



## December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 7pm AA Meeting	2 3pm Feed the Hungry 6:15pm Operation Wig	3 10am UWF Board Meeting 11am Preschool Chapel 5:30pm Choir	4 8:30am Preschool Singing 10am Christ Quilters	5 8pm Girl Scouts	6 11am UWF Christmas Luncheon	
7 Sam Heavenly High 10:15am Worship in Person & Online at www.ChristUMC.org 10:30am Adventure Kids Fellowship after Worship 4pm Parsonage Open house	8 7pm AA Meeting	9 10am Circle One 10am Preschool Connect	10 11am Hope Circle Pot Luck 11am Preschool Chapel 5:30pm Choir—Sanctuary	11 8:30am Preschool Singing 10am Christ Quilters	12 8pm Girl Scouts	13 Jan Family Christmas Party
14 —Continues— Sam Heavenly High 10:15am Worship in Person & Online at www.ChristUMC.org 10:30am Adventure Kids Fellowship after Worship/Cookie Exchange	15 5:30pm Possibilities Plus 7pm AA Meeting	16 9am Preschool Picnic	17 10am Preschool Chapel 3:30pm Worship Design 5:30pm Choir 8pm C-Has Movie Night	18 8:30am Preschool Singing 10am Christ Quilters 9pm P/Christmas Program	19	20
21 Sam Heavenly High 10:15am Worship in Person & Online at www.ChristUMC.org 10:30am Adventure Kids Fellowship after Worship 8pm Live Monthly	22 7pm Blue Christmas 7pm AA Meeting	23 Office Closed	24 10:30am Christmas Eve Children's Service 5pm Traditional Christmas Service	25 Office Closed CHRIST THE Savior IS BORN	26	27
28 Sam Heavenly High 10:15am Worship in Person & Online at www.ChristUMC.org 10:30am Adventure Kids Fellowship after Worship	29 1pm Congregational Date 7pm AA Meeting	30	31 Office Closed			

WELCOME  
2025

**CHRIST United Methodist Church**  
400 Penman Rd, Neptune Beach, FL 32266  
(904) 249-5370 • christumcnb.org

# The Beacon

The Latest at **CHRIST UMC** | DECEMBER 2025



## Awakened to Grace

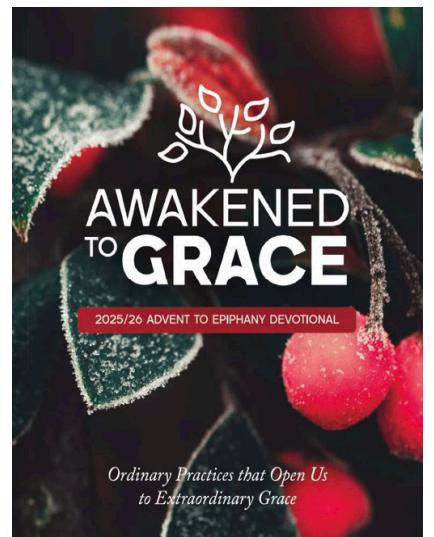
From the Pastor's Desk



I know that most of us are waiting for January to consider a new year and new beginnings. But did you know our liturgical calendar actually begins with Advent?

Our Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church has launched a new daily devotional study to begin November 30th. This series is called Awakened To Grace. Its intended purpose is to help the reader better understand our faith from a uniquely Wesleyan/Methodist perspective, which is always rooted in the loving grace of God.

You can use this QR code to access the devotional and other materials. I hope you'll consider joining thousands of others in our faith in becoming awakened to grace!



**PAGES 6 & 7**  
**Youth Christmas Party**  
with Night to Shine

in this issue

**PAGES 2 & 3**  
**Family Events**  
& Cantata

**PAGES 4 & 5**  
**Christmas Week**  
and Open House at the Parsonage

Blessings,  
Rev. Eric Williams

## MOVIES WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY

### Family Christmas Movie Night

Join us for a cozy Movie Night on the front lawn of the church on Wednesday, December 17. The movie starts at 6 pm, and we will have free popcorn and hot chocolate ready for you. Bring a blanket or a chair and settle in for a fun evening with your church family. If the weather does not cooperate, we will move the movie inside Wilson Hall.

For more information, contact Hanna Thomas at (904) 612-7286.

## FUN FOR EVERYONE

### Family Christmas Party

Family Ministries is hosting the 2nd Annual Family Christmas Party on Saturday, December 13, from 1 until 3. This year our theme is Elf, and everyone is invited to step into the story of Buddy the Elf as we celebrate together. Families can enjoy festive food, hands on crafts, and plenty of fun activities that bring the joy and silliness of Elf to life. This party is for the whole family, so bring kids, grandkids, and friends for an afternoon of laughter, memory making, and Christmas cheer.

Please RSVP by December 7, 2025, so we can make sure there is plenty of Elf-themed fun for everyone on the list. For more information or to RSVP, contact Hanna Thomas at (904) 612-7286 or Brittani Laski at (402) 305-2748.



