



Messenger

December 2022

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Volume 2022, December Issue No. 12
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WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

submitted by Pastor David

Dear friends,

Advent and Christmas are probably my favorite seasons of the year. In part, it's because I'm kind of a homebody and introvert. The winter season provides plenty of opportunity for holing up at home with a good book and a holiday beverage. Christmas is a cozy holiday. It's a time of taking shelter against the rain, snow, and cold.

It's also about the hope of light shining in the darkness. It's not an accident that we celebrate Christmas near the winter solstice. The shortening days and dropping temperatures test the faith of all people. Will light and life come again?

During Advent, we strike lights against the darkness. We take hope in God's promises. We are inspired by the vision of God's peace. We take joy in the gifts of God. We accept and give love.

And in the incarnation of Jesus Christ in our world, God strikes an unfading light in the darkness. God reveals an incomprehensibly expansive love: the love of God coming to earth to share our life, in both its joy and its pain. God becomes human in order that we might become more like God, grounded and empowered by love.

During this Advent season, we consider the act of ascending up to the temple for worship. As we climb, we catch glimpses of God's dream for humanity, a commonwealth of justice and of peace.

On Christmas Eve, we will gather today to hear the story of salvation history, told in scripture and in song. We will receive the gift of the light of Christ and be sent forth to share that light with the world.

On Christmas Morning, which falls on a Sunday this year, we'll gather for a casual service of story and song. Feel free to come in your pajamas, if you like. Here again God's great story of redemptive love, and sing your faith in the words of beloved carols.

This season, I wish you and yours all of the blessings of God's great love.

December 4, The Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10

"Stand as a Signal"

December 11, the Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-10

"The Lord's Highway"

December 18, The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 1:18-25

"Give You a Sign"

Saturday, December 24th, Christmas Eve, 7pm

A Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

December 25th, Christmas Day

John 1:1-14

"A Light in the Darkness"

