

NOWATA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



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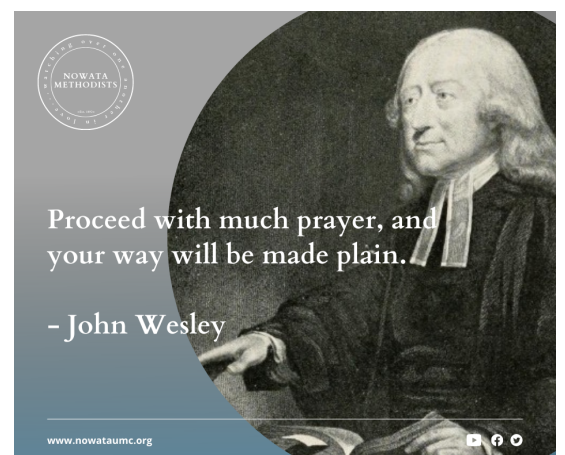
The Joy of Spiritual Family

Written by Pastor Jeffrey Rickman

Advent has begun. The greenery has been placed around the sanctuary. My children often ask to go over to the church to “see Christmas.” They plug in the lights on the tree and amble around it together. Despite the anxiety of our historical moment, people we see seem generally happier than they have been for some time. We walk to Wisebeans Coffee Shop downtown. They marvel at the Christmas decorations while sipping on hot chocolate.

At this point, it almost seems like a lost cause to try to make Jesus the center of America’s holiday season. I think our culture has successfully ignored Jesus to the point where the vast majority of people love this season for reasons other than Jesus. If anything, people love this time of year for the decorations, the parties, and the time with family. Very few now know about the importance of the Incarnation (what we celebrate on Christmas), nor the Second Coming (what we anticipate during Advent). Rather, most are content not to know why we do things the way we do. An entire country full of people who are, for the most part, disinterested in the foundations upon which they stand.

I walk around feeling like I know an inside joke, or a mystery. I think I like a holiday focused on rampant consumerism and the avoidance of death being further removed from my Lord and Savior. As our culture grows more ignorant of the domesticated Jesus who was so long taught, I feel as though our dangerous and worldchanging



Jesus has more power. As medieval people walked around Europe, they saw the ruins of a once-great civilization (the Roman Empire). Most had no idea the heights to which humans could ascend. Likewise, we today live among the ruins of a civilization ravaged by decades of hedonism and idolatry. While the forces of darkness relax in self-satisfied victory, it still cannot comprehend the light (John 1:5), which will be its doom. It was in the darkness of the ruins of a once-great Judea that Jesus was born. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, the heavenly armies appeared to shepherds, proclaiming the birth of the messiah. Likewise, Jesus foretells that the world will be completely unaware when he returns with all his angels to destroy the forces of darkness (Matthew 24:36-44).

We Christians walk around the world, not so distracted by the things around us that we cannot see the promises of God. During this season of cold darkness, our role is not to quell our misery with eggnog, shopping, decorating, or Hallmark movies (although perhaps these can be done with some prudence?). Rather, we are comforted in the darkness, because we know it has no power over the light. While the world might want to co-opt Christmas, one cannot take something that belongs to the Lord of Lights. We stand secure, knowing that whether or not the world keeps 'Christ' in Christmas, we are being kept in Christ. That is a most comfortable place to be.

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Christmas Eve Worship



Join us for our annual Christmas Eve candlelight service at 7pm on Friday, December 24th. We

will read scripture and sing hymns to celebrate the birth of our Savior. At the close of our service, we will light candles and sing a few songs in the quiet and darkness of the night.

Coming Up in December

- December 4 from 7am-10am
Delaware Methodist Church
Breakfast
- December 12 at 5:00pm
Christmas Caroling at Nowata
Nursing Home
- December 14 at 6:30pm
Administrative Board
meeting
- December 23
Gwen C.'s birthday
- December 24 at 7:00pm
Christmas Eve Worship
- December 26
Potluck after worship

Happening Every Week

Worship: Sundays at 11am

Women's Prayer Group:
Wednesdays at 10:30am

Bible Reading Hour:
Thursdays at 6:30pm

Office Hours: Monday-Friday
from 9am-Noon

Contact Us

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A History of First United Methodist Church of Nowata (Part 3):

Information gathered & compiled by Mrs. Chas E. Shafer & Floy Y. Shafer

In 1910 the original church building was moved across the street (probably to where the senior center is currently located). A new building was built between 1910 & 1911 for a contract price of \$20,000. There was a week long dedication from February 5th to the 12th. The new building as well as a church bulletin from that week is pictured below.

The new building had a large auditorium with balcony seating on three sides and large enough to seat 1200. It served as a meeting place not only for the church but also community events. High School graduations would take place here until the High School auditorium was built in 1938.

Many of the stained glass windows that still adorn our current building to this day were purchased at this time, including "Gethsemane" which was purchased by the church's Ladies Aid Society.

For more information about our church's history you can visit our website:
<http://www.nowataumc.org/history>



An easy way to promote our church and share about your faith is to share our church's online content. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. We are also airing a new podcast as well! If you are unsure how find our content or share it with your friends, please stop by the church office on a weekday so that Pastor Jeffrey or Sara Beth can teach you how!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nowatamethodist
Twitter: @NowataUMC
YouTube: Nowata United Methodist Church
Podcast: Nowata Methodist Podcast

Touring Local Ministries

Pastor Jeffrey, TJ, and others have begun taking tours of other local ministries that seek to help the poor. They have also had opportunities to sit down with the directors of these ministries (Tulsa Dream Center and Lighthouse Outreach in Bartlesville) to pick their brains about the details of running ministries like these. This has given us knowledge not only of what other ministries we might point folks in need toward, but it is also helping our church leadership decide which path we might take to help the needy and brokenhearted here in our own community of Nowata.

If you are interested in what wisdom and knowledge these ministries have to offer us, check out the interviews and tours on our church's YouTube channel.



We are on Apple Podcasts!

Check out our new podcast, "Nowata Methodists", on Apple Podcasts. You can listen to past worship services, interviews with Pastor Jeffrey, and any other content we record.

Corner of Appreciation

We want to express our appreciation for those who serve our church in various ways on Sundays and throughout the week.

We appreciate David Hindman, Bobby Wilson, and Karen Wilson reading scripture in worship in October. We also are thankful for Gwen Clingan and the Barron family for reading scripture in November.

Thank you to Jeff Holt and Karen Wilson for providing the main courses at our October potluck. The brisket and meatloaf were delicious!

We are grateful to Mesa Holt, Cyndi Trammel, Bobby Wilson, Gwen Clingan, and TJ Owens who helped prepare the sanctuary for Advent.