



# Newsletter

At the end of Mark 10, we find the story of blind Bartimaeus. It appears that Bartimaeus lived in Jericho, which is down the mountain to the east of Jerusalem about 25 miles. Jesus is leaving Jericho headed to Jerusalem for what we have come to know as his Palm Sunday triumphal entry. On the way out of town, he encounters Bartimaeus, who cries out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus asks him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And Bartimaeus says, "My Teacher, let me see again." The passage ends with, "Immediately he regained his sight and followed [Jesus] on the way."

"I want to see again." Evidently, at one time Bartimaeus could see. At some point, he lost his vision. No one knows what kind of accident or condition may have led to his loss of sight. But Jesus healed him and gave him the gift of sight once more.

This may seem like an odd passage for this time right on the cusp of Christmas. It's that request, "Let me see *again*" that captures my attention.

Every year I worry about how busy we get preparing for Christmas; how consumed we are with tasks and duties and preparations. I know people who agonize over getting just the right gift for each person on the list. I worry about children whose expectations are dashed by disappointment. One year, when I was a kid of about 10 or 11, I received 3 of the exact same gift, and I was happy about none of them. I worry about kids who have figured out that they probably will get next to nothing. Thank God for ministries like the Angel Tree.

Whatever pressures we may be feeling this time of year, I pray that we can have a Bartimaeus experience. "Let me see again." To see the depth of God's love in the Babe in Bethlehem. To see God's faithfulness to his promises to his people, Israel. To see the grand scope of history. Human destiny will work out just the way God sees it. And our God is good. All the time!

Maybe you've managed to keep a sane schedule and a steady heart throughout your preparations for Christmas. Or maybe you feel like a lot of people seem to feel: breathless, hurried, maybe more than a little worried about the Big Day. Either way, my prayer for all of us is that we see again, that we see the deep meaning of Christmas again in all its glorious simplicity. God took human nature among the most common of conditions and surroundings. God, the Creator of all things, whose power rules over all, whose glory is unmatched, is Love Incarnate.

Let's take a deep breath. Let's open our eyes. Let's see again.

*From Pastor Steve's Desk*



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

News .....	2
Special Events .....	3
Ministry Reports .....	4
In Memoriam .....	4
Events Calendar .....	5
Birthdays and Anniversaries .....	6

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Advent
- ESL Wrap-up
- Live Nativity
- Poinsettias in Honor or Memory

## ESL 2023 WRAP-UP



English as a Second Language completed its 2023 classes with awards and celebration on Wednesday, Nov. 15, at the St. Paul campus. This was our second year of classes after skipping two years because of COVID and the ninth year of ESL classes overall.

We had an enrollment of 24 students, 12 of whom stayed with us to the end. This is typical as some drop out early or have work schedule changes that prevent their attending.

We had one student who met with her teacher outside of scheduled classes due to work schedule.

Students were tested at the end of the class sessions. Two of the twelve were out of town and were not available for testing at another time. Students needed to score 70% or better in order to receive a recognition certificate. Six students met that goal. Two of those six had two tests to take and met the goal on both tests, so eight testing certificates were awarded.

Four students received certificates and \$10 Braum's gift cards for perfect attendance. Two students received \$5 Braum's gift cards and a certificate for exemplary attendance because they missed only one class.

Volunteers deserve credit for their dedication and commitment to the program. Those who took a teaching role were Sylvia McAlister, who has taught every year; Sandy Smith who has taught seven years; Lynda Arnett, Shanna Graham, and Elrea Mullen who taught for the first time. Joni Rankin not only taught on Wednesday nights but also taught outside of class time using different material with a student she had last year.

The need for volunteers doesn't stop with teachers. Cheri Morris took care of attendance and registration, Jon Oak did security, and Shelly and Gracelan Dixon handled the nursery with occasional help from Kareem Espino. A few other people stepped up to help on an as needed basis. They were Billie Swanson, Doris Miller, and Nancy Talbert.

We were blessed this year with four translators. They were Melissa Mendez, who helped both during and outside of class time, Sherilyn Espino, Natalie Caprio, and Michelle Ambriz. These translators were vital for making things run more smoothly and efficiently. Two of the translators volunteered their services without being asked because they recognize the need among the Spanish population to learn English.

Thank you to all the volunteers!

