



Join us for
**THE ADVENT
SEASON**

Event Calendar - 2023

SKYLAND
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOVE • GROW • SERVE



Advent at Skyland UMC

It's "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!"

The season of Advent is one of expectation. This is a time of looking forward to what is about to come in reality. This is a joyful time of year because we look to God who came into the world in Jesus the Christ. Our Creator took on human form (incarnation) and lived among us. And it is through this same Jesus that we know something of God's heart, and we know how much God loves each of us.

Advent is a time of preparation in that we believe Christ will come again someday. Thus, we work today to prepare for this second coming. The season is filled with expectation, joy, hope, peace, and love. My prayer for you at Skyland is that you will live fully into as much as possible in terms of what we have to offer for your "season of preparation." I pray that you will all be blessed and know God's love each day!

Joe Tarpley
SUMC Pastor



What Is an Advent Wreath?

The Advent Wreath is believed to have originated with a Lutheran pastor working among the poor in Germany in the late 1800s. Tradition goes that children would ask every day if Christmas had arrived, so he arranged candles (four large candles for the weeks and then smaller ones for the days) to help the children mark time and journey with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem without leaving Germany. The wreath came to appear as it does today through the adoption of the practice by German Catholics, who decreased the wreath to just the candles we use today. Different traditions attribute different meanings to the candles, and even use different colors, but the purpose remains the same: to provide Christians with a way of marking time through the season of anticipation until we reach the birth of Jesus. For some, the wreath is a visual pilgrimage through Advent, similar to the idea behind the recreation of the crèche in churches and homes started by Francis of Assisi as a way of helping the poor experience holy sites from home. It is our hope at Skyland that the use of the Advent Wreath in worship will help you journey through this time of waiting and anticipation for when Christ is born in our hearts and in our world.

Visiting the Sick and Homebound with Communion

Once again this Advent season, Joe is glad to take Holy Communion to any who are sick or homebound and not able to get out much. If you are interested in receiving the Sacrament in the comfort of your own home, please notify the church office or you may call/text Joe directly at (336)-613-3085 or email him at JTarpley@skylandumc.com.

Poinsettias & Building Fund

In Honor and In Memory. You may order Poinsettias for \$10 each and/or give to the Building Fund. Poinsettia/Building Fund forms and envelopes are available at each worship service, in the Colonnade, and in the church office. Please fill out the form completely and put your check/cash and form in an envelope. Place it in the offering collected during worship services or bring it to the church office. Deadline is Sunday, December 3RD.



The Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, November 26TH at 10 a.m.

Mark your calendars for SUMC's Annual Hanging of the Greens! The Hanging of the Greens will take place on Sunday, November 26TH after the 9 a.m. service and we need your help decorating! Lunch will be provided.

Angel Tree Giving

Sunday, November 26TH – Sunday, December 10TH

Our Angel Tree will provide Christmas assistance to children in need at our adopted school, W.W. Estes Elementary, and to families of children with special needs through the Progressive Education Program (PEP) in our school district. The Angel Tree wish lists will be on display starting November 26. Items are due by December 10TH by the end of the day.

Reverse Advent Calendar

Sunday, November 26TH – Sunday, December 17TH

The Missions Committee's Reverse Advent Calendar project to benefit Compass Pointe Village will begin November 26TH. Please pick up a bag in the colonnade and use the list provided to add one item to the bag each day until you turn it in. Bags are due December 17TH. Compass Pointe Village was recently renovated by Homeward Bound and provides housing to 85 previously un-housed individuals. Look for a date in the next few months to visit this property!

Staff Love Offering

Taking offerings until Sunday, December 17TH

We are blessed at Skyland UMC with a dedicated staff. Following tradition, we will again honor them with a token of appreciation during this Advent and Christmas Season. If you would like to contribute toward this love offering, please mark your gift "Staff Appreciation" and place it in the offering plate or mail/bring it to the church office by Sunday, December 17TH. Thank you for your support and prayers.

Ned Fowler, Chair of Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Study with Joe: “An Unlikely Advent”

Sunday, November 26TH – Sunday, December 11TH

Our theme for the Advent Season is “An Unlikely Advent.” We will be engaging in a study based on the Rachel Billups book on **Sunday evenings at 4:30 p.m. and Mondays at noon**. Please sign up in the Colonnade if you know, in advance, that you want to attend. Books will be made available. The study focuses on the experiences of overlooked characters in the Nativity story. You will be exposed to themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing stories of persons such as Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the shepherds. Each of these has something important to teach us about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas. Joy and Joe will also be preaching on these themes and characters during the Advent season during both services. Reach out to Joe with questions.

