

The United Endeavor

News from United Evangelical Church

December 03/January 04

Pastor's Message



*Christmas
Eve*

7:30 p.m.
&
11:00 p.m.

*New Years
Eve*

11:30 p.m.

Making Room

The weeks of Advent bring with them a myriad of activity as we prepare for the coming of Christ. It is a time of excitement! I remember as a child how wound up my sisters and I would be when the Christmas decorations were brought down from the attic. The day would begin with a flurry of cleaning and rearranging of the furniture to make room for those special icons that signified Christ's coming: the tree, the manger, angel-shaped candles.

This physical cleaning and making room for decorations is reflective of what we are called to do spiritually as we draw close to Christmas. Each Advent we hear John the Baptist calling us into a time of repentance, to clear our hearts of the darkness of sin so that there is room for the light of Christ to dwell within us. The Gospels convey a sense of urgency in making room, a sense that our preparedness is vital for our well-being. John's message is a warning to be prepared, for God will come in God's time and in God's way.



ADVENT

Luke points out that Christ's coming will not be delayed by our lack of preparation, as Jesus is born even though there is no room at the inn. This earth-shaking

event, in which hosts of angels are seen and heard upon the earth, and all of time is redefined, is not dependent upon our readiness. Rather we are to hear that the onus is upon us to make room, for God will come in unexpected ways, and in the fullness of God's time, not ours.

As Advent approaches there are many physical signs that here at United we are preparing for the coming of Christ. The sanctuary will be decorated with the symbols of the season; an additional worship

service has been created through which to announce His coming; space has been rearranged to make

room for everyone who would come to worship the newborn King.

In the midst of all this, may the preparations of our hearts also be ready to welcome Christ who may come in unexpected ways, such as through the face of someone we have never seen before, or through the worship and music we have never experienced before. May we each be prepared with room in our hearts when we sing..."O Holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today." Blessings and peace in your Advent preparations.

In Christ,
Rev. Cathy

Comments from Your Church Council

Church Council

As we enter the Thanksgiving and Advent season, I would like to express the wishes of the Church Council for the very best of these festive seasons for you and your families, as we close out 2003 and look forward to 2004 with great expectations and anticipation!

Sunday, November 30th holds great promise for the upcoming year as well as the future of our church. We will have just participated in our first "Contemporary Worship Service" (November 29th), and begin to look forward to all the festive activities and services associated with the Advent season. Of equal importance is the Congregational Meeting to be held after the 10:30 services on that day. At this meeting we have the opportunity to elect six council members. We have nine church members who have agreed to run for the six vacancies on the council. This alone is an outstanding achievement as in recent years we have had a difficult time getting enough candidates to fill the slate. Also at this meeting we will present and approve the budget for 2004.

As you can see, November 30th is going to be a very busy day for our church, but hopefully, one that will successfully chart the course for the future of our church.

Again, best wishes for a very Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas season for each of you and your family members.

May God's peace, power, and spirit be with each of us and our loved ones as we enter and prepare for the future.

Clarence Rowell
Council President

Spiritual Committee

Praise the Lord!
For it is good to sing praises to our God;
For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.
Psalm 147:1

On Saturday, November 29th at 5:30 p.m. United Evangelical will begin a new way we praise our God. Our new contemporary service will make its debut with modern music and casual worship style. After months of planning and praying the Spiritual Committee believes that this is the direction the Holy Spirit is leading us. This is not an effort to change who we are but just a way to expand on our commitment to serve our Lord. The world has changed and so must we in order to bring the gospel to people in today's society. We would like to thank all of the people who have stepped forward to make this service possible. We always have room for more. We ask for your thoughts and prayers as we begin a new chapter in the life of our beloved church.

George Nassner



Comments from Your Church Council

Christian Education Committee

At the last Christian Education Committee meeting, plans were being finalized for the upcoming Tinsel Sunday, December 14th, and other holiday activities. This year the congregation will be treated to a new Christmas program presented during the 10:30 service by members of the church school. Following the church service and the dinner in the Friendship Hall, all the church school children and other children present will be invited back to the church school to do Christmas crafts. This has always been a time of joy for members of the church school as we do the crafts and prepare the church school for the holidays. Once the crafts are completed everyone will again gather in the church to light the Christmas tree and sing carols. This will be culminated by a birthday party for Jesus with cake and punch in the Friendship Hall.