## CUMC FAMILY

### December Celebrations!

#### Anniversaries

**3** Del and Johnna Ware  
**30** Dan and Karen Long

#### Birthdays

**2** John Jenkins  
**5** Shirley Van Duzer Strachan  
**6** Bryce Williams  
**7** Judy Williamson  
**8** Maryanne Zimmerman  
**17** Kenneth Graham  
**18** Rick Terry

**21** Kristen Stewart  
**23** Peggy Burton  
**26** Kathy Sheets  
**27** Margaret (Teddy) Broeker  
**28** Cathy Klein  
Wanda Lee  
**30** Judy Gerber  
Sally Ogburn

## YOUTH NEWS

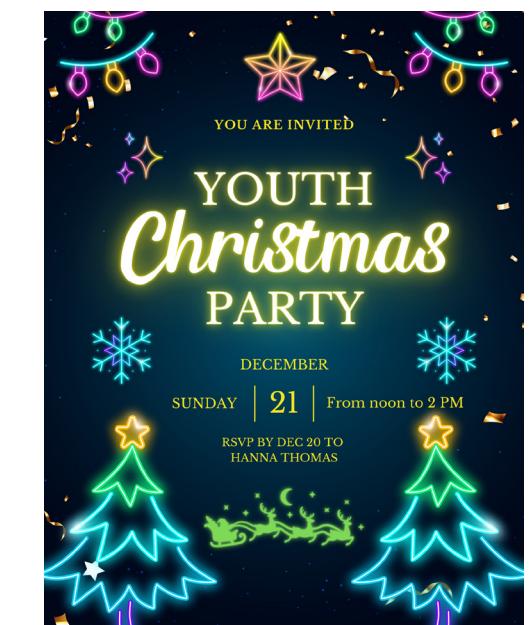
### Community Youth Group

The Community Youth Group will meet on December 7, from noon until 1:30 PM for our regular gathering.

Then get ready for the annual Youth Christmas Party on December 21 from noon until 2 PM. This celebration is open to all youth and their friends, so if you know someone in 5th grade or older, contact Hanna Thomas to get the information needed to invite them.

The party will include food, music, games, and a fun white elephant gift exchange with a five dollar limit. It is a great chance to connect, celebrate, and enjoy the Christmas season together.

Please RSVP by December 20.



## CALLING ALL WOMEN

### United Women in Faith – December 2025

United Women in Faith wishes all a blessed holiday season! Please see our holiday schedule below; we would love to see you if you can make it!

Circles will meet on the following days, and all ladies are welcome:

Circle One - will meet on Tuesday, December 9, in Wilson Hall at 10 AM. Bring a dish to share for our holiday gathering.

Hope Circle – will meet on Wednesday, December 10 at 11 AM at the home of Steffanie Stuart for a potluck lunch.

Freedom Circle - will not meet this month. They wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## SHOPPING FOR A CAUSE

# Sunday Morning Fellowship

The end of the worship service doesn't mean the end of our Sunday morning together! Each week, right after the service, we gather in Wilson Hall to relax, reconnect, and enjoy a few simple pleasures—like a warm drink, a friendly conversation, and a bowl of oatmeal or sweet treat.

Whether you're meeting someone new or catching up with old friends, our post-service fellowship is the perfect way to ease into the week with your church family.

Want to help make this time even more welcoming?

There are a few easy and meaningful ways you can pitch in:

- Drop a small donation in the jar on the fellowship table to support weekly refreshments.
- Pick up an item or two from our shopping list next time you're at the grocery store.
- Bake or buy snacks (freezer-friendly is best!) that we can serve in the coming weeks.

Fellowship Shopping List:  
(Watch for sales and BOGOs!)

- Ground coffee (regular or decaf, unflavored)
- Refrigerated flavored coffee

creamers

- Chocolate chips (regular or mini)
- Freezer-friendly snacks like muffins, cookies, bagels, etc.

Label donations with "Fellowship" and drop them off in the church office or kitchen. Want to sponsor a Sunday with fresh fruit or baked goods? You can sign up on the bulletin board in Wilson Hall.

Questions? Contact Laura Williams by text or call at (904) 614-1485.



## ARE YOU 16 OR OLDER?

# Can You Serve at Night to Shine?

We are thrilled to share that our church has once again been selected as a host site for Night to Shine, a prom experience created especially for the special needs community and sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation. Mark your calendar for Friday, February 13, 2026 (time to be determined). This unforgettable evening will take

months of preparation, and we will need many helping hands to make it possible. From background checks and training to planning, decorating, and event set up, volunteers are essential to bringing this night to life. We are looking for volunteers 16 and older, and there will be training for all areas starting in the new year. There are plenty of ways to get

involved, and no matter your gifts, there is a place for you to serve.

For more information or to sign up as a volunteer, please contact Cathy Klein at 904 477 9510 or Hanna Thomas at 904 612 7286.

## IT'S FINALLY HERE

# See You at the Christmas Luncheon!

Join us for our Christmas Luncheon on Saturday, December 6, at 11:30 AM. We are looking forward to a beautiful time of food, fellowship, and Christmas joy as we gather to celebrate the season together. If you have already purchased your ticket, we cannot wait to welcome you. Childcare is available upon request, and it is sure to be a memorable afternoon for all who attend.

