



THE BEACON

"Making disciples for Jesus Christ to share God's love."

Newsletter of Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church • December 2025

This year as we enter the First Sunday of the Advent Season, we will be reading Matthew 24: 36-44, "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

Many of you may find it strange that our scripture lesson on the First Sunday of Advent starts off with such a dire prophecy about the end times. You may feel, as many do, that we should be reading about the joy of the coming birth of Jesus, rather than the doom and gloom of the end times. This belief is common in today's church because the ancient tradition of reading stories of the end of the world as preparation for Advent has long since been abandoned, even though it remains in our lectionary readings as a reminder of the deeper meaning of the Advent Season.

Instead of encouraging us to prepare for the

celebration of Christ's birth by decorating, throwing parties and spending lavishly in order to shower our friends and family with gifts, the ancient tradition of the church invites us into a period of self-examination and repentance. It is the opposite of what the world tells us to do - it is countercultural. It tells us to do the exact opposite of what we find going on in this world. It tells us to prepare for the birth of Jesus into the world and for his coming again, by living as people who are prepared to die. This notion definitely lacks the festive holiday spirit. However, it is a vital alternative to what the world offers in preparation for the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ into the world and his coming again.

So, how can we participate in the coming reign of Christ? That is what the true challenge of Advent is all about. God promises us a new order, the birth of a world in which justice and righteousness rule. Whether we are among those who will be reborn with that world depends upon our commitment and allegiance, in each moment of our lives,



to the one true God, rather than the false gods we so often honor. God shows us the way in the life and words of Jesus, and gives us companions - our sisters and brothers in Christ. But ultimately, each of us must actively prepare

if we are to be part of what is being born at Christmas. So, what do we have to do to prepare?

First of all, we have to prepare ourselves by examining our lives and repenting and turning away from those things that are not life-giving. When we accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we begin to look at the world differently. We start to prioritize our life around putting our faith in Jesus

EPISTLE & CHURCH INFO

EPISTLE CONTINUED....

as first and foremost in our lives. Love and compassion begin to replace our selfish earthly cravings for material wealth and luxury. We begin to see the brokenness of the world more clearly and strive to serve as Disciples of Christ in all aspects of our lives – not just once a week for an hour on Sunday but every day.

We have to live whatever time we have left on this earth in the ways that Jesus came into this world to teach us. This means that we need to model our lives after the life of Jesus. We should be guided by the Gospel accounts of how Jesus made a difference in the lives of everyone he came into contact with during his ministry. His compassion, his love, his desire to submit fully to the holy will of the heavenly Father, and his ultimate sacrifice for our salvation, should be a powerful lesson for all of us to follow.

We have to participate in the healing of the world. This means that we need to go out into the world and “live our faith” in the brokenness of the world. We must work to be agents of transformation – seeking to make disciples of everyone we encounter on our faith journey.

We must offer the prospect of the hope, peace, joy, and love that Jesus was born into this world to share. Each week of Advent we light a symbolic candle for one of the four virtues that Jesus brings to us. As we light these candles, we must recommit ourselves to bringing hope to those that have lost hope, bringing peace by being peacemakers in a

CHURCH INFORMATION

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Office Phone: 301-432-8741

Mt. Nebo Email: mt.nebo@myactv.net

Website: www.mtneboumc.com

Sunday Event Times:

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

Including Children’s Church

Pastor:

Pastor Bob Ruggieri

443-994-9505

Email: pastorbob2017@gmail.com

Staff:

Administrative Secretary – Brandi Puzonia

Minister of Music – Rose Gamblin

Finance – Patty Watson & Shana Wolfe

Sextons/Maintenance – Dennis & Sallie Dorsey
and Sara Halbritter

Mt. Nebo Christian Learning Center

Hours: Monday – Friday 6 a.m.—6 p.m.

301-432-6042

www.mtneboclc.org

Director – Kim Kelly

director@mtneboclc.org

Communications Team:

Toni Wetzel, Katie Smith, Pastor Bob,
Glenn deShazo, and Brandi Puzonia

IN THIS ISSUE

Pastor’s Epistle	Page 1-2
Table of Contents/Church Info	Page 2
Lay Readers/Birthdays/Anniv./Thanks-living	Page 3
Church News	Page 4-5
Youth & Christian Learning Center News	Page 6
Missions in Outreach/Pics Around Mt. Nebo	Page 7
Pics Around Mt. Nebo/All Saints Sunday	Page 8-9
Hanging of the Greens Pics	Page 10
December Calendar	Page 11

world torn by war and strife, bringing joy to the faces of those who have been traumatized and have lost the joy that God has intended for all of us. And lastly, by offering radical love in a world that is filled with so much hate.