* We know that everyone will *
* enjoy hearing the children of *
* the church school sing dur- *
* ing the 10:30 service on the *
* third Sunday of each month. *
* November will be the first *
* month that they will sing. *



As the holidays approach, we would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. One of our wishes for the New Year is that the church and church school will continue to grow in God's presence.

Carol Rowell
Committee Member

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has been meeting regularly once a month and is very excited about the following projects. We have reviewed our website and made corrections, which will appear in the near future.

We have purchased a visitor book that has been placed in the Narthex for visitors to sign. We have also made up small gift packages to be presented to visitors as a token of appreciation for joining us in worship.

Arrangements have been made to place advertising signs on the outside of our buildings for special occasions in the church. We have also made plans for our "Ye Olde Time Christmas Service" again for our folks on the Caring and Responsibility List. The service will be held on Sunday, December 7th at 2:00 p.m.



We are also making plans for a New Year's Eve party here at United. Come join us at these affairs. Hope to see you there!

Chairperson
Cass Young

* Come Join Us *
* For Our Second Annual *
* *Olde Time Christmas Sunday* *
* December 7, 2003 at 2 p.m. *
* We will be honoring the folks on our *
* Caring and Responsibility List. *
* Please come join us *
* Everyone is welcome *

Comments from Your Church Council

Ladies Organization

Want to get into the holiday spirit? We have just the thing. The Ladies Organization is planning the Annual Christmas Party for members. Festivities are scheduled for 12 noon on Wednesday, December 17th at the well-known Williamsburg Inn. So if you are interested contact Millie Wirsing @ 410-675-3904. Millie can reserve your spot and provide menu information. The cost is only \$27.00 per person and the company is priceless!



This is an open invitation to all the ladies of the congregation of United Evangelical Church. We would like to have you join us on the second Wednesday of the month at 12 noon at our meetings. The Ladies Organization plans activities, trips, helps with suppers and church affairs. The profits we make from these activities are used to keep a small amount in our treasury for working money and to donate the balance for the ongoing work of the church.

Ladies Organization Upcoming Meetings

Jan 14th Brown Bag Meeting
12 noon

Arlene Pate

Fellowship Committee

Thanks again to everyone who helped with our sour beef dinner. Here is a breakdown of what was sold:

Number of Carry Outs	778
Dining Room	289
Deliveries	95
Total Dinners Sold	1,162
Dumplings Sold	3,615
Phone Orders	109

Total income over expenses totaled \$ 9,685.41.

Each year we have fewer and fewer volunteers helping out with the Sour Beef Dinner. As a result, I have tentatively decided to change the menu (with Council approval) to accommodate the lack of volunteers. Next year I am planning to have sour beef and dumplings, red cabbage, and green beans (?) - no cole slaw and no lima beans.

Don't forget December 14th, Tinsel Sunday. Lunch will be served at 12 noon with ice cream and cake later. Hope to see you there.

Bob Osburne
Chairman



Comments from Your Church Council

Property Manager

Well here we are with the holidays approaching fast and time for another property report. When weather allows we have been fixing and painting the exterior of our buildings; we are hoping this will not only brighten up our building but also attract visitors to our services.

At the time of this report, inspection of our Sunday School building will be completed by Gardner Engineering and we should receive their report by the time you read this article. The complete report will be presented at the congregational meeting in January.

We have passed inspections by Maryland state (boilers) and Baltimore City (kitchen) and the Fire Department (second floor) with only a few things to correct.

Wishing all of you a Blessed Holiday from your Property Committee, (Sam Jones, Art Jones, Ursula Jacob) and myself,

Bill Meyers
Property Chairperson



Senior Spot

Hatton Center

Feel Like Kickin' Up Your Heels?

Well here's your chance...

The Hatton Center is offering a 4 week
Line Dance Workshop on
Tuesdays
from
January 6 - January 27
Cost is \$ 12.00



Places to Go, People to See, Things to Do....

Ladies Organization Upcoming Trips & Events



**Christmas Show
American Music Theatre
Lancaster, PA**

*Lunch at Shady Maple Restaurant
\$ 55.00*

*December 3, 2003 (Wednesday)
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
(Bus is filled - waiting list is available)*

Important Notice

All trips MUST HAVE DEPOSIT TO HOLD SEATS

If you must cancel your seat you need to find someone to take your seat to receive your money back.