+ Pastor David

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

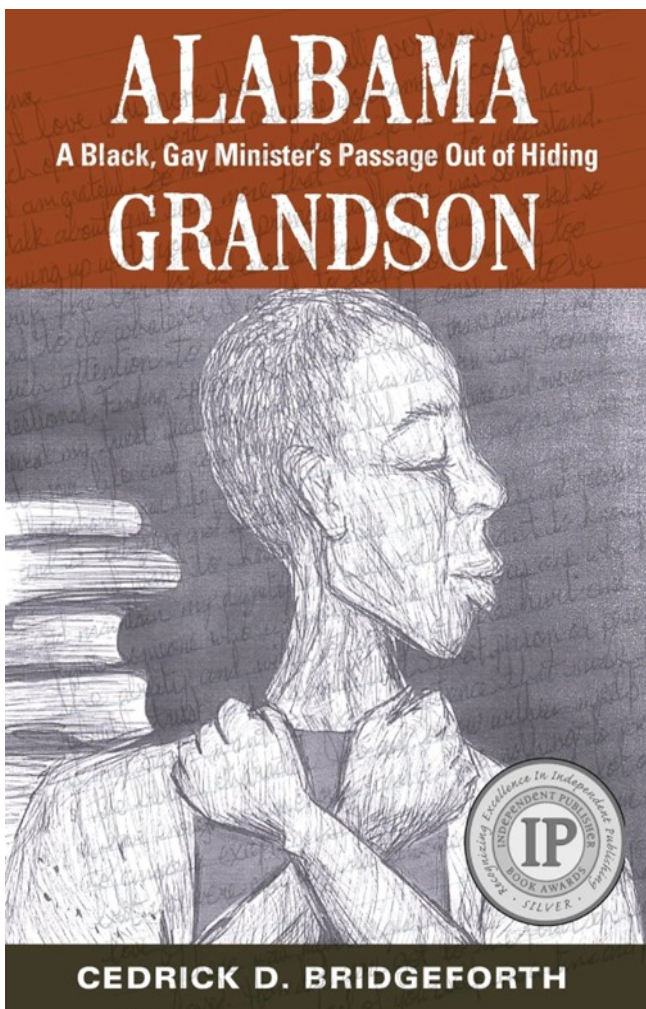
submitted by Pastor David

New Early Church Study

Early Church will be starting a new book on December 11th. We'll be reading a book by our incoming bishop, Rev. Dr. Cedrick Bridgeforth. *Alabama Grandson: A Black, Gay Minister's Passage Out of Hiding* is a memoir, written during the pandemic, and dealing with deep questions of identity, acceptance, and faith. Join us at 8:30 on Sunday mornings either in-person in the Garden Room or online via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 916 3238 9612

Passcode: FGUMC



“With heart-wrenching vulnerability, Cedrick Bridgeforth has crafted a beautiful and riveting narrative. It reveals how personal integrity and character develop through Black gay self-acceptance and deep, nurturing, love by family. This spiritually enlivening journey contains both excruciating, betrayal-filled life lessons and awe-inspiring examples of his non-judgmental, compassionate care for others.”

—Traci C. West, PhD, Professor of Christian Ethics and African American Studies

“My brother Cedrick comes out of the closet like an educational cyclone with this book. After reading it you will be both blown away and enlightened. With each chapter I clutched my pearls, busted a gut laughing, and wept with his pain. This book is a must-read for all who seek to embrace and understand our LGBTQIA brothers and sisters. Once you read it, you cannot remain the same.”

—Dr. Sheron Patterson, Senior Pastor of Hamilton Park UMC in Dallas, TX and author of *The Blessings and Bling*

Ken Bond Memorial Service

December 3, 2022 1 - 3 pm

The Bond family have been active members of our congregation for many years. The Bond family would like you all to join them in the celebration of Ken Bond's life in Fellowship Hall, December 3, 1 - 3 pm

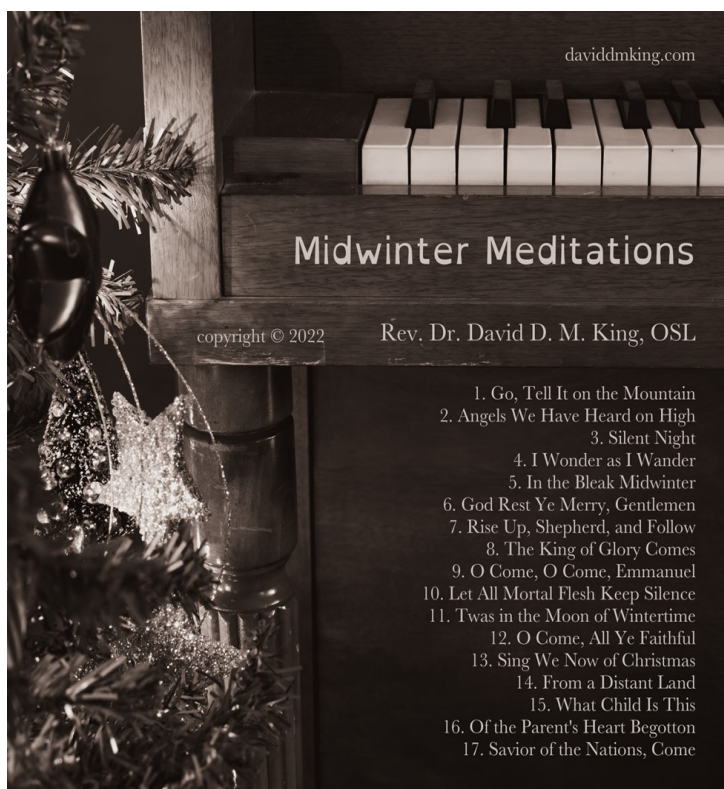


Bells of the Cascade!!!

