

## Spiritual Life Advance

Focus Verse: 1 John 4:13



**"By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit."**

SLA is always a weekend I look forward to throughout the year. It is a time of fellowship, togetherness and growing closer in a relationship with God, as well as friends. I was especially looking forward to this weekend because of the busyness of my schedule, including school and extracurriculars.

I needed a time to take a breath from my ongoing schedule and re-familiarize myself with my relationship with Christ. Throughout the weekend, we discussed how we are all children of God and we're made in God's image. In small groups, we talked about our daily routines, such as brushing our teeth and making our bed, and how we can incorporate a small act of stillness to be with Christ during these ordinary acts. This mindfulness for a few minutes everyday will slowly feed into our daily routines and help us have the right mindset for the rest of the day.

I loved this new idea and now, it being a few weeks after SLA, I have taken time to be still with God for a few minutes everyday, which has incredibly changed my perspective and given me a pair of fresh eyes each day. It has allowed me to see God perform in different ways throughout my day and it has shown me how we really are made in God's image.

One thing that really stayed with me from SLA was the idea of the Holy Spirit. We discussed how God presents himself in many different ways throughout our lives; the Holy Spirit being one of these ways. After this discussion, we began to pray with our hands open, instead of clenched together. This different way of praying felt refreshing and made me feel more open to God.



Mary Kate Holladay (left) and Claire Hamilton (right)

By opening our hands, we are giving up our burdens to God and letting him take control; though, with clenched fists, we cannot receive his Grace.

SLA has always been my favorite weekend of the year. It feels like coming up for a breath of fresh air after 'drowning' in everyday obstacles.

—MARY KATE HOLLADAY, SOPHOMORE



## Concerning the Holy Conferencing at Church Street UMC

The Holy Conferencing group intends to meet every month for at least a year, and the participants have agreed to read several books that address diverse viewpoints regarding the recommendations to the special 2019 General Conference. These books have perspectives as diverse as members of the Church Street *Holy Conferencing* group and of the congregation.

Please note that no one is endorsing or disregarding outright any of the selected books. You might be interested as well in reading these books prior to February 26, 2019. Along with the Bible, the first two of seven books are as follows:

- *Unity of the Church and Human Sexuality: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness*, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Study Guide
- *Unafraid and Unashamed: Facing the Future of United Methodism* by Rev. Will Cantrell.

(Other titles will be shared via *The Messenger* as space permits.)

### How to contact Holston Conference Delegates

If you wish to write to the delegates of the Holston Conference you may send an email message to:

[delegation@holston.org](mailto:delegation@holston.org)

Messages are forwarded on to each member of the Holston Conference delegation.

## Olive Branch Olive Oil

Olive oil bottles are still for sale until Christmas! The organic olive oil from Palestine is a fair trade product and has received the Palestine Standards Institution extra virgin certification. We did not sell all the bottles at the UMW Bake Sale. If you would like to order a bottle (\$15/bottle), please contact Elaine Ralston at [aralston1025@tds.net](mailto:aralston1025@tds.net).



## Poinsettia Sales

Sundays, Dec. 9 and 16  
in the Chapel Hall

Help decorate the church this Advent by purchasing a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one. The cost is \$12 per plant. You may also order by calling the church office at [865-524-3048](tel:865-524-3048).



## Youth Christmas Parties



December 9, 12:30–2:30 p.m.

- ☀ Lunch & White Elephant Gift Exchange
- ☀ High Schoolers: The Hamilton's House
- ☀ Middle Schoolers: The Powell's House
- ☀ RSVP through the weekly Youth Update

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**Saturday, December 1 at 11 a.m.**

UMW Christmas Service & Luncheon

**Sunday, December 2**

Shop the World Fair Trade Sale

8 a.m.–12 p.m. in the CLC Hall

Advent Crafts Festival and Supper

5–7 p.m. in the Gym and Church Life Center

**Wednesday, December 5 at noon in the Nave**

Midweek Advent Service (recital begins at 11:40 a.m.)

**Sunday, December 9**

Youth & Children's Choirs present Advent & Christmas music

8:30 & 11 a.m. in the Nave

Youth Christmas Parties

12:30 p.m. (see article above for locations)

**Tuesday, December 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the Nave**

Community School of the Arts Holiday Concert

**Wednesday, December 12 at noon in the Nave**

Midweek Advent Service (recital begins at 11:40 a.m.)

**Sunday, December 16**

Festive Carols and Anthems accompanied by the TN Brass Quintet

8:30 & 11 a.m. in the Nave

Annual Children's Christmas Pageant

9:40 a.m. in the gym

**Monday, December 17 – Wednesday, December 19**

Full of Grace Nativity Art Display (see article above right)

**Tuesday, December 18 at 7:30 p.m.**

Master Arts Series: *Messiah* (part 1) by G.F. Handel presented by the Parish Adult Choir, soloists and orchestra. Reception follows.

**Wednesday, December 19 at noon**

Blue Christmas Service in the Chapel

**Friday, December 21 at 5:00 p.m.**

Downtown Church Tours



## FULL OF GRACE – MARY, MOTHER OF GOD IMAGES THROUGH THE AGES

On December 17, 18, and 19 all are invited to view twenty images of Mary as envisioned by artists through the centuries. This unique display will be housed in the new Welcome Center and will feature not only the remarkable renderings of grand masters of early eras, but also includes an arresting array of contemporary paintings. The striking beauty of these works is unquestioned, yet each is sure to deepen your faith during this Advent Season. Greeters will be on hand to welcome you during these hours:

**Monday, Dec. 17 — Noon – 6:00 p.m.**

**Tuesday, Dec. 18 — Noon – 10:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, Dec. 19 — Noon – 6:00 p.m.**

For more information, contact Rev. Jan Wade at [865-521-0264](tel:865-521-0264); [jbwade@churchstreetumc.org](mailto:jbwade@churchstreetumc.org)

## Downtown Church Tours

**Friday, December 21 from 5:00–7:00 p.m.**

City People is hosting a downtown church tour (Church Street, First Baptist and First Presbyterian) from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, December 21. The tour is open to everyone. Music and refreshments will be provided in our newly renovated Parish Hall. Enjoy the decorations in our Nave, and take a tour of our newly built Welcome Center. Parking is available in our Cumberland Avenue lot, and you can enter through the Welcome Center. Docents will be available.

## College Student Addresses

We want to send notes and care packages to our college students near and far to express our love for them! If you are a college student or a parent of a college student, please send an updated address to Ann Marie Tugwell at [anmarie@dewhirstproperties.com](mailto:anmarie@dewhirstproperties.com).