

THE MESSENGER

Belated Birthday

Should we pity poor ole Jesus? He missed out on his birthday party! There is no indication Jesus' family celebrated his birthday and the early Church didn't acknowledge it until many years had passed. But, boy O boy, do we celebrate it now! Or do we? Christmas, as we more commonly call the day of Jesus's birth, was not a major Christian event for many years. The Christian Holy days (holidays) of Easter and Pentecost were more important. Christmas has grown in popularity and observance primarily in the last few hundred years. Much of this can be attributed to the public relations campaign for Santa Claus in the 19th century along with the increase of Christmas customs; Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Christmas decorations, Christmas songs, and gift giving. Gift giving in particular has become the preeminent activity of Christmas in our nation. And because most gifts are purchased instead of home made, there is a huge industry centered on selling gifts. Very little products at this time of year are not advertised in conjunction with Christmas. I wonder if today's commercialization of Christmas is driven by a hidden collective human guilt. For Christians we don't want to ignore the birthday of the most important person in our history. So maybe we over compensate and buy, buy, buy and give, give, give. Increasingly our western society is less Christian and thus less focused on the religious meaning of Christmas. But western culture is certainly focused on stressing the buying and giving of gifts. Maybe we don't want to be left behind and miss out on what everyone else is doing. Funny, though, very few of us actually offer gifts to Jesus or even ones that Jesus would support or appreciate. And is what we do at Christmas time actually a celebration of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, the Redeemer of our sins and Savior of our souls? Hmmm, something to think about. I don't know if Jesus is that concerned with whether we miss his birthday or even celebrate it. But I do think Jesus is interested in whether or not we choose to acknowledge him as our Lord and Savior and if we will follow him as his disciples. If Christmas becomes an event or occasion in which we give glory and praise to God as our primary gifts and in which we worship the Christ as the one true God and in which we spread the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, then let the festivities roll! Happy Birthday Jesus and Merry Christmas to all!

Wesley

Annual Charge Conference

This years Annual Charge Conference will be Sunday Dec. 13 5:00-6:00pm at Inyokern UMC. This will be a joint mission area Charge Conference of Ridgecrest-Inyokern-Trona UMC's. Our DS, the Rev. James Powell will preside. We will celebrate the ministries of our past year and conduct required church business. No dinner, but you are welcome to bring light refreshments to share.

Indian Wells Valley Mission Area

On Sunday Dec. 6, 12:30-1:30pm our District Supervisor, Rev. Jim Powell, will be visiting our church to have a gathering of persons from our 3 churches in our area (Ridgecrest-Trona-Inyokern). This gathering is open to all and will be held in the RUMC Social Hall. Please join us as we discuss how we can be united in mission and outreach in our area. Earlier in the day, Rev. Powell will be our preacher at the 8:00 am service before going to Trona to preach.

DECEMBER

Birthdays

- 1 Rick Ferris
- 4 Janice Anderson
- 5 Chuck Bunch
- 7 Hayley Cleveland
Monte Frisbee
- 9 Peter Brown
Jamie Clair
- 12 Dave Flanagan
- 13 Jim Weeks, Sr.
Holly Estrada
- 14 Andrew Christison
- 15 Achilles Ochoa
- 16 Lisa Austin
Jonah Gilbert
- 21 Lynn Wade
- 22 Anna Benson
Leroy Corlett
Sabrina Estrada
- 23 Darrin Boston

Anniversaries

- 19 Todd & Jennifer Holland
- 21 Wayne & Ingrid Zellmer
- 22 Craig & Carol Porter
- 23 Lowell & Carolyn McDaniel
- 27 Russell & Phyllis Wise
Rex & Terry Ratcliff
- 28 Don & Dale Lane
Ed & Amy Pillers
John & Beth Seybold
Bill & Donna Stratton



- 24 Carol Corlett
- 25 Jesus
Dick Wright
- 28 Bill Stratton
- 29 Carrie Cope
Eric Frisbee
- 31 Carolyn Magorian
Erik Wadelin

