

DECEMBER 2022  
Issue No. 242

# The SPARK

Newsletter of the Choteau—Brady—Dutton UM Parish



*Prepare the Way*

**Sunday, December 4**

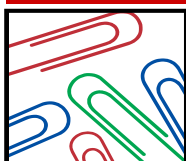
Worship  
with Communion  
and Lighting of the  
Advent Wreath



**9:00 AM—Brady** 1st & 3rd week

**9:15 AM—Dutton** 2nd & 4th week

**11:00 AM—Choteau**



**Office  
Hours**

Mon—Thurs 9am—Noon

If you look for Me at Christmas

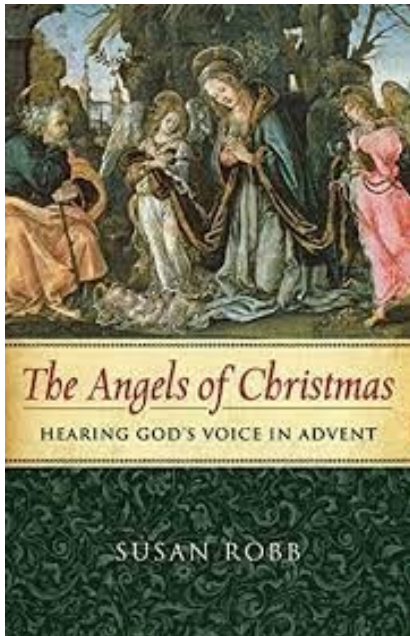
You won't need a special star—  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there where you are.

You may not be aware of Me  
Amid the celebrations—  
You'll have to look beyond the stores  
And all the decorations.

But if you take a moment  
From you list of things to do  
And listen to your heart, you'll find  
I'm waiting there for you.

You're the one I want to be with,  
You're the reason that I came,  
And you'll find Me in the stillness  
As I'm whispering your name.

Love,  
Jesus



## Join us throughout the season of Advent

as we listen for God's voice through  
"The Angels of Christmas"  
and the people who the angels spoke to  
throughout the Gospel stories  
of Christ's birth.

**November 27: 1st Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 1:5-25—"Gabriel & Zachariah"

**December 4: 2nd Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 1:26-38—"Gabriel & Mary"

**December 11: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
Matthew 1:18-25—  
"An Angel of the Lord & Joseph"

**December 18: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 2:1-14—"The Angels & the Shepherds"  
(Handbell Choir @ Brady;  
Baby Jesus Birthday Cake @ Choteau)

*The Longest Night*

DECEMBER 21  
7:00 PM  
CHOTEAU UMC

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING SADNESS OR  
DIFFICULTY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, YOU  
ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR THE  
LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE. THIS IS A  
SERVICE OF HEALING AND HOPE FOR  
ANYONE WHO IS SEEKING LIGHT IN THE  
MIDST OF DARKNESS.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

*Candlelight*  
SERVICE

JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS EVE

Brady UMC - 3:00pm  
Choteau UMC - 6:30pm

*Christmas Day*

Join us Christmas Morning as  
you celebrate the birth of our  
Savior at home with your family.  
Pastor Julie will have a family-  
centered Christmas devotional  
posted online that you can access  
anytime throughout the day. The  
video will be posted on our  
website: [www.umchoteau.net](http://www.umchoteau.net).



## Pastor's Page



As many of you already know, I have been studying “The Angels of Christmas: Hearing God’s Voice in Advent” by Susan Robb this year. The study has opened my own eyes to the ways that God is speaking through messengers in today’s world. One of the stories that she shared in the book really touched me, and I thought it would be a good one to share with you:

### *Angels Gather Among Us*

Roberta, a member of my Bible study group, had driven her husband to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, where he was to receive a lifesaving stem cell transplant. Before the transplant could take place, however, her husband required a very high-risk surgery. The doctors were honest as they told Roberta and her husband, Tom, that his chances of surviving the surgery were less than 50 percent.

Other than Tom’s medical team, Roberta knew no one else in the hospital, and she’d had no conversations with others. Knowing the odds were not in her husband’s favor, Roberta sat alone at a table in the waiting room while he was in surgery, laid her head down on the table, and began to sob. After a few minutes, a woman she had never seen before approached and introduced herself. She said that she and her mother had recently flown to Houston from Egypt, and her mother was having surgery that day. Then she reached out and touched Roberta’s hand and said, “I just came over here to tell you that your husband is going to be okay.” Roberta later said that when the woman touched her hand, a complete sense of peace washed over her, and her words and her voiced filled Roberta with a deep sense of assurance and comfort.

