

THE EPWORTH TOWER

DECEMBER 2019

Epworth United Methodist Church

4855 W. Central Ave Toledo, Ohio 43615 | 419.531.4236 | epworth.com



The real gifts of Christmas aren't under the tree.

Advent Sermon Series

DEC. 1 | Hope
DEC. 8 | Peace
DEC. 15 | Joy
DEC. 22 | Love
DEC. 24 | Christ

Christmas Concert

DECEMBER 4 | 7PM

Listen to your
favorite carols performed
by the choir and the
Academy Brass Quintet in
the Sanctuary.

Christmas Eve Services

DECEMBER 24

5pm | Children & Family
7pm | Contemporary Candlelight*
9pm | Traditional Candlelight
11pm | Traditional Candlelight*

**communion served*

December 2019

3-4

INFO & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- + Sympathies & Congratulations
- + Inclement Weather Policy
- + Nametag Transition
- + Thanks!
- + Electronic Tower Transition
- + Wi-Fi Access
- + Gear-Up Growth Initiative
- + Pickleball
- + Winter Office Hours

5-6

GROW & CARE

- + Christmas Concert
- + Lunch w/ Ottawa Hills Choraliers
- + Sunday Bible Studies
- + Friends In Faith Bunco & Book Club
- + Adult Singles
- + Parent Connections
- + Longest Night Service
- + Explore Epworth
- + Priscilla Circle
- + Stephen Ministry
- + Wash Your Hands!

6-7

GROW: FAMILIES

- + Gingerbread House Workshop
- + We Love Our Preschool
- + Every Brilliant Thing
- + Care Bare Scholarships
- + Kids: December
- + Children's Musical
- + Family Caroling
- + Kid-to-Kid Missions
- + Family Worship Sundays
- + SWAT Lunch & Movie
- + SWAT Christmas Party
- + Hawkins Stemm Academy
- + SWAT: December
- + Stay Connected to SWAT

8-10

SERVE

- + Advent 2019: We Three Trees
- + Other Advent Giving Opportunities
- + Donate to Amazon Smile
- + Friendly Center Gift Drive
- + Feed Your Neighbor
- + Plan Events for Epworth
- + Cookie Bakers
- + Journeying Through Grief Books
- + Furniture Ministry

Sunday Worship Services

8:30 BLENDED

A mix of traditional and contemporary styles, with Holy Communion served every week. Also available during this hour: Nursery, Toddler, and Preschool Childcare.

9:45 TRADITIONAL

Steeped in the warm-hearted Methodist tradition featuring choral and organ music. Also available during this hour: Nursery Childcare and Sunday School Classes for Toddlers, Preschoolers, K-6, Jr. and Sr. High, and Adults.

11:00 CONTEMPORARY

Fast-paced with visuals to illustrate the Bible-based sermons, this service features our praise band. Also available during this hour: Nursery Childcare, and Sunday School Classes for Toddlers, Preschoolers, W.O.W. for K-3 (not during summer), and Adult Sunday School.

SERMONS ONLINE

Out of town or ill and not able to make it to worship on Sunday? View each week's sermon: epworth.com/series

Our Pastors:

REV. DR. DOUG DAMRON

Senior Pastor

doug@epworth.com

REV. BETH IRWIN

Associate Pastor

beth@epworth.com

REV. DAVE PETTENGILL

Pastor of Student and Family Ministries

dave@epworth.com

REV. JENNIFER BAILEY

Pastor of Welcome

jennifer@epworth.com

January Tower Deadline:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

E-mail articles & pictures to
communications@epworth.com

WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER

Sign up for the weekly e-newsletters!

Go to: epworth.com/email

OBITUARY NOTIFICATIONS

Sign up to receive obituary notifications!

Go to: epworth.com/email

Our Mission & Vision

MISSION

To embrace people exactly where they are and empower all to know, love, and serve God through Jesus Christ.

VISION

- CARE for all of our members and friends with special emphasis upon senior adults.
- PARTNER within in our community to increase the number of positive on-property experiences for families with kids.
- GROW and actively invite and welcome all people into our community to grow in faith together.
- INVEST in the next neighborhood over in order to lower the poverty rate of Lucas County.

Sympathies recent deaths

- THE KNOFF FAMILY on the death of Debbie (Jeremy) Knoff's dad.
- THE BOZE FAMILY on the passing of Jeff (Darlene) Boze's mom.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The Church building closes if there is a Level 3 Snow Emergency in Lucas county!