Office Hours:	Monday thru Friday 8:00 am – 2:00 pm Closed for Lunch 12:30-1pm
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Web:	http://www.umcrc.org
Facebook Page:	http://www.facebook.com/ridgecrestumc
Pastor:	Rev. Wesley Elmore (808) 482-1913
Office Manager:	Tara Argain
Director of Music:	Doug Hallenbeck
Director of Youth Ministries:	Amy Ochoa (760) 793-7850
Newsletter Editor:	Sarah Guess
Prayer Chain:	Church Office (760) 375-7434

--Mission Emphases--



Dr. Belinda Forbes through the General Board of Global Missions of the United Methodist Church

--Also--

Christmas Offerings



Ridgecrest Women's Center and Emmanuel Center for Women and Children, Liz and Eric Soard
Adv. # 3021924

United Methodist Student Day



United Methodist Student Day
Moved to December 6th

Living Bread Ministry



Food Emphasis for December

The Missions Committee has elected to designate a specific food each month to be provided to the Salvation Army.

The food item for December is:

Canned Chili

Our Purpose and Mission

We are a richly blessed, loving and spiritual family of Christ who Shares God's love through our personal and congregational ministries. Our mission is to share Christ's love with all, through our tradition of scripture, sermons, music, and fellowship. We believe strongly in sharing our blessing with those in need.

Our church family welcomes you to join us in our bible based worship, prayer, and discipleship.

In Service In Our Church

Lock up for December: John Veazey

December 6

December 20

Liturgists:
 8:00 am: Available
 10:30 am: Available

Ushers: James & Sarah Guess
 Jim & Mary Netzer

Flowers: Available

Counters: Kristin Hall, Olivia Zade,
 Gretchen Hawes

Fellowship Hosts: Nina Lane, Barb Johnson,
 Shirley Kidner

Liturgists:
 8:00 am: Available
 10:30 am: Available

Ushers: Stanley & Ellen Chassagne
 George & Elsa Hennings

Flowers: Available

Counters: Joanna Rindt, Sheri Boston,
 Calvin Johnson

Fellowship Hosts: Ellie Petersonr, Aida Stafford,
 Encar Card

December 24

6:00 pm: Christmas Eve Family Service
 9:00 pm: Christmas Eve Lessons, Anthems
 and Carols Service

December 13

December 27

Liturgists:
 8:00 am: Available
 10:30 am: Melanie Branson

Ushers: Nina Lane & Family
 John & Paige Netzer

Flowers: Available

Counters: Hazel Hensley, Nina Lane,
 Barbara Johnson

Fellowship Hosts: Jennifer Small, Patty
 Wharton, Katie Eldridge

Liturgists:
 8:00 am: Available
 10:30 am: Available

Ushers: Monte & Tina Frisbee
 Ken Wetzel & Patty Wharton

Flowers: Available

Counters: Wes Hensley, James Guess,
 Nancy Hodge

Fellowship Hosts: Julie Gervais, Kristen Hall

Liturgists

If you are interested in being a liturgists, please feel free to sign up on the bulletin board by the church office. Do not feel obligated to do both services, just the service of your choice. If you have any questions please feel free to call the office at 375-7434

Altar Flowers

The flower chart is located on the bulletin board outside the main office. If you would like to place flowers on the altar for a special occasion please sign up.

Lost but Found

If you think you have lost something at the church, you may stop by the church office to see if it has been found.

Church Mission Opportunities



It is that time of year again! The church will sponsor 60 families in the community, who could use a little extra help this holiday season, and provide them with the ingredients needed for both Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. One basket of food, for a family of four, costs about \$40 to prepare. Christmas baskets will be prepared and delivered on Sunday, December 20th. Youth are asked to be in the social hall at 9am that morning to help. If you wish to help deliver a basket or two after worship on the 20th, please contact Amy in the church office, maps are provided. The holiday food basket ministry is 100% supported by special giving from the congregation. Please make your donations out to the church, and denote "food baskets" on the giving envelope, or check memo line.



