

Middletown Messenger

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DECEMBER EVENTS

- 3 | Monthly fellowship potluck
- 3 | Community Christmas Concert
- 7-9 | EACM Christmas Store
- 9 | LAA Christmas Program
- 10 | Random Acts of Kindness/Game Night
- 25 | Christmas

Free Community Christmas Concert!

Christmastime is here! Music and fellowship are favorite holiday pastimes shared by many celebrators, and Middletown's FREE 2nd annual Community Christmas Concert offers a festive opportunity to enjoy both. On Saturday, December 3, 2016 at 6:30 pm, our church family will welcome the music ministry of contemporary Christian singer and songwriter Jaclynn Huse along with our own Middletown Mass Choir singing Christmas favorites. The concert is free; a love offering will be accepted.

Jaclynn Huse is a Chapel Music contemporary, Christian singer/songwriter from Collegedale, TN. She has released two albums, WHEEL OF FORTUNE



Jaclynn Huse,
Contemporary Christian
Singer/Songwriter

and READY. The songs that she sings reflect the importance of God in her life, the power of grace, influencing change in today's society, the sanctity of

her marriage and family, and her passion for helping those who are less fortunate. You can learn more about Jaclynn and her ministry at: jaclynnhuse.com.

The Community Christmas Concert was founded in 2015 and has quickly become a highly-anticipated mainstay on our church calendar. Last year's concert featured the music of The Lightkeepers Quartet of Lexington, KY along with Middletown Mass Choir and Orchestra presenting excerpts from Handel's Messiah.

This event is an excellent time to invite your family, friends, and coworkers to share the holiday spirit with you in an inspiring, worshipful atmosphere. Share one of the colorful event flyers

Pen of Inspiration by Ellen G. White

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

"The story of Bethlehem is an exhaustless theme. In it is hidden "the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Romans 11:33. We marvel at the Saviour's sacrifice in exchanging the throne of heaven for the manger, and the companionship of adoring angels for the beasts of the stall. Human

pride and self-sufficiency stand rebuked in His presence. Yet this was but the beginning of His wonderful condescension. It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four

thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.? {The Desire of Ages, p. 48.6}

Being the Hands & Feet of Jesus



Several of the young adult volunteers at the entrance of The Healing Place

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink...” Matthew 25:35 ESV

Middletown’s recently-launched Young Adult Ministry lived out the gospel in a practical way and became Jesus’ hands and feet when they volunteered recently at The Healing Place Men’s Campus in downtown Louisville.

The Healing Place is a highly successful recovery program

that helps its clients to return to productive living after suffering from addiction (<http://www.thehealingplace.org/>).

A group of 11 young adults and 4 children from Middletown served lunch to over 200 men at the facility at 1020 West Market Street. The peer mentor who guided us during our visit shared his testimony of what going through the program has meant to his recovery. Some of the young adults stated later

that they were unsure what to expect before arriving, but were tremendously blessed by the experience.

Young adults and their friends are invited to our first Holiday Fun Night on Saturday, December 10, 5:30-8:30 pm. They may also join our weekly Sabbath School class at 9:45 am.

Young Adult Ministry targets ages 18-35. To get involved, contact youngadults@friendlychurch.com or

“I loved how practical and Bible-based our parenting program was.”

Small Groups Are A Big Hit!

The successful launch of our Tuesday night small group series drew an average of 25-30 attendees each week. During September 20-November 15, church leaders and lay members facilitated topics including parenting, conflict resolution, evangelistic living, following Jesus, and prayer. A light supper was served one hour prior to the

small group breakout, making it easier for busy members to attend in the evening. Between supper and the breakouts, all attendees participated in a huge prayer circle.

Samantha Rabuka recalls: “I loved how practical and Bible-based our parenting program was.”

The next series of small groups

will begin in January 2017. Sign-up forms are available now to gauge which topics members have the most interest in.

Make plans now to join a small group in the new year as we grow closer to God and to each other!



We are blessed by and love our preaching, singing Pastor Marius!

Showing Our Pastor We Care

October was nationwide Pastor’s Appreciation Month . Since Pastor Marius was away most of the month, on Sabbath, November 5 the congregation presented him with gifts of appreciation. Gifts included a greeting card filled with handwritten messages by members and several gift cards to Pastor Marius’ favorite

retailers. He also received a compilation video of members expressing gratitude and favorite memories.

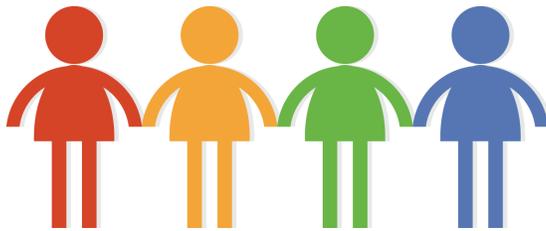
Here are a few fun facts about Pastor Marius:

- He’s been married for 23 years to Dana and has one teenaged son, Calvin.
- He grew up in Urleta,

Romania, and emigrated to the U.S. on January 1, 1992.