Persons to contact:
Millie Wirsing 410-675-3904
Arlene Pate 410-327-3211

**Christmas Luncheon
for Members of the
UEC Ladies
Organization**

December 17, 2003
(Wednesday)
12:00 noon
Williamsburg Inn

\$27.00 per person

Call Millie Wirsing @
410-675-3904 for menu



Upcoming Ladies Organization Meetings

Jan 14th Brown Bag Meeting
12 noon



Mountain Gate Restaurant in Thurmont, MD

&

**Cabin Fever Festival at the Frederick Fairgrounds
February 14, 2004 (Saturday)**

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Lunch at 11:30

Cost is to be determined



UEC December Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. <i>(make note of meeting date & time change)</i>	3 American Music Theatre Bus Trip Lancaster, PA 8:30 - 5:30 p.m.	4 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	5	6 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
7 2nd Sunday of Advent <i>Communion Sunday</i> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin: 5px 0;">Food Bank Donations</div> 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education Olde Time Christmas Service 2:00 p.m.	8	9	10 Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	11 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	12	13 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
14 3rd Sunday of Advent 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education Tinsel Sunday begins with 10:30 service	15	16	17 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Ladies Organization Christmas Party Williamsburg Inn 12 noon P.A.C.T. Christmas Party 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.	18 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	19	20 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
21 4th Sunday of Advent 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education Christmas Caroling Homewood Home 1:30 p.m. <i>(leaving from UEC)</i>	22 First day of Winter	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 7:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.	25 	26	27 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
28 9:00 Christian Education 10:00 Worship Service <i>(Note: There is only one service on Dec. 28th)</i>	29	30	31 New Year's Eve Party at United Evangelical begins 8:00 p.m. Worship Service 11:30 p.m.			December 

UEC January Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
4 <i>Communion Sunday</i> Food Bank Donations 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education	5	6	7 Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	8 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	9	10 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
11 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education	12	13 Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. <i>(make note of time change)</i>	14 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Ladies Org. Meeting 12 noon	15 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	16	17 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
18 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education	19	20 Membership Meeting 2 p.m. Christian Education Meeting 6:30 p.m.	21 Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	22 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	23	24 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.
Rev. Cathy on vacation from 1/19/04 thru 1/26/04						
25 8:00 & 10:30 Worship Service 9:15 Christian Education Congregational Meeting following 10:30 service	26	27	28 Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	29 Contemporary Worship Practice 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	30	31 Contemporary Worship 5:30 p.m.  January
Rev. Cathy on vacation thru 1/26/04						

A Vow for the New Year

Making plans for your life in the new year? Could it be that God already has a plan for you and is patiently waiting for you to make that plan a reality?

When one considers how everything seems to have a purpose in nature (atoms, genes, plants, animals, etc.), it makes sense to believe that each of us has a purpose as well. On the other hand, if all of creation seems to have just happened without any reason, then this means our minds and spirits must have no reason or purpose as well. How can we trust them?

But believers trust that there is a great Intelligence that brought everything into existence.

There is a Mind and a Heart at the center of all creation. If that's the case, then life can only make sense when we seek what the Creator has in mind for us.

Jesus, who knew the Mind and Heart of God better than anyone who ever lived on Earth, once said to the erring Peter: "You are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things" (Mark 8:33, NRSV).

Setting our minds on human things can get us into trouble. That's why it often seems we live in a crazy mixed-up world. How can life ever be fulfilling, without the purpose God has for that life?

To set one's mind on divine things leads us to consider the one vow we should take seriously for the new year. Your will, Lord. Your will and nothing else.

United Evangelical Church

Church Office 410-276-0393
e-mail: uecucc@juno.com
website: www.united-evangelical.com

