

**SPOKANE VALLEY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
115 NORTH RAYMOND ROAD
SPOKANE VALLEY WA 99206
509 924-7262

Sundays
Traditional Service 9 a.m.
Sunday School 9a.m

Staff:

Congregation: Ministers of the Church
Alissa Amestoy: Reverend
Betsy Pletscher: Piano & Organist
Luke Henderson: Director of Music
Margie Manfred: Hospitality Director
Amanda Johnson: Church Secretary
Nate Dunigan: Technical Ministry
Samantha Wallace- Ministries with Young People
Cassandra Strickland: Nursery Caregiver

Volunteer Staff Position:

Shirley Porter: Lay Leader

Church Office: (509) 924-7262

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00am to 12:00pm

1:00pm to 3:00pm

Church Website:

www.spokanevalleychurch.org

Church E-mail:

secretary@spokanevalleychurch.org

Return Service Requested



OUR PURPOSE: *Spokane Valley United Methodist Church is here to invite people to: follow Jesus, love others, and transform the greater community through the grace of God.*

Non Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 69
Spokane, WA



CONNECTIONS

December 2023



ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY
WORSHIP IN ADVENT AT 9AM
AND ON CHRISTMAS EVE FOR
OUR CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
AT 8PM.

EXPERIENCING CHRISTMAS
CHRIST IN THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF ADVENT



Second Annual Holy Pub Christmas Sing-A-Long

Please join us on December 10th at:

45 Degree Brewhouse
10421 E. Sprague
2:00PM-3:30PM

Enjoy your favorite Holiday drink along
with some great food while wearing your
best Christmas outfit! Looking forward to
another great time of Fellowship!

See you there! (This event is 21 and over)



spokanevalleychurch.org

from The Pastor's Desk

The season of Advent is upon us at Spokane Valley UMC! By Sunday December 3rd, the Sanctuary will be awash in holiday colors of bright red, crisp green, with a touch of white all signaling that Christmas is coming! The tree will be up, the lights will be twinkling, and our Advent Wreath will be ready to help us count down the weeks to the birth of Christ! This year, with guidance from our Lay Leader, Shirley Porter, and our small group leaders, we have chosen an uplifting all-church study based on UMC Pastor Rev. Matt Rawle’s book *Experiencing Christmas: Christ in the Sights and Sounds of Advent*. As you can guess by the title, this series will invite us to use ALL our senses in this season of expectation to discover how everything changed when God was born among us. Here’s how Rev. Matt summarizes the inspiration and focus of his series:



“Everything seems different at the end of the year. We put lights on our houses to dispel the growing darkness, Christmas music floods local radio stations, apple cider and cranberry sauce are again on the menu, and wrapping paper and tape are always ready. Things just look, smell, and taste differently during the Advent and Christmas season, and these differences are a sign to us that God is about to do something radical and different. Christmas is when God surrounded the divine with senses of his own. That first noel was when God had eyes to see suffering, ears to hear our cries, and hands to hold those in need, and all of these senses were bundled in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ‘This will be a sign to you,’ the angel told the shepherds, and they traveled to Bethlehem and found a child. What signs [will] you see during the Advent and Christmas season that point you to the divine?”

Experiencing Christmas will guide us see those signs through these weeks of waiting and encourage us to attune all our senses to fully receive the sights, sounds, tastes, and feelings (both emotional and physical) of Christmas, so that we can be fully prepared to welcome Christ into our lives once again. Through worship, study, and prayerful devotion, we will dedicate this most beloved season of the year to experiencing anew the presence of the incarnate born among us in Bethlehem so many years ago.

If you haven’t gotten a book yet, it’s not too late! Stop by the Connect Desk to pick one up before or after worship the next two Sundays. If you choose to participate in the *Experiencing Christmas* series, you’ll notice that our worship themes for the Sundays in Advent complement those in the book!

If you’d like to go deeper and explore the material with others, you are welcome to join one of our Small Groups or Adult Sunday School which will be viewing the companion DVD, reflecting on the themes for each week and studying the scriptures we will use in worship. Here’s the days and times, plus the leaders and their contact info:

SUNDAYS - 10:30am led by Linda Hansen (208-620-0158) in the Fireplace Room

MONDAYS - 9:30am led by Shirley Porter (509-924-2830) in Room 115

6:00pm led by Madelyn Bafus (509-869-8213) on ZOOM

THURSDAYS - 11:00am led by Marlene McCoy (509-999-7240) in the Fireplace Room

Since there’s so much happening this season (and so many things to *experience*!) I thought it best to provide a glimpse of all the worship services and special events taking place at our church this year. As in years past, we will enjoy some time before worship singing some of our favorite carols so be sure to come early and join the fun! Our choir will also be offering pieces each Sunday through Epiphany from Pepper Choplin’s cantata, “The Winter Rose”! Please note that we *will* worship as usual on the morning of Sunday, December 24th and celebrate the birth of Christ the same evening! It doesn’t happen often but sometimes Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday - this year happens to be it!

Advent 1 – December 3 - *Do You See What I See?*

We will begin our season of expectation by lighting the Advent Candle of Hope and exploring the signs of the coming Lord of Righteousness through the scriptures of Jeremiah 33:14-16 and Luke 21:25-36. We will also celebrate communion!

DECEMBER

B L I R E B G Q N I Y L G E C S G N I T E E R G
E T P E E R W F T D P G T I S T H E S E A S O N
B H F E R I P B S T N E S E R P H G V K H M Y P
U G E D T V R E K C A R C T U N C L Y C T P V M
I I D N S T S T Y S G N I K C O T S N T O Y S H
U N I I A D M H L J M A E N O U M I P H C V G S
Y T T E M E J L K E P Y B K M I R E D B Q I T P
L N E R T C E E Y E J E I E P G N Y O G E H D T
I E L A S E S H G F S E A N L A C W C L G S S N
M L U W I M U E D I S R I C C V S M S I D E C E
A I Y R R B S M Z X N C W Y E N E W L E H L L M
F S A I H E S W E G D G D G I C R S C E Q O M A
S T N E C R O I V Z Z N E C A A G O M A B P I N
S C V S W E C K O C A M A R P D R S S W E H S R
Y E N M I H C J L C E N O P B A J A P P L T T O
U I O W R E A T H R G L I V T R X N H T I R L B
N D J Y W T N O R E S N X I E Y E T N R E O E R
W D H H B I E Y L U G Q O U C V N A K O V N T E
P H P F P A S W R P F N F R A R E A D Z E D O G
F D L W Y E B M A D S L T R N Z F D M M C L E N
J J O Y R S S P E J Z L O C D Y G D F W A Z X A
E O D H A G E O W N C X V B L Q R K Z L O N Y M
Q O U X M R T P J Y Y O J X E H O L L Y N N H O
O K R I S H E P A R D U J I N G L E B E L L S G

Angel	Baby	Believe	Bethlehem	Bows	Candle
Candy Cane	Carols	Chimney	Christmas Tree	Cookies	December
Decorations	Elves	Family	Gingerbread Man	Greetings	Grinch
Holly	Jesus	Jingle Bells	Joseph	Joy	Lights
Love	Manger	Mary	Merry	Mistletoe	Noel
North Pole	Nutcracker	Ornament	Peace	Presents	Reindeer
Rudolph	Santa	Shepard	Silent Night	Sleigh	Snowman
Star	Stockings	Tis The Season	Toys	Wismen	Wrapping Paper
Wreath	Yuletide				

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senior Lunch Bunch -

Sunday, December 10 - Holy Pub Sunday, 45 Degree Brewhouse
10421 E. Sprague 2:00 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.
January 14th - Darcy's

2023 Estimate of Giving Update

The Finance Committee would like to apologize for not being able to get out planned giving statements at the mid-year point this year. When making the attempt to do so it was discovered that we had a software program issue and have been in the process of rebuilding the system for each individual's planned giving statements. At our meeting in November, we discussed the need that some may have to know their giving status prior to the end of the year and that others may just need the year end statements for tax purposes in January. As a committee we decided to ask the congregation to let us know if you need your estimate of giving during the month of December to assist in meeting your pledge for 2023. If you need this information please contact our church secretary, Amanda at (509) 924-7262 and provide contact information and Amanda will pass along the request to Desiree Forster, our Financial Secretary. Desiree will get back with you to provide you with the request information. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Jim Droppers and Jerry Bafus, Finance Committee Co-Chairs



If you have a request for a song for hymn sing,
contact Wes at Wesleyross@protonmail.com

Advent 2 – December 10 - Do You Hear What I Hear?

As we light the Advent Candle of Peace, we will learn from Isaiah 42 how to sing to the Lord a new song and explore how song is one of the most powerful ways to tell God's story! We will enjoy our traditional Second Sunday Hymnsing led by Wes Holmquist and host our "Holy Pub Carols" at the *45 Degree Brewhouse* for those 21 and older! Join us from 2:00-3:30pm to sing your favorite carols led by Luke Henderson and enjoy Christian fellowship! (And if you're wondering if I planned to have the Hymnsing and Holy Pub on this Sunday so we could further focus on our sense of hearing, the answer is "no!" Once again, the Holy Spirit has been WAY ahead my planning!)

Advent 3 – December 17 - Do You Taste What I Taste?

For the third Sunday in Advent, we will light the Candle of Love and read from Psalm 34 in which the psalmist invites us to "taste and see the goodness of God"! Some people might argue that the best way to show love is through their stomach...which makes me think I might need to plan for a special mid-service snack for everyone!

Advent 4 – December 24 at 9am - Do You Feel What I Feel?

On the fourth Sunday in Advent, we will light the Candle of Joy and explore the power and responsibility of physical touch through the story of Simeon (Luke 2:25-32), who was the first person beyond Jesus' family to hold the Christ Child. As we experience the feelings of Christmas, we will also be blessed by the music of our Bell Choir.

