



# *The* **VISITOR**

A monthly publication of St. Luke's Methodist Church - Kilgore, Texas

December 2023

Issue 12

## *Christmas* **AT ST. LUKE'S**



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<https://www.instagram.com/stlukeskilgore/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/stlukesyouthkilgore>

#### St. Luke's Kids

<https://www.facebook.com/stlukeskilgorekids>

#### St. Luke's MDO

<https://www.facebook.com/stlukesmdo>

#### Subscribe to our YouTube page

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQI83akQH4YDK-LYIHM0QXQ>

#### Sign-up to receive our emails

<https://stlukeskilgore.org/newsletters/>

#### Watch Worship Live

<https://stlukeskilgore.org/watch-live/>

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**Rev. Dr.  
Allison  
Andrews**  
Sr. Pastor

## THE GREATEST MYSTERY

*"God rest ye, merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, remember  
Christ our Savior, was born on Christmas Day, to save us all from  
Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray. Oh tidings of comfort  
and joy, comfort and joy. Oh tidings of comfort and joy."*

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" has always captured my emotions and tightened my throat. How is it that Christ really saves us from ourselves? This is not only beyond my comprehension, but constitutes a powerful mystery.

We will celebrate Advent this year at St. Luke's by focusing on "The Mystery of Christmas." Indeed, the greatest mystery in all of history is unquestionably how God himself became fully human without ceasing to be fully divine — that God, in all his God-ness, united himself with all human-ness. Church history has coined it "the hypostatic union," the joining of two distinct natures in one undivided person ("hypostatic" is just a fancy word for "personal"). Jesus is fully God and fully man in one spectacular person. This is the incarnation, which literally means, the "in fleshing" of the divine Son, God Himself taking on humanity.

He really is human for our sakes; the Apostle Paul says in the book of Hebrews 2:14, ***"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—"*** Paul's statement summarizes the true celebration of Christmas. But let us fully ponder the beautiful mystery of this freedom from sin through Christ. Reflect on the four concepts below:

It was decided hundreds of years ago that four mysteries were true about Christ: He is 1) fully God, 2) fully man, 3) as one person in 4) two natures.

The truth of the incarnation makes a practical difference in our faith:

1. Jesus as "God-Man" leads us to understand our own mission as Christ followers. We simultaneously bow to the sovereignty of God while also rolling up our sleeves to bring love to our neighbor. Jesus did it and so do we.
2. We matter. Jesus reminds us that God has created us for dignity. We are the climactic creatures, even above angels, and our work in this world is meant to mirror Christ's mission. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers (Hebrews 2:11)
3. The visible image of the invisible God has been established in Christ, but it CONTINUES THROUGH US! Jesus is the "lamp" which gives us light to know God's will and imitate the example of Christ. And so when Paul tells the early Christians that we will all be changed in the twinkling of an eye, we should know that occurs the minute we are new creations in Christ. For God not only worked through the body of Jesus, but God is indwelling in each one of us. May we reflect that mysterious glory.
4. God has joined himself with us forever in the person of Christ. He eternally identifies with us. The question then rises: "do we identify with God?"

## PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

Friday, December 1

6:00pm-9:00pm | Gym

\$15 per child

Hey Kids, do you need a night away from your parents? We're here to help. Send your parents out on the town and have them drop you off for a night of fun at the church. For \$15 a child you can enjoy pizza, crafts, games, and fun with your friends.

We hope to see your family at the next Parent's Night Out.  
Contact the church office or use the QR code to register and pre-pay.



# ST. LUKE'S kids



**Debbie  
Nicholson**

Children's Ministry  
Director

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR CHRISTMAS PARTY

Wednesday, December 13

After School-5:15pm

Activity Center

The kids have been working hard to prepare for the Christmas Musical and now it's time to cut loose and celebrate! Mr. James and his amazing volunteers are planning a fun Christmas Party before Christmas break begins.

**\*\*NOTE: No Dinner or Studies on this Wednesday\*\***

## MARK YOUR Calendar

### DECEMBER

- 1**      **Parent's Night Out**  
6:00pm-9:00pm
- 6**      **Last Wednesday Night Meal  
& studies of the year**
- 9**      **Breakfast With Santa**  
9:30am-11:00am
- 10**     **Children's Choir Christmas  
Musical 6:00pm**
- 13**     **Children's choir Christmas  
Party 3:15pm-5:15pm**
- 17**     **Happy Birthday Jesus Party**  
9:30am  
No Children's Sunday School

**Please see the calendar on page 10  
for a complete list of this month's  
events and meetings.**

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS

Calling All kids!  
You're invited to a Birthday Party for Jesus!

**Sunday, December 17**

**9:30am**

**Family Center**

We will have cake, crafts, and fun.

