



DECEMBER 2025

Randall by the River: A United Methodist Community

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 2: Advent Study at 6:30 in the Branch

Dec 7: Worship at 9 am; Connect Youth at 5:30 pm

Dec 9: Advent Study at 6:30 in the Branch

Dec 10: Community Events meeting at 6:00 pm

Dec 14: Worship at 9 am; Annual Cookie Exchange Party at 10 am; Connect Youth at 5:30 pm

Dec 16: Advent Study at 6:30 in the Branch

Dec 21: Worship at 9 am

Dec 23: Packing Fruit Bags and Christmas Gifts at 6:30 pm

Dec 24: Christmas Eve service at 6:30 pm; Fellowship to follow

Dec 25: Christmas Day Meal at Norwood's Community Table at 10 am

Dec 28: Worship at 9 am

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

December arrives quickly, filling our calendars even as the days grow darker. In this season, we proclaim a holy truth: the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.

Advent calls us to slow down and notice God drawing near—just as God did in the humble birth of Jesus. This month, our worship, service, and generosity become ways we share Christ's hope, peace, joy, and love with the world.

My prayer is that December would be holy rather than hurried, and that you would find moments of wonder amid the busyness. Thank you for being a church that lives the Christmas story all year long.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Hanna (9803562705)

ANNUAL COOKIE EXCHANGE: DECEMBER 14TH



Our annual cookie exchange is this Sunday! If you join in, you'll go home with a wonderful assortment of holiday treats to enjoy throughout the season.

How to participate: Bake several batches of your favorite homemade Christmas cookies or treats—the one you're "famous" for! Instead of bringing a platter, please package about six cookies per bag in small sandwich-size baggies. This keeps them fresh for freezing or refrigerating. Bring 20 filled baggies of cookies or treats. Bring an empty tray or container to carry home your assortment. Fo you have no time to bake? No worries—you can purchase cookies from a bakery and package them into 20 baggies.

CHURCH MAILBOXES!

Randall by the River has a long-standing tradition of exchanging Christmas cards using the church mailboxes located in the hallway. To help everyone participate, we've created mailboxes for you. Participation is completely optional, but if you'd like to join in, please email randallbytheriver@gmail.com for a list of the names. If your name is missing and you'd like to be added, please let us know—we're so sorry for the oversight! And please remember to check your mailbox regularly throughout Advent, even if you aren't sending cards, so that boxes don't overflow.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: DECEMBER 24TH AT 6:30 PM

Our Christmas Eve service will be held on December 24 at 6:30 p.m. Our service will be an opportunity to remember what Christmas is all about. We will have beautiful music, a time of word, and communion. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend to join you. We'll enjoy a time of fellowship afterward in the Branch. If you're able, please consider bringing a refreshment to share.



CHRISTMAS DAY AT THE COMMUNITY TABLE

We hope you will consider joining us as we volunteer at the Community Table. This is a great way to serve your neighbor and make sure everyone has a warm meal on Christmas Day. If you would like to volunteer, please let Pastor Hanna know. We will gather at 10 am to set up and begin preparing plates.



GIFT PACKING

While we serve our meal on Christmas Day, we would love to provide a small gift to our neighbors to help them stay warm throughout the winter. In order to do this, we need your help! We will be collecting socks, gloves, and hats throughout the rest of Advent. We need items in all sizes and for both genders. Please bring them to church and we will assemble the gifts on December 23rd with the fruit bags.

JOINING SUNDAY: JANUARY 11TH

On January 11th, we will have a Joining Sunday. If you have been discerning joining the church, this may be a great opportunity to join the church with others! Please talk to Pastor Hanna if you would like to receive more information or if you would like to join!

Holiday Health and Safety Tips

1 Wash your hands often.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product.



2 Stay warm.

Cold temperatures can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry, and dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing. Check on children, the elderly and pets.



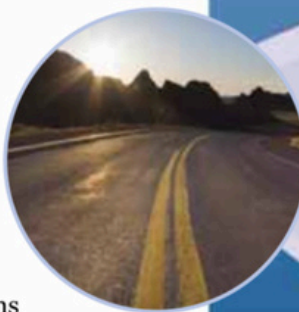
3 Manage stress.

The holidays don't need to take a toll on your health. Keep a check on over-commitment and over-spending. Balance work, home, and play. Get support from family and friends. Keep a relaxed and positive outlook. Get enough sleep.



4 Travel safely.

Whether you're traveling across town or around the world, help ensure your trip is safe. Don't drink and drive, and don't let someone else drink and drive. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to his/her height, weight, and age. Get vaccinations if traveling out of the country.



The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and reflect. They are also a time to pay special attention to your health. Give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others by following these holiday tips.



5 Be smoke-free.

Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke. If you smoke, quit today! Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW, or talk to your health care provider for help.



6 Get check-ups and vaccinations.

Exams and screenings can help find problems early or before they start. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Schedule a visit with your health care provider for a yearly exam. Ask what vaccinations and tests you should get based on your age, lifestyle, travel plans, medical history, and family health history.



7 Watch the kids.

Children are at high risk for injuries. Keep a watchful eye on your kids. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy), and other objects out of kids' reach. Learn how to provide early treatment for children who are choking. Develop and reinforce rules about acceptable and safe behaviors for all electronic media.



8 Prevent injuries.

Injuries from falls and fireworks often occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations. Leave the fireworks to the professionals.

Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Keep candles away from children, pets, walkways, trees, and curtains. Never leave fireplaces, stoves, or candles unattended. Don't use generators, grills, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning devices



inside your home or garage. Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector in your home. Test and change the batteries regularly.

9 Handle and prepare food safely.

As you prepare holiday meals, keep you and your family safe from food-related illness. Wash hands and surfaces often. Avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces. Cook foods to the proper temperature. Refrigerate promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than two hours.



10 Eat healthy, and be active.

With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays the healthy way. Choose more vegetables and fruit. Select just one or two of your favorites from the host of tempting foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to your favorite holiday music. Be active for at least 2½ hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.



To learn more, including the holiday song *The 12 Ways to Health*, visit www.cdc.gov/family/holiday



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Women's Health