Nancy Clarkson, ESL Coordinator



## Cards of Thanks

*To all my friends at Arkansas City United Methodist Church,*

*Thank you so much for all your cards, prayers, and visits the last few months for Fred and I. We as a family appreciate your concern.*

*I hope to return to church again when I regain my strength. Time will tell.*

*Again, thank you,  
Donna and Fred Rindt*

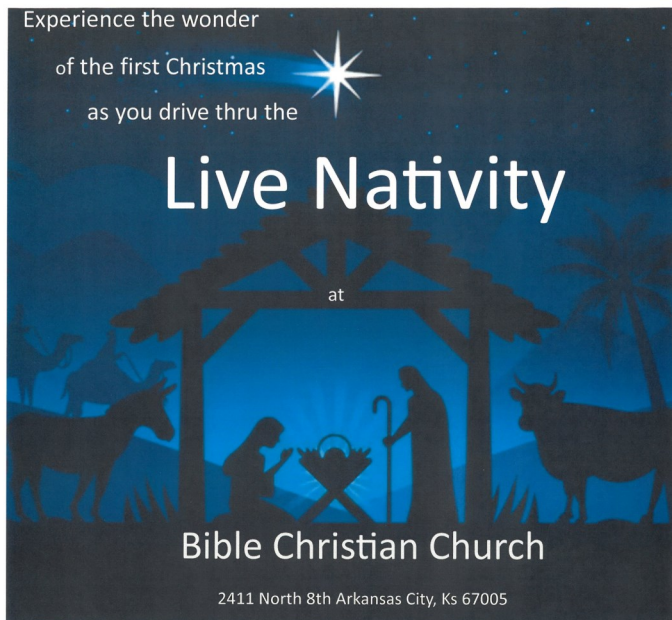
*To the Arkansas City Methodist Church,*

*We want to express our gratitude to the church family and especially Pastor Steve Rankin for the use of the church for our family reunion and baptisms. It was a special time of remembering the beginnings of our own Christian walks as we grew up in this church's family.*

*Please accept this donation with our gratitude. We are praying for God's continued guidance of this church.*

*Thank you, Jean and John Gough*

## SPECIAL EVENTS



AC UMC is a sponsor of the live nativity Friday and Saturday, Dec. 8 and 9, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at Bible Christian Church, 2411 N. 8th, Arkansas City.

Other participating churches include Blessing Heights, Calvary Chapel, First Baptist, First Church of the Nazarene, and Harvest Fellowship Four-square. Lynda

Arnett has liaised with Bible Christian to provide many of the costumes from the church's collection.

### BRING ON THE TALENT!

Family Life Services is having a talent show as part of their annual fundraising banquet Saturday, March 9, and they're looking for acts! Entry fee is \$100 per act, or purchase a table for 8 and waive the entry fee. Pick up an entry form at the church office and submit it by Thursday, Feb. 15!



### BEAT THE DEC. 31 DEADLINE



#### DECEMBER 31, 2023

Deadline for gifts to be doubled with \$50,000 Matching Challenge Grant\*



#### MARCH 2024

Construction Begins

#### MAY 2024

Challenge Course open for Summer Camp 2024

Camp Horizon has a new grant to redesign and repair the challenge course. Deadline for gifts to be doubled with a \$50,000 matching grant is Dec. 31. Highlights of the new challenge course include two new zip lines, a climbing/rappelling tower, a giant team pull swing, a 2-person leap of faith, and a vertical playpen. Donate online at [Donate/Buy a Brick – Camp Horizon \(horizoncenter.org\)](https://www.horizoncenter.org)



*Let us pray for each other. Contact Pam Archer at (620) 446-2456 or at [parcher@cox.net](mailto:parcher@cox.net) to add your request to the prayer chain. Let Pam know if you'd like to receive the e-mail list as a reminder to pray.*

### LOCAL SERVICES

#### MEALS

Mondays—Northside Baptist Church; 5:30-6 p.m.  
Wednesdays—Arkansas City United Methodist Church St. Paul Campus; 5:30 p.m.  
Thursdays—Shepherd's Grace 5-6 p.m.

#### OTHER FOOD

Food Pantry, First Assembly of God Church  
Manna Ministries, First Baptist Church

#### BLESSING BOXES

Central Christian Church  
Arkansas City United Methodist Church, Edgemont and St. Paul campuses  
Hog Mob Ministries  
Shepherd's Grace Church  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
West Kansas Avenue Church of God

#### HOUSEHOLD

Angels in the Attic Thrift Store  
Cowley County Outreach—Angel's Closet  
Community Laundry Resource Service

#### CLOTHING

Rooted Women's Ministry  
AC NAZ Free Clothes Closet

#### LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

Inside City Hall  
Inside Northwest Community Center  
Pershing Park  
Ark City United Methodist Church St. Paul Campus  
Wilson Park

#### FAMILY LIFE SERVICES

305 S. Summit

#### SHELTER

Arkansas City Ministerial Alliance  
(620) 393-0060

Winfield House of Hope

(620) 983-6464  
[cowleyhouseofhope@gmail.com](mailto:cowleyhouseofhope@gmail.com)

#### TRANSPORTATION

Twin Rivers General Public Transportation (620) 442-3575 or (620) 221-6140  
General Public Transportation: (620) 221-7020

*Check flyers posted on church bulletin boards for details.*

## IN MEMORIAM

The church has received delivery of a dozen poinsettias for the Advent and Christmas season. If you would like to pay for one or more in honor or memory of a loved one, call the church office at 620.442.4530. Cost is \$15 each.



