

Monthly Newsletter

SEMC
COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

1 December 2024 ✦



“Emmanuel” God WITH Us...

I woke up this morning with frost blanketing the blades of grass as they seem to stretch towards the morning sun. I took in a deep breath and exhaled to see my very breath swirl in the crisp air and gentle sunlight. The world seems so quiet in those first morning rays. I don't know about you, but there is always something magical about seeing the earth wake up.

Oftentimes I am alone as I take in these first intentional moments. But today, as I took a deep breath in and listened to hear a bird, a faraway car, there was only silence, and I felt so alone.

I thought about a few dear friends who are alone. I thought of those who, in this Christmas season, are alone with no family or a loss of a loved one. I thought about those who simply long to be with others and yet for whatever reason are “outcast or marginalized”. I asked God why so many have to suffer alone?

And then quietly and softly as if it was but a whisper in the air, I received the name Emmanuel. It's at that very moment, I am reminded that God, Emmanuel is “God WITH us.” God IS with us in our busyness of the holiday season and with us in the very quiet alone moments.

God is with us, at home, work, the store, the neighborhood and church. God is with us as we battle sickness, loneliness, cancer, surgeries and even death.

Sometimes the world gets awfully lonely and dark, but we are reminded to be the light as it says in Matthew 5:14.

I encourage you this season to find ways to be the light and seek to find Emmanuel because HE is with us.

Andrea Johnson

In this newsletter you can expect:

World Church
Events Updates

Mission Center
Recap and
Updates

Congregation
News

Prayer and
Praise Reports

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Events



World Church Updates

As world church is wrapping up this 2024 season, there is so many ways we can stay in touch and involved through the holiday season.

Here are a few items of note:

Tuesday, December 3rd is giving Tuesday. It is a great opportunity to give and share your resources to bring hope to those in need. This year \$200,000. was given to match contributions. That offers double the giving and support needed. You can give online at: www.cofchrist.org/give

Advent 2024 Theme is "Hope is Near." with focus text on Luke 1:46-55.

Weekly themes:

12/1/2024-Joy before us

12/8/2024- Love Overflows

12/15/2024- The Lord is Near (Hope)

12/22/2024 -The Magnificat: A Vision of Justice

You can also download advent resources for families and households.

Mission Center News

As many congregations are busy preparing for the Christmas season, there are a few reminders and dates to mark your calendars for.

*The world conference survey is due by 12-15-2024. This survey is vital to the World Church as they prepare and prioritize legislation for world conference. Mrs. Chris Binkley Gillum sent a reminder email on 11-30-2024. If you have not taken the time to respond to the survey, please do.

*Wednesday, December 4th, Startrekcofc will be giving a special presentation on CIMM sessions at 8:00PM. Bill will send a link out for anyone interested in listening and being a support to our group within the mission center.

*Men's Retreat

Theme: "Where is Your Spirit Leading Me?"

**Guest Ministry: Seventy, Charlie Carter (Former Pastor of Greenville, SC congregation and spouse of retired Apostle Barbara Carter.)

**Dates: 3/21/2025-3/22/2025 tentatively at Greenville Congregation.

**Seventy, Charlie Carter will be speaking on Sunday 3/23/2025 at Greenville as well.

More info to come!

*Women's Retreat

Theme: "Becoming Women of Blessing."

Dates: 3/28/2025-3/30/2025

Where: Lake Junaluska (Lambuth Inn)

Cost: \$200 per person

(That covers lodging, food, supplies, the book "The Blessing")

Plan on a flyer coming soon and guest ministry will be updated once we get confirmation. Please share with all the women in your congregation.

SEMC Congregation Updates



Atlanta

Pastors Peter and Candy Melsen.

Atlanta is in full swing with the holiday festivities. We have the sanctuary set beautifully for Advent and Christmas. Our annual Christmas party is scheduled for Dec 8th. that includes the fun filled White Elephant gift exchange.

Our final class on the book, "The Blessing" will be Dec 15th. The journey through the book has been enlightening and truly a blessing.

As always, we enjoy the Advent season as we journey through the true reason for the season. (Attached is a picture of our sanctuary for Christmas.)

Cary

Pastor Patty Seery:

Cary congregation has been preparing for the holiday season and enjoy the journey through Advent.

We do have our scheduled business meeting on December 15th.

The prayer bench has been a beautiful addition to our congregation.

This month has also been a big "health" month with Patty having surgery and recovery and Tyler having surgery and just begun the PT and recovery.

May all the congregations have a very Merry Christmas.

Charleston

Pastor Kathy Johnson:

Charleston congregation enjoys the season with special advent services as well as an annual Christmas party. We like to bring appetizers and play a silly gift exchange. We remember the reason for the season. Jesus Christ is our greatest gift.

We are starting a coffee and book club get together for Sunday mornings. WE are excited to see how this evolves. We have a Keurig coffee pot. Everyone will bring a pod to share or creamer. We have a selected book and will discuss it

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Kathy Johnson .

Weekly Zoom Opportunities

- Tuesdays 8:00PM EST "Armed with Truth" hosted by Greenville Congregation
 - Zoom meeting id: 857 5643 3250 passcode: 997905
 - Wednesdays 7:00PM EST "SEMC Bible Study" hosted by Atlanta North Congregation
 - Zoom meeting id: 834 7049 0497 passcode: 522969
 - Saturdays 8:00PM CST "Star Trek CofC" hosted by Bill Cozzens -Bryant and Greenville congregation
 - Zoom meeting id: 817 7665 1063 passcode: 094922
 - Sundays 10:50AM EST Greenville/Knoxville combined worship
 - Zoom meeting id: 896 7422 9129 psacode: 808071
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SEMC Congregation Updates



Greenville

Pastors Viola Suddaby and Steve Crowder

Greenville will be having their Christmas party on December 15th. It is a fun tradition to play the “present stealing game”. There is plenty of laughter and great food shared for the Christmas party.