Hours later, Tom came out of the surgery – alive. He made it through the critical hours of the night, and by the next day it was apparent that he would be able to receive his stem cell transplant in the near future. Roberta asked the nursing staff if they would lead her to this woman’s mother’s room so she could properly thank her for the words that brought her through the ordeal with a sense of peace. However, none of the nurses she spoke with had seen anyone fitting the woman’s description, and they insisted that no one from Egypt had been admitted to the hospital.

Later that day, Roberta asked her husband’s surgeon if he knew anything about the woman and her mother. The doctor affirmed the medical staff’s assessment: “We don’t have anyone here from Egypt.” He went on to say, “We get stories like this all the time here at MD Anderson. You’ve just experienced an angel sighting!”

Sometimes angels appear in our lives in such a way and with such an impact that it’s difficult to tell if their presence is human or divine. **But one thing is certain: whether the angels we experience are of human or divine origin, the Divine is always at work in and through these messengers to offer assurance, guidance, comfort, peace, love, and protection to God’s children.**

(from “The Angels of Christmas” by Susan Robb, pg. 23-24)



## CONNECT Children's Christmas Program

**December 11 @ 5:00pm**

at Trinity Lutheran Church

**Program Rehearsal**  
**Saturday, December 10**  
**9:30—11:30 am**  
**at Trinity Lutheran Church**

# Come one & all!



**Gathering together for fun & joy**  
**Christmas Party**

At St. Joseph Catholic Church, Choteau

Wednesday, December 14

Crafts & More at 4:30

Dinner at 5:30



Hosted by Trinity Lutheran, Choteau WMC, & St. Joseph Catholic Church  
A gathering for all ages, families & individuals to enjoy fellowship & fun  
celebrating the birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ!!  
Questions, contact Laura Toeckes at 406-459-4682



*Advent*

*Recitals*

## Trinity Lutheran Church

*All are invited to enjoy a time of great entertainment,  
good food and fellowship this Advent Season !!*

**Fridays, December 2, 9 & 16**

**12:00 Noon – 12:30 pm**

**Soup & Bread served at 12:30 pm**

### December 2

*Students of Isaac Callender & Louise Steinway and  
Students from the Choteau Arts music program*

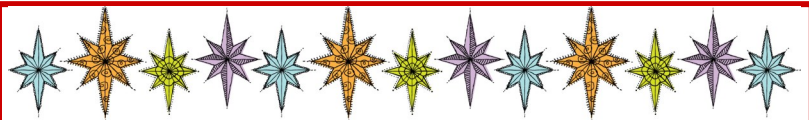
### December 9

*Rock & Jancil Perkins*

### December 16

*Joy Baker & Holly Baker Wulf*

**Free-will offering for  
Choteau Ministerial Association**



**YOU ARE ALL INVITED**

**Skyline Lodge Christmas Service**

**Thursday, December 15**

**2:00 pm**

**Come and enjoy the variety of music and talent  
from our schools and community.**





## Bible Readings for the Month

### December 4

Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
Romans 15:4-13  
Matthew 3:1-12

### December 11

Isaiah 35:1-10  
Luke 1:46b-55  
James 5:7-10  
Matthew 11:2-11

### December 18

Isaiah 7:10-16  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1:1-7  
Matthew 1:18-25

### December 24 ~ Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-20

### December 25 ~ Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10  
Psalm 98  
Hebrews 1:1-4  
John 1:1-14

## Opportunities for Your Spiritual Growth

### Skyline Lodge Bible Study



#### Weekly Bible Study

Skyline Lodge  
Every Wednesday—10:00 am  
**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN TIME**

All are welcome to join us every Wednesday as we gather at Skyline Lodge for an ecumenical Bible Study.

**C.C.C.**

*Coffee ~ Conversation ~ Communion*

**PLEASE NOTE**  
**Tuesday, December 20 ~ 3:00 pm**



#### The Glorioso Ringers

composed of ringers from several churches, meet once a week to practice and ring the bells of the First Presbyterian Church of Conrad. During the Christmas season members take turns to perform as a group of five to open services in area churches.

**On Sunday, December 18th, the Glorioso Ringers will ring the Christmas prelude music for the morning service at 9:00 a.m. at the Brady UMC Church.**



All are invited to join Pastor Julie for

*Wine & The Word*

**Copper Creek**

**Wed., Dec. 14**  
**7:00 pm**

Owner, Brian, will be cooking up some special hot wings for our gathering at Copper Creek on December 14. YUM!



