from 1:00-3:00pm on Saturday, December 10th. This is a fund-raiser for our mission to serve locally, in our own area.

You can either drop off your gifts to be wrapped and stop by later to pick them up, or you can stay and have refreshments while you wait for your gifts to be wrapped.

We thank you for your support!

Thank you to everyone who has supported our youth group as they strive to serve in mission locally for the 2022-23 year. So far, since September, these hard working young people have;

Made a donation to Inspiration Hills retreat center in Inwood, IA.

Made a donation to the Henry Nyandwaki family.

Made a donation to The Dinner Table.

Made 5 batches of dog treats for the Cottonwood County Animal Rescue to bring awareness of the need for foster families.

Made toy donations to the Christmas Cheer Box.

Watch what they do in 2023!



*Our youth in mission!*



*Get The Story Straight*  
special practice on

Wednesday, December 7th-  
from 6:00-7:15. This is for  
students in grades

Pre-school-6th grade.

KFC students will just remain  
at church following KFC.



**Church-wide Sledding!**  
**Thursday, December 29th**  
**at 2pm.**

**Meet at Abby Hill!**

**Hot Chocolate Following**  
**Sledding, at 3pm, in the**  
**Fellowship Hall.**





# NOVEMBER

## MEMORIES

KFC



*Operation  
Christmas  
Child*



*Youth Bake Sale*



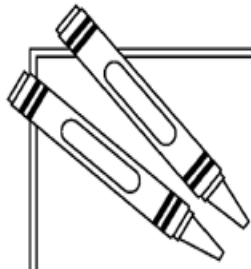
*Game Day*







|                      |                     |                       |                               |                         |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1<br>Luke 1:1-4      | 2<br>John 1:1-5, 18 | 3<br>John 1:1-5, 18   | 4<br>Isaiah 9:6-7<br>& 11:1-5 | 5<br>Micah 5:2-4        |
| 6<br>Matthew 1:1-17  | 7<br>Luke 1:5-25    | 8<br>Luke 1:26-38     | 9<br>Luke 1:39-45             | 10<br>Luke 1:46-56      |
| 11<br>Luke 1:57-66   | 12<br>Luke 1:67-80  | 13<br>Luke 2:1-7      | 14<br>Matthew 1:18-25         | 15<br>Luke 2:8-21       |
| 16<br>Matthew 2:1-12 | 17<br>Luke 2:22-40  | 18<br>Matthew 2:13-15 | 19<br>Matthew 2:16-18         | 20<br>Matthew 2:19-23   |
| 21<br>John 1:6-8, 15 | 22<br>John 1:9-14   | 23<br>John 1:16-17    | 24<br>Isaiah 52:13-53:12      | 25<br>Revelation 21:1-8 |



# Just for KIDS

## The Christmas Story

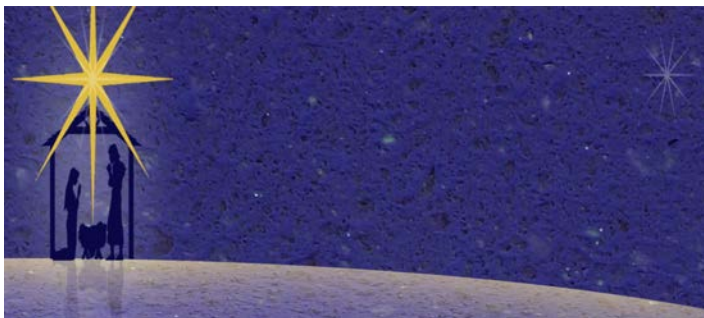
Each line below contains the letters to form a word that is part of the Christmas story. But each group of letters has 1 that is extra! Unscramble the words and write the extra letter on the lines at the bottom. What did we all receive at Christmas?

- ① TGLBEHHEME \_\_\_\_\_
- ② NEAGLO \_\_\_\_\_
- ③ NRMEDAG \_\_\_\_\_
- ④ ODEKSNY \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑤ AMGYR \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑥ OHESJIP \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑦ EFJSUS \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑧ ITEENMSW \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑨ SPHHDSREEO \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑩ EMCFAL \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑪ TLSRA \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑫ CSSNUEO \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑬ HEVSPE \_\_\_\_\_
- ⑭ ENIN \_\_\_\_\_

" \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 10 11 12 13 14  
 \_\_\_\_\_"

God's gift of love

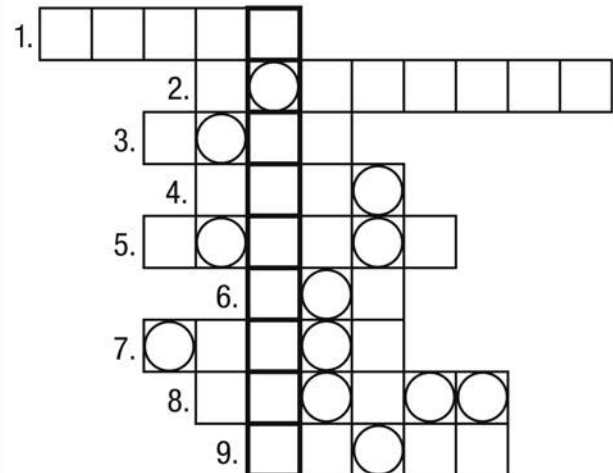
Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E)



# A few puzzles to try

## Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the blanks. Then write the word from the boldface vertical column. Also unscramble the circled letters to reveal a seasonal phrase.



