

The Courier



for the Orion United Methodist Church

December 2017

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A Violent Season

It's been a violent season.

Fifty-eight died in a mass shooting in Las Vegas during an October 1 country concert.

Three people died in a Walmart Supercenter in Thornton, Colorado on November 1 when a gunman walked into the store and began shooting randomly at customers.

Twenty-six died in a mass shooting at First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs on Sunday morning, November 5.

Five died in a shooting rampage in tiny Rancho Tehama, California on November 13 and 14.

Ninety-two lives lost plus, in some cases, the shooters themselves.

Is this any way to usher in a season of peace and joy? Is that any way to usher in Christmas?

Perhaps you'll recall the television series M.A.S.H. which was set during the Korean War. In one episode, several wounded soldiers were brought into the 4077th surgical unit late one Christmas night. Mike Farrell played "B.J. Hunnicutt," a surgeon who persistently treated one of the wounded soldiers even though it was clear to everyone else in the operating room that the soldier had already died. But, with an eye on the clock, B.J. kept trying to revive him. Finally, a few minutes after midnight on December 26, B.J. declared the soldier dead.

"Nobody dies on Christmas," he explained.

Christmas is a time when we like to cover up the ugliness of sin, war and violence. And yet, the Christmas story that I read in the Bible is plopped right down in the middle of unimaginable violence. In Matthew's Gospel, the birth of Christ is attended not by gentle shepherds, but by inquiring wise men who alert King Herod to the birth of the king of the Jews. When the wise men fail to deliver Jesus into his clutches, Herod orders the execution of all boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and younger. Fortunately, an angel warns Joseph of the impending danger and he, Mary and Jesus escape to Egypt.

Herod retaliated with violence, prompting Matthew to quote the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her

children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more" (Mt. 2:18).

From the earliest accounts of his life among us, Jesus is willing to live among us in the midst of violence. But that's why he came to live among us. He died a violent death to save us from the violence of sin. And even when we suffer unimaginable violence, we have the promise of eternal life.

This Christmas, my prayer is that the promise of Isaiah 9:6 will flourish: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given...and he will be called...Prince of Peace."

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Dave

Mission of the Month

Our December Mission of the Month is Golden Cross Ministries which includes ten social service agencies from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

They include four ministries to older adults: Evenglow Lodge in Pontia, Sunset Home in Quincy, United Methodist Village in Lawrenceville, and Wesley Village in Macomb.

Two hospital pastoral care ministries are included: Alton Memorial Hospital in Alton and Methodist Medical Center of Illinois in Peoria.

There are also four ministries to children and families: Chaddock in Quincy, Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, East St. Louis, The Baby Fold in Normal, and United Methodist Children's Home, Mt. Vernon.

As you can see, individuals of all ages and in all stages of life are blessed by our Golden Cross agencies. More than 30,000 individuals are served each year; 19,000 hours are given by more than 2,000 volunteers and more than \$10,000,000 of benevolent care is given by these ministries.

Your giving to our December Mission of the Month will enhance the impact of these ministries. However, one of these ministries, the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, is facing quite a cash crunch due to a decline in state funding. Consequently, all offerings given in our red-tabbed Christmas envelopes (which you received at the beginning of the year) will be directed to the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House.

As always, your support of missions should be above and beyond your regular tithes and offerings.

October Sunday School Perfect Attendance – Pastor Dave Schultz, Rose Haars, Lena Haars, Ann Marie Haars, Peggy Crayne, Derek Nelson, Nick Browning, Allen Catour, Diane McCunn, Devin Nelson, Jon Ditzman, Tara Miller, Lanie Nelson, Don Berns, Marilyn Berns, Rachel Girotti, Deb Miller, Mandy Browning, Clayton Browning

Ladies Day Out is Dec. 2 from 9 a.m.-10 p.m. All ladies of the church and friends are invited to attend for a day of crafting and fellowship. Please bring your own drink and snack. Come and go throughout the day!

Thank you to all who helped with Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Through your generosity, we filled 50 shoeboxes for children around the world. May God richly bless you for your love for these children!