The wonderful
Bells of the Cascade
will be performing in our sanctuary on
Saturday, December 17—7 PM

Church Bell Choir Performance

The next Bell Choir Performance will be **December 11**. Mark your calendars to be sure you don't miss the choir's performance of *Angels from the Realms of Glory*



Christmas Album

Pastor David has recorded a new Christmas album

Midwinter Meditations

It's a collection of instrumental impressions of Advent and Christmas carols. You'll find it on most music streaming services, including Apple Music, Spotify, and YouTube. CDs will also be available starting December 10th. Talk to Pastor David for more details.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

BRING THESE ITEMS AND ANY OTHER
NONPERISHABLE FOOD

December Holiday Food Items

AGAIN, YOUR HELP TAKING IT OVER ON
WEDNESDAY AT 10:00 A.M. IS ALWAYS
APPRECIATED!

submitted by Betty Pritchard



The church is supporting 6 families in the area with
gift cards & Christmas Baskets,
including 5 Hispanic and 1 Muslim family.

Donations can be submitted any time / with a note
indicating "Christmas Baskets".

Special thanks to Leah Hendrickson and
Melissa King for coordinating with our Hispanic
families and Cathy Hummel for coordinating with
the Muslim family.

SIMPLE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS TO SHARE WITH YOUR FAMILY

SET ASIDE SOME TIME THIS HOLIDAY SEASON TO CULTIVATE THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT
WITH THESE TIMELESS FAMILY ACTIVITIES -

- **SEASONAL MUSIC**—ATTEND HOLIDAY SERVICES AND BELL PERFORMANCES
- **FAMILY DECORATING**— PLACE TRADITIONAL ORNAMENTS ON THE SANCTUARY CHRISTMAS TREE
- **CHRISTMAS COOKIES**—MAKE OR PURCHASE COOKIES AT OUR COOKIE SALE DECEMBER 11
- **SPECIAL GATHERINGS**— VISIT FRIENDS UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH AND SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER!
- **SELFLESS GIVING**—DONATE TIME OR MONEY TO OUR CHRISTMAS FAMILIES OR EMBARK ON RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY.

Excerpt from Epoch Times, Nov 2-8, 2022



**American
Red Cross**

Together, we can save a life

Blood Drive *December 16*

Free Snacks & Juice!

Fellowship Hall — 12:00p.m.—5:00 pm.

If you have any questions
please contact
Janet Hummel 503-341-2182
janet.hummel@frontier.com

LAY LEADER REPORT

submitted by Chuck Pritchard

Now with Thanksgiving done, Merry (some people say Happy) Christmas! When was the birthday of Jesus? The year we are not sure of but we believe it is within a ten year span, between three years before to seven years after the assumed year. But what about the date? "There were shepherds in the fields at night, tending their flocks," they did this in the fall and spring, (my birthday is in March so I favor the spring) to protect the new lambs from predators, they were not in the fields during the depth of winter.

So why was Dec. 25 chosen? You have to remember that Christianity started as an underground movement and was frowned upon by the general population, so the 'date' was moved to another, Dec. 25, the date of Saturnalia and with everyone else celebrating already; we could celebrate openly but quietly.

Does it really matter what date was chosen to celebrate? No, not really. This date was chosen so most Christian people could enjoy and remember the things that happened. So let us remember and be thankful at the birth of Christ and remember Him with our good deeds and wishes to those around us. May you and yours have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. So let it be.

Yours's in the holiday spirit, Chuck Pritchard .



SERVING IN SEPTEMBER

Lay Leader	Chuck Pritchard
Altar Guild	Valerie Hawkins
Coffee Coordinator	Amy Scott

BIRTHDAYS

Shirley Gamble	December 3
Sharon Adame	December 7
Lois Oakberg	December 19
Robbie Boles	December 23
Betty Ludlam	December 26
Shirley Peloquin	December 26

ANNIVERSARIES

Chuck and Betty Pritchard	December 12
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COOKIE SALE!

STOCK UP ON YOUR FAVORITE GOODIES TO ENJOY OR SHARE WITH FRIENDS – AFTER WORSHIP ON DECEMBER 11.