When we center our lives on service to God, we are given the greatest gift of all - the promise of everlasting life. Isn’t it time for you to rethink how you will celebrate the Advent Season? Amen.

Pastor Bob

DECEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIRTHDAYS

Dec 1 Enzo Gerand	Dec 20 Brittany Harding
Dec 3 Gary Pryor	Jane Lohman
Dec 7 Jon Gollogly	Jade Ruggieri
Dec 10 Mark Parish	Dec 22 Faithie Riner
Dec 16 Amanda Mathis	Dec 23 Jaxon Pugh
Dec 17 Bob Ruggieri	Dec 25 Betty Jones
Dec 19 Wanda Lowman	Dec 31 Donna Furry



ANNIVERSARIES

Dec 10	Dan & Genna Gerand
Dec 13	Tony & Dianna Basile
Dec 16	Glenn & Jannette deShazo



DECEMBER LAY READERS:

Dec 7—Carter Family
Dec 14—Riner Family
Dec 21—Young Family
Dec 24 Christmas Eve— Shank Family
Dec 28— Darce Easton



OFFERING ENVELOPES/END OF YEAR STATEMENTS

Look for the 2026 offering envelopes in the Gathering Room. If you don't have a box and would like one, please see Toni Wetzel. End of the year statements will be available by mid-January.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Save your stamps!

The Mt. Nebo Post Office is open on the counter in the Gathering Room!

THANKS-GIVING FOR THANKS-LIVING

Many thanks to everyone who packed a Shoebox and to Patty Young for heading up the Shoebox ministry.

To Rose Gamblin and to all the choirs for giving time and talent to enhance our worship each Sunday.

To Oscar, Mike and all the volunteers who work to keep our sound system and recording of the service each week going.

Also to Lisa Riner for her wonderful sermon when Pastor Bob was on vacation.

And special thanks to each of the persons who take time to prepare and present a children's message each week.

CHURCH NEWS CONTINUED

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

December will be a busy month for the United Methodist Women! On December 1st, the UMW will host a COOKIE SWAP to kick off the Advent Season! All women/girls are invited to join us on **Monday, December 1st at 6:00pm** for this festive event! Bring 3 dozen homemade cookies (plus copies of the recipe) and you'll go home with 2 dozen of a variety of cookies that others have brought! We look forward to hosting this evening of fellowship and cookies! We will share the extra dozen cookies that evening along with having hot chocolate and coffee available.

Our December meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 17th, at 10:00am**. This will be a special meeting followed by a Christmas gift exchange and luncheon. Please bring a \$5-\$10 gift for the gift exchange and join us for our meeting and fellowship time.

Alyssa Berg

MUSIC NOTES



It was the day of the Children's Christmas Program. The children lined up on the platform decked out as angels, wisemen, shepherds, and sheep. Once in place, I signaled Mike to begin the soundtrack. The children were singing beautifully when suddenly one little boy in the front row be-

gan waving frantically. I tried to keep directing while looking to see if a hornet or bee was buzzing near the child, but seeing nothing, I thought he was just being silly. But he kept waving harder, looking straight at his mom in the congregation. All of a sudden, he yelled out, "*MOM! I have to go potty RIGHT NOW!*" "*Go now!*" I mouthed while incorporating an exit motion into my conducting.

The congregation burst into laughter; the soundtrack kept going. Half of the children began to giggle, but with a single look from me, they pulled it all together. The little boy made it back in time for the last chorus and sang with renewed gusto, "*Joy to the World . . . Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy!*" We ended the song to thunderous applause.

Still smiling, the pastor began his sermon with, "Well, that's one way to make sure you get everyone's attention before the sermon begins!"

Children have a way of reminding us that life doesn't always go as planned. In church, as in life, interruptions happen—and sometimes they're even funny. Jesus said, "*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these*" (Matthew 19:14).

That morning, the children's imperfect performance brought more joy and laughter than a flawless one could have ever brought. (In fact, I don't even remember the flawless ones.) It reminded the congregation that God values sincerity over perfection. Just like that little boy, we can come to God honestly, just as we are, knowing He delights in our presence.

Mt. Nebo's choir Christmas program is just a few weeks away (**December 21**). There is still time for you to join us for this gift of music to the Savior.

Rose Gamblin, Minister of Music



CHURCH NEWS Continued

UNITED METHODIST MEN

On **Saturday Dec. 13th**, we will have a small gift and a card for each shut-in member of Mt. Nebo UMC. Help is needed to deliver these items. They will be placed on the counter in the Gathering Room with cards (addresses will be on the cards) for volunteers to pick up and deliver to our shut-ins. Please make time in your busy schedule to help with this important ministry.

