

ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES

DECEMBER 16, SATURDAY

Christmas Caroling

1:00 p.m. Brookdale Senior Living, 4401 Spicewood Springs

All voices—young and old—are invited to help spread Christmas cheer through song! Join our Children's Choir in singing Christmas songs and visiting with residents. We will meet and get organized at the front entrance at 12:30 p.m. and begin singing at 1:00 p.m. Song sheets provided. Dress holiday festive! For more information, contact Roxie Garza at roxie@fumcaustin.org.

DECEMBER 17, SUNDAY

Carols and Lullabies of the Southwest

9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary

This year's services feature the singing of Spanish Carols arranged by Conrad Sousa. These delightful and cheerful settings of beloved carols are well known throughout the Spanish speaking world for their homey, artful simplicity. Hear again the inspiring story of the loving purposes of God, sing the carols of the season, and celebrate together the coming of God's gift of the Holy Child.

Children's Choir Presentation: Come to the Manger

10:00 a.m. Sanctuary

Our Children's Choirs will perform "Come to the Manger: A Service of Lessons and Carols during the Sunday School hour. Come be blessed by their singing.

Cookie Collection Ends

Cookie bakers are needed to provide guests at the Christmas Breakfast with a treat. Our goal is 300 zipped bags with six cookies each! Make your chocolate chip (NO NUTS) cookies and package six per bag in zipped plastic baggies. We will take a dozen or six dozen! Happy baking! Bring cookies to the church on Sundays, December 10 and 17.

Sock Collection Ends

We are collecting new, white, adult-sized tube socks to give to our homeless neighbors at our annual Christmas Breakfast. As you are out and about shopping, consider picking up a bag or two of socks. You may place donations in the bins located in the foyers of the Chapel, Sanctuary, and Family Life Center on Sundays or bring them to the church office.

Youth Engage: Christmas Party

4:30-7:00 p.m. Family Life Center

All youth will celebrate together for our last Engage of the year. There will be food, games, music, and a white elephant exchange. Bring a gift for \$10 or less.

DECEMBER 21, THURSDAY

Blue Christmas Service

7:00 p.m. Murchison Chapel

How come I don't feel it? In the midst of the wonder and expectation of Advent, many of us might feel out of step with the joy and excitement of Christmas. Some of us have lost loved ones or face the "happy" holidays feeling blue with grief or depression. Come to this special worship service on the "longest night" to acknowledge our grief and longing for hope.

DECEMBER 26, TUESDAY

Christmas Breakfast for the Homeless

6:30 a.m. Great Hall

Breakfast will be held from 6:30-8:30 a.m. Our guests enjoy coffee and Christmas music beginning at 6:30 a.m., breakfast will be served at 7:00 a.m. Many in congregation have made this a significant part of their Christmas season. Spaces fill fast, so sign up now at fumcaustin.org/christmasbreakfast.

DECEMBER 24, SUNDAY



Morning Service

11:00 a.m. Sanctuary

For those who are ready to celebrate the birth of Christ early in the day, this traditional service features carols, choral offerings by the FUMC Choir, scripture reading, Holy Communion, and two Baptisms! *Childcare provided.*

Family Service

4:00 p.m., Sanctuary

For the young and young at heart, this 45-minute service is a wonderful way for families with young children to worship together and enjoy the holiness and excitement of the Christ child's arrival.

Childcare provided.

Candlelight Services

8:00 & 11:00 p.m., Sanctuary

These traditional services feature carols, choral offerings, scripture, Holy Communion, and candle lighting to celebrate Christ's birth.

Childcare provided at the 8:00 p.m. service only.

DECEMBER 25, MONDAY



Merry Christmas!

Have a safe and merry holiday!

ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES



Sounds surround us at Christmas time—sounds of crowds at work, shopping, wrapping, cooking; sounds of joyful gatherings, familiar voices and comforting music; sounds of chaos in a world that lives on the brink of war. Listen. Listen for the voice of God, cutting through the clamor. What do you hear? What is God saying? This Advent season, attune your ears to the sound of God with us.

December 10 Second Sunday of Advent

Sermon:

“The Doorbell:
Someone’s Coming”

Scripture:

Luke 1:39-45

December 17 Third Sunday of Advent

Sermon:

“Shouts of Joy:
Echoes from the future”

Scripture:

Psalms 126

December 24 Christmas Eve

Sermon:

“The Bell”

Scripture:

Luke 2:1-20

Morning Service

11:00 a.m.

Family Service

4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Services

8:00 & 11:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Each year we remember that Advent is a season of anticipation. We anticipate the coming celebration of Christ’s birth, and we anticipate Christ’s return—the time when God will restore all things through God’s own loving presence. In Christmas, we remember that God chooses to be with us, and that God’s presence truly changes lives.

We get to join God in changing lives each year through our Christmas Offering. This year, led by Bishop Robert Schnase and joining with the Rio Texas Conference, we have chosen to change the lives of young people in one of the poorest regions of our state by giving to the Lydia Patterson Institute (LPI). Begun in 1913 by a Methodist woman in El Paso, LPI is a United Methodist School that has educated and formed generations of young people for service in the world as agents of love and transformation.

Consider the story of Abigail Cervantes, a 2012 graduate of LPI. After completing the eight years of free education provided in their hometown of Juarez, Mexico, her hard-working parents were unable to provide any further education. They knew a life of poverty and hardship awaited Abigail. Scholarships to attend Lydia Patterson Institute changed all that. Abigail was accepted and, because of the United Methodist Church, she received an education that prepared her for college. Today, Abigail is a graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University and has a promising career as a Registered Nurse. Her future is bright because she has received an education that matches the gifts God gave her.

Lydia Patterson Institute enrolls students from the poorest neighborhoods of El Paso and Juarez—those who are at the greatest risk of having their ambitions and gifts cut short because of poverty. As they learn, these young people are formed in Christian service and discipleship; they work each day on campus to help the school operate, providing janitorial and food services at the school. Starting as early as 4 a.m. each day, many catch a series of buses in order to build a new life for themselves. Now, here’s the amazing work God is doing through LPI: 95% of graduating seniors go to college or university with a mountain of scholarship support they have received with help from LPI. We don’t always think of education as a miracle, but at LPI, thousands of graduates will tell you what a miraculous gift it truly is.

Through our gifts to the Lydia Patterson Institute, we have the power to change a young person’s life. This is what we do as Christians—we recognize all that God has done to change our lives, and then we join God in changing the lives of others. In doing so, we transform the world, one life at a time.

I hope you will join me this Christmas in making a special gift to LPI, over and above your pledged support of FUMC. Your gifts, marked “Christmas Offering,” may be left at the communion rail, dropped in the offering plate, mailed to or brought by the church office, made online at fumcaustin.org/christmasoffering, or text FUMCAUSTIN to 73256. Will you please join me this Christmas in transforming lives through your gifts to the Lydia Patterson Institute?

With great love,

Pastor Taylor