Activities, Classes & Volunteers:

- Canceled if Sylvania Schools close -- Will re-evaluate again at 3pm regarding evening activities. The staff person in charge of that activity will make the decision and will contact those persons involved.

Preschool (ECEC & CDO):

- Canceled if Ottawa Hills Schools close.*
- 1 hour delay: Preschool opens on time.
- 2 hour delay: Preschool morning classes canceled, afternoon classes will meet.

**The preschool reserves the right to cancel classes regardless of Ottawa Hills schedule, should extenuating circumstances arise.*

BODY RECALL+:

- Canceled if Ottawa Hills schools close.

NAMETAG TRANSITION

Please be aware we are in the midst of a nametag transition. If you can not find your nametag, please write a note on the connection card, call or email Marla at 419.214.3766 or marla@epworth.com.

LOOK UP!

Watch the TV screens in the lobby areas for upcoming events and opportunities at Epworth in the coming few weeks!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKS!

A twelve-person Epworth adult team recently completed a powerful and productive mission experience with nice folks

of the Good Works community in Athens, Ohio. This was Epworth's tenth mission team. We thank you for your support and prayers as we reached out in friendship to those struggling with issues of poverty and homelessness. As you may know, Good Works exists to connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the Kingdom of God can be experienced.

Each day we prayed that our team would receive the love of Jesus so deeply into our lives that it would propel us to extend love to our neighbors. We certainly felt God's love--and gave our best to honor Him. We quickly learned that while our daily tasks were very important, it was our heart-felt outreach to love our neighbor that mattered most. Over the years we have learned that serving, working alongside, and loving our neighbor---is a powerful form of worship. On Friday, at an event known as Friday Night Life, Good Works offered a hearty family style supper to over 100 hungry individuals at The Plains United Methodist Church. Epworth provided and prepared the delicious meal. The folks really liked the food and extra take-home helpings. Everyone enjoyed the light-hearted evening of fellowship including the kids who later played dodgeball. Many left the church with a take-home grocery bag filled with enough extra food to last for several days, including canned goods, cereal and fresh vegetables.

Each morning and evening we had a meaningful devotional time. Throughout our week we prayed together, sang, and enjoyed meeting new friends in their homes throughout the surrounding Athens areas. At night, as we piled our tired bones into bed, we lifted our hearts in gratitude. We look forward to doing it all again next year.

-Good Works Team

Debbie and I want to thank you for all your prayers, encouraging words, cards, hospital and home visits during this challenging time. I'm healing from my cancer surgery and feeling stronger each day. Thanks once again for your caring concern.

-With Every Good Wish, Rev. D² (former pastor, David David)

I wish to thank the group who came to my home and helped finish up the cleaning of my yard for this year. They were great! They even bought subs and we sat around and got acquainted beforehand. You'll never find a group who worked so tirelessly and did such a great job that I could not do, and had worried about how it would get done. Oh, yee of little faith! Thanks again. It was nice to meet Ronnie and Doug Gorsuch, Judy and Martha. The church is blessed to have you.

-Jo Mizer

If you'd like a thank you printed in the next Tower, send your note in an e-mail to communications@epworth.com.



WE ARE BEGINNING A FULL TRANSITION TO AN ELECTRONIC TOWER!

Over the past several years, we have had many members request to stop receiving the printed Tower in order to be better stewards of our resources and planet. We've also received inquiries as to why, in this digital age, are we still allocating so much of your generous blessings to Epworth UMC on sending The Tower via mail? With this question in mind, the Communications Committee did an in-depth cost analysis and concluded The Tower is currently costing Epworth just over \$16,500/year. Heres' the cost breakdown per year:

- Paper cost: \$955
- Ink cost: \$5,469
- Postage cost: \$1,290
- Man hours: \$4,356
- Printer contract (% used on Tower): \$4,447

We feel this considerable amount of money could significantly contribute to other, more impactful, areas of Epworth ministry and have decided beginning January 2020, we will move to a full transition to an electronic version of The Tower.

However, we do understand there are members and friends without e-mail addresses and/or those who would simply prefer to receive a hard copy via mail. If you would rather receive the printed version in the future, call Marla at 419.214.3766 or email Marla@epworth.com to be removed from the e-list and added to our hard copy, mailed list. We will also continue to print a few dozen copies that will be available in the lobby.

Please keep in mind, this is not a full paperless transition. You will still receive important letters and announcements from the pastors and Ad Council at Epworth via the U.S. Postal Service.