1. Carolers and instrumentalists make this
2. What happens at malls
3. The angel Gabriel appeared to her
4. You'll find this under a Christmas tree
5. He was a carpenter
6. Joseph had to pay this in Bethlehem
7. The "ship of the desert"
8. Cattle eat out of this
9. Shepherds tend this

**Bold word:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Seasonal phrase:** \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: music, shopping, Mary, gift, Joseph, tax, camel, manger, sheep, Christmas, peace on earth



# First United Methodist Church ~December 2022

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday                                   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday                                     | Saturday   |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |  |   |   | <b>1</b><br>6:30a Men's<br>Breakfast @<br>Hardees   | <b>2</b><br>6:30a McPrayer<br>@ McDonalds  | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>4 Advent Week 2</b><br>9:00a Sunday School<br>9:00a Coffee Fellowship<br>10:30a Worship Service<br>11:30a KDOM First Things<br>4:00p-6:00p Jr High Youth<br>5:30p-7:30p Sr High Youth | <b>5</b>   | <b>6</b><br>9:30 UWF Executive<br>Meeting | <b>7</b><br>KFC After School to 7:15p<br>6:00p-7:15p Christmas<br>Program Practice grades<br>Pre-School-6th Grade<br>6:30p Confirmation | <b>8</b><br>6:30a Men's<br>Breakfast @<br>Hardees   | <b>9</b><br>6:30a McPrayer<br>@ McDonalds  | <b>10</b><br>Youth Group<br>Fundraiser - Gift<br>Wrapping<br><br>1:00p-3:00p |
| <b>11 Advent Week 3</b><br><b>Christmas Program</b><br>9:00a Sunday School<br>9:00a Coffee Fellowship<br>10:30a Worship Service<br>/Christmas Program<br>11:30a KDOM First Things        | <b>12</b>  | <b>13</b>                                 | <b>14</b><br>3:30p Lois Circle<br>6:30p Confirmation<br>7:00p Trustees<br>7:30p SPRC Meeting<br>7:30p Finance                           | <b>15</b><br>6:30a Men's<br>Breakfast @<br>Hardees  | <b>16</b><br>6:30a McPrayer<br>@ McDonalds | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>18 Advent Week 4</b><br>9:00a Sunday School<br>9:00a Coffee Fellowship<br>10:30a Worship Service<br>11:30a KDOM First Things<br><br>4:00p-6:00p Youth Group<br>Christmas Party        | <b>19</b><br>5:30p Ruby's<br>Pantry Distribution | <b>20</b>                                 | <b>21</b><br>6:30p Confirmation   | <b>22</b><br>6:30a Men's<br>Breakfast @<br>Hardees<br>6:30a McPrayer @<br>McDonalds                   | <b>23</b>                                  | <b>24</b><br><b>4:00p Christmas Eve<br/>Candlelight Service</b>              |
| <b>25 Christmas Day</b><br><b>Church Closed</b><br><b>No In-Person Service</b><br><b>No Sunday School</b><br><b>Online Service</b><br>11:30a KDOM First Thing                            | <b>26 Church<br/>Office Closed</b>               | <b>27</b><br>5:30p Dinner Table           | <b>28</b>   | <b>29</b><br>6:30a Men's<br>Breakfast @<br>Hardees<br>2:00p-3:00p<br>All Church<br>sledding-Abby Hill | <b>30</b>                                  | <b>31</b>  |

# 1<sup>st</sup> UMC Birthdays & Anniversaries ~December 2022

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday                         | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday  |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
|    |  | <b>Green = Birthdays</b><br><b>Red = Anniversaries</b><br><br>Updates and additions are welcome! Please let the church office know. |                                   | <b>1</b><br><b>Dorothy Deutchman</b>                                     | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>4</b><br><b>Danielle Ambrose</b><br><b>Jan Dehmlow</b><br><b>Lynn Mohlencamp</b> | <b>5</b><br><b>Karina Buresch</b><br><b>Mavis Thompson</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>                          | <b>8</b><br><b>Braysin Branch</b>  | <b>9</b><br><b>Sharron Tibodeau</b><br><b>Jason &amp; Sarah King</b> | <b>10</b>   |
| <b>11</b><br><b>Jim Glidden</b>   | <b>12</b><br><b>Jan Falk</b><br><b>Becky Stevens</b>       | <b>13</b>   | <b>14</b>                         | <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b>   |
| <b>18</b>   | <b>19</b>  | <b>20</b><br><b>Moesha Blodek</b><br><b>Gary Korthouse</b><br><b>Wayne Wormstadt</b><br><b>Dave &amp; Juane Elston</b>              | <b>21</b><br><b>Betty Haack</b>   | <b>22</b><br><b>Harold Johnson</b>                                       | <b>23</b><br><b>Eric Pfeffer</b>                                     | <b>24 Christmas Eve</b><br><b>Tom Christensen</b> |
| <b>25 Christmas Day</b><br><b>Roger Ambrose</b>                                     | <b>26</b><br><b>Jerry Moon</b>                             | <b>27</b><br><b>Rebecca Marker</b>  | <b>28</b><br><b>Marge Eichner</b> | <b>29</b><br><b>Dana Krumrey</b><br><br><b>Josh &amp; Miranda Schunk</b> | <b>30</b>  | <b>31</b><br><b>Margaret Grunig</b>               |