Thank you, members and friends of Orion UMC, for remembering me during Pastor Appreciation month. Your gift is greatly appreciated.
Pastor Dave and Candice

Thank you to everyone who helped with the holiday meals for the Orion Area Food Pantry. Your generosity was appreciated by many!

Thank you to **Ty Bingham** for providing spray treatment to the lawns at the church & parsonage throughout the year.

Cindy and Bruce Walker are happy to announce the marriage of their son, Brad to Brianne. Brad and Brianne were married November 4 in St. Louis. *Congratulations!*

2018 Ladies Luncheon January 28 at Noon

All ladies & friends from the church and the community are invited for a time of food, fellowship, and laughter. Table designers are needed. Please see Candice Schultz to volunteer and for more information.

You Are Invited

Loving Stitches will host a potluck on Monday, Dec. 11 at noon. Please bring a dish to share and table service. Drinks will be furnished. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Thank you to **Office Machine Consultants** for providing our worship and funeral bulletins during the year!

Thank you to everyone who helped with donations for our hat and mitten tree. Your generosity will help keep children in our Orion school district warm this winter.

Special December Services

Sunday, December 3 –

8 a.m., Traditional Worship

10:30 a.m. Children's Sunday school program in MAC

Noon, "Festival for Missions" dinner with silent auction of Christmas items.

Sunday, December 10 –

10:30 a.m., Special music by the Bell Choir

Sunday, December 17 –

8 a.m., Traditional Worship with Carols

10:30 a.m. Christmas Cantata by our Sanctuary Choir

Friday, December 22 –

6 p.m., "Eve Before You Leave," the first of two identical Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services

Sunday, December 24 –

9 a.m. Worship

(only one worship service, no Sunday school)

9 p.m., Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 31 –

8 & 10:30 Worship

9:15 am Sunday school

Please join us as we celebrate the Christmas season with special music and services!

Festival for Missions – Sunday, Dec. 3, Noon

Come to our Christmas dinner with a missions' emphasis and invite a friend to join you! Christmas items are on display in the lower narthex with silent bids accepted until Dec. 3 at 12:15 p.m. Proceeds from the sale of each item will be directed to a mission of the donor/decorator's choice.

A \$5 donation will cover the cost of the catered meal following the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Christmas in Orion

Main Street Orion invites you to celebrate Christmas in Orion with a variety of activities on Fri., Dec. 1 including:

5:30 lighting of the tree in the Central Park Band Shell by Jennifer Lees with music by Orion Chamber Choir under the direction of Parker Haley

4-7 pm Wine tasting at Orion IGA. Both Lavender Crest and Creekside Winery will be handing out samples

5-7 pm Cookie Walk (*sweets sold by the pound*) in the Orion UMC MAC. \$8.00 per pound

(Bakers are needed for cookies. Contact Candice Schultz, MSO director to volunteer.)

5:50-7 pm Soup Supper (*by donation*) in the Orion UMC MAC with entertainment by Stephanie Moen's Musicians

Sat., Dec. 2 Saturday with Santa will be from 2-4 pm at the Orion Middle School. *(note the new time)*

Come! Kick off the season here in Orion!

The Worship Team will **collect for poinsettias** to decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas season. If you would like to remember/honor a loved one, please sign up with a member of the Worship Team Dec. 3 in the lower narthex.

Prepare Your Hearts for Sunday

When it comes to music, Advent is an interesting—and sometimes puzzling—time of year. It's the one time of the year when secular recording artists sing songs about the birth of the Messiah while Christian recording artists sing secular songs such as "Sleigh Ride" and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

Music is just as crazy in the church. There are some ministers who insist on only singing Advent songs during Advent and save the Christmas carols for Christmas Eve and the Twelve Days of Christmas which follow. There are others who virtually forget all about Advent and jump headlong into Christmas carols as soon as they've finished singing, "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come."

Opting for the "both/and" approach, we'll have some of each beginning on the First Sunday of Advent, December 3. We'll feature traditional worship at 8 am and our Children's Sunday school program will follow at 10:30 in the MAC. Scriptures include Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 and Mark 13:24-37.

