

December 2020

Pastor Debbie

Volume 35 Issue 12

Center United Methodist Church

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Saguache United Methodist Church

6th & Christie, Saguache
Worship Service: Zoom Only
(8:30 am & 10:30 am)

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At the writing of this newsletter article, the COVID infection rates have continued to climb to 3% of Saguache population and Rio Grande has already reached 3% which means we are officially in the orange phase of COVID protocols. It is the recommendation of both our bishop and our governor that we have virtual services instead of in person services. We have decided to follow these recommendations. While the church may be closed to activities and in-person worship, Hannah and I will still be working at the church in our respective offices so it will not be a complete shutdown. We will still be sending out the weekly letter and Cooking for your Neighbor will continue. These are certainly difficult times.

During this time, we rejoice in the testimony of our sister Isabel Geibel as she celebrates her one hundredth birthday December 3rd. Because of COVID there **can't be any party as such and she has resigned herself to that, but I think we can** honor her, not only for her military service but also her faithful commitment to Center. We can do this by flooding her with special birthday cards. You may wish to mail them, but we would love it if you would leave them at the church or join us in a parade. If weather is permitting, I am planning to leave the Center church at noon on December 3rd and invite any who would like to join me in their cars. We drive to her house in the mountains forming a parade, honking our horns, and delivering a personal birthday cake with birthday cards, then head our separate ways. If the weather is good enough to do this, I think this would be a wonderful way to let Ms. Isabel know we are thinking of her on her 100th birthday in spite of COVID. If you would like to join us, let Hannah know or text Pastor Debbie.

During these holiday seasons there are many on our prayer list, so let us remember to lift them in prayer daily. With all the loss in both Center and Saguache, this year we will have a Blue Christmas service on the longest night of the year, December 21st. As with our services, Blue Christmas service will be via zoom and Facebook Live and if we are able we will also have in person service that evening at 6:30 pm. Our special Christmas Eve service will be via Zoom at 5 pm in Saguache and via Zoom and in person at 7 pm in Center. All in person services are subject to COVID outbreak percentages and may be virtual only should the numbers not decline.

Our November 18th Zoom Charge Conference went very well and most people who were involved liked it much better than the cluster conferences. We celebrated how God has blessed us this year even in a pandemic.

Last year we started Adopt a Veteran for special gifts for our Homelake Veterans. This year we will have to do it a little differently. We are continuing our tradition of adopting a veteran from Homelake, and we invite you to participate with us! As with **anything this year, there is a COVID twist. We have one hundred 10" X 8.45" brown** gifts bags that we would like to be filled with items that are basic necessities but might be hard for them to get good quality of during these times. Items to include in the bag: *(All items must be non-fragrant and non-gender specific)*: shampoo, deodorant, lotion, chapstick or lip balm, tissues, toothbrush, toothpaste, bar of soap and a Christmas card.

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"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

- James 1:17 (NIV)

Twelve Days of Love

Like last year, I also challenge you to join me in the twelve days of love. (-P. Debbie)

December 25 – Call or visit someone you **haven't talked to in a long time to wish them a Merry Christmas.**

December 26 – Write a thank you note to your mail carrier or garbage collector or police officer or someone who serves others.

December 27 – Hold the door open for **someone or return someone's shopping cart.**

December 28 – **Bring your neighbor's** garbage up to their house or pick up the litter on the area in front of your house.

December 29 – Feed the birds and/or squirrels or tell a child they are special and loved.

December 30 – Call or write someone who **wasn't at church and tell them they were missed.**

December 31 – Leave a random happy note **sharing God's love somewhere you go in town.**

January 1 – Tell someone how much you love them.

January 2 – Smile at everyone you meet and wish them a wonderful day.

January 3 – Write a letter to a service member or veteran thanking them for their sacrifice.

January 4 – Go through your closets to find clothes and items to give to the thrift store.

January 5 – Collect non-perishable food items for the food bank to bring tomorrow.

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You may choose to pick up the brown bags or to use one grocery bag per veteran that we can put into our brown bags for delivery. Your completed bags can be dropped off at Center United Methodist Church no later than December 18, 2020. I already have 25 Adopt a Veteran bags spoken for and would like to have as many people get involved as possible. This is a great way to thank our veterans who have been isolated from family and friends and church for the last 8 months. Please contact Hannah at the church through phone message or email, or text Pastor Debbie. This is open to folks from the community and other churches to join.

