



The Stidham Story

765-474-2806
stidhamumc@yahoo.com
www.stidhamumc.org



MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MIKE

We are in the Advent season. It is the time of year when we prepare to welcome the birth of Jesus for Christmas. Christmas can bring joy to us for the rest of the year.

The Advent season is one of waiting and preparing. There is a tension between Advent and Christmas. Advent is emptying ourselves so that we can be filled with the joy of Christmas. There is a sense in which Advent is like grief work. If we do it well, then joy comes. If we do not do grief well, we become stuck emotionally and spiritually.

The words of Isaiah 9:2 describe the relationship between Advent and Christmas. "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the deep darkness a light has dawned".

During Advent we wait and hope patiently for the emergence of Christ's light. At Christmas the light of Jesus shines. That light leads us and guides us. It points out the way to a new way of living life. The light takes away our grief and sorrows. That light is the presence of Jesus.

Isaiah 9:6, 7 describes the Christmas light—

He will be called—

- Wonderful Counselor
- Mighty God
- Everlasting Father
- Prince of Peace

*For to us a child is born.
To us a son is given.
And the government will
be on his shoulders.*



The long wait of Advent is worth it because of what it brings to us. It brings to us the joy of Jesus. He is the light of the world. His light shines in the darkness. His light chases away all darkness.

It is my prayer and hope that all year long we experience the joy of Jesus. His presence in our lives is the best present we could ever have.

Blessings,

Pastor Mike

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Christmas Eve Service

Stidham will have Christmas Eve service on December 24th at 8:00 p.m. The service will feature candle lighting, carols, and communion. Symbolic candles will be used to tell the story of the birth of Jesus. There will be time for singing Christmas Carols by candle light.

The pastor needs volunteers to read Advent scripture readings for the remainder of the Advent season. Ushers, communion servers, and help passing the candle light following communion. If you are willing to help please see Pastor Mike.

Christmas Sunday

Stidham will have normal worship time at 10:30 am on Christmas Sunday. The service will be a monologue of Joseph.

Christmas Open House

Pastor Mike and Julie want to invite Stidham to an open house at the parsonage on Sunday December 18th. You are welcome come between the hours of 3:00 pm. and 6:00 pm. Light refreshments served. Don't miss out of the chance to fellowship with your church family.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED WITH THE REFRESHMENTS EVERY SUNDAY THIS YEAR.

YOUR HELP WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

AS THE END OF THE YEAR APPROACHES, I AM STEPPING DOWN FROM THIS POSITION.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TAKING OVER, PLEASE SEE ME.

BLESSINGS,

JUDY

DECEMBER 2016

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



6 Lee Yoder
7 Tim Driscol
13 Fern McDowell
16 Susie Webb
19 Pam DeVault
19 Tera Driscol

7 Ray & Mary Lou Coogle

10 Dave & Arletta Brown

THANK YOU NOTE FROM PASTOR MIKE & JULIE

Kudos to Staff Parish Relations Committee and the Trustees.
They have worked together to help make Pastor Michael and Julie feel welcome in this new chapter of ministry for both the Dillon's and Stidham UMC.

A lot of work has been done at the parsonage.
Most of Stidham is aware that the parsonage was redecorated inside.
All of the rooms were painted.
New carpeting installed.
New flooring was laid down in the kitchen, master bath, and laundry room.

The trustees just finished another project in the parsonage just recently.
The kitchen now has a new dishwasher, gas range, microwave, and refrigerator. All the matching appliances makes the kitchen look great.

Thank you to both committees from Pastor Mike and Julie. We appreciate this very much.

WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING ALL ARTICLES IN FOR THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER

BY WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21st.

THANK YOU

Bethlehem

It is time to prepare for Christmas Day. Advent is a time of preparation, for weeks of getting myself ready for the birth of my Savior, Jesus. The Hallmark channels, both of them, are already featuring stories of Christmas. The merchants are anticipating a profitable holiday season of shopping by filling their places of business with enticing gift suggestions. The mail carrier brings catalogs by the dozens – full of ideas to make everyone on my gift list feel special. The buzz created doesn't begin to tell what Christmas means to me.



A child's book titled, "All Roads Lead to Bethlehem" is a favorite of mine. The author travels around the world, stopping in on families in many countries as they prepare to celebrate Christmas. In the last few pages the final stop is in Switzerland at the town's local church. A grandfather and his young grandson are our hosts. They await the midnight-hour to climb the steps to the rope that would ring the bell in the steeple announcing Christmas Day. As the hour approaches the grandfather tells his grandson that they were going to Bethlehem. The grandson is alarmed and says; "It's a long way to Bethlehem!" The old man assures him that on this day all roads lead to Bethlehem, and I say Amen – Lest we forget.