WI-FI ACCESS

The communications committee has been working hard to figure out a way to capture and effectively utilize the information from guests who are new to the Epworth community. You may have noticed that the first time you attempt to access the Epworth WI-FI on each mobile device, you are asked to submit your email address. The idea is to send three individual emails from our pastors, one per week for three weeks, to our on-campus guests who sign-up to use our WI-FI by submitting their email address.

While we are doing our best to make sure members to not accidentally receive these emails by cross referencing with our member database, we are sure mistakes will be made. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you accidentally receive one or all of these emails so we can correct it! Thank you for your grace and understanding in this transition to more effectively reach our on-campus guests.

GEAR-UP GROWTH INITIATIVE UPDATE

Consistent with the Christ's commandment in Mathew 28:16-20 to "Make Disciples of all Nations," Epworth continues an initiative called Gear-Up. The project aims to provide authentic messaging about Epworth Values, Vision, and Mission to help us seek new Disciples for Christ through Epworth. Recently, through a focus group, the Gear-Up group gathered important and useful feedback from Epworth members. More info will be coming out about the Gear-Up project as it proceeds, with an update at the December Ad Council meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Gear-Up leaders, Wes at [personal info has been removed] or Ken at [personal info has been removed].

PICKLEBALL HAS COME TO EPWORTH

If you already know how to play, come join us on Monday evenings from 7-9pm, we have already begun meeting! If you are interested in learning the game through a beginner's clinic, please email Lisa at [personal info has been removed] so she can gauge interest and schedule a date! What is pickleball? A fun sport that combines many elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT



Join us on **December 4** at 7pm in the sanctuary for our annual Christmas concert featuring the Epworth Chancel Choir and the Academy Brass Quintet. Hear your favorite carols performed by the choir and Academy Brass, and join in an audience

sing-along. This is a free community event so bring your friends, neighbors, and coworkers and ring in the beginning of the Christmas season. A freewill offering will be taken. The tea ladies will be providing a reception in the lobby following the concert.

LUNCH W/ OTTAWA HILLS CHORALIERS!

What are you doing for lunch on Wednesday, **December 4**? Join us for a casual Christmas concert at 12 noon in the lobby! It's a fun, energetic way to sing in the Christmas season while enjoying a delicious meal cooked by Chef Les. The Ottawa Hills High School Choraliers (the Ottawa Hills audition chamber choir) will return to our lobby for an annual Christmas program! Bring friends and family for a break from your busy day. The cost of lunch is \$7. Please RSVP at shautau@epworth.com by Monday, December 2.

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDIES:

- **9:45am | Adult Bible Study | Rm 214**
Who Needs Christmas by Andy Stanley. Join the conversation as Andy unpacks why the improbability of the Christmas story is what makes it so believable. The story of Jesus' birth was not what anyone expected: a baby born to save us from sins that no one thought we needed saving from. And here we are, 2000 years later, still talking about an event no one could have made up. All are welcome.
- **9:45am | Coffee & Conversation | Rm 213**
This class discusses modern day issues and current events, and examines the teachings of Jesus in light of them; meets year-round.
- **9:45am | Connection Point | Rm 205**
Post high school through mid-twenties: provide a faith based place to connect with peers and discuss issues relevant to this stage of life.
- **9:45am | Donuts & The Bible | Rm 216/Deep End**
All Jr. and Sr. High School students are welcome. Come enjoy some donuts and time with others as we look deeper into what it means to follow Jesus.
- **11am | Sermon Notes | Rm 214**
Discussion around individuals understanding of the scriptures' relevance to their journey

FRIENDS IN FAITH

BUNCO

All women are welcome, even if you have never played before. Bunco is a simple game, but it is more about the Christian fellowship. Bring a side dish, appetizer or dessert to share. We start at 6:30pm with dinner before we play.

Tuesday December 10: at Karen Wyckoff's [personal info has been removed]. Bring an inexpensive gift if you wish to play the gift exchange game.

BOOK CLUB

Everyone is welcome to join us for the Book Club! Join us the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7pm for lively discussion and dessert! Meet at June Galvin's house [personal info has been removed]. See future book titles at epworth.com/fif.

Tuesday, December 17: Christmas Party – No Book Discussion.

Tuesday, January 28: *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto* by Mitch Albom.

