

WELLS SPRING

A Publication of Wells Church

A United Methodist Congregation

December 2025

Let's Take a Slow Journey to the Manger

By Susannah Grubbs Carr
Senior Pastor

As we step into the season of Advent, there is an invitation that is holy and life changing should we accept.



Carr

The invitation is to slow down, breathe more deeply, and prepare for the coming of Christ. Advent beckons us to be more intentional than the world around us seems to allow.

Advent is often overshadowed by the rush of “holiday” everything. Yet at the very heart of the season is the opportunity to do the very opposite of a busy, stressful secular-driven time: to pause, slow down, pay attention in watchfulness so we will remember why we even make preparations to celebrate in the first place, to reclaim the HOPE, PEACE, JOY and LOVE of our faith in Christ Jesus, God in the Flesh, born to set us free.

Advent begins in the dark. That's not because the story of Advent and Christmas is bleak. To the contrary, because God has always done God's best work in dark places — hovering over waters before creation, leading Israel by night, speaking to Joseph in dreams and sending the Savior of the world into a quiet Bethlehem night. Advent reminds us that God is most present where and when we least expect him. Advent reminds us of the

See Manger, Page, 2



We will be lighting the candles on the Advent wreath representing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

Celebrate Christmas Joy with Our Wells Family

The Christmas holiday season in December is full of activities at Wells to help us celebrate with joy.

The theme this year is “Meet Me at the Manger,” and will include special activities as well as a sermon series by Rev. Susannah and Rev. Sue that will help us focus on important aspects of the Christmas story. **(See preaching schedule, Page 2)**

And, of course, the air will be filled with special music. On Dec. 14, the combined choirs of Wells and Broadmeadow UMC will present “A Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration. The concerts will be presented at the 10 a.m. worship service at Wells and at 3 p.m.

at Broadmeadow. **(See ‘Light,’ Page 4)**

On Dec. 7, our everyone is invited to meet at Trustmark Park at 5 p.m. to enjoy the new Southern Lights display and activities together. There also will be special Advent dinners at activities with Broadmeadow — Dec. 3 at Wells and Dec. 10 at Broadmeadow — beginning at 6 p.m. At Wells, we will prepare care packages for our Food Pantry friends, and at Broadmeadow we will participate in Advent prayer stations.

The most important aspect of the season — worship — will include the traditional services in a sanctuary decorated with greenery of the season. Please plan to join us as we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



MEET ME AT THE MANGER



Dec. 1 Howard Ballou, Eryn McCarthy

Dec. 3 Jonathan Huddleston, Peggy Jennings, Roosevelt Carter

Dec. 4 Bob Kersh

Dec. 5 Sam Ferrell

Dec. 7 Douglas "BB" Watson

Dec. 10 Ethan Perkins, Vickie Stewart

Dec. 11 Linda Brewer

Dec. 12 Susan Sloop

Dec. 13 Raymond "Mac" McNulty

Dec. 14 Sarah Parker Bedi, Carson Furniss

Dec. 15 John Dollarhide

Dec. 16 Dave Deardorff, Lorene Nevels, Anitra Montgomery

Dec. 21 Duke Garraway

Dec. 22 Margie Prine

Dec. 23 Zeily Orozco Hernandez, John Stark

Dec. 25 Dora Boaz, Maria Robinson

Dec. 27 Wesley Benson, Chris Pigott

Dec. 30 Michelle Young

Dec. 31 Pam Hynes, Rick Kelly

If your birthday is in December and isn't listed here, please let us know.

Manger

Continued from Page 1

promise that, when God shows up, light breaks into darkness.

Given all these reminders, I invite you to see Advent this year as a journey. A journey to Bethlehem where we will meet at the manger to remember, to celebrate and to receive the greatest gift of our lives: Salvation through Emmanuel, God with us.

We cannot meet at the manger of Christ, fully ready for that miraculous moment, if we have not done the work of Advent.

Our Advent Worship theme will be *"Meet Me at the Manger: A Journey to Christmas."* Each week we will be walking with characters from the biblical Nativity story as we seek to understand our own faith in God through the eyes of these our biblical brothers and sisters.