**CHOTEAU UMC & TRINITY  
LUTHERAN CHURCH YOUTH**

**FOOD DRIVE**

**December 3rd 1-2pm**

in front of the  
Choteau Roxy  
Theatre



# Birthdays & Anniversaries



☺ **Norman & Sharon Haug** for cleaning the debris from the rain gutters of the church and parsonage this fall. We are grateful for your extra efforts!

☺ **ALL** who provided items to fill the College Care box and a note to our student. Your continued support of this outreach ministry is appreciated.

☺ **Kelly DeBruycker** for your continued support to coordinate, shop, wrap and deliver gifts for our Adopted Family Mission. We are grateful for your time and special effort!

☺ **Lila & Terry Dunn, Duane Halverson, and Tom Tesch** for all your extra time and effort to decorate the church and grounds for the Advent and Christmas season. This seasonal change takes several days and many hours. You are appreciated!

## DECEMBER

1	Chris Proff
3	Nolan DeBruycker
4	Zach Bechtold
♥	Ryan & Kelly DeBruycker
6	Marsha Hinch
8	Larry Maurer
9	Lorran Depner
10	JesiAnn Sessions
15	Stacy Reynolds
17	Charles Hinch
18	Charles Wesley (1707)
	Syd Clark
	Billy Tallmadge
19	Karen Peebles
	Cheryl Schlepp
21	Katie Kostelnik Dyer
♥	Alois & Julia Kostelnik
24	Frank Bemis
25	JESUS
	Linda Forrest
26	Craig Zwerneman
♥	Frank & Donna Bemis
27	♥ Larry & Sue Schilling
30	Jack Clark
	Tiffany Maltby
♥	Andy & Kirsten Passmore
31	♥ Rich Clough & Mary Sexton

With  
HEARTFELT  
Sympathy  
to the families  
and friends of



### June Jordan

*Death – November 14, 2022*

*Funeral Service*

*Friday, December 2*

*4:00 p.m.*

*Asper Funeral Home*

*Conrad, Montana*

### Jeanie Long

*(Brady)*

*Death – November 26, 2022*

*Memorial Service in the spring*

## The First Laugh in the Bible

The word "laugh" appears for the first time in the Bible very early on, in Genesis 17:17. God informs the 100-year-old Abraham that his 90-year-old wife Sarah will give birth to a son. "Abraham bowed to the ground, and he laughed, thinking to himself, 'Is a child to be born to a man 100-years-old, and will Sarah have a child at the age of 90?'"

God commanded Abraham to name his son "Isaac," which in Hebrew means "God's laugh." In Arabic, "ithaac" also means "he laughs."

Sarah laughed and said, "Am I really going to have a child now that I am old? Is anything too wonderful for God?"

After she gave birth to Isaac, Sarah said, "God has given me cause to laugh; all those who hear of it will laugh with me." (Gen. 21:6)

The birth of Isaac brought joy, smiles, and laughter to Abraham, Sarah, and their friends. Centuries later, how much more did the birth of Jesus bring joy, smiles, and laughter to the virgin Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men, and the millions who celebrate the birth of the Messiah?

– from *The Joyful Christ -The Healing Power of Humor*, by Cal Samra (1985)



## ALTERNATIVE GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



### Choteau UMC has an adopted family!

The family with children resides in Teton County and has few wishes but some definite needs. Thanks to the continued generosity of our congregation, we will be able to continue doing some important

things for this family during the approaching holidays and the coming year. God bless each of you for contributing to this very worthwhile "at home" mission.

**If you would like to contribute to this mission, please make your checks out to Choteau UMC and make special notation that this is for the "Adopted Family" mission.**

Kelly DeBruycker is our coordinator for this special mission and will give periodic updates to the congregation.

A couple of elementary teachers in our church family have provided us with a link to their classroom wish lists. These are items that would be used to enhance their teaching curriculum. If you would consider this as a giving opportunity, the Amazon links are provided below:

**Mrs. Shafer's Amazon classroom wish list:**

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1TVALMEG1FE9V?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1TVALMEG1FE9V?ref=wl_share)

**Miss Hyde's Amazon classroom wish list:**

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2MIVBD6T5AQ1N?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2MIVBD6T5AQ1N?ref=wl_share)



### Conrad / Brady Christmas Giving Tree 2022

The Brady United Methodist Church, along with seven churches in Conrad, sponsors the Conrad/Brady Christmas Giving Tree. Local businesses also contribute to this project.