[adult Singles]

Single, divorced and widowed adults in the Toledo community are invited to join. RSVP to Nancy at [personal info has been removed]. The next opportunities are:

Sunday, November 24: 12-2pm Brunch at Reynolds Garden Cafe (1220 Reynolds Rd., Toledo). 2pm - tap dance variety show by Manhattan Dance Co. at Maumee Indoor Theatre.

Wednesday, December 4: 7pm - Epworth Christmas Concert. Epworth Chancel Choir and the Academy Brass Quintet with favorite Christmas Carols and a sing-along.

Sunday, December 15: 12:30pm - Holiday Brunch - Brandywine Country Club, 6904 Salisbury Rd, Maumee. Cost \$16.95.

PARENT CONNECTIONS

Epworth Family Movie Day

Mark your calendars for Saturday **January 25, 2020** at 1:30pm. Parent Connections will be hosting our annual Family Movie Day in the Deep End here at Church. Bring your sleeping bag or camping chair and enjoy a movie with all the comforts of home. Bring a friend get a prize - we'll have a small gift for anyone who brings a "New to Epworth" friend to our Movie Day event. More details to come (including the title of our family friendly movie) after the holidays. For more info contact Adam at [personal info has been removed].



THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

A Christmas Healing Service

The holiday season and long nights of winter can amplify feelings of grief and loss. Whether you have recently lost a loved one, or it's been years, their absence can make the Christmas season difficult. Missing a loved one, facing major family changes or illness, and navigating job losses or job change are just a few things that can take the joy from the season.

The Winter Solstice just before Christmas is the longest night of the year. From there, each day offers more light. Our Longest Night Service is a different Christmas service – one of scripture, music, quiet reflection, and candle lighting to drive away darkness and to help heal the wounds of loss. This year's Longest Night service is Tuesday, **December 17** at 7pm in the Sanctuary. All are welcome, and please invite a friend. For more information, contact Pastor Beth at beth@epworth.com.

EXPLORE EPWORTH

We're glad you're here, and we'd love for you to Explore Epworth with us!

When you're ready to learn more about Epworth, join us on **January 26** from 5-7pm in the lobby for a one-time informal meeting called Explore Epworth. Enjoy dinner & conversation with your pastors, and explore the possibility of membership. Those who choose to join will be received as members the following Sunday, February 9 in worship, but you're never obligated to join. To sign up, please email Marla at Marla@epworth.com. Childcare can be provided if requested at least one week in advance, please email us at childcare@epworth.com to make a request.

PRISCILLA CIRCLE

Priscilla Circle will be holding our Mini-Bazaar on **December 8** in the lobby before and after all three services. If you were not able to come to the Harvest Bazaar or saw something you wished you had purchased we still have baby and children gifts, household items, Christmas advent calendars and decorations, pet toys and coats, cloth books, your favorite university Quillo blankets, knitted hats, mittens and gloves. Our sales support UMW missions in our area. If you would be interested in being a part of Priscilla Circle, please call Kay Hitchner [personal info has been removed]. See you on December 8.

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN

To Stay Healthy

December is a busy time for most people. Between the rush of the holidays, the end-of-the-year excitement, and the turn in the weather, it's easy to become run down and exhausted—perfect conditions for illness to take hold. When your system is compromised, it's extra important to stay healthy by avoiding germs, and the best way to do that is by washing your hands. By keeping up with these good habits, you can easily decrease your risk of flu, viruses, and the cold.

When should you wash your hands?

Most people are good about washing their hands when they use the restroom or are about to prepare food, but there are many other moments throughout your day in which a good washing will go a long way. For example, if you're caring for someone who is sick, about to or just finished treating a wound, cleaning up after a child or changing a diaper, in contact with animals or their waste, or just took out the trash, you should absolutely wash your hands. All of these everyday activities could spread germs and disease!

What is the best way to wash your hands?

Think you know everything about handwashing? Think again! The Center for Disease Control outlines the five steps to proper handwashing. They are as follows:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

STEPHEN MINISTRY - COLD WEATHER, COLD FEELINGS?

The winter weather can be symbolic of what may sometimes happen in life. A crisis hits, and we feel like we're buried beneath a drift of snow. Relationships can become icy, or we can feel frozen by life circumstances. Little difficulties build up like slush, making us slip and slide, causing every decision to seem treacherous. Life seems dreary, and we begin to doubt that spring will ever come. We can wonder, "Is God even there?" Stephen Ministers are trained to provide confidential Christian care, giving you the emotional and spiritual support you need to make it through a winter in your life. To learn more about how a Stephen Minister can help you or someone you know, contact one of the Stephen Leaders - Bobbi Sanders or Paul Schroeder, a pastor, or contact us at stephenministry@epworth.com to learn how Stephen Ministers can help in troubling times. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you.