The angel tree ministry is where people from the church purchase new clothing, with the store tags still attached, for the children of the 60 families that the church sponsor through the holiday food basket ministry. Angel tree tags provide the gender, age, clothing size, and any specific clothing need. Tags will be available on Sunday, November 29th. However, if you would prefer to shop during the Black Friday sales, please contact Amy in the office for early-bird picks. Gifts should range between \$10 to \$40. Congregants are asked to return the angel tree tags attached to the wrapped Christmas clothing gifts, and place under the Christmas tree in the sanctuary, on or before the Christmas food basket delivery day, of Sunday, December 20th, 2015.

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ACCION MEDICA CRISTIANA

"...I will tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these my brothers and sisters of mine, You did for me."—Mathew 25:40

Dr. Belinda Forbes is the missionary that our church is supporting right now. She is a dentist. She is a Board of Global Ministries Missionary of the United Methodist Church assigned to work with Accion Medica Cristiana (AMC) in Nicaragua, Central America. AMC works to empower people for God's purpose in community health (HIV AIDS, clean water and sanitation, essential medicines, traditional health, dental health, health models), food security, knowledge management, disaster risk reduction and responses. The AMC recently celebrated 30 years of ministry.

Dr. Forbes serves as Ecumenical Liaison for Community Health and accompanies AMC with dental health services, communications, and partnership development. At a recent visit from a team doing a mission trip from the USA, Dr. Forbes and the team visited several remote villages offering dental health care. They did cleanings, sealants, and also 581 extractions!

Our church is in a covenant relationship with Dr. Forbes. This means that we have pledged to support her ministry with \$2,500 annually. In December, our mission emphasis is this ministry. Please give generously to support Dr. Forbes and her dental health ministry in Nicaragua.



**Togo,
West Africa**

Harris Potluck

Sunday Jan. 17, 2016 from 5-7 pm there is a potluck dinner with a presentation by the Harris family about their Africa Mission.

Church Events



This year's Adult Christmas Party with White Elephant Gift Exchange will be held on Saturday, 12 December in the Social Hall. This is a potluck dinner, and the Family Ministry will provide a roasted turkey and a ham. Childcare will be available, please let us know if you will be needing it when you RSVP for the dinner.

The White Elephant gift exchange is the highlight of the night, but certainly not a requirement to attend the dinner! A true White Elephant gift is anything you have at home that is no longer needed or wanted, but people may opt to buy something inexpensive. The point isn't really about the gifts- the fun is in watching the exchange happen, even for those that do not participate.

Volunteers are needed to cook the ham and help decorate the tables. You may bring your own dishes and tableware from home (as fancy or simple as you like) or use the dishes provided by the church. Please let Patricia or Sheri know as soon as possible if you are able to help.

RSVP for the dinner to Patricia (760-495-2152) or Sheri by December 6th. We'll see you there!



Invite your neighbors to attend Messy Church on the FIRST FRIDAY of every month from 6:00pm to 7:00pm in the social hall! December's Messy Church theme will be Christmas from A to Z will be held Friday, December 4th, 2015, after the Upper Room Suppers free community meal. There will be an interactive story, and after the Bible story, stay for some fun stations. Messy Church is an outreach ministry, and welcomes all ages!



Camp Christmas

Children currently in Pre-K (age four) through the 5th grade are invited to attend CAMP CHRISTMAS, a special kids-only workshop on Christmas meanings and symbols on Sunday, December 6th, from 5:00pm to 6:30pm, starting and ending in the social hall, with dinner provided. Community invited. Permission slips required, and are due the Friday before the event. Adult volunteers are needed to help with the dinner and program. For more information, please contact Amy in the office.



UMW Christmas Luncheon

Jesse's Tree is the title of the program for the United Methodist Women's Christmas Luncheon on Wednesday, December 2. The Luncheon will start at 11:00 with fellowship, then a salad potluck at 11:30 and program to follow. If you are a working person, please DO NOT FEEL OBLIGATED TO BRING ANYTHING!!! We want you to enjoy a nice lunch. If you are able and willing, please bring a salad to share. The board members will bring desserts and take care of refreshments.