We have several guest ministries this month for our combined Greenville/Knoxville services:

Dec 8th- Apostle David Nii

Dec 15th- Bishop Garland Land

Dec 29th- Mission Center President Tyler Grange

Jan 19th- Evangelist Heather Donofrio

Kernersville

Pastor Christine Gillum

Kernersville is celebrating not only the Advent season but also does, “A Countdown to Christmas with 25 Daily Gifts.” This is a great way to share throughout the Christmas season the love and hope found in Jesus. (I will add the Calander to email for reference and use.)

Also, Bill and Linda have Christmas concerts that Kernersville enjoys attending. It's a beautiful way to support their special ministry.

Savannah

Pastor Mark Johnson

Savannah is gearing up for their Christmas celebration/meal that is scheduled for later this month. This year we hope to invite the neighbors over and “make the table longer”.

We continue to mainly meet on zoom due to health, healing and surgeries but are blessed that we have a way to continue to connect.

The hope is to plan a few outings for the 2025 season to share in our community.

Warner Robins

Pastor Melissa Rabun and
2025 Pastor Elect Joe Houston

We are gearing up for the holiday season here in Warner Robins.

We have decided this year to have a mug exchange for the women's group on December 21st. It should be a warm and inviting time with goodies to share as well.

One thing that has taken off here at Warner Robins that we will continue in 2025 is the Coffee Club/Breakfast Club. We meet every Tuesday at our local coffee shop. We have had a great turnout each week for this gathering and hope to grow in the new year.

Our adult class for January will be studying a book, “Real-life Discipleship” Jim Putman



PRAYER NEEDS AND PRAISE REPORTS

- Justin Hartwig- needs hip replacement
- Norman and Mary Jane Nichols -health and preparing to head to FL
- Theresa- Margaret Griffin's Mother in Law- health
- Esther's son and grandson-Pete and Khail
- Earl and Cindy Coolman-Earl is still recovering from accident and testing due to stroke-Cindy battling health issues
- World Church as they prepare for WC2025
- Pray for our country
- Tyler Grange -continued healing
- Andrea Johnson-continued healing
- World Church Leadership
- CeeCee-Andrea's neighbor-health issues seeing all kinds of specialists.
- Heather Donofrio mom-diagnosed with Lymphoma starts chemo
- Mike and Linda Sherman -celebrating their 50th anniversary
- Addie Binkley- 2 parts in the Nutcracker performance. AWESOME

Thank you for reading!

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ATLANTA NORTH'S-SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS



ADVENT 2024

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS WITH 25 DAILY GIFTS

(THANK YOU KERNERSVILLE)

1. THE GIFT OF PRAISE – PRAISE THE LORD FOR THIS SEASON AND FIND SOMEONE TO PRAISE TODAY
2. THE GIFT OF HOPE – ENCOURAGE SOMEONE TODAY
3. THE GIFT OF GRATITUDE – SEND A THANK YOU CARD TO SOMEONE
4. THE GIFT OF GENTLENESS – LET ALL YOUR WORDS BE GENTLY SPOKEN TODAY
5. THE GIFT OF SOLITUDE – ALLOW SOMEONE SOME TIME ALONE
6. THE GIFT OF NOURISHMENT – BAKE SOME CHRISTMAS GOODIES AND GIVE THEM AWAY
7. THE GIFT OF FRIENDSHIP – SEEK OUT A FORGOTTEN FRIEND
8. THE GIFT OF MEDITATION – READ GOD’S WORD AND MEMORIZE AT LEAST ONE VERSE
9. THE GIFT OF PEACE – PRAY FOR PEACE IN YOUR COUNTRY, IN YOUR CHURCH, AND IN YOUR HOME
10. THE GIFT OF A PHONE CALL – CALL SOMEONE TO SEE HOW THEY ARE DOING
11. THE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS – MEND A QUARREL
12. THE GIFT OF A PRAYER – PRAY FOR SOMEONE WHO IS IN NEED OR ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST
13. THE GIFT OF HOSPITALITY – INVITE SOMEONE TO YOUR HOME OR TREAT SOMEONE TO LUNCH
14. THE GIFT OF GENEROSITY – GIVE BEYOND WHAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY GIVE
15. THE GIFT OF PRESENCE – TAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO SOMEONE ELSE’S STORY
16. THE GIFT OF LOVE – TELL SOMEONE HOW MUCH YOU LOVE THEM
17. THE GIFT OF GOODNESS – DO A GOOD DEED FOR SOMEONE YOU HAVE DIFFICULTIES WITH
18. THE GIFT OF FAITH – SHARE YOUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST WITH SOMEONE
19. THE GIFT OF KINDNESS - DO A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS DURING THE DAY
20. THE GIFT OF PATIENCE – BE EXTRA PATIENT WITH SOMEONE TODAY
21. THE GIFT OF FASTING – GIVE UP ONE THING TODAY AND SPEND THAT TIME WITH GOD
22. THE GIFT OF GUIDANCE – LET THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDE YOU TO DO SOMETHING FOR SOMEONE
23. THE GIFT OF JOY – LAUGH WITH SOMEONE OR YOURSELF TODAY
24. THE GIFT OF CONFESSION – THINK OF SOMETHING YOU NEED TO CONFESS AND GIVE IT TO JESUS
25. THE GIFT OF CELEBRATION – CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF JESUS WITH ONE NEW TRADITION

CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF JESUS WITH HOPE, PEACE, LOVE, AND JOY