22ND GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP



You, your family, friends and neighbors are invited to join us on **Sunday, December 8** from 2-4pm in the Gym! Houses are \$10 each. Keep in mind, they **must be reserved and paid for in advance**.

Bring extra decorations to share, white frosting and a few candies will be provided. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors- the more the merrier, but, we only have room for 100 houses, so don't delay! Contact Mary at 419.214.3776 or email her at Mary@epworth.com.

Make Gingerbread House Frosting

If you would like to help make frosting for the 22nd Annual Gingerbread House Workshop, please join us on:

- **Tuesday, December 3 @11:30am**
- **Wednesday, December 4 @ 6:15pm**

Help With Clean Up/Tear Down

We need strong helping hands to help us clean up and put tables, chairs, etc. away

- **Sunday, December 8, 4-5pm**

Sign up on the connection card in late November or e-mail mary@epworth.com to let us know you'll be there!

WE LOVE OUR PRESCHOOL



Bryn and Summer both began with the ECEC program in the CDO class, they then progressed to the preschool classes. As Bryn prepares to head to kindergarten next year I truly believe that she will be 100% prepared for this transition because of the

ECEC program. She has learned valuable skills like letters and numbers but more importantly she has gained self-confidence through in-class activities.

Summer is currently participating in the 2 day a week program and I have noticed a growth in her social skills over the past several months. She greatly enjoys seeing her teachers and classmates on a regular basis and is excited to go to school. The staff at ECEC are caring, patient, and well organized. They make the school a very special place.

Jason and Brianna Smith
Parent Board Member Representative

EVERY BRILLIANT THING

If you were to make a list of things that make life worth living, what would be at the top? Ice cream? Family? Harry Potter movies? Learn why the character in this solo performance started making a list of Every Brilliant Thing in the world.



This surprising and immersive theatrical experience speaks openly about depression, mental illness, and suicide. With poignant humor and joy, Every Brilliant Thing takes us on a journey through grief, healing, falling in love, and (re)discovering all that life has to give. The performance will be followed with a time of discussion and resource sharing with a panel of local mental health experts. Join us on **January 12, 2020** for this unique opportunity as we journey to meet people where they are and better understand and break the negative stigma of mental illness. More information coming soon, please contact Mary@epworth.com with questions.

CARE BEAR SCHOLARSHIPS



Looking for a way to make a difference in the lives of a family? Consider making a donation to the "Care Bear Scholarship Fund" for Epworth Preschool. Last year a donation was made to the preschool and we were able to provide assistance to 3 families who would not have had the opportunity to send their child to a preschool. The families have

been grateful as stated in this testimonial...

Thank you so much. I was in tears a bit driving home just so incredibly thankful for this opportunity for my child. He is thrilled to back there too. I'm beyond grateful especially when the job hunt is still going and things haven't been looking up like I thought they'd be by now. I appreciate this so much.

Checks can be made out to "Epworth Preschool" with a notation for "Care Bear Scholarships."

stay connected to
epworth church:



@epworthtoledo
epworth.com

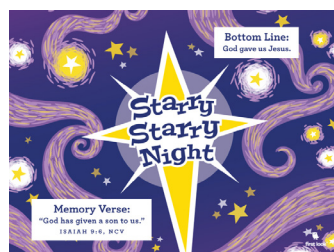
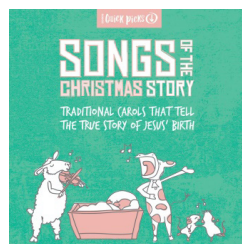
DECEMBER: EPWORTH KIDS EXPLORE



Elementary at 9:30: This December, Epworth's Elementary Kids will focus on the life app Joy—Finding a way to be happy, even when things don't go your way. Chances are, if you've turned on the television, or radio, strolled to your mailbox, or

browsed the internet lately, you've been bombarded with advertisements trying to sell you all the things you need to make this a joy filled Christmas. If we're honest, even as adults it is easy to get wrapped up in the busyness of the season and forget to take time to pause and reflect on the real gift—the birth of our Savior. If we allow our children to focus on the toy ads, and beliefs of popular culture, they will look to find joy this holiday season in the material things they receive and miss the true meaning of Christmas. Instead, if we help our kids remember that Jesus is the root of true joy in our lives, they can find joy all year long - even when things don't go our way. The kids will work to memorize this month's memory verse: "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!" (Philippians 4:4) Our prayer, is that your child will learn to find a joy in their relationship with Jesus that brings them happiness long after the juniper scented decorations are packed away.