Hours Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

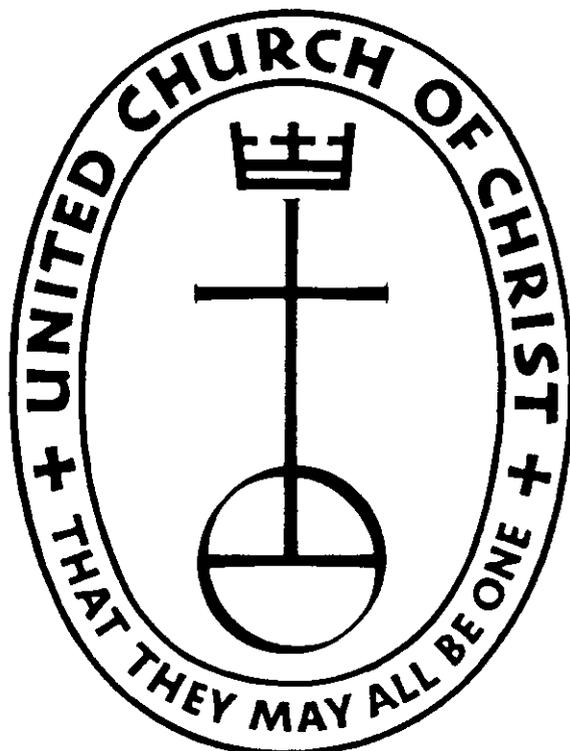
Pastor Rev. Catherine J. Oatman
cjoatman@msn.com
home: 410-276-2200
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Secretary Peggy Tlasek

Custodian Art Jones

Director of Music Robert Gundlach
robert.gundlach@verizon.net

Newsletter Editor Barbara Matthew
cartbar@earthlink.net



Holiday Bits & Pieces

The Origin of the Christmas Tree

It's difficult to pinpoint when and why Christians first began to use evergreen trees at Christmastime. There are many legends and myths regarding the origin of Christmas trees. For example, the ancient Romans brought greenery into their homes in winter to symbolize life in the midst of bleakness and death.



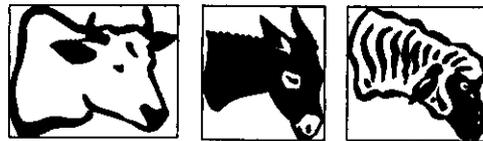
German Christians in the early part of the 16th century may have been the first to use evergreen trees during Advent and Christmas. Those trees had no candles on them, but were decorated with items at hand: colored paper, gold foil, apples and dolls. German immigrants brought the custom to America around 1700 when they settled in Pennsylvania.

Some scholars say that evergreen trees represent Christ, because they, too, are everlasting. Others say that Christmas trees remind us of salvation which came to us through Christ who died on a "tree." St. Peter wrote: "He [Christ] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24, RSV).

The forbidden fruit of the tree in the Garden of Eden, when eaten, brought guilt and death. On the other hand, the "tree" on Calvary was the instrument by which God through Christ ushered in salvation, new life and hope. The Christmas tree can remind us of those wonderful gifts.

The Legend of the Friendly Beasts

There's an old Christmas legend about the animals who shared the stable with the Christ child. Each animal bestowed a gift on Him. The legend says the animals in the stable gained the power of speech for that night. Here's a portion of an old English Christmas carol based on the legend:



Jesus our brother, kind and good,
Was humbly born in a stable rude;
And the friendly beasts around Him stood.
Jesus our brother, kind and good.

"I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
"I carried His mother up hill and down;
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town."
"I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow, all white and red,
"I gave Him my manger for a bed;
I gave Him my hay to pillow His head."
"I," said the cow, all white and red. ...

Thus every beast by some glad spell,
In the stable dark was glad to tell
Of the gift he gave Emmanuel,

The gift he gave Emmanuel.

... & They
... Shall Name
Him
Emmanuel

Special Announcements

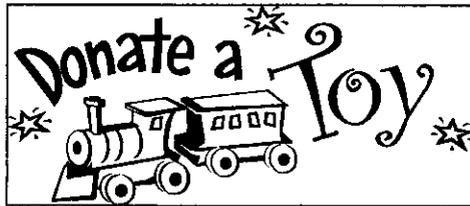
Children's Holiday Gift Program for Christmas

Church Council has elected to support the Hoffman Home Holiday Gift Program for Christmas. Gifts will be purchased, priced, and displayed in the Narthex for your donation.

Watch bulletin for display dates.

Any questions, please call Darlene Waters
at 410-675-3932.

**Every child needs to be remembered
at Christmas.**



ATTENTION ALL YOUTH !!

Here's your chance to be discovered.
Could be a talent scout in the crowd.
You never know....