A small stone cross is being given to our shut-ins as a gentle reminder that God's love is always with them wherever they are. We will be distributing to our shut-ins crosses similar to those provided as part of our box breathing activity.

Don Dorsey and Bruce Smith



TRUSTEE NEWS

EXCITING IMPROVEMENTS AT MT. NEBO

Over the past few months, the Trustees have been hard at work addressing several improvements that directly support the worship experience and visibility of our church. Many of you have already noticed the **upgrades to our sanctuary sound system**, including new speakers and equipment. These improvements were made in response to feedback from our congregation, and we are pleased to say that clarity and consistency of sound have already greatly improved.

In addition, we are in the process of installing a **new full-matrix LED signboard**, replacing our current static sign. This will give our church a brighter, clearer, and more effective way to share events, ministries, and community messages with everyone who passes by. Permitting for the sign is currently underway, and we are excited for the increased visibility this will bring to Mt. Nebo.

NEW VISION FOR OUR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Another major initiative is the long-term reconstruction of the outdoor classroom area, formerly known as the playscape. Our goal is to create a **safer, more functional, and weather-ready**

TRUSTEE NEWS Continued

environment where our children can learn, explore, and grow. We are working with our design team to develop a full master plan—one that includes improved structures, protection from the elements, proper facilities, and a layout that reflects the excellence our church strives to provide.

We want our outdoor classroom to be the leading outdoor facility in the area. To create a space that is safe, modern, and centered around learning and creativity.

REIMAGINING THE THIRD FLOOR

During our November meeting, we discussed another exciting project: **the future of the third floor**. The area has served as storage for years, but with fresh vision—and architectural design work beginning soon—we hope to develop it into a truly functional ministry space. Potential uses include Sunday School rooms, a learning center, community activity areas, or flexible multi-use spaces. Please share with us your vision and we would love to try and incorporate any ideas that could benefit our facility. Feel free to reach out to Gary Harding with your ideas. Next, to prepare for this design phase, we will need to clear out the third floor including old electronics, unused furniture, and miscellaneous stored items. If you want any furniture or know anyone who may be able to use it, please contact the church secretary. **Trustee Workday – Sunday, November 30 (After Church)**

We invite **everyone** from the congregation to stay after the worship service on November 30th to help with this cleanup effort. A little help from many hands will make a big difference as we open the door for this exciting renovation.

LOOKING AHEAD

Between sound improvements, a new LED sign, outdoor classroom planning, and the third-floor redesign, there is a tremendous amount of positive momentum at Mt. Nebo. We are grateful for your prayers, encouragement, and support as we continue investing in spaces that strengthen worship, ministry, and the future of our church.

Trustee Chairman, Gary Harding

YOUTH & CLC NEWS

MT. NEBO YOUTH

The continued reduction of old appliances and furniture from the third floor is moving forward, as we donate unwanted materials to those in need. Special thanks to the Wrights and Trustees for their ongoing support in removing these items.

Mt. Nebo has sponsored a holiday ornament through the town of Boonsboro! Look for the ornament in Boonsboro, snap a selfie and send it to mt.nebo@myactv.net.



It's beginning to look like Christmas. The youth will be setting up the Christmas tree and decorating the Clopper house.

Please join us to set up the luminaries for the Christmas Eve service about an hour before the service begins. If you are interested in either of these wonderful activities, please reach out to Don Dorsey at 240-529-2202.

Don Dorsey

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER

As usual, we have December packed with events. And if you are anything like me, your own calendars are filled with holiday shopping, parties, and get togethers. The holidays are supposed to be fun – for everyone! As we rush around this holiday season, we need to be mindful of the effect of our hectic schedules upon our children.

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER Continued

Dinners on the run, crowded stores, and long lines are not young children's idea of a good time. These events are often-times stressful for children. You may see changes in your child's behavior such as teary good-byes, aggression, and acting out. So, as you're making your plans, be sure to maintain that quality time with your children too!

Santa's Workshop will be available at the Clopper House from **December 8th – December 12th** for those children that turned in the form and payment. All items will be wrapped and ready to go home by 12/19. We are excited to help our kids shop this year!

Christmas Spirit week will be from **December 15th – 23rd**! We are looking forward to a fun-filled week to get us in the Christmas mood!

Mark your calendars for our next **PNO – Parent's Night Out** on **Friday, December 12th from 6 pm to 9 pm**. The cost is \$30 cash per child. This will be for infants through school age students. This is a great opportunity to do some Christmas shopping or a date night! Sign-up sheets will be posted by the check-in computer by December 2nd and payment is due by December 11th.