The worship committee has been hard at work planning worship for this holiday season. Starting December 3rd at **6:30pm via our Zoom link, we will begin our Adam Hamilton's Advent Study *Incarnation*.** Please let the church office know if you wish to participate, so we can get you the resources for **each week's study.**

Our Cooking for Our Neighbors has been a blessing. Thank you to our good cooks and volunteers Betty Felmlee, Kitty Bigley-Entz, and Janet Myers. Thank you for the delicious Thanksgiving meal last week and we will resume the first week in December. We welcome anyone who wishes to join our little group. We know it is a lot of work which is much lighter as we share it together. It is not meant to be a burden but a blessing for everyone involved. It is such a delight to share the love of Christ in this unique way. If you know of someone who should be on our list for meals, please let us know. If you wish to be **removed, please let us know. It is truly an out pouring of God's love.** The week of Thanksgiving we will not be doing the meals.

Christmas is the giving season and I would encourage you to join us in giving to our church and its ministries, to Beaver Creek Youth Camp and its ministries, to UMCOR and its ministries, to LaPuente and its ministries, or to whatever the Lord lays upon your heart to give to. If you have been blessed this year, be a blessing to others.

Let's make a conscious effort to share God's love with all we meet, not just our family and friends because our world needs God's love, especially now.



Ms. Isabel Giebel

This Month Our Ms. Isabel turns 100 years young! In honor of such a big occasion, the Center Post Dispatch wrote an article about her wonderful life and military service. The article can be found at: <https://centerpostdispatch.com/article/former-marine-to-hit-100-in-december>.

We love you Ms. Isabel, and have a wonderful 100th Birthday!

I realize that this has been a different year for everyone, and we are ever making changes to try to meet your worship needs. We continue with our 8:30 Zoom service and 10:30 In-person service on Sunday mornings. Access to any worship is also posted on our www.umcofcenter.com website, so feel free to go back and watch what you may have missed. The Story Behind the Songs is on Facebook Live every Wednesday at 1 pm.

The year is coming to an end and we find our church in need of financial help. We are \$-14,237.15 in the hole. Yes, we usually receive large contributions towards the end of the year, however, unfortunately we have lost several of our large contributors this year and can therefore not be counting on those contributions. So, I am asking you if you can find it in your heart to please dig deep and perhaps donate an extra dollar or two. Whatever you can spare will make a difference for the church. For your convenience you can make your donations by text at (719) 628-1830 (then just follow the prompts). Or online at our website www.umcofcenter.com the link is on the front page.

Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. Deuteronomy 15:10.

Vicki J Ratzlaff

Center Finance Chairman

Joke of the Month

Did you hear about the St Michael's Primary School nativity play? Two children are dressed as Mary and Joseph, and they are on their way to the inn at Bethlehem. Meanwhile on the other side of the stage, a lad in a shepherd's outfit is on a mobile phone. He is calling the inn to make a reservation.

Peppermint Bark

Recipe by: Andrea (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients

- 8 oz semi-sweet chocolate (broken)
- 2 tsps. Canola oil
- 1/2 tsp peppermint extract
- 8 oz white chocolate (broken)
- 25 peppermint candies (crushed)

Directions

1. Lightly grease a 9 x 9 inch pan and line with waxed paper, smoothing out wrinkles; set aside.
2. Place the semisweet chocolate and 1 teaspoon of the canola oil in the top of a double boiler over just barely simmering water, stirring frequently and scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula to avoid scorching. When the chocolate is melted, stir in 1/4 teaspoon of the peppermint extract. Pour the melted chocolate into the prepared pan, and spread evenly over the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle half of the crushed peppermints over the chocolate layer. Refrigerate until completely hardened, about 1 hour.
3. Place the white chocolate and the remaining 1 teaspoon canola oil in the top of a double boiler over just barely simmering water, stirring frequently and scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula to avoid scorching. When the chocolate is melted, stir in the remaining 1/4 teaspoon peppermint extract. Pour the white chocolate directly over the semisweet chocolate layer; spread evenly. Sprinkle the remaining crushed candy over the top and gently press in. Refrigerate until completely hardened. Remove from pan; break into small pieces to serve.



Allrecipes.com