



Friday, Dec. 11, 2020

Greetings Paragould FUMC,

**THIS SUNDAY** is the Third Sunday of Advent! Anticipation builds as we move closer to Christmas! This week we turn our attention to Luke chapter 2 which begins the Christmas story in earnest. You know these verses well! **“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.”** I wonder if you’ve ever had a job that required you to work overnight like the shepherds? I have not, though I am thinking of those who do. I remember staying up all night in hospital rooms with the birth of our children. I was so encouraged by the care of nurses and staff throughout the night. For most, darkness means sleep, but not for all. As we prepare for this Sunday I am thinking about what it means to work through the night, in the dark and why God chose to reveal himself in this manner to these people. Join me Sunday!

**ADVENT DEVOTIONAL | WEDNESDAY STUDY & PRAYER** Continue with your “In Light & Darkness” devotional. Join pastors and other FUMC members for online study and prayer each Wednesday (9am and/or 6pm) during Advent via ZOOM. You’ll receive the electronic invitations by email each week. Dec. 16; Wk 3: Luke 2:2-14 | Dec. 23; Wk 4: Luke 2:15-20 | Dec. 30; Wk 5: John 1:1-18

**FILL THE BOX, SHARE THE LIGHT** Remember to pick up your box to fill with Christmas goodies for neighbors in need! Boxes can be picked up and returned to the Welcome Center by Dec. 18. Only a few boxes left!

**LIVING NATIVITY** Mark you calendars and pray for good weather on Sunday, Dec. 20 6-7PM for a drive-by celebration of the Christmas Nativity. Kaylee will be working with students (and their animals?!) to offer a safe reenactment of the Christmas story as you drive by at a safe distance!

**COVID-19 & FUMC** This week we’ve returned to the following schedule:

1. FUMC campus open for business during the week including social distance & facemasks
2. Witt House continues to operate under strict safety guidelines
3. Sunday 9am & 11am services will be streaming only
4. Sunday 10am abbreviated in-person service. Sanctuary. No singing. More contemplative. Total attendance < 50. Please pre-register. (<https://www.fumcparagould.org/register.html>)
5. Wednesday 4-6pm FUMC Sanctuary is open for prayer. Lights low. Candles will be lit. A time for reflection in our sacred place of worship.

Our local COVID-19 data is very concerning. Area school districts have some of the highest case numbers in the state. Businesses are closing to sanitize and relieve staff. Multiple church families have lost loved ones due to COVID-19. Some of you are ill and many are in quarantine. My heart is heavy. I am holding you in prayer. For the sake of our community, please do your part to be as safe as possible. Reach out if you need anything at all.

Grace & Peace,  
Rev. Dane

**P.S.** - If you haven’t already, please come by and check out the new Sanctuary front doors on Main Street! They are beautiful! Special thanks to those who supported this important effort. Originally we’d hoped to

have some sort of in-person blessing or celebration. But for now I'd rather you come individually when you are comfortable so as to avoid a large gathering.

**WEEKLY RESOURCES:**

1. 9am Order of Worship
2. 11am Order of Worship
3. [Craft Ornament 3rd Week of Advent "Joy"](#)