The VISITOR

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

December 2024 Issue 12

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St. Luke's Kids
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St. Luke's MDO
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https://stlukeskilgore.org/watch-live/

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Rev. Glen Blackmon
Interim Sr. Pastor

WELCOME PASTOR GLEN

Grace and peace to all of you, sisters and brothers in Christ. I am Rev. Glen Blackmon, the new Interim Pastor of St. Lukes Methodist Church. I come to you as a retired (twice now) Methodist minister. Most of my career has been spent in the North Texas area. The churches served have been from Chicota, Texas, Iowa Park, Mabank, Metroplex (Garland, Celina) to Chatfield. It has been a journey indeed and one I have been honored to take. I now have the honor of serving St. Lukes.

I grew up in East Texas and graduated high school in Hawkins, Texas. A couple of years after High School, I entered the U.S. Air Force, where I worked as Security Police. Upon leaving the military, I worked in civilian law enforcement as a deputy sheriff and then as a patrol officer with another department. It was then that I was called into ministry and began my collegiate (and ministry) journey. I achieved a Bachelors in Business from East Texas State University (now A & M at Commerce) and a Masters of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at SMU.

While I have met many of you, I look forward to meeting many more. If we haven't had the opportunity to meet, please come to worship on Sunday and lets visit a bit. I hope that in God's service we can achieve the goal of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and offering Christ to the community that surrounds us. I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with your great staff here and look forward to serving with each of them.

May God Bless and keep each of you as we journey together. May Gods peace rest upon you and may we together proclaim and share Gods love with one another and all that we encounter.

ST. LUKE'S Kids

'Believing is the only magic that makes the utterly impossible completely possible, and the undoubtedly undoable undeniably doable! And of all the different kinds of beliefs there are, the belief of a child is by far the most unbelievably unstoppable.'

CHRISTMAS PARADE

The St. Luke's Kids will be decorating and riding in their own float in the annual Kilgore Christmas Parade. If your child would like to join us, or if you would like to help decorate, contact Lindsey Exline at children@stlukeskilgore.org or 903-985-1341.

Tuesday, December 3
6:30pm

All abord the Parents Night Out Christmas Express! We will be celebrating the Christmas Season with a night of games, crafts, pizza and a movie. Kids age 3-12 are invited to join us on Friday, December 6, 6:00pm-9:00pm.

Pre-registration is required and must be completed by Thursday, December 5, at 5:00pm.

This event will be canceled if we have less than 5 participants at the time of the deadline. Use the QR code to register and pay.

MARK YOUR Calendar

Upcoming Children's Ministry Events

DECEMBER

3 **Kilgore Christmas Parade**
6:30pm

6 **Parents Night Out**
6:00pm-9:00pm

11 **Christmas Party**
6:00pm

15 **Sing Noel Together! Christmas Concert**
6:00pm

18 **Christmas Trivia Night**
6:00pm

22 **Happy Birthday Jesus**
9:30am

24 **Christmas Eve Worship**
6:00pm

Please see the calendar on page 14 for a complete list of this month's events and meetings.

Lindsey Exline
Nursery Care Director
children@stlukeskilgore.org

Happy Birthday Jesus

Sunday, December 22
9:30am | Family Center

Join us for a light breakfast celebration for Jesus' Birthday! We will have crafts, a photo booth, goodie bags, and games.

**NO kids or youth Sunday School

Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 11
6:00pm | St. Luke's Gym

All kids and youth are invited to a Christmas celebration. We will have games, bingo, prizes, gifts, food, and maybe even a visit from Santa.

WE WANT YOU

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

- Nursery Worker
- Substitute for Nursery

JOIN OUR TEAM!

QUALIFICATIONS

- LOVE kids
- Patience & Understanding
- Flexibility
- Good Communication

APPLY NOW

children@stlukeskilgore.org
or
Contact Lindsey @ 903.985.1341

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM

WE NEED YOU!

THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN

Contact Lindsey Exline for more information about how you can be a part of the future of St. Luke's Kids!

