



## **WINCHESTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

20 N. Walnut St., Winchester, IL 62694  
217-742-3610  
Webpage: [winchesterilumc.org](http://winchesterilumc.org)

December 10, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers In Christ!

May the Peace, Presence and Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ continue to surround and fill each of you and your families in this Advent season! With only three, remaining Sundays left in 2020, I want to give you an idea about what we at WUMC have in store for you in these last few weeks of the year.

### **Reminders**

It was chilly last Sunday Morning, but our UM Men's Drive Thru Communion Team of Eleven (including Laura and Phyllis), braved the chill and helped us pull off our seventh, drive thru Communion of 2020. We ended up serving the Sacrament to sixty participants, and gave a blessing to two dogs! Also, kudos and thanks to Dr. Tom Welch and the WUMC Float crew for getting our float ready and in the Winchester Christmas Parade last Saturday night! The Christmas Parade was a huge success and a great, Christmas, morale booster for all! Check out the photos on our WUMC Webpage @ [winchesterilumc.org](http://winchesterilumc.org).

### **WUMC Rings Salvation Army Bells: December 19**

Our WUMC Bell Ringing assignment is Saturday, December 19, from 9:00am-1:00pm at Dollar General. I'm putting the schedule of volunteer ringers together. If you would like to ring that day, please call me at the Church at 742-3610. The need in our County is great, and your help is greatly appreciated!

### **Nativity In The Park: Sunday, December 20**

**Our Sunday School youth classes will put on a Drive By Nativity Scene on December 20, 2:00-4:00pm downtown at Douglas Park.** Invite your friends and neighbors to drive around the town Square, as the kids of WUMC Sunday School remind us all of Christmas Good News: "For unto you, is born... a Savior who is Christ the Lord"! We send out a great big THANK YOU to teachers Pam Hembrough and Laura Dukett and the youth of their classes! See you at the Square on December 20!

### **Gifts of the Magi Christmas Offering Week: December 20-24**

The Gifts of the Magi Christmas Offering is one of our long-standing, Christmas traditions here at WUMC. Due to restrictions placed on us by COVID 19, we have extended the Gifts of the Magi Christmas Offering time line a few extra days this year, from December 20 through December 24, Christmas Eve. Though Christmas 2020 will have a different "look" this year, we will still celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, and be thankful to God for the best gift ever: God's love and grace in Jesus Christ! As you put together your family, Christmas Present list, the WUMC Finance Team is hoping you will also remember the Gifts of the Magi Christmas Offering, and will include a Christ Gift for the mission and ministry of WUMC. Your Christ Gift can be mailed to WUMC, (envelope enclosed) or you can drop your gift by the Church (inside or mailbox) or you can make a gift electronically by using our VANCO App on the WUMC Webpage.



### **Christmas Eve Communion: December 24, 2:00-4:00pm**

As of press time, we still have not heard a ruling from Bishop Beard concerning directives for all 800 UM Churches in our IGRC Conference. Our plan is to serve Come and Go Communion from 2:00-4:00pm on Christmas Eve. We will keep everyone posted as we get closer to December 24.

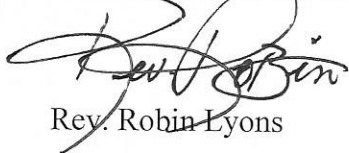
### **Closing Remarks**

If nothing else we have learned these past nine months, we have certainly learned this life truth: some things in life are just beyond our ability to control. When given these situations, like COVID 19, we adhere to a simple formula for coping and success: adapt, improvise and overcome. Because we at WUMC have been following the IGRC safety guidelines and protocols, we have had ZERO instances of COVID 19 in the Church! Our goal is to keep our Zero Instance streak going.

It goes without saying, but I will anyway: my favorite Service of the year, Christmas Eve Service, will have a different look this year due to the coronavirus situation. We won't have 200 people in the Sanctuary, nor any Christmas, choral selections from our WUMC Choir. We will not light individual candles and sing "Silent Night" together. (We WILL PLAN to do that again in 2021!) However, we will have a Christmas Eve Broadcast, and we will have an opportunity to receive Christmas Eve Communion during that afternoon. WE WILL CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS, and the coming again of EMMANUEL in our world and in our lives! If approached in a spirit of genuine reverence, gratitude, joy and thanksgiving, this Christmas 2020 has the possibility of being the best Christmas ever! As author Thomas S. Monson has written, "*Finding the real joy of Christmas comes not in the hurrying and scurrying to get more done, nor is it found in the purchasing of gifts. We find real joy when we make the Savior the focus of the Season.*" Christmas is coming, as we prepare to welcome his saving, presence of joy, peace, hope and love, for "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..."

You all are in my daily prayers. Keep on helping others when you can, and encourage each other to share the Christmas Message in word and deed to those all those around us. Let us all prepare our hearts and lives for Christ's Coming Again, with open eyes, open ears and open hearts! Everyone stay well the best you can, be kind to others, and always, KEEP FAITH!

In Christ's Love and Service,



Rev. Robin Lyons

**PS: Our WUMC Finance Team has asked me to announce to everyone that all financial gifts to WUMC for 2020 credit must be sent to the Church (or delivered) by Wednesday, December 30.**