**\*\*No Sunday School on this day\*\***



# ST. LUKE'S YOUTH



**Rev. Wade  
Skinner**

Associate Pastor  
of Youth  
& Families

## MARK YOUR *Calendar*

### DECEMBER

- 6 Last Wednesday Night Meal  
& studies of the year**  
5:15pm Dinner  
6:00pm Studies
- 13 Youth Christmas Party  
Sock Exchange**  
3:15pm-5:15pm
- 17 Happy Birthday Jesus Party**  
9:30am  
No Youth Sunday School
- Ice Skating in Marshall**  
5:00pm-8:00pm

Please see the calendar on page 10  
for a complete list of this month's  
events and meetings.

One of my favorite Merle Haggard songs is his 1973 hit "If We Make it through December." While the lyrics contain a measure of hope about the future beyond December, they also contain observations such as: "it's the coldest time of winter/ I shiver when I see the falling snow." The speaker ponders his "plans to be in a warmer town come summer time" while lamenting his loss of a job "down at the factory" due to a layoff. The second verse is the most poignant and captures the mixed spirit of the song:

I don't mean to hate December  
It's meant to be the happy time of year  
And my little girl don't understand  
Why daddy can't afford no Christmas gift

I love this song because I share in the speaker's struggle to love December and the Christmas season. I don't believe that I am alone in this struggle. I would even venture to say that many people share in the mixed bag of feelings that well-up during this time of year; that's why this song was so popular. It could be for any number of reasons: loss of job, loss of loved ones, loneliness, cold, sickness, etc. Thanks to Charles Dickens, the Christmas spirit of giving, hope, and love is in general good for our world and our communities. And, the thought of a benevolent and jolly old man dressed in a red suit bringing presents to families all over the world gathered around decorated trees and in front of warm fireplaces is touching. But, we as Christians have so much more to offer the broken-hearted and hurting than sleigh bells and reindeer. There are plenty of "little girls and boys" who "don't understand/ Why daddy can't afford no Christmas gift." There are also plenty of daddies and mommas who have lost their jobs "down at the factory" or wherever they have been working. When God wrote himself into history, he entered our world not as a king in a lush palace, but as an impoverished child sleeping in a cattle trough who grew up without "a place to lay his head" to become a "man of sorrows" who died the death of a criminal on a Roman crucifix. This Jesus is who we celebrate and offer the world; he brings meaning to our suffering because he willingly endured all of it for our sake. We can be joyful and merry about Christmas because of Him. Merry Christmas to you all.

### YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

**Wednesday, December 13**

**After School-5:15pm**

#### Activity Center

Calling all youth! Join us for our annual Christmas Party. We will meet after school on Wednesday, December 13, in the Activity Center. Bring a pair of Christmas socks to exchange. Parents, pick up will be at 5:15pm.

**\*\*NOTE: No Dinner or Studies in this Wednesday\*\***

### ICE SKATING

**Sunday, December 17**

**5:00pm-8:00pm**

We're going Ice Skating. Invite a friend and join us on, Sunday, December 17. We will leave from the Family Center Parking Lot at 4pm and we will return at 8:00pm.

# Poinsettia ORDER FORM

Poinsettias that will decorate our sanctuary for the Advent & Christmas season are \$25 per poinsettia. Please complete this form, write a separate check from your normal giving to SLMC, and place the form and the check in the offering plate.

Name:

---

Phone #:

---

**If applicable, please circle one:**  
IN MEMORY or IN HONOR OF:

Name(s):

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Number of Poinsettias \_\_\_\_\_ at \$25.

For a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Final Deadline for ordering is  
December 17.

# Christmas

## AT ST. LUKE'S

DEC  
9



### Breakfast With Santa

9:30am-11:00am | Family Center

You're invited to a FREE pancake breakfast with Santa Claus. This year we will be partnering with Restoration of the Spectrum Ministries to provide a sensory sensitive Santa and other accommodations for our friends that might find the crowd overwhelming. Grab a friend and join us for the fun.

DEC  
10

### Arise Service

#### Songs of Wonder

8:30am | Sanctuary

Selections of contemporary music leading us to consider the mystery of Christmas - Almighty God coming as a lowly man, yet still fully God.

### Traditional Service

#### Carols of Wonder

10:30am | Sanctuary

Brand new and never heard before carol arrangements by James Vermillion for choir and chamber orchestra

These carols explore the mystery of the Christ child, and the wonder at the impact of this lowly baby will bring. The music encourages us to once again raise our celebration of this mysterious and powerful event - God bringing mankind to himself.