Scriptures for Sunday, December 10 include Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85, 2 Peter 3:8-15a and Mark 1:1-8. I'll be preaching at both services; however, the 10:30 service will also feature special music by the bell choir.

We'll have two very different services on Sunday, December 17. I'll be leading worship at 8 a.m. but at the 10:30, I'll be turning the service over to our sanctuary choir who will bless us with the Christmas cantata, "The Voices of Christmas." Scriptures for the day include Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 and John 1:6-8, 19-28.

The first of our two Christmas Eve services will be held at 6 pm Friday, December 22. Our "Eve Before You Leave" service will feature carols and candlelight communion. Scriptures include Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14 and Luke 2:1-20.

Please remember the number "9" on Sunday, December 24. Once again, we'll have two very different services, both at 9 o'clock. Because it's Christmas Eve, we'll have just one service Sunday morning and it will be held at 9 am. Scriptures include 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55; Romans 16:25-27 and Luke 1:26-38.

That evening, Christmas Eve worship will be at 9 pm. The service and scriptures will be the same as our Eve Before You Leave.

Our last services of 2017 will be on Sunday, December 31 with worship at both 8 and 10:30 am. Scriptures include Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7 and Luke 2:22-40.

As always, scriptures for lector-liturgists are underlined.

I'll see you in church,

Pastor Dave

Thank You

We'd like to thank everyone for their acts of kindness, prayers, and cards during my recovery. Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated by both of us. We are blessed to be a part of this wonderful community. We'd like to extend a special thank you to Pastor Dave for his visits. They meant so much to us.

Toni & Paul Carlson

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ORION, ILLINOIS



Winter Emergencies on Sundays

We will conduct services every Sunday, regardless of the weather. We will not cancel services. However, that does not mean I am encouraging you to come to worship if it is dangerous for you to do so. I'd much rather have you miss one Sunday service rather than fall on your way to church and miss for the next three months.

If for some reason, I am unexpectedly unable to conduct a service, an emergency bulletin is located under the pulpit. Someone please distribute them and divide up the readings among those who are present, and have church. -- Pastor Dave

Winter Emergencies on Weekdays

If there is no school in the Orion School District due to inclement weather, the church office will not be open that day, and if it is Thursday, Bible Study will also be cancelled.

Holiday Office Hours

Dec. 26, 27, 28, and 29 the office will be open
9 am-Noon.

*Merry Christmas
from the OUMC staff!*

Blessings on your Birthday!

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|-------|-------------------|-------|------------------|
| 12/01 | John Heller | 12/18 | Lynn Doy |
| 12/02 | Jessica Ott | 12/19 | Amanda Dykeman |
| | Ben Gladkin | 12/20 | Louise Nelson |
| 12/03 | Matthew McVietty | | Alicia Fuller |
| | Jennifer Weaver | | Aidan Moody |
| 12/04 | Haylee Downing | 12/21 | Kylee Brown |
| | Kate Lefever | 12/22 | Morgan Gainey |
| | Barbara Riedesel | | Rylie Lough |
| | Alex Pasmore | | Cecil Woods |
| | Todd Anderson | | Keith Weaver |
| 12/05 | Paul Carlson | 12/23 | Bernice Stropes |
| 12/06 | Marian Goodnight | 12/24 | John Riggs |
| 12/07 | Rick Thomsen | | Clayton Browning |
| 12/08 | Terry Waldbusser | 12/25 | Helen Carlson |
| 12/09 | Greg McCunn | | Matt Richardson |
| 12/10 | Marilyn Berns | 12/26 | Ron Foley |
| 12/11 | Gay Patton | 12/27 | Linda Muhleman |
| | Michelle Faulkner | 12/28 | Andrew Dodson |
| 12/13 | Allen Catour | 12/29 | Teresa Woodley |
| | Sloane Welch | 12/31 | Don Berns |
| 12/14 | Pastor Dave | | |
| 12/15 | Lloyd Whitsell | | |
| | Adam Killion | | |

*Call the church office if we
need to add your name.*