



THE

Communique

January 2018

Abingdon United Methodist Church

101 E. Main Street Abingdon, Virginia 24210

Rev. Robert Countiss, D. Min.

www.abingdonumc.org

Worship Volunteers

Sunday, January 7

8:45 Contemporary: Glenn Patterson
8:45 a.m. Traditional: Rev. Robert Countiss
11:00 Traditional: Rev. Robert Countiss
Greeters: Bobby & Lorena Bolling
Acolytes: Virginia & Josie Stockner
Ushers: Team Communion
Flowers: Communion
Communion will be observed this day in the 11 a.m. service

Sunday, January 14

8:45 Contemporary: Rev. Robert Countiss
8:45 Traditional: Glenn Patterson
11:00 Traditional: Rev. Robert Countiss
Greeters: Rob & Lee Ann Hitch
Acolytes: Carolyn & Mary Hitch
Ushers For Traditional Worship: Team A
Flowers: Andy and Beth Stockner
Children's Church: Brittani Clayman
Communion is observed in the Contemporary Service

Sunday, January 21

8:45 Contemporary: Glenn Patterson
8:45 a.m. Traditional: TBA
11:00 Traditional: TBA
Greeters: Tom & Allison Cook
Acolytes: Elizabeth Nichols & Ainsley Richmond
Ushers For Traditional Worship: Team B
Flowers: TBA
Children's Church: Brittani Clayman
Communion is observed in the 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service

Sunday, January 28

8:45 Contemporary: TBA
8:45 a.m. Traditional: Glenn Patterson
11:00 Traditional: Rev. Robert Countiss
Greeters: Otey & Mary Dudley
Acolytes: Carter & Lucy Withers
Ushers For Traditional Worship: Team C
Flowers: TBA

Welcome to 2018 By Rev. Robert Countiss



For most of us it takes a bit of getting used to as we move into a January and we need to begin to start using a new year to date things. Our current system of dating years started sometime in the early middle ages as most of the western world had become Christian. Rather than the previous method of dating based on the ruling year of some emperor, the thought was to date years since the coming of Christ (AD= Year of the Lord). In this system, the years before Christ's birth ('BC') extend backwards, ending on year 1 BC, then we move to AD 1 (the AD properly comes first), and there is no 'year 0.' We are thus now in what is reckoned to be the 2,018th year since the birth of Christ. Of course, the middle ages system of dating and counting was not as precise as ours, and many Biblical scholars reckon the birth of Jesus to have been something more like what we call 4 BC, but given the time when all this was done being centuries later, it was a reasonably close estimation. Theologically, it would probably be more appropriate to have begun the counting of years from the Resurrection, rather than Jesus' birth, which would put us back about 30 years.

Though the calendar year of 2018 got off to a cold start weather-wise, I trust we are off to a warm and happy start to the year itself. Certainly, this church has been kind and generous to Carla and me and we are thankful for all the kindnesses you have shown us and our family over this Christmas season and indeed all of 2017. It was a year that marked Amanda and Nick moving out to their own home and of Jacob and Sarah getting married and moving to Atlanta for his continued schooling. In this past year our wonderful church has been supportive and helpful in many ways and Carla and I are thankful for all of you.

As we look ahead to 2018, we can celebrate the blessings of 2017 for a bit, but we still should focus on what lies before us as most important. As with the beginning of any new year there are practical things to be done, some paperwork to complete and new leadership to help guide the church. We also recognize the changes in Holston Conference as we move into a new district structure and we become part of the new Clinch Mountain District. You can look at Holston.org to see the new district map and the names of the other 8 districts. We'll have to get used to this new way of our Conference being organized, but of course, we continue as Abingdon UMC!

Whether or not you make resolutions at the beginning of a new year, I do hope you will take the opportunity to renew your commitment to Abingdon UMC and to our mission and ministry in this town and community. We have many opportunities before us and many responsibilities, but the year ahead looks bright! Thanks to your generosity in 2017, we enter the new year with no outstanding debt from our building project, we have new church members, a new staff member and many wonderful activities that continue. And most importantly, though the calendar year changes, we still have the same Lord and the same faith. May 2018 prove to be the best year yet for us all!