The manger is far more than a pretty scene on a Christmas card, or a decoration we collect and set out in our homes. The manger is THE place where God chooses to meet us and reveal to us who God truly is — right in the middle of our journey, our ordinary lives, our cluttered hearts, our imperfect stories, and our fears, doubts and hopes — this is where God has chosen to show up.

If you look closely, the characters around this miraculous event — those who prepare the way, who say "yes" in faith, who are courageous in doing God's will, and who are committed to sharing in bold witness the message of Good News, and of course the One who lays in the manger to heal and change the world — these characters are our spiritual road map on this journey.

My prayer for us for this Advent is that we would slow down enough to notice the holy in the midst of the hurry. That we would listen for the quiet stirrings of God as we prepare, and that our hearts will be more open to the One who is always drawing near.

So come, join us as we journey to Christmas at Wells through this holy season. Meet me in hope, meet me in peace, meet me in joy, meet me in love, and meet me where God chooses to meet the world, in a simple feeding trough of life-changing grace.

May this Advent season draw us deeper into the wonder of Christ's birth and the beauty of God's nearness in every part of our journey as we prepare to meet at the manger.

Write Susannah at
revsusannahc@gmail.com.

2025 Wells Church Giving

Jan. \$32,276	July \$36,926
Feb. \$38,392	Aug. \$39,558
March \$51,892	Sept. \$30,117
April \$33,480	Oct. \$68,028
May \$40,881	Nov.
June \$46,982	Dec.

Based on the 2025 budget, \$46,893 is needed monthly to support operations and ministries of the church in 2025.

Wells Memorial United Methodist Church Staff

Susannah Grubbs Carr, Pastor | Sue Keen Hyland, Associate Pastor

Chuck Reynolds
Choir Director

Jamie Ward
Accompanist

Ashley Rogers
Children's Ministry Director

Jane Everly
Pastoral Assistant

Kay Olliver
Treasurer

Elaine Collins
Nursery Coordinator



2019 Bailey Ave. | Jackson, MS 39213 | 601-353-0658
admin@wellschurch.org | www.wellschurch.org

Wells Notes

WellsFest Presents Check

Wellsfest 2025 raised \$32,500 for the Jackson Free Clinic to support JFC's work in providing health care to those in need.

The WellsFest gift, which represents the net proceeds from this year's festival, was presented to JFC representatives on Nov. 23 during the morning worship service. The funds will be used to expand JFC's facilities, which will help expand the clinic's capabilities, said Natasha Burrell, chief outreach officer for JFC.

"I am just so grateful for the generosity of this church and of community and for you guys coming together to truly support us in what we do," she said.

Preaching Schedule

During Advent, Rev. Susannah and Rev. Sue will be preaching a series of sermons: "Meet Me at the Manger: A Journey to Christmas."

Nov. 30 "Walking with John: A Faith that Prepares" (Matthew 3:1-12) Rev. Sue preaching

Dec. 7: "Walking with Mary & Joseph: A Faith That Says Yes." (Matthew 1:18-25) Rev. Susannah preaching

Dec.14: Choir Christmas Concert

Dec. 21: "Walking with the Shepherds: a Faith that Bears Witness" (Luke 2:8-20) Rev. Susannah preaching

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve "The Manger of Christmas: Where Heaven Meets Earth" (Luke 2:1-7) Rev. Susannah preaching

Dec. 28: Rev. Rick Brooks preaching

Facility Manager Sought

Wells is seeking a part-time Facility Manager to work approximately 8 hours per week. This job is ideal for a retiree in the Jackson area. Detailed information about the position and how to apply can be found at

<https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/qE9oYAF7CHCPb76cFnNvqeQ>

Long Awaited Advent

By Ashley Rogers
Children's Director

How many times have you heard an adult lament the lost magic of the holidays? Or maybe you've felt it yourself — that longing to return to a time where all the Christmas season meant was stories around the fire, flipping through the gigantic Sears or JC Penny catalogue with a marker in hand, watching *The Grinch* and *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, decorating the tree, and seeing family members.