So how about bringing your yet to be
discovered voices to:

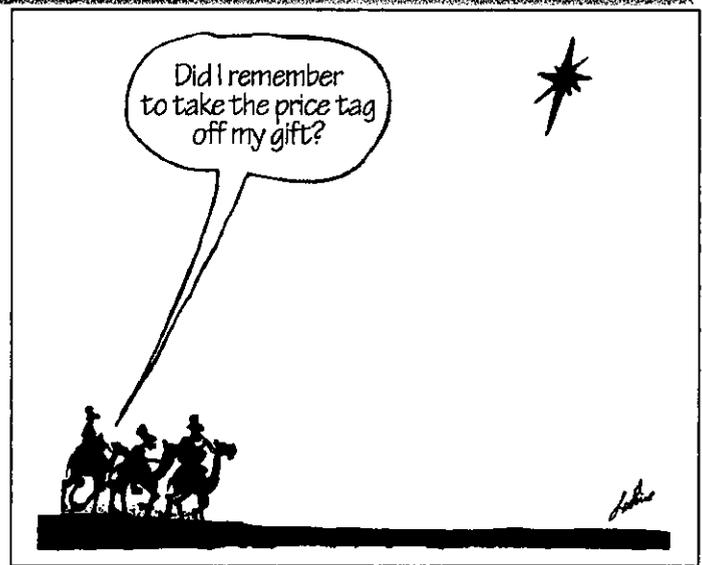
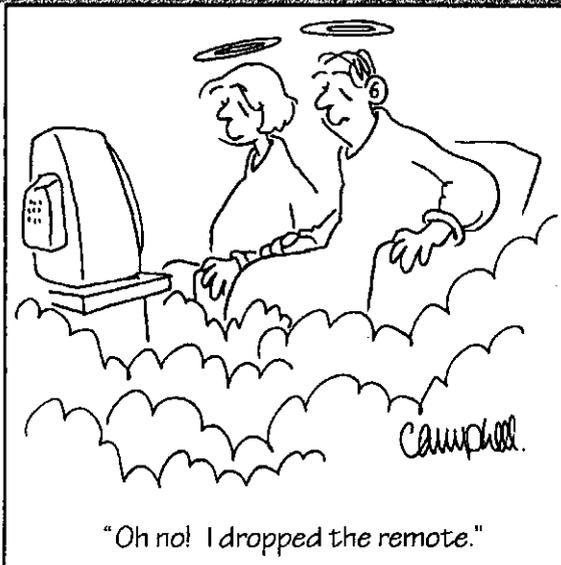
Homewood Homes
on
December 21st
for some Christmas caroling
for the residents



Okay, so you may not get discovered but you
sure could brighten the days of a lot of folks at
the nursing home!

Bus leaves from the parsonage
at 1:30 p.m.

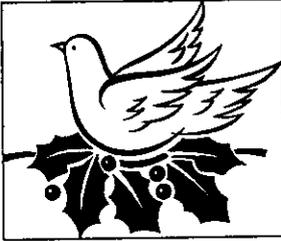
Comics Corner



More Holiday Bits & Pieces

A Little Holly History

Like many Christmas traditions and symbols, the use of holly began long before the time of Christ. Thought to be a sacred plant and a good omen, holly was used by the ancient Romans to honor Saturn, their god of the harvests. The festival, Saturnalia, was held annually on December 17. Wreaths and other gifts were exchanged and homes were decorated with holly. During the early years of Christianity, many Roman Christians continued to decorate their homes with holly to avoid detection and persecution. When Christianity became the dominant religion of the Romans, holly continued to be used.



Its sharp, pointy-edged leaves are thought to represent Jesus' crown of thorns, while the red berries represent the blood he shed on the cross. This seems to make holly a suitable decoration for Easter as well as for Christmas.



The Symbolism of the Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as the birth of Jesus approaches. The circular form of the wreath symbolizes eternity or life without end. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World who brought light and life to a dark world (see John 1:4-5). We light a new candle on each of the four Sundays of Advent. As the light grows, so does our anticipation and joy.



For many denominations, each of the four weekly candles is purple, the traditional color of royalty. For the third Sunday, some denominations use a pink candle to symbolize love. The other three candles are purple and represent hope, peace and joy, respectively. In the center of the wreath is a large white candle — the Christ candle — which we light on Christmas Eve. White represents the purity of Jesus.