11:00 WOW: Epworth Elementary Kids will embark on a 4 week study titled "Songs of the Christmas Story" This hands-on, multi-media series will look at traditional Carols that tell the true story of Jesus' birth. This is a unique way for the children to learn the Christmas story and why these classic carols can help them do more than just set a festive mood during holiday gatherings; they can help re-tell the joyous news of our Savior's birth.



Preschool & Toddler:

Epworth's Preschool and Toddler kids will learn all about the birth of Jesus one starry, starry night in Bethlehem. In fact, we are going to be breaking down the Christmas story to help your little ones understand

that we celebrate Christmas because it is Jesus's birthday. This hands-on, action packed large group/small group time will also help your early childhood children learn that Jesus is God's son as they memorize this month's Bible Memory Verse: "God has given a son to us." (Isaiah 9:6) Our prayer is that your preschoolers will learn why we celebrate Christmas and that Jesus was the best gift we could ever receive!

CHILDREN'S MUSICAL 2019

This is a heartfelt, fun and moving Christmas musical. The animals in the Bethlehem stable have been informed of the coming Messiah, but they aren't quite sure who it will be. The lamb naturally thinks it's a lamb, the dove thinks it's a dove who will come and bring peace, and the other animals have their own thoughts as to who this mysterious visitor will be. Through easy-to-prepare songs and rhyming dialog, this adorable musical tells the Christmas story in a fresh and creative way.

Come join us as our Children's Choir present this wonderful musical at the 9:45 and 11am services on Sunday, **December 8** in the Children's Church.

FAMILY CAROLING

Please join us for this annual fun family outing. We will meet at Epworth at 3pm on **December 15** and travel by cars to area Assisted Living/Nursing homes.



Please wear your fun holiday gear: Santa hats, festive scarves, antlers are all welcome! This event is for the whole family and all levels of singing ability are appreciated. We should be done by 5/5:30 pm. To let us know you are coming or with questions contact Pastor Dave at dave@epworth.com.

KID-TO-KID MISSIONS: LEARNING TO SERVE



Our project this December is to collect items for Epworth's Magi giving tree dedicated to providing new hats, socks, scarves, mittens, and gloves for children in need. Items donated will help to provide warmth to many Toledo neigh-

bors this winter season. Epworth community outreach committee will be distributing donated items to area partners such as Hawkins Elementary, Leading Families Home, St. Paul's community Center, and YWCA Domestic violence Center. The deadline to put items on the tree is Dec. 22.

FAMILY WORSHIP SUNDAYS

December 22 and **December 30** are Family Worship Sundays. On Family Worship Sundays, we encourage children and youth to worship in the Sanctuary with their families as it is an important aspect of their spiritual growth and enriches the worship experience for our entire Epworth congregation.

S.W.A.T. LUNCH & A MOVIE

December 1 | 11am-2pm

Following our 11am worship all teens are welcome to meet us at the Franklin Park Mall Food Court for lunch (bring \$) then to watch the new Mr. Rogers movie, "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood". Sign up for tickets will be on the SWAT bulletin board by the Deep End. Cost is \$8, due on Dec 1.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 20 | 7-9pm

All junior high and senior high students are invited and encouraged to bring a friend! Make sure to bring a snack to share, wear an ugly sweater for our ugly sweater contest, and bring some new fun/silly socks for our sock exchange! We will also be enjoying some Christmas movie festivities, so we hope to see you there!

HAWKINS STEMM ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP

This year the Epworth-Hawkins Partnership is assisting Hawkins STEMM Academy with parent engagement activities. The current focus is Parent Power Hour, a monthly meeting held at Hawkins with the goal of updating families on initiatives at the school and encouraging them to actively engage in their child's learning. Epworth supports this very important program for parents by offering child-care as well as by encouraging attendance. With childcare available, parents can be fully engaged in these informative sessions.



Through Parent Power Hours this fall, parents have experienced the Catalyst Lab, learned about Mind-Set, gained a better understanding of school initiatives, and participated in small projects.