ST. LUKE'S Youth

Ministry is not a job or Sunday routine. It's a privilege to be chosen & used for Jesus

THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS: PART ONE

Modern American Christian churches spend a great deal of time trying to figure out how to grow their churches numerically because quantitative growth has become the primary measure of "success". The reason for this single standard is twofold. First, churches have adopted a secular business model for defining success, and second, it is easy to count the number of people who a) attend worship and Bible study, b) join the church, c) get baptized, and d) profess faith.

Jesus does not give a simple quantitative measure for determining whether or not the church is carrying out his discipleship mission successfully; his great commission in Matthew 28:18-20 does, however, give three actions with equal emphasis that makeup the mission of the church: make disciples, baptize them, and teach them. Each of these components represents one part of the discipleship process, which is the mission of Christ's Church.

Making disciples refers to evangelism or bringing people who do not know God to faith in Christ. Baptizing disciples refers to moving a believer from being a participant or attendee to being an engaged member of a local church body. Teaching disciples to observe all of Jesus's commands refers to the process of turning an immature believer into a mature disciple. The threefold mission of disciple-making required of the church could be articulated as: evangelize, embrace, and mature. The church evangelizes a person through discipleship, embraces them through baptism, and matures them through teaching.

Jesus frames His great commission with the promise that when we fulfill His discipleship mission, we carry with us the unlimited authority of his presence throughout all time and in all places. The youth program at St. Luke's Methodist Church exists to transform the youth of Kilgore into impassioned followers of Jesus with the Gospel. When we evangelize, embrace, and mature the youth of Kilgore with the Gospel, we do so with the transforming power of Christ who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Being faithfully obedient to Christ's discipleship command means that we start to see "success" differently. When we stop counting heads and start looking for heart transformations by the power and authority of Jesus, we move from the world's standard of success to the Lord's.

MARK YOUR Calendar

Upcoming Youth Ministry Events

DECEMBER

7 **Ice Skating in Dallas**
8:30am-7:00pm

11 **Christmas Party**
6:00pm

18 **Christmas Trivia Night**
6:00pm

24 **Christmas Eve Worship**
6:00pm

Please see the calendar on page 14 for a complete list of this month's events and meetings.

Rev. Wade Skinner
Associate Pastor of
Student & Family Ministries

Our youth helped give out cotton candy and Family Fun Day in the Patch.

The big winners of the Trunk-or-Treat best trunk voting contest

Presley & Aiden where among our Pumpkin Carving Contest winners!

Movie Night
Congratulations to Colby Thompson for winning our bring anything but a chair contest. He used a Rubbermaid box as

