



## OFFERINGS & REFLECTIONS

### SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS



Dear Church Family,

As we navigate the challenges and uncertainties of life, it's not uncommon to feel weary, drained, and on the verge of giving up. In times like these, turning to the wisdom found in ancient scriptures can offer solace and inspiration. Isaiah 40:30-31, a timeless passage, provides a profound message of hope and renewal. The passage reads:

“Even youths grow tired and weary,  
and young men stumble and fall;  
but those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.”

These verses serve as a reminder that weariness is a universal experience, affecting even the strongest among us. It acknowledges the inevitable trials and tribulations that we all encounter on our life's journey. However, embedded within these words is a powerful promise – the promise of renewed strength for those who place their hope in the Lord. The image of soaring on wings like eagles paints a picture of resilience and greatness. Eagles are known for their strength, keen vision, and ability to rise above storms. In the same way, those who anchor their hope in the divine can find the strength to overcome challenges, to rise above adversity, and to navigate the storms of life with grace.

Renewal is a process that involves patience, faith, and trust. It's about recognizing that our own strength may falter, but by placing our hope in something greater, we tap into an eternal wellspring of resilience. This doesn't mean that we won't face difficulties, but it assures

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## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

In November, UWF hosted our annual Pancake Packing Party to pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Items were collected throughout October and even a truck load of donations was brought from Canada by Carol Sine! It was a blessed evening full of wonderful food, servant hearts, and prayer. Attendees started by putting their handprints on the boxes. They added handmade jump ropes, toothbrushes, crocheted pencil pouches, soap and washcloths. Then, they added school supplies, toys and

clothes. Many attendees included cards and letters and then most importantly covered the boxes in prayer. We packed 342 boxes of love! That's 85 more than last year. You also donated over \$3,000 to help with shipping. The following Sunday, Pastor David lead us in prayer over the boxes and later they were delivered to the Charlotte processing center. Thank you to everyone who donated to, helped organize, packed, and prayed for this mission project. You helped introduce children to Jesus and his unconditional love.

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Worshiping in Love



Growing in Love



Serving in Love

# OFFERINGS & REFLECTIONS

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us that we won't face them alone.

So, how can we practically apply the wisdom of Isaiah 40:30-31 in our lives?

**Cultivate a Spirit of Hope:** In the face of challenges, choose to cultivate a spirit of hope. Trust that there is a purpose beyond the difficulties you are facing.

**Lean on the Divine:** Recognize that you don't have to bear the burdens of life alone. Lean on your faith, whatever that may be, and find solace in the belief that there is a higher power guiding your journey.

**Seek Renewal:** Actively seek renewal through practices that

nourish your mind, body, and spirit. This could include prayer, meditation, self-reflection, or spending time in nature.

**Encourage Others:** Just as you draw strength from your faith, be a source of encouragement for others. Share the message of hope and renewal with those around you, fostering a community of support.

In the midst of life's challenges, Isaiah 40:30-31 serves as a beacon of hope, reminding us that, no matter how weary we may feel, we have the capacity to soar to new heights with renewed strength. May these verses inspire you to face each day with resilience, hope, and a sense of purpose during this season of Advent.

See you in the pews. Meet you at the alter.



# MUSIC AND WORSHIP ARTS

## Advent

Thank you to those who decorated our church so beautifully for our Christmas season worship. Advent is the beginning of the church year and each Sunday in Advent will have special music to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child. We will light a candle on the Advent wreath along with delivering a reading pertaining to each week's focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brings us: Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

## Christmas Cantatas Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>

**9:00<sup>AM</sup>** - Join us for a morning of celebrating Jesus' birth through song and scripture at our Core Cantata "Light of the World". Jesus was born to help direct us towards God's light, and that light of Christ guides us through the darkness. So this season, let us rejoice and share the story of Christmas—the story that forever changed the world, today and for all time.