- He earned a Voice Performance diploma at the School of Arts in Ploiesti, Romania.
- His hobbies and interests include singing, soccer, and running.

Adopt-A-Student Connects Campus to Church



On a Sabbath in early August, the names of every identified high school and college student at Middletown, both local and away, were placed in a pot to launch our Adopt-A-Student program. Members pulled names at random and committed to connecting with

their student at least a few times each year to offer encouragement, prayer, and even small gifts, if desired.

Similar student adoption programs of this nature conducted at other churches have been successful at connecting students to their home churches over the long term.

Christianity Today reported some startling statistics in 2014 about students leaving the church, citing

ages 17-19 as the age range when many young adults take a hiatus from the church.* We must actively engage and build up our young people and let them know we care during this critical time in their lives.

If you adopted a Middletown student, please remember to contact them during the holidays to let them know they're on your mind. They'll appreciate the effort!

*<http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/may/dropouts-and-disciples-how-many-students-are-really-leaving.html>

Age 17-19 is when many young adults take a hiatus from the church.

Celebrating Diversity in Christ

Acts 2:5-11 describes the early church as an ethnically diverse assembly of worshippers speaking different languages. More than fifteen countries and ethnicities are mentioned in this passage describing the Holy Spirit falling on the day of Pentecost. As these worshippers spoke of the mighty works of God, onlookers were amazed at how each person could

understand the words in their own languages. Amazing!

Middletown's church family includes natives and direct descendants of over 22 countries from around the world, which is remarkable for a church of our size.

To celebrate our cultural diversity, we will host our first International Weekend on March 5 & 6, 2017!

Planned highlights will include an international concert, Parade of Nations, musical worship, delicious potluck, and much more. Members will be invited to participate in various portions of the experience, especially by wearing traditional clothing from their native or favorite country.

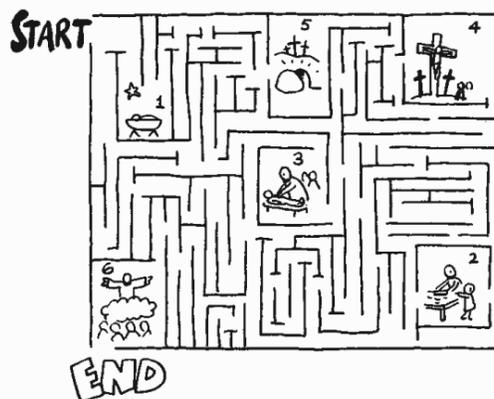
Stay tuned for more information about this exciting event!

Kids' Korner

Mini-Middletowners, we hope you enjoy this section created just for you!



CAN YOU FIND YOUR WAY?



You must travel right through each event in Jesus' life in the right order!

1. Jesus is born at Bethlehem.
2. Joseph teaches Jesus to work as a carpenter.
3. Jesus heals a little girl.
4. Jesus is crucified.
5. Jesus is alive again.
6. Jesus ascends to heaven.



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"A safe environment... where people relationships become kingdom relationships"

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We're on the web!
www.friendlychurch.com

Fun & Fellowship, Middletown-style!

Known as "the friendly church", Middletown values social interaction and connectedness as an integral part of our life blood. Jesus Christ often fellowshiped at social gatherings with friends during His earthly ministry (see John 2:1-12 and 12:1-8, also Luke 19:1-10).

The nine members comprising the current Social Committee work hard to organize a variety of creative, fun events and activities to foster positive relationships and help members to connect with each other socially as well as spiritually. The committee meets annually in August to plan nine activities for the entire year. Past event favorites have included the annual Super Bowl Party and Progressive Christmas Party. Recent new additions to the social line-up included a Sabbath walk and picnic at



Middletowners enjoying the 2016 Derby Picnic in Beckley Park



Beckley Park and the Sabbath Breakfast Potluck.

If you would like to submit an idea for a social event or activity, please contact Linda Wilson, committee leader, or any one of the committee

members.

Mark your calendars for the following dates for upcoming social events and activities:

- December 10: Random Acts of Kindness/Game Night
- January 21, 2017: Middletown's Got Talent
- February 18: Babysitting for parents for Valentine's Day
- April 14: Agape Feast
- April 16: Easter Egg Hunt & Potluck at Silo
- May 6: Derby Picnic at Beckley Park

Members and guests are welcome to join us at these and other Middletown activities and worship services.