Fun and games at youth on Wednesdays

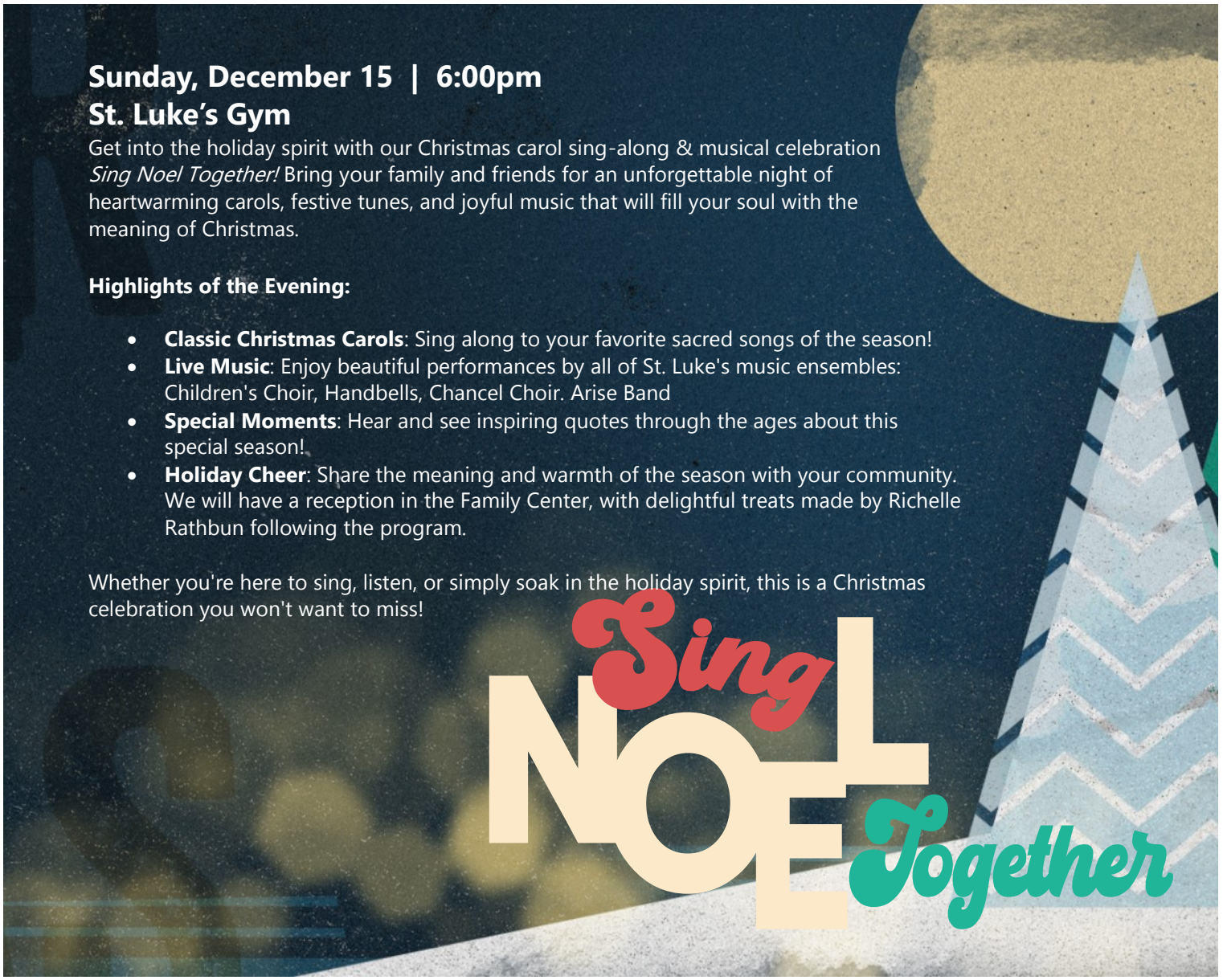
Sunday, December 15 | 6:00pm
St. Luke's Gym

Get into the holiday spirit with our Christmas carol sing-along & musical celebration *Sing Noel Together!* Bring your family and friends for an unforgettable night of heartwarming carols, festive tunes, and joyful music that will fill your soul with the meaning of Christmas.

Highlights of the Evening:

- **Classic Christmas Carols**: Sing along to your favorite sacred songs of the season!
- **Live Music**: Enjoy beautiful performances by all of St. Luke's music ensembles: Children's Choir, Handbells, Chancel Choir. Arise Band
- **Special Moments**: Hear and see inspiring quotes through the ages about this special season!
- **Holiday Cheer**: Share the meaning and warmth of the season with your community. We will have a reception in the Family Center, with delightful treats made by Richelle Rathbun following the program.

Whether you're here to sing, listen, or simply soak in the holiday spirit, this is a Christmas celebration you won't want to miss!



Christmas TRIVIA

Wednesday, December 18
6:00pm
St. Luke's Family Center

Join us for a night of fun, fellowship, and food. Bring a Christmas themed snack to share and be ready to battle it out for the big trophy.

METHODIST Women

The Methodist Women will be celebrating Christmas with a party at the Pollard & Payne Event Center in Downtown Kilgore.

All women are invited to join us for fellowship, food, and fun.

Contact Anna Rohde for more information.

Tuesday, December 10
6:00pm
Pollard & Payne Event Center

THE FINER ARTS GROUP

Each week this group will explore different art techniques and general interests to experience new ways to explore our faith journey.