Our **Christmas program, Christmas Light Show**, will be on **Tuesday, December 23rd at 6:15 pm** in the sanctuary. Those children in 2's, 2/3's, 3/4's, outdoor and school age classrooms will be participating in this event.

As Christmas approaches, we will be teaching our students about Holiday Traditions Around the World, and the celebration of God's great gift to us – the birth of Christ! I pray that each of you will discover the best gift of all this season!

Mt. Nebo CLC will be **closed** from **December 24th through January 2nd**. We will re-open on **Monday, January 5th**.

Our MNCLC family wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!

Hugs and High Fives, Ms. Kim, Director

MISSIONS IN OUTREACH

MISSION MOUSE

December is a time of expectation and giving. What are you expecting? Maybe it is something special that you've been wanting for a long time. Maybe you just want a nice surprise. Can you really think of something that would make your life perfect? I don't have the answer, but can you put yourself in the place of so many people around the world who have nothing to eat, no home or shelter, no peace. Then what would you want? Through all the problems we face, we are blessed. To make the month of December more meaningful, take time to be thankful for what you have and to share some of your blessings with Mt. Nebo as an extra offering, and with others who are not as fortunate. Be thankful that you can share your riches.



CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

The posters are up in the Gathering area. There are seven children from three local families that can use our help this Christmas. You may participate by signing up for some or all the needs of a child by adding your name on the item line of that which you would like to purchase. Please return gifts, wrapped or not, by **Sunday, December 7th**.

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH Continued...

Identify them with a post-it note, not scotch tape, that states family number and child with age. (family 3 girl 6). Presents may be taken to the third floor where you will find tables marked with the family number for your child.

If you would like to participate in this ministry but shopping is not possible, then you may make your check out to Mt. Nebo and mark "Christmas Outreach" in the memo area, or put a cash donation in the special envelope in the pew. We will use these funds to purchase items left blank on the posters.

Some gifts will need to be wrapped and labeled before being given to the families and we have set aside **Thursday, December 11th at 9:30 a.m.** for this. Paper, tape and labels are provided, but we ask you to bring your scissors please. There will be snacks and drinks for these special elves.

This wonderful ministry of Mt. Nebo has brought much joy to many local families, and they seem very grateful for this help. If you have any questions, you may contact Ann Wright at 301-992-7216.

May you and your family be abundantly blessed as you spread God's love and joy this Christmas.

Ann Wright



PICS AROUND MT. NEBO



PICS AROUND MT. NEBO CONTINUED



Clearing out the third floor



ALL SAINTS SUNDAY



HANGING OF THE GREENS



DECEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>BAAA Bball Mon & Th 630p-830p</div> <div>1st&3rd Th 730-930p</div>	<div>1</div> <div>6p Cookie Swap</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div> <div>1p Micah's Backpack</div> <div>6p Pickleball</div>	<div>4</div> <div>6p Girl Scouts</div> <div>5p Bells 6p Choir</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div> <div>9a Pickleball</div>
<div>7</div> <div>9a Worship</div> <div>Christmas Outreach Gifts Due</div> <div>1030a Bible Study</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div> <div>6p Pickleball</div>	<div>11</div> <div>9a Christmas Outreach Wrapping</div> <div>5p Bells 6p Choir</div>	<div>12</div> <div>Newsletter Articles Due (Early because of Holidays)</div>	<div>13</div> <div>9a Pickleball</div> <div>UMM Shut-in Deliveries</div>
<div>14</div> <div>9a Worship</div> <div>1030a Micah's Backpack</div> <div>1030a Bible Study</div>	<div>15</div>	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div> <div>10a UMW Meeting</div> <div>6p Pickleball</div>	<div>18</div> <div>6p Girl Scouts</div> <div>5p Bells 6p Choir</div>	<div>19</div>	<div>20</div> <div>8-9a SHARE Pickup</div> <div>9a Pickleball</div>
<div>21</div> <div>9a Worship Choir Christmas Program</div> <div>1030a Bible</div>	<div>22</div>	<div>23</div> <div>6:15p CLC Christmas Program</div> <div>Brandi Off</div>	<div>24</div> <div>7p Christmas Eve Service</div>	<div>25</div> <div>MERRY CHRISTMAS!</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div>
				Pastor Bob Vacation 12/25-1/2		
				Office Closed Thurs 12/24 – Fri 1/2		
<div>28</div> <div>9a Worship</div> <div>1030a Bible Study</div>	<div>29</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div> <div>New Year's Eve</div>			
				Pastor Bob Vacation 12/25-1/2		
				Office Closed 12/24—1/2		
				<div></div>		

Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church
134 S. Main Street
Boonsboro, MD 21713

Change Service Requested