Do you shop at **Dillons**? Consider signing your shopper rewards card up to benefit the church with a cash back for all of your purchases. Here's how to do it online: [Dillons Community Rewards - Dillons Food Stores](#). You can also sign up with customer service in the store.

If you are unable to attend church on Sundays, search for Ark City UMC on Facebook and worship with us Sundays at 10 a.m.



## FINANCE REPORT

### October 2023

Income \$ 22,528  
Expenses 21,020

### 2023 through October

\$228,810  
229,228

## SHARE MEALS SERVED

### Monthly Totals

Jan	318	Jul	374
Feb	334	Aug	487
Mar	407	Sep	503
Apr	326	Oct	520
May	446	Nov	478
Jun	397	Dec	

## ESL 2023

Date	Students	Volunteers	Nursery	
Aug. 16		13	14	2
Aug. 23		23	16	5
Aug. 30		13	15	6
Sept. 6		16	16	5
Sept. 13		13	15	5
Sept. 20		12	14	3
Sept. 27		12	13	6
Oct. 4		12	14	2
Oct. 11		11	14	5
Oct. 18		9	15	5
Nov. 1		9	12	5
Nov. 8		11	11	5
Nov. 15	5, with 5 guests		11	5

## ad·vent

[ˈad,vent]

### NOUN

the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event:  
"the advent of television"

SIMILAR: [arrival](#) [appearance](#) [emergence](#) [materialization](#) [surfacing](#)

- the first season of the Christian church year, leading up to Christmas and including the four preceding Sundays.



- CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY  
the coming or second coming of Christ.

# DECEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	F/S
					1/2
<p>3 <b>First Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Adult Sunday School; Disciple 8:30 am MS Bible Study 9:30 am Fellowship Coffee 10:00 am Worship 4:30 pm Caroling and Soup Supper 6:00 pm Faithbuilders</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Small Group</p>	<p>5</p> <p>10:30 am Seeking Sisters</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:00 pm Prayer + 5:30 pm SHARE Meal @ St. Paul; Handbells 6:00 pm Kid's Club/Youth Group 6:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	8/9
<p>10 <b>Second Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Adult Sunday School; Disciple 8:30 am MS Bible Study 9:30 am Fellowship Coffee 10:00 am Worship; Bucket Sunday 2:30 pm Music Club Christmas Concert 6:00 pm Faithbuilders</p>	<p>11</p> <p>5:30 pm Quilt Guild 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Small Group</p>	12	<p>13</p> <p>5:00 pm Prayer + 5:30 pm SHARE Meal @ St. Paul; Handbells 6:00 pm Kid's Club/Youth Group 6:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	15/16
<p>17 <b>Third Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Adult Sunday School; Disciple 8:30 am MS Bible Study 9:30 am Fellowship Coffee 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Fellowship Meal 6:00 pm Faithbuilders</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Small Group</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:30 am Seeking Sisters</p>	<p>20</p> <p>1:30 pm UWF 5:00 pm Prayer + 5:30 pm SHARE Meal @ St. Paul; Handbells 6:00 pm Kid's Club/Youth Group 6:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>21</p>	22/23
<p>24 <b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Adult Sunday School; Disciple 8:30 am MS Bible Study 9:30 am Fellowship Coffee 10:00 am Worship <b>5:00 pm Candlelight Service</b></p>	<p>25</p> 	26	<p>27</p> <p>5:00 pm Prayer + 5:30 pm SHARE Meal @ St. Paul; Handbells 6:00 pm Kid's Club/Youth Group 6:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>28</p>	29/30
<p>31</p> <p>8:30 am Adult Sunday School; Disciple 8:30 am MS Bible Study 9:30 am Fellowship Coffee 10:00 am Worship</p>					

**ARKANSAS CITY  
UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH**

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our vision is to help people become deeply committed Christians who live authentic lives modeled after Jesus Christ to make a difference in our community and the world.

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

Dec. 2	Heather Munson	Dec. 27	Mykenzie Goff
Dec. 7	Diane Birdzell Kyla Baker		Zabreana Thompson Carlene White
Dec. 12	Glenn and Kim Walton		Rowyn Hensen
Dec. 14	Jill Sullivan	Dec. 28	Fred and Donna Rindt
Dec. 16	Donald Evinger Woody Marker	Dec. 30	Josiah Cox Louise Smith
Dec. 18	Lon Pressnall	Dec. 31	Jeffrey Musson Jordan Wilson
Dec. 21	Deanna Kuder		
Dec. 23	Joycelyn Goff Adah Utt		
Dec. 24	Monica Wise		
Dec. 26	Richard Hensley		

**CONTACT US**

Edgemont Campus  
2448 Edgemont Dr.  
Arkansas City, KS 67005

St. Paul Campus  
220 E. Washington Ave.  
Arkansas City, KS 67005

Phone: 620.442.4530  
E-mail:  
office@arkcityumc.com



PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE