



Jasper United Methodist Church

85 West Church Street, Jasper, GA 30143

Phone: 706-253-2100, Fax: 706-253-2110, www.jasperumc.org

Facebook: Jasper United Methodist Church / YouTube: Jasper UMC

January 2026



A View from the *Crowe's Nest*

Christmas All Year

Is your Christmas tree down? Have you put up your Christmas decorations already? Wait! Christmas isn't over! The Twelve Days of Christmas, actually, begins on December 12 and lasts until January 5. When should the decorations be put up? When is Christmas over?

In recent years, it has been asserted that "The Twelve Days of Christmas" was originally written as a way to secretly teach principles of the Christian faith during a time of persecution. "My true love" was considered to be God himself who is the giver of all good gifts. Each of the individual gifts in the song were then considered to be a gift that God has given us. Such as, the two turtle doves were thought of as the gifts of the Old and New Testament.

While the evidence for this claim is questionable, I still believe it can provide us a tool for keeping Christmas all year. The following was adapted from a blog by Woodeene Koenig-Bricker:

January: A partridge in a pear tree

The partridge is said to represent Jesus, the one true gift of the Father. During the month of January, renew your commitment to faith by spending time each day in prayer with Jesus. Don't make it so difficult you quit before you begin. It is enough to start each day (maybe while brushing your teeth) by simply saying, "Jesus, be with me today." After doing this for 31 days, it's likely a new habit of trust and hope will have taken root in your heart . . . just like the pear tree in the song.

February: Two turtledoves

As suggested, the Old and the New Testaments are presumably signified by the turtledoves. This month, pay special attention to the readings from the Old Testament and the New Testament. Choose to read one book from each of the testaments. If you've never read the Book of Genesis, you might be surprised at what some of the stories you think you know by heart, like Adam and Eve, really say. Then read the Book of John in the New Testament to see how God fulfilled his promises of Genesis.

March: Three French hens

The Magi are said to have brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the Christ Child. Gold is symbolic of our money, frankincense of our faith, and myrrh of the ultimate end of our lives. During March, take time to consider how you are using your financial resources, how you nurture your faith, and how you are living your life in light of the final union with God. Refer to the following website for scriptures on tithing, http://www.openbible.info/topics/tithes_and_offering.

April: Four calling birds

The four Gospels tell the story of Jesus and our salvation. Select one Gospel verse this month, memorize it, and ask for the faith to bring it to life. Since April is tax month and a time of worry for many people, consider Mt 6: 25-34:

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you

will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? . . . But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

May: Five gold rings - The first five books of the Old Testament are called the Torah or the Pentateuch and contain the foundations of our faith in the one, true God. They would have been very familiar to Jesus, who would have read them in the Temple. During May, consider the prophecies of Jesus as found in the Old Testament. You can find a list of some of these prophecies at <http://www.accordingtothescriptures.org/prophecy/353prophecies.html>.

June: Six Geese a-laying - For six days, God labored and worked at creation. On the seventh day, he rested. This month, make an attempt to keep the Sabbath free of unnecessary work. Use it, instead, for things that renew and rejuvenate your spirit such as Bible Study, prayer, creative worship, etc...

July: Seven Swans a-swimming - We are taught that the Holy Spirit has given us seven gifts: wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, piety and fear (or awe) of the Lord. During July, read 1 Corinthians 12. Look for evidence of the gifts of the Spirit in your life, reflect on those gifts and how they can and should be manifested in your life and in the life of the church.

August: Eight maids a-milking - Listed in Mt 5: 1-12, the Eight Beatitudes give us a concrete formula for living a holy life. In fact, St. Augustine called the Beatitudes the ideal model for every Christian life. Choose one of the beatitudes; using a biblical concordance or a website like Crosswalk.com, identify and read scriptures about that beatitude; and, identify ways to live out that Beatitude in your life.

September: Nine ladies dancing - In his Letter to the Galatians, Paul lists nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). Identify one of the fruits of the Spirit that you have trouble demonstrating in your life. Ask God to help you grow and mature this gift in your life.

October: Ten lords a-leaping – Memorize the Ten Commandments. Watch the following 3 minute video on a simple way to learn them: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8KDbIUACf4> This month the presidential campaign will kick into high gear. As you prepare to vote, pray that the candidates remember the Ten Commandments and the principles on which our nation was founded.

November: Eleven pipers piping - We sometimes forget that there were only 11 faithful disciples left at the time of the Crucifixion. Read <http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/who-were-twelve-disciples> Which apostle are you?

December: Twelve drummers drumming -Sometimes we make our faith more complicated than it really is. The Apostles’ Creed contains all the basics that we must believe. Read the creed slowly and make your own assertion of faith to each of its 12 points. See: <http://www.examiner.com/article/12-points-of-the-apostles-creed>

Merry Christmas all year,
Rev. Dr. Sheila Crowe





Happy New Year from JUMC Preschool.

We ended 2025 with a wonderful Christmas program full of love for Jesus and each other. It was a blessing to all of us. We start this new year with new things to learn and make in a slower pace than the last two months. On January 19th we will be closed in observance of **MLK Day**, and we will have **“Donuts with Dad”** on January 28th.



Donna Dooley, Preschool Director
dooley@jasperumc.org
470-560-9696

Children's Ministry



Happy New Year!

We are excited to welcome a brand-new year with our Kids of the Kingdom family! January will be a fun and meaningful time as

we learn more about God's love, grow in faith, and enjoy time together.

January meeting dates and time.

4:00 – 5:30 PM

- January 7
- January 14
- January 21
- January 28

Each gathering will include Bible stories, music, games, crafts, snacks, and activities, along with time to build friendships in a loving, faith-filled environment.

We look forward to seeing all of our kids this month as we begin the year learning and growing together in Christ.

— Amy Swancey
Director of Children and Youth
amy@jasperumc.org

WELCOME

Come On In

This is the message our new hospitality crew is creating for visitors and members. Greeters are opening doors with a smile and offering assistance. A new fellowship coffee hour is offered before our worship service, and

Wednesday night suppers are opportunities to both serve and strengthen relationships. If you would like to join us in creating a stronger welcoming environment we would love to have you on our team! Contact Pastor Sheila, Mitchel or Nancy Henson to see where you might plug in.



Happy New Year from Elevate Youth!

We're excited to begin a brand-new year together and look forward to all that January has in store. Join us for connection, growth, and fun!

January Schedule

Elevate Youth Nights – Sundays

5:30 – 7:00 PM

- January 4
- January 11
- January 18
- January 25

Elevate Youth Nights – Wednesdays

6:00 – 7:30 PM

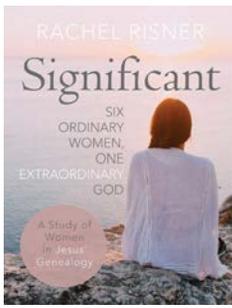
- January 7
- January 14
- January 21
- January 28

We can't wait to see everyone as we kick off the year together. Bring a friend and come ready for a great time!

May this new year be filled with God's love, guidance, and blessings as we grow in faith together.

Happy New Year!

— Amy Swancey
Director of Children and Youth
amy@jasperumc.org



Ladies Study/Sunday, January 4th-February 8th

4:00pm ~ Room 106

Significant by Rachel Risner

A six week study of Women in Jesus Genealogy. Walk alongside real women of the Bible through their struggles and successes and discover

how to become a woman of Significance. We will study, share and fellowship each week.

Please sign up with Juanita or contact for questions {call /text @ (770) 633-2563 or email at nitawa27@gmail.com}

Order your own book from Amazon or your favorite bookstore. Book titled: SIGNIFICANT by Rachel Risner, A story of Women in Jesus Genealogy.

Read and Be prepared to BEGIN on our first night.
WEEK One ~ DAYS 1-5.

Information from the Office:

The office will be closed from December 25-January 5. Pastor Sheila will be out of the office the first two weeks of January and Cathy will be out of the office the last two weeks of January. For any emergencies during that time or after office hours, Pastor Sheila can be reached on her cell #770-842-3025 and Cathy can be reached on her cell #618-384-6254.

Financial statements for donations to the church for tax credit will be emailed, unless a hard copy is requested. If you have changed your email or moved, please make sure to inform the office before January 5. Statements will be sent on or before January 15.

Even though the holiday activities are over, the church building is still a busy place. Before scheduling any meetings or programs, please check with the church office calendar.



Join us in the sanctuary every Sunday at 9:30 for coffee and donuts. They will be available from 9:30 to immediately following worship. If you aren't part of a Sunday School join us in the sanctuary for a time of casual conversation. And, as always, invite others to come and join us!!

Winter Sermon Series

Starting January 18 will be our new 2026 Winter Sermon Series, "New and Different." What makes us different?



How does Christ make my life different. Together, we will explore the unique gifts God brings into our lives and explore how and where he calls us to be different from the world.

Music Ministry

December was a busy month filled with programs, banquets, worship and more! It was the end of a year and the beginning of a journey through a new Christian year. January at JUMC is a time to reflect, rest, and plan.

We are so blessed to have some wonderful, talented musicians in our worship services and programs. Special shout out to Phyllis Pool, Darcy Douglas, Susan Gooch, Justin Davis, Gracie Bail, Lea Gallagher, Katie Lewis and the faithful Chancel Choir members for sharing their musical gifts. Our new group, of young ladies, shared their first 'Sign Singing' interpretive movement song on December 14. We hope to share more in the coming months and we have room for others to join.

The Chancel Choir will begin Wednesday rehearsals on January 7 at 6:45 pm. We invite everyone who wants to sing, play or dance for the Lord, to join us!

Rehearsal schedule for January:

KOK Music: Wednesdays at 4:30 pm

Chancel Choir: Wednesdays at 6:40 pm

Handbells: Wednesdays at 5:15 pm (as needed)

Interpretive Movement: TBD

For more information or questions about any group in the music department, please feel free to contact me. We would love to have you join us!

Cathy Riley, Director of Music

criley@jasperumc.org

706-253-2100 or 618-384-6254



United Methodist Men meet on the second Thursday of each month. Dinner is served at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary with a devotion and business following. All men of the church are invited to join UMM. For more information contact Richard Lewis.



The Dorcas Circle will meet the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM in room 106. All ladies are welcome and invited to attend.

PRAYER LIST



Call the church office to have names put on the list.
(Names will be on the list for 2 months)

Pray for those who are in need of our Lord's Healing Touch:

Burl Chesser, Pam Edwards, Sara Fowler, Judy Francis, Peggy Higgins Maureen Huntington, Linda Judkins, Tom Judkins, Don Larson, Joyce Leist, George Montgomery, Susan Sherrell, Linda Waitsman

Retreat at Jasper Assisted Living: Carolyn Omundson, Carolyn Jenkins

Rock Creek Manor: Barbara Peddicord, Donna Dicus, Don & Pat Smith, Sarah Fowler, Peggy Higgins

Cedarhurst Assisted Living: George Hall

Please call the church office if you have a prayer concern, update or to notify us of any family illnesses, deaths or hospitalizations.



Who are we? Where is God leading us? Where do we fit in our community? How can we be of service to our neighbors?



God has been so good to JUMC. He has lead the church into many wonderous opportunities and adventures. It is our joy to be of service to him. The last few years have brought many challenges; however, God has walked us through all of them. Now it is time to journey forth with a new perspective, energy, and direction. Come help us discover where God is leading.



EVERYONE is invited into the conversation on January 18, 2026 from 2PM - 4PM in the church sanctuary.

Together we will pray, share, and dream as we seek God's guidance. This meeting with be followed up with a meeting in February with local leaders. At that meeting we hope to hear from local community leaders about what they see as the needs and concerns before us. A third and final meeting is planned for March 22 as where we hope we will be able to refine some goals and objectives for 2026 and beyond.

We WANT you to be part of this. Make plans now to join us!

Missions Matters

Sponsor a student! A whole new batch of Kenya students to sponsor in 2026 is on the bulletin board near the restrooms. Please find the one you want to support, put your info on the sign-up sheet and take the photo and info with you. Pray for him/her. Fee information is on the board or send questions to Dex at: hummerlover60@hotmail.com (470-203-9595)