There is no Christmas without the Christ child. Every year I enjoy reading the two scriptures description of his birth. Matthew, chapter 1:18 thru the chapter and all of chapter 2. Then I turn to Luke and in Chapter 1:26 thru chapter

2:1-40 is more information of the miraculous birth of the Son of God we call Jesus. The beauty of the birth of Jesus never grows old. It is the most wonderful gift God has given us. His love for the world glows from every window that has a lighted candle resting on the window sill, from every tree that is decorated with symbols of the gift God so lovingly has given us. The breakfast, brunch, or dinner, prepared in anticipation of the people we love sharing it with us. We gather together and offer our prayer of thanks to God for all he has given us. Let us pray for those that have no one to share the day, we include those that are sad and lonely. We ask ourselves – did I do anything to make this day a day of blessings for someone less fortunate than I? Did I ring the bell over the red kittle helping Salvation Army make Christmas really Christmas for someone that needs help? There are many ways we can show the spirit of giving. Stop by the church office and give to the helping hands fund. St. Ann's kitchen is in need of food and helpers to feed the hungry every Christmas. Some years the Community Christmas dinner at Jeff High school is a place to spread the love of fellowship on the most wonderful day of the year. Be a Christmas angel.

The year I remember with gratitude is a very slick and snowy Christmas Eve. I was waiting in Lafayette for my brother to pick me up at 11:30 pm. We were driving to our parent's home out in the country about halfway between Delphi and Monticello. The radio kept warning, "Don't travel, stay where you are." I was preparing myself how to spend the first Christmas I would be alone. A knock on the door told me my brother arrived and at 4:30 am we drove into the driveway at the farm. A Christmas without family is a difficult Christmas for me.

May you have a Christmas of many blessings.

Love and prayers,

Betty Greene

THINGS GOING ON IN THE CHURCH FOR DECEMBER

Communion Sunday December 4th

Helping Hand Sunday December 4th (Please mark the pew envelope "Helping Hand")

Bible Study Monday, December 5,12,19,26, at 6:30 pm

Bible Study Tuesday, December 6,13,20,27 at 10:00 am

R.O.C.K. Wednesday Night Kids Ministry Program December 7th, 5:30-7:00 pm (Meal furnished)

Choir Practice Wednesday Nights– December 7th,14th, at 7:00 pm

Lighthouse Prayer Group– Thursday Morning 1st,8th,15th,22nd,29th at 10:00 am

Sunday, December 18th – Open House at the parsonage from 3:00 pm-6:00 pm (See page 2)

Ad Council Tuesday Night, December 20, 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve Service Saturday Night December 24th, 8:00 pm

Worship Service Christmas Day, December 25th, 10:30 am Please take Poinsettia's home.

FOOD PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED FOR OUR GROCERY CART EACH MONTH

JANUARY– CASH DONATIONS

FEBRUARY–CANNED MEAT OR TUNA

MARCH–SPAGHETTI SAUCE OR NOODLES
(NO GLASS JARS)

APRIL–PAPER PRODUCTS

MAY– CASH DONATIONS

JUNE–CANNED FRUIT

JULY– MACARONI AND CHEESE

AUGUST–PAPER PRODUCTS

SEPTEMBER–CASH DONATIONS

OCTOBER– PEANUT BUTTER

NOVEMBER–SOUP & CRACKERS

DECEMBER–OATMEAL OR CEREAL

A CHRISTMAS WISH

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

**I wish you the joy of Christmas,
The spirits sweet response.
I wish you the peace of Christmas
To mark the old years close.
I wish you the hope of Christmas
To cheer you on your way,
And a heart of faith and gladness**

PRAYER LIST

Dear Heavenly Father,

We ask that you be with all that are on our prayer list, those who are going through health, issues, personal struggles, and other worries they may have. Let us show our faith and our love to one another each and every day. Amen

Hubert Doughty, Marjorie McGlothlin, Bud Dillon, Deloris Findlay, Eric Columer, Sue & Mike Biery, Jean Biera, Don & Jan Plantenga, Jane Vandeventer, Tom Sosbe. Pat Baugh, Mary Bulter, Bill Sullivan, Don Kelly, John Bryant Family, Rich Keller, Millie Vonstein, Al Cummins, Dick Watts, Lucy Keller, Patricia Tooley, Shannon Withers, Sandy Kukman, George & Doris Carlton, Karen Fridlin, Frank Airhood, our military and world leaders, and for all those who are prayed for silently.



THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

God is always with us, whatever our circumstances.

I have an equal share in God's amazing love.

God gives us gifts so that we can share them with others.

God is the source of things that nourish me today.

A LOVE GIFT FOR OUR CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

If you would like to participate in a love gift for the church, please bring a new or gently used children's book. It should be appropriate for a child from infant to children age 12.

You may place it under the poinsettia tree for the next two Sundays.

We will present them on December 25th.



***LET US GIVE THANKS FOR THE MANY BLESSINGS THAT
GOD BESTOWS UPON US EACH AND EVERY DAY!
AMEN***