**11:00<sup>AM</sup>** - This year's Chancel Choir Cantata is entitled 'Sing a Song of Christmas', composed by Michael Barrett and Joseph Martin. It includes newly composed songs such as A Song of Christmas, Prepare the Way, and Sleep Little Lamb, among others. It also includes traditional carols like O Come Emmanuel, O Come All Ye Faithful, and Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus. Between each song there will be narration based on the Christmas story from Luke. It has been a blessing to prepare the Cantata, and we hope it will be a blessing to others as they hear joyful songs proclaiming Christ's birth.

## Children's Christmas Concert Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4:00pm

Start your Christmas season out on a most joyful note. Our 'Children's Chimes' and 'Joyful Noize' have been working hard to bring you a Christmas program celebrating the birth of Jesus. Invite your friends and neighbors and stay after the show to visit Santa!

## DECEMBER WORSHIP CALENDAR

DEC 3<sup>RD</sup> - ADVENT BEGINS

DEC 10<sup>TH</sup> - CHRISTMAS CANTATAS 9AM & 11AM

DEC 24<sup>TH</sup> - CHRISTMAS EVE

11AM: ONE MORNING SERVICE

4PM: FAMILY SERVICE

6PM AND 11PM: CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

### COOKIE OFFERING

PLEASE BRING BAKED COOKIES BY THE DOZEN TO EITHER THE 11AM OR 6PM SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS EVE. WE WILL PRAY OVER THESE COOKIES AND ASK 6PM WORSHIPPERS TO DELIVER TO THOSE WORKING ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

# MISSIONS COMMITTEE

## Angel Tree

It's time to bless 32 local children with Christmas gifts! Scan the QR code below with your smart phone camera to sign up for clothing and toys for individual angels OR pull a tag from the tree in the Narthex to purchase a gift card for a family. Important! Please wrap your gift and tag with the child's name, age and the family number. Blank tags are in the Narthex for you to use. All gifts and gift cards are to be returned no later than 11:00 am on Sunday,



Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. If you choose a gift card from the Angel Tree, please return gift card to Linda Honeycutt or the church office. Questions? Contact Linda, [honey6239@comporium.net](mailto:honey6239@comporium.net). Thank you for your generosity.

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# STAFF PARISH RELATIONS TEAM (SPRT)

Mayra Leon joined the PUMC staff in late March as our Financial Associate. Mayra holds a Bachelor's in Business Management from Western Governors University, as well as multiple certifications in process improvement including a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt. She has spent a decade working for large financial institutions in various leadership capacities. In addition to her financial responsibilities, working with the Finance Committee and Church Council, Mayra is helping us manage the church website and keep it current.

Mayra is originally from Peru and most of her family still lives there. She has been married to her husband Edil for 8 years, and together they have a 5 year old son named Leo. In her free time, Mayra enjoys reading, writing, listening to podcasts and traveling overseas to visit family. If you have a chance on a Tuesday morning, stop by and welcome Mayra to the PUMC family.



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

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# MISSIONS COMMITTEE

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## Bethel Men's Night Shelter

A warm winter coat, work pants, thermal top and bottoms, long sleeve shirt, bookbag - that is what



we saw over and over on our request sheets at Bethel Men's Night Shelter Donation Center. It was a very cold night, men were lined out the building when we got there. We ran out of work pants in the longer pant sizes - but we fulfilled all the requests we could. Fellowship with other volunteers and the men was a blessing and made the evening fly by. A total of 7 PUMC volunteers served in the donation center pulling requested items and sorting and shelving recent donations.

If you are cleaning out your closet - please donate men's cold weather clothing. There is also a list of much needed items in the Coffee Connections Room that you can take with you. We continue to collect items for breakfast bags too.

Monday, January the 22<sup>nd</sup> is our next opportunity to serve a meal and work in the donation center. Reach out to Eugenia Taylor [taylorj@comporium.net](mailto:taylorj@comporium.net) to join in this mission.