Advent Retreat Day

Saturday, December 2ND 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

On Saturday, December 2ND from 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. (place TBD). Come apart during what is often a busy season to reflect on the true sights and sounds of this season. We’ll explore ways to enable you to enhance your Advent journeys by exploring bible readings, prayers, music, and additional reflective readings.

Creche Blessing Service

Sunday, December 10TH 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

You are invited to join us on December 10TH for a very special Creche Blessing. At both the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services we will take time to bless YOUR SPECIAL FAMILY CRECHE. Bring your Nativity “Scenes” from your home. We will set up display tables for your Creche and during the service offer a special blessing for its use by your family to highlight your home during the Advent Christmas season.

Christmas Showcase Talent Show and Jingle & Mingle

Practice on Sunday, December 10TH from 12:10-1:30 p.m.

Show on Wednesday, December 13TH from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Christmas Showcase followed by church-wide Jingle & Mingle. All are invited to come and enjoy all of the many talents of our Skyland church family. Following this presentation, we will mingle in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring your favorite family Christmas hors d'oeuvres (meatballs, wings, finger sandwiches, chips and dip, fruit dish, vegetable plate, or dessert, etc.). Hot chocolate and punch will be provided.

Special Advent Music

Sunday, December 17TH 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

At both of our services on December 17TH we will have a special LESSONS AND CAROLS service. At 9 a.m. our praise band will lead us in contemporary and popular songs of the season with accompanying lessons to highlight the anticipation of the Feast of Christmas. At 11 a.m. our Music Director, Kimberly Cann, will assemble special musical guests, soloists, and instrumentalists for a wonderful service that heralds our Advent/Christmas season at Skyland.

Caroling to Shut-ins

Sunday, December 17TH from 3-5 p.m.

Join us for Skyland's annual caroling event for those unable to get out and about this holiday season. Sign up for this event in the colonnade beginning Nov. 26 or by calling the church office. All are welcome!

Family Service Opportunity

Monday, December 18TH from 3-5 p.m. Skyland's Manna Food Market.

Reach out to Rev. Joy for more information on how your family can help!

A Service of Remembrance and Hope

Tuesday, December 19TH 6:30 p.m.

As the darkness of winter reaches its peak and light begins to increase, this worship service gives space for the heaviness of our lives that may come from daily stress and worry, grief or loss, memories of loved ones who we see no longer, or for any other reason at all. The weight of these is present in our lives even as the world gleams with the joy and light of the season. Join us as we light candles, sing, and pray casting our worries, pain, and grief onto God, who is an ever-present source of comfort, peace, and hope. The service is set for December 19 at 6:30 p.m. in our church's sanctuary.

Cookie and Cardmaking for Veterans

Wednesday, December 20TH from 9:00- 11 a.m.

Cookie & Cardmaking for veterans living at Veterans Restoration Quarters in Swannanoa. All aged children and youth are invited. Parents are welcome, but not required, to stay and join in the fun!





Christmas at Skyland

One Service together at 10:30 a.m. to mark Advent IV.

Join us for a Christmas Celebration at any or all of our three Christmas Eve Services!

- **3 p.m.** A Family-friendly service that seeks to re-tell the Nativity of our Lord utilizing our children to re-create the Christmas story (Holy Communion included)
- **5 p.m.** Our Moravian Lovefeast is a family affair that celebrates the birth of Jesus in traditional Moravian style, complete with coffee, sweet buns, and a chancel full of woodwind and brass musicians.
- **8 p.m.** Our Traditional Christmas Holy Eucharist with music and candle lighting to welcome the great day of Christmas.

One Service Together on December 31st

Join us for the **First Sunday after Christmas** on Sunday, **December 31 at 10:30 am** in our Church's Sanctuary. Dress comfortably (if you like, wear your Christmas pajamas!). We'll enjoy a "simpler" service for the Christmas season on this occasion.

Children are invited to bring a toy received at Christmas for a special **Toy Blessing**. You'll have an opportunity to show your Christmas gift and to share the experience of what others have received at this grand time of gift-giving. We look forward to celebrating with you on this special Sunday!

Notes about this Special Newsletter:

Hello, Skyland family! This special newsletter and advent brochure has been made for you to know all things Christmas and Advent at Skyland this year. If you have any questions, please reach out to me, Megan, at newsletter@skylandumc.com. I love hearing your feedback, and if you have a question for me, don't hesitate to ask!

Do you have questions related to RSVPing for an event or something related to the church office? You can call or email Jennifer during office hours at admin@skylandumc.com or the office phone at (828)-684-7283.

Do you have questions related to a service or ministry? Contact Joe at jtarples@skylandumc.com or by phone at (336)-613-3085
OR Joy at revjoy@skylandumc.com or by phone at (828) 777-5007.

We can't wait to celebrate the beauty of Advent with you this year. Thanks for reading!

Blessings,

Megan Prestridge
SUMC Communications Coordinator