Rogers

For many of us, it's a stark contrast to how we experience the holidays as adults. Do we still do most of those activities? Probably. But the added responsibilities and awareness that comes with age can too often dampen the excitement. As we enter the seasons of Advent and Christmas, I invite you to dig deeply and look broadly to rediscover that holiday wonder. We have four weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas to prepare our hearts and minds to joyfully remember and receive the gift of the Christ Child.

Let our weekly focus on Hope, Peace, Joy and Love help realign your focus on what truly matters this holiday season. May we let go of the worry and angst so that we can fully embrace the baby Jesus and the salvation we have in his promised coming!

The church year has a rhythm of seasons — some joyous, others more somber. The church year is complete — it covers the whole story of God's acting in human history. Advent is a time of preparation, a time to remember all the ways God has come to us and will come, a time to prepare ourselves — as well as our homes — for the glorious celebration of Christmas. It's a time of waiting and expectancy, a time of contemplation.

In the upcoming weeks at church, the service will begin with a family lighting the Advent wreath and sharing scripture and prayer to center all of our hearts on the anticipation of the season. If your family is in church in the weeks leading up to Christmas, allow your children to (carefully) examine the Advent wreath! What you'll see is four candles in the greenery itself and a large white candle in the center. But what do they mean?

The four candles in the wreath represent the four virtues Jesus brings us: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. In many churches, ours included, a pink candle is used the third week to symbolize Joy. Each week of Advent, a new candle is lit and on Christmas Eve, after *much* waiting, the Christ candle is lit to symbolize the fulfillment of God's promise in the birth of Jesus Christ.

If you didn't get to attend our Advent Fair at the beginning of November, we still have copies of some great resources — Advent calendars, scripture chains, paper ornaments and a nativity shadow box. If you'd like any of these, please let me know!

May this season of Advent help us all to practice patience and find new ways to exemplify those Christ-like virtues of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

Write Ashley at ashleyrogers@wellschurch.org.

Electronic Service Requested

december 

'Tapestry of Light' Offers Musical Worship

By Chuck Reynolds
Choir Director

On Sunday, Dec. 14, our sanctuary will be filled with the warmth, wonder and joy of the season as the combined choirs of Wells Memorial and



Reynolds

Broadmeadow United Methodist Churches present *Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration*. This special musical program beautifully weaves together familiar carol texts, beloved Celtic melodies, and inspiring new words to create a meaningful worship experience.

Christmas has always been a season marked by music. From the angels' song over Bethlehem to the carols we still sing today, music has the power to express the mystery of the incarnation in ways spoken words cannot. It stirs our hearts, awakens memories and

draws us closer to the presence of God. Whether sung in a choir loft, whispered beside a manger scene or lifted joyfully in a sanctuary full of believers, sacred music gives voice to our hope that Christ has come, and comes still, to bring peace, love and light into the world.

Tapestry of Light embraces that tradition while offering something uniquely beautiful. Celtic music, with its haunting melodies, lilting rhythms and rich cultural heritage, has long carried themes of faith, longing, and celebration. Its storytelling quality makes it a natural partner for the Christmas story, inviting us to experience familiar texts in a new and meaningful way. Listeners will hear new musical settings of carols they know by heart, as well as new texts inspired by scripture and the prayers of the church. From energetic fiddle-inspired rhythms

to gentle flute lines, the music evokes rolling hills, candlelit chapels, and a deep sense of mystery and reverence.

This program is more than a concert; it is an act of worship. Each musical moment has been carefully woven together like threads in a tapestry, telling the story of Christ's coming with beauty and depth. The Celtic sound reminds us that the message of Christmas is not confined to one culture or century. Instead, it echoes across generations and lands, finding new expression while remaining rooted in the eternal truth of Emmanuel, God with us.

We invite you, and encourage you to invite others, to join us for this meaningful celebration of word, song, and light. May the music fill your heart with peace and help you encounter the true joy of Christmas.