December Art Schedule

December 4
Christmas Card making with Janet Craver

December 11
Quilling a snowflake ornament
with Janet Craver

December 18
No meeting
KISD Early release

December 25
NO meeting
Christmas Holiday

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

December 4
Chicken Pita's, Salad,
Dessert, & a Drink

December 11
BBQ Meatballs with Rice, Salad,
Dessert, & a Drink

December 18
NO Wed Night Dinner or Studies
KISD Early Release day

Dec ember 25
NO Wed Night Dinner
Christmas Holiday

$3 for kids under 12
$6 adults over 12

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

SATURDAY Bread

Saturday, December 14
The Saturday Bread team is preparing to serve in December. If you are looking for a way to give back, this program is ready for you.

The team helps to prepare, package, and deliver meals to our community members in need.

If you interested in volunteering please contact Brenda Culpepper or the church office.

Check out all the fun we had!

MDO has had a fantastic first semester. From the first day of school to community visitors, costumes and candy, and they are ready for thanksgiving and Christmas. We also wished Ms. Elaine Kirksey a farewell after 10 years with MDO. We are teaching science, sign language , Spanish and art this year, too.

PUMPKIN PATCH REPORT

The Pumpkin Patch is an opportunity for our congregation to make God seen and known in our community. We provide events and activities that bring people onto our campus and give them a little taste of the family they could find at St. Luke's. The money raised from pumpkin sales, sponsorships, the silent auction, and other events, helps us continue to provide this ministry and gives us a little extra to help other programs in our community. Last year we were able to make donations to The East Texas Oil Museum, Kilgore Police Department, Kilgore High School Football Boosters, St. Luke's Mother's Day Out, and other small projects.

Some years we are blessed and sell lots of pumpkins at the beginning of the month, when they are full price, but some years we are trying to give them away in the last week. No matter how much money we bring in, we are touching lives and helping our community to see St. Luke's as a place they want to be. This year the Pumpkin Patch made a profit of **$3,801.71**. This brings our total Pumpkin Patch Fund up to about $13,000. For a little perspective, one of or more successful year's saw us brining in $7,000.

Here are some numbers to help you see how Pumpkin Patch effects our church members and our community.

68	The number of individuals who volunteered in the patch
67	the average age of our volunteers
2	the age of our youngest volunteer
88	the age of our oldest volunteer
265	the total number of hours volunteers supported pumpkin patch

This includes set-up tear down, manning the patch, and working all of our events

53	the number of classes who received Storytime boxes
34	the number of classes who visited Storytime in the patch
1650	the number of students who received a mini pumpkin from the Pumpkin Patch

2024 Pumpkin Patch Financial Report

	Expenses	Income	Profit/Loss
Closing Lunch	-$486.32	$0.00	-$486.32
Family Fun Day	-$360.87	$200.00	-$160.87
Misc	-$1,611.13	$0.00	-$1,611.13
Party in the Patch	-$131.47	$0.00	-$131.47
Storytime	-$390.03	$0.00	-$390.03
t-shirts	-$1,250.00	$577.06	-$672.94
pumpkins	-$4,791.00	$4,130.12	-$660.88
Sponsorships	$0.00	$5,300.00	$5,300.00
Silent Auction	$0.00	$1,617.10	$1,617.10
Donations	$0.00	$435.00	$435.00
lemonade Stand	$0.00	$362.25	$362.25
Craft Show	$0.00	$201.00	$201.00
	-$9,020.82	**$12,822.53**	**$3,801.71**

A ministry' success is not in how much money it brings in, but how many people are blessed. Our members and our community are truly blessed by the Pumpkin Patch each year.

TRUSTEE REPORT

The trustee team has been busy working to keep our campus in tip top shape. As you know keeping buildings and vehicles of various ages can be a challenge, but our team is great at taking care of all the little things.