Christmas Eve – December 24 at 8pm - Experiencing Christmas

Our 8pm Christmas Eve Service will offer the traditional worship experience of *Lessons and Carols*. This service will be family-friendly (i.e. kids are welcome!) and will invite everyone to experience Christmas filled with hope, peace, love, and joy as we light the Christ Candle! We will use all our senses as we witness the lighting of the Christ Candle, hear the story of the Nativity, and feel the close touch of the incarnate Christ as we wrap our hands around the candles and sing "Silent Night". And to be sure we also engage our sense of taste...there might just be a candy cane to enjoy! Remember – the Sundays of Advent and Christmas Eve are great times to welcome someone to join you for worship so invite your friends and neighbors in both anticipating and celebrating the birth of Christ this year!

New Year's Eve - December 31

It isn't every year that New Year's Eve falls on a Sunday and when it does, it provides us a special opportunity to do a morning observation of *Watch Night*. In the Black church, *Watch Night* was first observed on December 31, 1862, as enslaved and free African Americans gathered to worship, pray, sing, and wait for January 1, 1863, the day the Emancipation Proclamation became law. Also called Freedom's Eve, this first *Watch Night* led to a yearly worship gathering to mark the turning of the old year into the new. As part of our commitment to eliminating racism, the "E" of the Bishop's M.I.L.E., we will dedicate our worship to the learning the traditions of *Watch Night* as we witness to the story of slavery and freedom, reflect on own faith and role in eliminating racism, and celebrate the gifts of community, confession, and covenant through God.

Epiphany – January 7

As we follow along with the Wise Men as they make their way to Bethlehem to offer their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ Child in Matthew 2:1-12, we will keep our senses keen as we kick off our second annual New Year's worship series based on our SVUMC Mission Statement and recommit ourselves to inviting others to "follow Jesus" in the new year!

This promises to be an Advent season full of new and traditional ways to experience the birth Christ - I truly hope you are able to be a part of it all and that you invite others to join you!

A blessed Advent to you-
Pastor Alissa



Helping Hands
serving one another in love
GALATIANS 5:13

*“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”*
John Wesley

The staff at Broadway Elementary School send their thanks for the delicious luncheon on November 16th. They look forward to this luncheon served during conference week. Thank you to all the cooks who brought food. They so appreciate YOU!!!

At the Connect Desk in December

Sunday December 3

Sign up to bring cookies and help at **Broadway Ornament Night**

Bring New Boys and Girl's jeans and tops for **Mission Community Outreach Center**

“Children's Christmas Joy”

Sign up to help serve at **Mission Community Outreach Center Benefit Breakfast**

Sundays December 10 and 17

\$10 gas cards for Family Promise of Spokane

The Mission and Service Team wishes to thank you
for your “window work” in 2023.

Using your resources of time, talent and treasures you have supported:

**Broadway Elementary School, Naomi,
Mission Community Outreach Center,
Our Covenant Relationship with Katherine Parker,
Jamaa Letu Orphanage,
Shalom Ministries, Family Promise of Spokane,
Volunteer of America Crosswalk and Young Adult Shelter,
Neighborhood Sunday Lunch Program at St. Ann,
Valley Partners Food Bank, Meals on Wheels**

**55 Plus Luncheon and Program
December 7, Thursday, at Noon in the Gym
Hot Turkey Sandwich
Program: Pastor Alissa's Renewal Leave in Egypt**



**United
Women
in Faith**

*United Women in Faith shall be a community of women
whose purpose is to know God and to experience
freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ;
to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and
to expand concepts of mission through participation in
the global ministries of the church.*

Spokane Valley United Women in Faith Tea Money

Through out the year each circle collects change at their meetings. We call this money Tea Money.

Why? We are not sure of the total history but we like the name. It reminds us of our beginning history. Six women met on March 23, 1869. They drank some tea and heard from two missionary wives about the need of medical and educational work in India.

After hearing the need, they started collecting their pennies.
By November 1869, they collected enough to send an educator, Isabela Thoburn and a physician, Dr. Clara Swain to India. From that simple beginning began what we now call United Women in Faith. They heard a need.

We hear a need. They collected pennies. We collect change.

Each circle has chosen a non-profit to receive their tea money.
Here is where their tea money is going this year.



Esther Circle will be sending their tea money to
VOA Young Adult Shelter

Rachel Circle will be sending their tea money to
Childhood Cancer Coalition

Rebekah Circle will be sending their money to
Childhood Cancer Coalition

Sarah Circle will be sending their money to
Mission Community Outreach Center

2024 Spokane Valley United Women Officers

President: Madelyn Bafus
Vice President: Robin Gregory
Secretary: Mary Jane Waters
Treasurer: Shirley Porter
Program Resources: Linda Hansen
Mission Coordinator of Education and Interpretation: Nancy Olds
Mission Coordinator of Spiritual Growth: Marlene McCoy
Mission Coordinator of Social Action: Linda Hansen
Sunshine: Susan Henderson
Chair of Esther Circle: Nancy Ashworth
Chair of Rachel Circle: Susan Henderson
Chair of Rebekah Circle: Nancy Olds
Chair of Sarah Circle: Robin Gregory
Chair of Prayer Shawl Ministry: Jodi Mackin