At home, many families observe regular devotional times around the wreath. The practice builds family memories and develops Christmas customs that are likely to pass from generation to generation.


BEHOLD,
I bring you
tidings
—of—
GREAT JOY!

Special Announcements



**BECAUSE
OF YOUR
GENEROSITY...**

we have received thank you notes from the following:

St. John's Lutheran Church
in Edgemere for reaching out after Hurricane
Isabelle.

Canton Baptist
for donations of non-perishable foods.

St. Lukes Church
in Edgemere for food and donations to their
Emergency Fund to help local families recover
after the hurricane.

*Come Join us for
Tinsel Sunday
December 14th*

10:30 a.m. Christmas Pageant
during worship

12 noon Lunch

Afternoon Crafts

Decorating the Christmas tree

Carols in the Sanctuary

Cake in Friendship Hall



**BIG
THANKYOU**
to these volunteers



Rebecca Orendorff
Cal Gundlach

Cal and Rebecca represented United Evangelical in the 5K (3.1mile)
marathon run for Earl's Place held on Saturday, November 8th.

They ran together and finished the race in 28 minutes. A big thanks
to them for their participation and enthusiasm in representing UEC.

UEC is a proud supporter of Earl's Place through benevolence
(semi-annual monetary gifts).

*Season's
Greetings*

Kids Only!!

Make Ornament Cookies!



Make Christmas ornament cookies to hang on your Christmas tree.



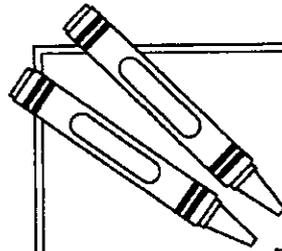
You will need:

- * package of refrigerated cookie dough
- * rolling pin
- * cookie cutters (star, bell, tree, etc.)
- * cookie sheet
- * icing
- * a drinking straw
- * ribbon
- * an adult to help!



How to make them:

1. Roll out the dough and cut shapes with the cookie cutters.
 2. Place on cookie sheet.
 3. Use the straw to make a hole near the top of each cookie.
 4. Bake according to the package directions.
- Important: Have an adult help!**
5. When cool, decorate the cookies with icing and tie a ribbon through each hole.
 6. Hang them on your tree or give them as gifts to friends!



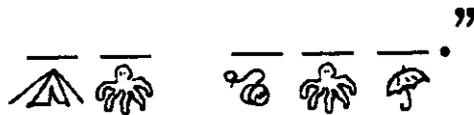
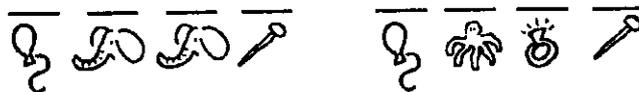
Just for KIDS

The Shepherds and the Angel

What did the angel of the Lord say to the shepherds?
(Luke 2:11)

Write the first letter of each picture on the lines.

“



”

Answer: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you.





Website Alert!

 Check out www.spiritseasons.com.

 Click on Action Zone

Special Announcements

Ring in the New Year at United Evangelical !

A Night of Games,
Good Food &
Good Company!!



Festivities begin
at 8:00 p.m.
on December 31st
(of course)

Bring your favorite game

Bring your friends

Bring a snack to share
(all that game playing can make
a person hungry!!)

Bring your favorite music

Brief Prayer Service at 11:30 p.m. then it's up
to the 4th floor for fireworks!!



Don't feel like makin' the
trek up the steps - no prob-
lem. We'll have a tv set up
so you can watch the New
Years ball drop!!

Hope to see you there.

Come for all or part of the time.

A Message from Your Editor

I wish each and every one of you the happiest of holiday seasons. Having found a spiritual home here at United Evangelical and particularly among you has been one of the most rewarding gifts I have ever received.

I hope that my efforts with The Endeavor have in some small way made your lives brighter. Being editor has been, and continues to be, a learning experience for me. I have never known such a dedicated hard working group as the members of United. As I have said before, it is my very good fortune to find myself among you, and for that I feel truly blessed. Thank you for being my gift.

Barbara Matthew
Editor



Note:

On Sunday, December 28th

Christian Education
begins at 9:00 a.m.

Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.
(only one worship service)

The United Endeavor

United Evangelical Church
United Church of Christ
3200 Dillon Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
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Dated Material



United Evangelical Church
130th Year