Attendance at this monthly meeting is on the increase. Many thanks to Epworth volunteers for offering support to this valuable engagement and Epworth SWOT youth for assisting with child care. If you are interested in assisting with parent engagement, contact Jennie Vancil at [personal info has been removed].



-STUDENT MINISTRIES -

Students With A Task | Service, Worship, Accountability, Teamwork

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 1

9:45am Donuts & The Bible (Jr. & Sr. High)
Deep End & 216

11am **SWAT Lunch & A Movie** (details left)

No Sunday Night SWAT

Sunday, December 8

No Donuts & The Bible

Join the rest of Epworth and enjoy the Children's Musical at 9:45 worship.

5:45-7pm SWAT (Jr. High) Deep End

7:30-9pm SWAT (Sr. High) Deep End

Sunday, December 15

9:45am Donuts & The Bible (Jr. & Sr. High)
Deep End & 216

3pm Family Christmas Caroling (details left)

No Sunday Night SWAT

Friday, December 20

7-9pm SWAT Christmas Party (details left)

Sunday, December 22

9:45am Donuts & The Bible (Jr. & Sr. High)
Deep End & 216

No Sunday Night SWAT

Sunday, December 29

One worship service: 10:30am

No Donuts & The Bible

No Sunday Night SWAT

STAY CONNECTED TO S.W.A.T.



There are many ways to find out what is happening in S.W.A.T ministries for students in grades 6th-12th. Receive the parent/youth weekly email, send Pastor

Dave an email at dave@epworth.com. Or follow us on social media at:

- Facebook at facebook.com/epworthswat
- Instagram at instagram.com/epworth_swat

SERVE THIS ADVENT SEASON

"WE THREE TREES" ADVENT 2019

This project is inspired by the three Magi, who traveled to meet the baby Jesus with precious gifts to honor and worship him. The three giving trees will be located in the lobby hallway starting Sunday, **December 1**, and will be decorated with tags to take home and shop for our neighbors that need assistance this winter.

- **OUR FIRST MAGI GIVING TREE** will be dedicated to providing new hats, socks, scarves, mittens, and gloves to provide warmth to many Toledo neighbors this winter season. The Sunday School children will also be collecting items for this tree as their sharing project throughout Advent. Please place items directly on the tree by **December 22**.
- **OUR SECOND MAGI GIVING TREE** will focus on collecting a \$25 Gift Card to Target or Meijer to reward Hawkins Elementary students who have shown the most growth in their new computerized literacy program. The gift cards will be given to the top boy and girl in each class in the name of the Hawkins Epworth partnership. Please return the gift cards on or before **December 22** and place in the labeled container near the second Magi Tree.
- **OUR THIRD MAGI GIVING TREE** will provide opportunities to bless families transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing through Leading Families Home. Please purchase an item or items from the list on the tree "ornaments" and return unwrapped on or before **December 22** and place in the labeled container near the Third Magi Tree.
- **ADVENT BAGS** we are collecting grocery bags full of daily household supplies for three local community agencies: St. Paul's Community Center, YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter, and Lifeline Toledo. The bags have 2 lists stapled to them - one to take off and take to the store with you to aid you in your shopping, and one to let us know which agency it will go to when returned. You do not need to get all of the items on the list. Just fill it up and return by **December 22** in the lobby near the Giving Trees.



If you are unable to shop and would like a Christmas elf to do it for you, we are gladly accepting monetary donations. Please mark them "Advent donations". Let's celebrate this wondrous Christmas season by bringing gifts to assist our local community as the three Magi did for baby Jesus so many years ago. Contact Susan at [personal info has been removed] with any questions.

OTHER ADVENT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES:

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

Heifer international is a non-profit, humanitarian organization dedicated to ending world hunger and saving the earth by providing livestock, trees, training and other resources to help poor families in the USA and around the globe. A donation to Heifer International pays for livestock and technical training in animal management and care. You can purchase heifers, llamas, goats, tree seedlings, honey bees, pigs, chickens, and more! Make a donation in someone else's name and you will receive a card that can be sent as an acknowledgment of the donation. This is a great gift idea for those hard-to-buy for people on your list. The Heifer giving model also teaches a wonderful lesson to your children. Stop by the info table in the Lobby on Sundays, **December 1, 8, & 15**. If you have questions, email Rob at [personal info has been removed].