## CALLING ALL BAKERS

# Cookie Exchange - December 14

Start planning your favorite recipe for our annual Cookie Exchange & sale after service on December 14! You may purchase festive cookies or exchange the cookies you bake and bring for a new assortment from others. Every cookie customer gets one vote to choose the charity that will receive the sale proceeds. You can also help us deliver Christmas cookies to our homebound neighbors.

### We need

- Cookie Bakers with lots of homemade cookies
- Cookie Elves to pass out cookies and help package trays for shut-in delivery
- Cookie Deliverers to share a little sweetness and cheer

### How it works

- Please bring cookies to Wilson Hall on December 14 before church
- Cookies for the sale must be homemade
- Store bought cookies are welcome for Sunday refreshments

### Prices and baker bonus

- 1 dozen for \$5
- 2 dozen for \$7
- Donate 3 dozen or more and receive 1 free dozen in exchange

Questions? Contact Cindy Kastner at (904) 221-4103 or ckast952@gmail.com.



## EXPERIENCE THE STORY

### Live Nativity

Experience the wonder of Christmas at our Live Drive Through Nativity on Sunday, December 21, from 6 until 7:30 PM. This time honored tradition brings the story of Jesus' birth to life with scenes recreated by members of our church family. From the shepherds keeping watch to the holy family in the manger, you can journey through the Christmas story from the comfort of your car.

Whether it is a yearly tradition for your family or your first time attending, we hope you will join us for this beautiful and meaningful way to celebrate the season. Consider inviting friends, neighbors, or coworkers to share this special experience with you and let the joy of Christmas extend throughout our community.

## PEACE IN THE CHAOS...

### Blue Christmas

Join us for our Blue Christmas Service on Monday, December 22, at 7 PM. This quiet, reflective gathering is created for anyone who finds the Christmas season difficult whether due to grief, stress, loneliness, uncertainty, or simply feeling overwhelmed.

During this service, we will share scripture, prayer, music, and moments of silence meant to bring comfort and remind us that God is close to the brokenhearted. It is a peaceful space where you can simply come as you are, without expectations, and find rest for your spirit.

All are welcome to attend and experience God's gentle presence and the hope that light brings, even in the midst of the longest nights.

## THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

### Christmas Eve Services

Join us as we celebrate the joy of Christmas with two special services this year on December 24.

Our Family Christmas Service will be held at 10:15 AM. This creative, kid-friendly service is inspired by Whoville and the Grinch, reminding us how God works in our hearts and transforms us with love. It is a joyful, interactive way for families of all ages to celebrate Christmas together, complete with glow sticks and a festive hot cocoa bar to make the morning even more fun and memorable.

Then at 5 PM, we invite you to our traditional Candlelight Service. With scripture, carols, and the glow of candlelight, this service offers a beautiful and reverent time to remember the birth of Christ and the light he brings into the world.

## SECURITY CORNER

### Did You See Something?

There is an old saying that goes "If you see something, say something". Just what does this mean, and who do you say it to?

Security at Christ United Methodist Church doesn't rest solely on the shoulders of the six-member Security Task Team. The security of our church is on all of our shoulders.

Yes, if you see something, anything out of the norm, it is your responsibility to tell someone what you saw. Who do

you tell?

You can tell the Pastor, an Usher, anyone in the sound booth, or any member of the Security Task Team. Members are Pastor Eric, Bob Strachan, Jim Ransom, Mike Chambers, Don Sussex, Teresa Romano, and Wanda Lee. You could also tell Mary Muratore, our church Office Manager, or the administrative volunteer on weekdays.

The point is, it is better to have 125 people on the lookout than to rely on 7 people to keep us

all as safe as possible. Keeping CUMC a "least likely target" is ALL our jobs.

So, if you see something, say something.

Stay Alert Stay Alive  
Bob Strachan Chair, CUMC  
Security Task Team

## YOU'RE INVITED!

### Open House at the Parsonage

Join us for a festive Open House at the Parsonage! Drop in anytime or stay and visit with church friends old and new as we celebrate the joy of the Christmas season together. Pastor Eric and his family will be there to welcome you with Christmas cheer, delicious hors d'oeuvres, sweet treats, and plenty of laughter. It is a wonderful chance to connect, relax, and enjoy the warmth of our church community during this special time of year.

Everyone is welcome. Come by on December 7 between 4 and 7 PM, at 2897 Discovery Way. We would truly love to see you!

## FREE CONCERTS

### Sounds of the Season

Come and enjoy the sounds of the season with two wonderful free Christmas concerts this month. On Sunday, December 7 at 3 o'clock, Harvest Community School will present "Christmas in Song" in the sanctuary under the direction of our very own Kim Keepers. This uplifting program is sure to fill your heart with the joy of Christmas.

Then on Tuesday, December 16 at 3 o'clock, Singers by the Sea will offer a festive "Holiday Concert" in Wilson Hall. Their beautiful voices and lively arrangements are a delightful way to celebrate the season.

Both concerts are free and open to everyone. We invite you to join us for one or both of these incredible musical events and experience the gift of Christmas through song.