Here are a couple of updates:

1. The breaker box in the AC closet outside the kitchen has a new cover plate. Thanks to Dan Cross for all his hard work getting this project taken care of. Our insurance company will be very happy.
2. Curtis McKinley Roofing was on campus in October to complete work on the sanctuary roof. The Knowles Bell Tower and other areas are nice and dry now.
3. Dan Cross and Bill Bryant installed a new handrail on the stairs leading to Laird Hall from the sanctuary.
4. We have begun work on new landscaping in the Sanctuary Courtyard. The dead plants have been removed and 31 new Azalea's will be planted. New mulch and edging will also be installed.

STAFF-PARISH REPORT

The Staff-Parish team is sad to announce the resignation of our Business Manager, Audrey Whitten. Audrey may not have been with us for a long time, but she has left a lasting impact on the ministry and administration of our church. We wish her well in her new endeavor.

BACKPACK MINISTRY

The Backpack Ministry Team has delivered over 1100 backpack kits to Kilgore Primary School, Chandler Elementary School, and Kilgore Intermediate School this school year. That's over 90 kids in our school district that have been blessed by St. Luke's Backpack Ministry.

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

Board Chair
Amanda Gillen-Hall

Staff Parish Relations
Carol Grimes

Endowments
Celia Mooney

Lay Leader
Anna Rohde

Trustees
Bill Bryant

Class of 2024
Bill Bryant
Milton Hattaway
Paula Hooks
Jim McCann
Cody Sprayberry

Class of 2025
Kathy Brown
Alan Clark
Carol Grimes
Dean Miller

Class of 2026
Danny Harrison
Janet Craver
Joe Wallace
Annette Morgan

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.

For the month of October 2024

INCOME:

Congregational Giving:	$59,823.18
Edward Jones Disbursements:	$5,500.00
TOTAL INCOME:	$65,323.18
TOTAL EXPENSES:	$58,72.36

Church is not just a place we go. It is a family to which we belong. Our church family is experiencing the same increases in expenses that our personal families face.

Insurance costs for our beautiful facility almost tripled. We are so blessed to have our church home. We covet and are grateful for your continued support through your presence and your financial giving.

End-of-Year GIVING

What you need to know

1

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

Current Contribution statements will be mailed to every member. Once you receive your statement please look over it and let us know if we need to make any adjustments. We moved to a new Membership Database last year and it may have caused some missing or mislabeled contributions. Please contact the church office so that we can get those fixed for you.

2

ONLINE STATEMENTS

With our new membership database you have the ability to view your Contribution Statements online. If you would like to receive log-in information so that you can view your statement, please contact Jennifer Powell in the church office.

3

END-OF-YEAR DEADLINE

The deadline for the church to receive your 2024 contributions is December 31. Contributions received after this date will not be included in your 2024 Contribution Statement. The office will be closed December 26-January1. Contributions can be dropped off in the mail slot in the office door when the office is closed. .

4

ONLINE GIVING

Visit our website **stlukeskilgore.org** to set-up a recurring contribution from a bank account, credit/debit card, or online bill pay. Contact the church office for more information or to set-up automatic giving.

If you have any questions or need assistance please contact the church office at **office@stlukeskilgore.org** or **903-984-3576**.

WAYS TO GIVE AT St. Luke's

IN PERSON

Drop your gift in one of the offering boxes at worship or in the offering plate.

ONLINE

at

stlukeskilgore.org

TEXT

"give" to

BY MAIL

St. Luke's MC

401 E. Main St

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 5
Joshua Russ

December 8
George Jones
Jack Sprayberry
Les Thurston

December 9
Carol Brady
Richard Ross

December 10
Marcy Huey

December 12
Kathe Miller
James Mooney

December 14
Caylee Clark
Peggy Clarke

December 15
Dean Miller

December 18
Dee Arbuckle
Chloe Cha

December 20
Payton Berger

December 22
Loretta Ross

December 24
Bobbie Smith

December 25
Jamie Haynes

December 27
Kalynn Harrison

December 30
Dan Brown
Jared Lovell

December 31
Chuck Kunkel

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Name	Date
Jay & Tamara Dean	12/19/1992
Matt & Amanda Patton	12/22/2012
Joe & Barbara Johnson	12/24/1958
Wendell & Carolyn Holcombe	12/26/1970

JOYS & CONCERNS

Please use the "Prayer" cards in the pews to keep us updated on your loved ones.

PRAYERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

Roberta Boggs
Tommy Freeman
Pat Haynes
Sam Holley
Jack & Sharry Christopher
Jo Hancock
Carolyn Holcombe
Ludie Courtney

PRAYERS FOR OUR FAMILY & FRIENDS

Robert Adams.....friend to many
Sherri Bennett & Family.....friend of Karen L. Wilson
Robbie Belk.....son of Tim & Tonia Belk
Linda Brooks.....mother of Donna Barnard
Bobbie Bryant.....friend of Dan & Shelia Cross
Brad Campbell.....cousin of Randy Holder
Lindsey McClain Castro.....former member/friend of many
Lizz Collins.....wife of Mike Kerr
Chris Cross..... .....brother of Dan Cross
Sandy Dingler.....family member of Laura Farnham
Nick Hanewald.....neighbor of Jim & Sharon McCann
Richard Hansen.....brother-in-law of Jack & Ronda Dickey
Zach Hartfiel.....friend of Jamie Haynes & Robert Poland
Don Hedrick.....friend of Karen L. Wilson
Judy Issacs.....friend of Karen Wilson
Maurine Masterson.....aunt of Tonia Belk
Sandra Melville.....sister of Milton Hattaway
Mary Patton.....neighbor of Dan & Shelia Cross
Emily Porter and her infant twins,
Emberly & Emberlynn Mesker.....friend of Lindsey Exline
Sherri Pilcher & Family.....
French Sturrock.....friend of Jamie Haynes & Robert Poland**
Terri Smith.....friend of Jan Hattaway
Buddy & Selena Simmerman.....friends of Rhonda & Jack Dickey
Blakely Tarbutton.....family of Bob & Hope Cantu
Heather Thompson & daughter.....friend of Tracey Varvel
Les Thurston.....grandson of Bob & Cindy Lindley
Amanda Urban.....friend of Becky & Joe Wallace
Amber Watson.....friend of Glenda Cochran
Harold Wiese.....father of Emily Mason
Sharri Wix.....in-law of T. J & Amanda Gillen-Hall
Julie Brogoitti Woods & Randy Brogoitti..friends of Bill & Carolina Bryant

WE SHARE JOY WITH…

Trey & Lydia Rathbun on the birth of their daughter, **Fable Briar Rathbun,** on November 16.
Grandparents: **Larry & Richelle Rathbun**
Big Brother: **Brantley Slayton.**

****French Sturrock** rang the bell completing his cancer treatments.

December 2024

* Nursery provided for this event.
** Nursery can be arranged for this event.
Call the church office, 903-984-3576

1	**2**	**3** **Kilgore Christmas Parade** 6:30pm	**4**	**5** **Town Hall Meeting** 6:00pm	**6** **Parents Night Out** 6:00pm-9:00pm **Holy Huddlers** 6:00pm	**7** **Youth: Ice Skating** 8:30am
8	**9**	**10** **Methodist Women** 6:00pm	**11** **Youth & Kids Christmas Party** 6:00pm	**12**	**13**	**14** **Saturday Bread** 8:30am
15 **Sing Noel Together** 6:00pm	**16** **Board of Stewards Meeting** 6:00pm	**17**	**18** **No Children's Choir or Dinner** **Christmas Trivia Night** 6:00pm	**19** **Music Department Christmas Party** 6:00pm	**20**	**21**
22 **Happy Birthday Jesus** 9:30am	**23**	**24** **Christmas Eve worship** 6:00pm Office Closed	**25** **Merry Christmas** Office Closed	**26** Office Closed	**27** Office Closed	**28**
29 **Combined Worship** 10:30am	**30** Office Closed	**31** Office Closed				

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-2:30pm | Mother's Day Out
6:30pm | Arise Band Rehearsal* (Sanctuary)

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

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

E-Mail: office@stlukeskilgore.org Office: 903-984-3576 Web Site: www.stlukeskilgore.org

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LOVE GOD

LIVE HIS WORD

SHARE HIS GRACE