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGERS

Epworth volunteers will be manning a kettle at Kroger (corner of Holland-Sylvania & Bancroft) on Thursday, **December 12**, Friday, **December 13** and Saturday, **December 14** from 9am-7pm, in one-hour shifts. This is a wonderful service opportunity for individuals, families, or small groups. Sign-up sheets are in the church lobby starting November 24. Thank you for helping! If you have questions, email Bob at [personal info has been removed].

ST. PAUL'S: DONATE HAMS FOR A CHRISTMAS DINNER

Thank you for helping St. Paul's Community Center as they prepare and serve a Christmas meal to people without homes in our community. Mark your ham (tradition or football style) and put it in the church refrigerator. Hams will be delivered to St. Pauls through Monday, **December 22**.

DONATE TO EPWORTH EVERY TIME YOU SHOP ON AMAZON!



Now, you can support Epworth every single time you purchase

something on Amazon! When you sign up for AmazonSmile and select Epworth as your charitable organization, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Epworth. AmazonSmile is exactly the same as regular Amazon, it has the same products, prices & services, only now you're supporting Epworth at the same time! To sign up, go to: smile.amazon.com/ch/34-4428652 and select Epworth as your charitable organization, then start shopping! If you have any questions, or would like a direct link, contact Laura in the church office at laura@epworth.com.

FRIENDLY CENTER GIFT DRIVE

The Friendly Center is currently accepting donations of unwrapped gifts for children from birth to age 12. Please place these new toys in the box by the welcome desk in the lobby by **December 2**. Have questions? Please contact Correne Hofer at [personal info has been removed].

FEED YOUR NEIGHBOR

Hunger doesn't take a vacation!

The Feed Your Neighbor program is a unique network of food pantries in the most impoverished neighborhoods in the Toledo area, which serves those most vulnerable populations who, due to personal crisis, are experiencing food insecurity. FYN gathers and distributes a three day supply of nutritious, non-perishable food items to persons who otherwise would go without. They're currently asking for the items listed below. Find the wooden donation box on the floor inside the Central Avenue doors. Questions, contact Carol at [personal info has been removed]. Thank you so much for your generosity in helping our neighbors.

- hats
- gloves
- socks
- canned corn
- canned carrots
- canned fruit
- tuna fish

PLAN FUN EVENTS FOR EPWORTH!

Want a fun way to serve the church and make a difference in the community of Epworth? This team is for you! They meet on the first Wednesday of each month to plan fun, social events. Previous events include outings to Mud Hens and Walleye games and family skating at Tam O Shanter. We would love to make you a part of this team! To sign up, please email Pastor Beth at Beth@epworth.com.

ATTENTION COOKIE BAKERS!



We need your help by baking a dozen or two Christmas Cookies for our Homebound members. They look forward to the cookies our caring members bake and donate to share with them. Please mark them "For Homebound Members" and leave them in the church kitchen before **December 10**.

We also need volunteers to:

- help pack boxes on Tuesday, **December 10**, 9am-12pm
- help deliver cookies between **December 10-13**

If you have any questions, please contact Robin Jacob at [personal info has been removed]. Thank you.

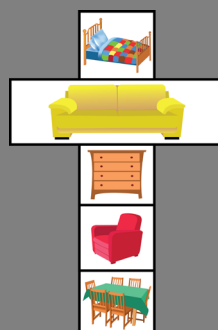
JOURNEYING THROUGH GRIEF BOOKS

Journeying through Grief is a set of four short books sent to people grieving the loss of a loved one at four crucial times during the first year after the loss. Epworth sends these books to members who have lost close family members. Each book is sent individually with a handwritten note. Help is needed to write those notes! Join us on the first Tuesday of each month in the volunteer office, next being Tuesday, **December 3** at 10am. Everything you need will be there, so just show up and be ready to put your pen to paper. It could be fun and a way to meet someone new, as we serve our Lord together. Contact us, stephenministry@epworth.com.



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

FURNITURE MINISTRY



BLESSINGS ITEMS NEEDED:

*sharp kitchen knives,
toasters and can
openers*

STATISTICS

Furniture:
Families:
Adults:
Children:

OCTOBER:

155
13
16
14

YTD:

1362
119
145
151

 **epworth church**
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Flawless Love. Unexplainable Peace. Boundless Joy. Endless Hope.

Christmas time for families can get overwhelming. Maybe it's been a while since you've been to church, and that's OK! The true gifts of Christmas are already yours, what could be better than to discover them with us? We're a group of people seeking to know, love, and serve God while creating deeper relationships with those around us.

YOU'RE INVITED



 **epworth church**
epworth.com