Also at the Christmas Luncheon we will vote on our new board officers and our Treasurer, Terry Ratcliff, will present the final expenses for 2015. . If you would like to be involved in the leadership of UMW, please contact Diane Wadelin. Hope to see you there.

Church Life

On November 15 RUMC welcomed two families as members, the Hill family and the Small family.

Andy and Susan Hill are transferring as new members from First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Arlington, Texas. Andy and Susan moved to Ridgecrest from Arlington, Texas and have been here just over a year. Their children Lindsey and Ryan are attending college, and Andy works at the base as an Engineer.

Tony and Jennifer Small are transferring as from First UMC, Morehead City, NC. Tony and Jennifer along with their daughters Mackenzie and Megan moved to Ridgecrest in 2008 to begin working at China Lake. Tony has been a life-long member of the United Methodist Church and Jennifer has been a member for over 21 years.

2016 Stewardship Potluck Luncheon



Thank you to trustees John Veazey and Ray Miller for cleaning out the gutters and drains.



Upcoming Events and Church Giving



Staff Notes

The Church office will be closed for the holidays on:

Friday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Friday, Jan. 1 New Year's Day

The Church office will have shortened hours of 8 am -12 pm on:

Thursday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve

Thursday, Dec. 31 New Year's Eve

Tara Argain, Office Manager will be on vacation Dec. 21-25 and Diane Wadelin will be in the office for her on Dec. 21-24.

Pastor Wesley will be on vacation Dec. 29- Jan. 9



Upcoming January 2016 Worship

Sunday, Jan. 3:

Epiphany Sunday - Guest Preacher
No Holy Communion

Sunday, Jan. 10:

Holy Communion Sunday



In 2016, the church is going to put together a new church directory. Starting in Jan. 2016, we will start taking photos to be used with our directory. We are using a new software program that will allow us to print the directory and make it available online (password protected). More information will be shared in January.



UMW Increases Giving

At the last board meeting, we voted to fund the following programs with your generous support. Each of these missions will receive \$200 from you!

David and Margaret Home; Methodist Hospital Foundation; Methodist Hospital Rehab Unit; Toberman Center; Imagine No Malaria; Upper Room Suppers; Women's Center; Child Abuse Hotline.

Also, we are increasing our pledge for undesignated giving to the missions of the church by \$500 making the total sent in a grand \$3000. Yay for supporting the missions of the church!

Mission Giving Report



November Mission Giving (As of Nov. 25, 2015)

Thank you for your donations to the following missions in November:

Thanksgiving Food Baskets:	\$3,351.00
Cystic Fibrosis-Great Strides:	\$2,734.00
Habitat For Humanity:	\$200.00
SSP:	\$317.00
Upper Room Supper Ministry:	\$192.41
Youth:	\$218.00

All tithes, gifts and donations need to be received in the church office no later than December 28 in order to be processed finalized before the close of the year. Anything received after will go towards 2016 giving

CHRISTMAS SEASON CALENDAR

Saturday, December 5

The Worship Committee invites you to come and get in the spirit by helping to decorate the Sanctuary and the Christmas tree. Decorating will begin at 9:30 am and any help will be appreciated.

Sunday, December 6

Camp Christmas will be held in the Social Hall for children pre-K (age 4) through 5th grade from 5:00 pm-6:30 pm.

Saturday, December 12

Family Ministries will be holding it's Annual Adult Christmas Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange. Festivities start at 5:30 pm in the Social Hall.

Sunday, December 13

During the 10:30 am service the children will be singing a Christmas Song.

Sunday, December 20

8:00 am Worship with Choral Cantata "Night of the Father's Love" bu Pepper Chopin

10:30 am Worship with Choral Cantata "Night of the Father's Love" bu Pepper Chopin

Thursday, December 24 Christmas Eve

6:00 pm Family Service

9:00 pm A service of Lessons, Anthems, and Carols

Both services will conclude with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight.

Friday, December 25 Christmas

6:10 pm A brief service following Upper Room Supper in the Social Hall will be given. This service is geared towards our guests who come to the Upper Room Suppers, but all are invited to attend.



Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!