## Spread the Warmth - Annual Coat Drive

Thank you for your generous donations! We collected 80 warm items: 18 children's coats, 18 women's coats, 6 men's items, scarves, hats, and gloves. Your donations were given to Haven Men's Shelter and Tender Hearts both in Rock Hill.

## JANUARY JOURNEY

January 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>

The Missions Team invites you to "journey" through the PUMC Ministry Fair where opportunities to become more involved will be showcased. Learn about service through our various committees and small group involvement like Bible study, choir, men's group, etc. It will be conveniently held in the Narthex and surrounding rooms. Be on the lookout for more information soon. Please plan to take some time one of these Sundays to become "plugged in" at PUMC!



## SMALL GROUPS

### Women's Retreat

It's been a long time since a PUMC Women's Retreat, but some preliminary planning has been taking place to have one in late Feb or early March 2024. The retreat will be a Friday evening and return on Saturday evening and thus the location won't be too far away. Accommodations will provide either a single room or double room, no bunk beds. We have gotten details on five locations and dates they are available that we can share with you, if interested. We have had fun exploring various program ideas and will continue to discuss and finalize. Please contact Toni Taylor, [tonirtaylor@gmail.com](mailto:tonirtaylor@gmail.com) for more information or to help with planning.

### Senior Friends, Disciples & Logos Christmas Party Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 12:00pm

Meet in the Fellowship Hall for our annual Christmas Party. Please bring heavy hor d'oeuvres and/or something sweet. In lieu of a gift exchange, please bring items to fill care bags (puzzle books, socks, toothbrushes, tooth paste, hand sanitizer, pocket tissues, lip balm, etc). RSVP please to Linda [honey6239@comporium.net](mailto:honey6239@comporium.net).

### Single Ladies' Lunch Bunch

Will not meet in December. Make plans to join us in January!

### United Women in Faith (UWF)



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# PHILLY YOUTH GROUP (PYG)

In November, PYG focused on generosity using the book of 1 Thessalonians. We put what we learned into action by participating with Hugaroo, a non-profit started by church member Jennifer Thrasher. Hugaroo provides new stuffed animals to children who have experienced a life-threatening illness or traumatic event. PYG inspected, removed tags, tied ribbons, and bagged a total of 576 stuffed animals!

With evening coming earlier and weather getting colder, we have to get creative with fun activities. We moved inside to have a nerf war! They had a blast playing capture the flag and after a few rounds everyone had a chance to win and earn a prize by trying swish the fish for a shot a gift card. No takers this time!

Moving into December, our lessons will continue with a focus on being grateful on select Sundays from 5-6:30pm. Middle School will have their Christmas Party on 12/17 ice skating and exploring illuminated trails at the Whitewater Center. High School Lockout is BACK this year on 12/15! Each stop we take around the Charlotte/ Fort Mill area will focus on faith, fun, or a give back element. Don't miss out on any of the fun. RSVP now!

All of this information can be found on PYG's BAND app. Contact Jessica Inman 910-833-0752 [jessica@pumcfortmill.org](mailto:jessica@pumcfortmill.org).



# CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES

## How Do You Prepare for Christmas?

It's Advent! It's Christmas! It's the Holy-Day season where we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Whether you're setting up a Nativity scene or decorating your home, send us a short video of your Advent preparation and we'll include it with our PUMC Children's Ministry Festivities. Send to [Nicolas@pumcfortmill.org](mailto:Nicolas@pumcfortmill.org)



## Children's Christmas Eve Service

A Christmas service for children and families, celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Sunday, December 24  
4:00PM




**December 3rd  
5:00-6:00pm**

### Cookies with Santa


Admission is a new, unwrapped toy for needy children in the community.

RSVP at [Nicolas@pumcfortmill.org](mailto:Nicolas@pumcfortmill.org)

**December 3rd  
5:00-6:00pm**

### Cookies with Santa

Admission is a new, unwrapped toy for needy children in the community.