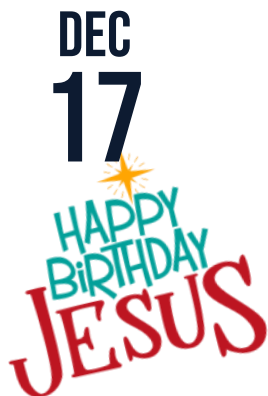


### Children's Choir Christmas Musical

#### The Loaned Manger

6:00pm | Activity Center

Git on your horse and come on to the small town of Incarnation where Christmas is celebrated like no other town in the West! But, it is now 1891 and the railroad has just now come to the town. Now people from all over will be coming to Incarnation to see the Christmas decorations and city folk may not be impressed plus outlaws might ride in.. Between the train and the new-fangled e-lectric light, things get a heap interesting!



### Happy Birthday Jesus Party

9:30am | Family Center

No Children's Sunday School

Kids and their parents are invited to help us celebrate Jesus' birthday with a PARTY! We will have cake and crafts in the Family Center. We will also have a light breakfast available for the adults.

### Christmas Open House at the Parsonage

12:00pm | 409 Hillside, Kilgore

Pastor Allison would like to invite you to a Christmas Open House. Stop by after church for a light lunch as you tour the parsonage all decked out for Christmas.

### Christmas Eve

#### Family Continental Breakfast

9:30am | Family Center

No Sunday School

Join us in the Family Center for food and fellowship before worship.

#### Combined Worship

10:30am

Help us celebrate the 4th Sunday in Advent as we prepare for the birth of a king.

#### Candlelight Worship

6:00pm | Sanctuary

Join us for a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight service with a lesson of Carols and Communion.

### New Years Eve

#### Continental Breakfast

9:30am | Family Center

No Sunday School

Join us in the Family Center for food and fellowship before worship.

#### Combined Worship

10:30am | Sanctuary

Let's end the year praising God! Join us for a combined worship service on New Year's Eve.

## Chrismon ORDER FORM

Each year we add Chrismon's to the Chrismon Tree in our Sanctuary. Chrismon's are \$10 each. Please complete this form, write a separate check from your normal giving to SLMC, and place the form and the check in the offering plate, or drop it off in the church office. The proceeds for the sale of Chrismon's will help offset the cost of our beautiful new tree in the Sanctuary.

Name:

---

Phone #:

---

**If applicable, please circle one:**

IN MEMORY or IN HONOR OF:

Name(s):

---

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Number of Chrismon's \_\_\_\_\_ at \$10.

For a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Final Deadline for ordering is  
December 18.



DEC  
24

DEC  
31





The JAM's moms joined the Methodist Women for a Friendsgiving Dinner. The group also took the time to fill 18 boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

## CHARGE CONFERENCE

**Tuesday, December 12**

**12:00pm**

**Family Center**

It's time for our annual Charge Conference meeting. Join us for a light lunch and a short meeting to wrap up the business of the church of 2023.

# WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

**December 6**

Chicken Pitas, Salad,  
Dessert, & a Drink

Cash, Check, and Credit Cards  
will be accepted at dinner.

Wednesday Night Meals will resume on January 10

## SERVE AT NEWGATE

**Saturday, December 30**

**8:00am**

Help us serve breakfast at Newgate in Longview, Saturday, December 30. If you would like to volunteer please contact Don or Debbie Nicholson.

## HOLY HUDDLERS

We would like to invite and welcome everyone to eat and fellowship with the Holy Huddlers. We meet twice a month (not always the same week of the month due to holidays). Supper will be on you, but the fellowship will be shared by all.

**December 1**

**6:00pm**

**Posados, Longview**

If you have any questions, please call  
Barbara Francisco, 903-918-6797



## 2023 BOARD MEMBERS

### Board Chair

Milton Hattaway

### Staff Parish Relations

Carol Grimes

### Endowments

Celia Mooney

### Lay Leader

Anna Rohde

### Trustees

Michael Barnard

### Class of 2023

Michael Barnard

Sheryl Caraway

Tommy Farnham

Denise Reinert

### Class of 2024

Paula Hooks

Jim McCann

Susan Moore

Cody Sprayberry

### Class of 2025

Kathy Brown

Alan Clark

Amanda Gillen-Hall

Carol Grimes

Dean Miller

These volunteers have agreed to help lead the church. If you have any questions about what is happening around St. Luke's please contact one of them.

# WAYS TO GIVE AT *St. Luke's*



## IN PERSON

In the offering plate or in the offering boxes at the entrance to the sanctuary



## BY MAIL

St. Luke's MC  
401 E. Main St  
Kilgore, TX 75662



## ONLINE

at [stlukeskilgore.org](https://stlukeskilgore.org)  
or use the QR Code



## BY TEXT

Text "give" to  
903-833-3576

## NOT ABLE TO MAKE IT TO WORSHIP?

Use the QR code to visit our website and watch worship live .

You can even view past services.



## JOYS & CONCERNS

Please use the "Prayer" cards in the pews to keep us updated on your loved ones. People will remain on this list for one month. Please let us know if they need to be on longer, 903-984-3576.

## PRAYERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

Tammy Ackers & Family  
Michael Barnard  
**Roberta Boggs**  
Jack & Sharry Christopher  
Cindy Frederick  
Jessica Hatt  
Pat Haynes  
Carolyn Holcombe

Sam Holley  
**Robert Smith**  
Angela Thompson  
Cindy Venable  
**April Watson**  
Josh Watson  
Jim Williams  
Joe White

## PRAYERS FOR OUR FAMILY & FRIENDS

Renate Albus.....friend of Pat & Art Morchat  
Cindy Allen.....sister of Sharon McCann  
Debra Bridges  
Cecilia & Byron Castleberry.....friends of Rhett & Anna Rohde  
**Mac Cervantes.....friend of Louise Fielding**  
Bill Decker.....friend of Shery Caraway  
Jacob Hankins.....grandson of Bob & Hope Cantu  
Danny Henry.....friend of Sheryl Caraway  
**Bruce Huther.....brother-in-law of Sharon & Jim McCann**  
Charles Osborne.....brother of Mikki Ellis  
J.T. Roberts.....friend of Jack & Susan Moore  
Gina Romero.....niece of Bob & Hope Cantu  
French Sturrock.....friend of Jamie Haynes & Robert Poland  
Terri Smith.....friend of Jan Hattaway  
Bob Sullivan & Family.....friends of Pat & Art Morchat  
Gene Thrash.....friend of Milton Hattaway  
Daryl & Julie Warren.....friends of Rhett & Anna Rohde  
Teri Yandle.....friend of Susan Moore

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Please say a prayer for our church family on their special day.

**If we missed your date, please call the church office (903-984-3576).**

### December 6

Jean Gray

### December 8

George Jones  
Jack Sprayberry  
Les Thurston

### December 9

Carol Brady

### December 12

Kathe Miller  
James Mooney

### December 14

Caylee Clark  
Peggy Clarke  
Dean Miller

### December 16

Jo Stiles

### December 24

Bobbie Smith

### December 25

Jamie Haynes

### December 27

Kalynn Harrison

### December 30

Dan Brown  
Carson Lovell

### December 31

Chuck Kunkel



## PRAYER GROUP

**Tuesdays**  
**8:00am**  
**Knowles Chapel**

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Name	Date
Jay & Tamara Dean	12/19/1992
Joe & Barbara Johnson	12/24/1958
Wendell & Carolyn Holcombe	12/26/1970

# December 2023

					<b>1</b> <b>Parents Night Out</b> 6:00pm-9:00pm <b>Holy Huddlers</b> 6:00pm	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Methodist Women's Christmas Party</b> 6:00pm	<b>6</b> <b>Last Wed Night Meal of the year</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>Breakfast with Santa</b> 9:30am-11:00am
<b>10</b> <b>Christmas Cantata</b> <b>Children's Christmas Musical</b> 6:00pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>Charge Conference</b> 12:00pm	<b>13</b> <b>Youth &amp; Kids Christmas Parties</b> 3:15pm-5:15pm	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> <b>Happy Birthday Jesus</b> 9:30am <b>Parsonage open house</b> 12:00pm <b>Youth: Ice Skating</b> 5:00pm-8:00pm	<b>18</b> <b>Board of Stewards Meeting</b> 6:00pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> <b>Combined Worship</b> 10:30am <b>Candlelight Worship</b> 6:00pm	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>Serve at Newgate</b> 8:00am
<b>31</b> <b>Combined Worship</b> 10:30am	<div>           * Nursery provided for this event.            ** Nursery can be arranged for this event.            Call the church office, 903-984-3576         </div>					

## RECURRING WEEKLY:

### Sunday

8:30am | Arise Worship\* (Sanctuary)  
 9:30am | Sunday School\*  
 10:30am | Traditional Worship\* (Sanctuary)  
 11:30am | Handbell Choir (Handbell Room)

### Monday

9:00am-2:00pm | Mother's Day Out  
 9:05am-9:20am | First Day Focus

### Tuesday

8:00am | Prayer Group\*\* (Knowles Chapel)  
 11:45am | Tuesday Lunch Bunch (Family Center)

### Wednesday

9:00am-2:00pm | Mother's Day Out  
 3:15pm-5:30pm | Children's Choir  
 5:15pm-6:00pm | Dinner (Family Center)  
 6:00pm | Chancel Choir Rehearsal\* (Sanctuary)  
 Bible Studies & Groups\*

### Thursday

6:30pm | Arise Band Rehearsal\* (Sanctuary)

*The*  
**VISITOR**

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**METHODIST WOMEN'S**

*Christmas*

**PARTY**

**Tuesday, December 5**

**6:00pm**

**Family Center**

**nursery care provided**