### A New Study Starting Wednesday, January 17 at 6:00pm

C.S. LEWIS



## Children's Christmas Craft

DECEMBER 9  
10-11AM

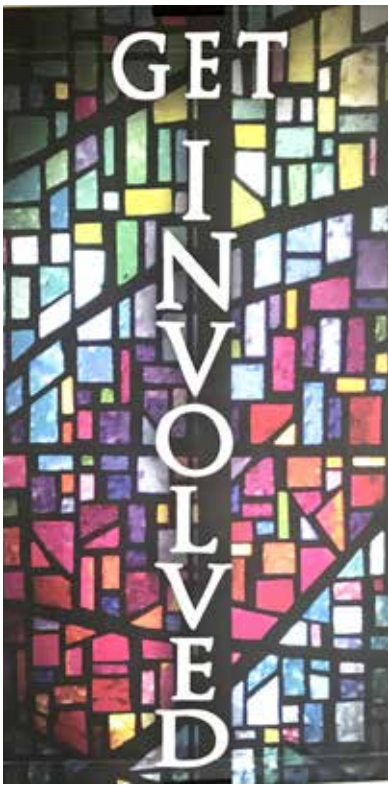
RSVP WITH [NICOLAS@PUMCFORTMILL.ORG](mailto:NICOLAS@PUMCFORTMILL.ORG)



### Chili Cook-Off and Kids' Dessert Bake Off

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH  
5PM

## DECEMBER - MONTH AT A GLANCE



Date	Event	Time
Sun, Dec 3	Children's Clang Buckets	9:00 & 11:00am
Sun, Dec 3	Children's Christmas Concert	4:00 - 5:00pm
Sun, Dec 3	Cookies with Santa	5:00 - 6:00pm
Sat, Dec 9	Christmas Craft	10:00 - 11:00am
Sat, Dec 9	Disciples & Logos Christmas Party	12:00pm
Sun, Dec 10	Christmas Cantata	9:00 & 11:00am
Sun, Dec 10	Christmas Cookie Sale	8:30am - 12:00pm
Fri, Dec 15	High School Lock Out	4:45pm
Sun, Dec 17	Angel Tree gifts due	12:00pm
Sun, Dec 17	Middle School Christmas Party	4:00 - 7:00pm
Sun, Dec 24	One Morning Service	11:00am
Sun, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Family Service	4:00pm
Sun, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Services	6:00 & 11:00pm
Thur, Dec 7, 14, 21	Advent Study via Zoom w/ Pastor David	7:00 - 8:30pm

### Philly Christmas Card Mailbox

Each Christmas, we put the Philly Mailbox in the Narthex so congregants can give Christmas cards to other and save on postage! Please put the recipient's first and last names on the envelopes and put in the slot that corresponds with their last name. Remember to check the box every time you are in the building and take home your cards so you can be blessed by those who have thought of you.



STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL REPORT
November 26, 2023
\$14,110 is needed each week to meet our annual budget of \$733,741, we received \$10,561 this week
\$505,570 has been received towards the General and Building Funds
\$535,743 has been spent from the General and Building Funds
\$37,512 Cash Available to Support Church Expenses, Missions & Ministries
\$778,816 Loan balance for Building

### UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (UWF)

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*Growing In Love: Ainslee Moss, founder of Tender Hearts Ministry, was the guest speaker at the UWF's annual harvest dinner. Tender Hearts works to change lives through their House of Hope women's shelter division, men's shelter division, baby care and senior care programs. UWF supports Tender Hearts financially and through special needs collections for the women's and baby programs*

#### Mailing Address

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#### Contact

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#### Staff

Senior Pastor - Rev. David Taylor  
Director of Music Ministries - David Hodges  
Contemporary Worship Leader - Mark Gannon  
Director of Children & Family Ministries - Nic Gold  
Director of Youth Ministry - Jessica Inman  
Office Manager - Denise Watson  
Financial Associate - Mayra Leon  
Audio Visual Specialist - Greg Millett