**Gifts will be distributed at the CENTROL Crop Consulting shop in Conrad on Sunday, December 18 at 1:30 p.m.**

### Christmas Shoeboxes for BUMP



The **B**lackfeet **U**nited **M**ethodist **P**arish is now accepting donations for their Annual Christmas Shoe Box ministry. Here's what you need to know:

A shoe box (or about that size) is filled with gifts for a boy or girl. Rule of thumb - put things in that you would purchase for your child or grandchild.

> **Everything must be NEW.**

> **Fill box with things appropriate for age ranges: 0-3 years; 4-7 years; 8-12 years; 13-17 years.**

> **Wrap the gift and label on the outside whether for a boy or girl and which age range.**

> **Send to the Browning UMC: P.O. Box 3007 Browning, MT 59417 or make arrangements to bring to Browning.**

> **Boxes must be in Browning by December 16, 2022.**

**Connie Bradley has volunteered to deliver the boxes from Choteau.**

**If you would like to make a monetary donation to this project, send a check to the above P.O. Box 3007. Make the check out to BUMP and on the memo put "shoebox".**

### ELEMENTARY FOOD PANTRY PLEASE NOTE

A special drop-off box is available in the main entrance foyer of the church for your donated food items.

**Reminder . . .** Please donate items that are easy for children to make or access (ie. canned foods with flip tops, cup of noodles, cereal, granola bars, etc.).

# Wish List...



Thank you for considering these items that are in-demand across all of our service areas:

- School supplies
- Arts and crafts supplies of all types
- Tempera or watercolor paint
- Paint brushes
- Painting canvas
- Colored paper
- Poster paper/rolls of butcher paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, markers
- Coloring and color-by-number books
- Paint-by-sticker books
- Play-Doh®
- Hot Wheels® cars
- Craft, science, or jewelry activity kits (Oriental Trading Co. or Amazon.com)
- Board games, e.g., Sorry! Checkers and Chess, Connect Four, Sequence Jr., Monopoly, Jenga, Hedbanz
- Decks of cards
- Dominos
- Juvenile book series e.g., Percy Jackson and The Olympians, Big Nate, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, I Spy, Fun Facts
- Blank unlined journals
- Helmets
- Sleds
- Snow molds
- Water resistant mittens or gloves
- Winter outerwear
- Hand fidgets and stress balls
- Oral-sensory chews
- TheraPutty®
- Weighted blankets
- Bean bag chairs with removable covers
- Toys we can gift-wrap and give to the children as birthday gifts throughout the year
- Gift wrap and party decorations
- Halloween costumes and seasonal decor
- Gift cards for shopping and food treats, e.g., Target, Hobby Lobby, Walmart, Amazon, Dairy Queen, Pizza Hut, Subway
- Activity passes to Cinemark Theatre, Stone Tree Climbing, Sleeping Giant Lanes, Flipping Family Fun, as a few examples
- Individually packaged snacks
- New children's clothing of all types

**\*For the health and safety of our children, new, unused items are preferred.\***

If you would rather we do the shopping, we gladly accept cash gifts. Just note "Wish List" on the memo line of your check or in the comments section of your on-line donation. We will purchase your preference of the above or whatever is of current greatest need.



Support our children with Amazon.smile.com!  
Select **Intermountain Children's Home** as your favorite charity and AmazonSmile Foundation will donate .5% of your purchase price back to Intermountain. It's so easy and adds up quickly!

500 S. Lamborn St. Helena, MT 59601 | 406-457-4804 | [www.intermountain.org](http://www.intermountain.org)



## YOUR MONETARY GIFTS AT WORK

The ministries of Choteau United Methodist Church are made possible by your on-going financial contributions. Our congregation is 100% self-funded; we receive no outside funding. Your gifts enable us to provide weekly worship, pastoral care, educational opportunities, youth group, Sunday school for children and adults, mission opportunities, the opportunity for us to provide responsible charitable contributions to help those in need, etc. I hope you will consider making a financial contribution to Choteau UMC to support our life-transforming mission. To make a tax-deductible donation you can send in a check to our church office, or contribute on Sundays during the offering. Financial statements are available upon request at the church office.

### VITAL STATISTICS – Choteau

2022 Budget for Choteau	\$120,327
Needed to meet budget –November	\$110,300
Received through November 27	\$ 82,709

**Thank you for your on-going support!**



Seeking and Empowering Disciples of Jesus Christ to Love, Witness and Serve

**CHOTEAU - BRADY - DUTTON**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**BUSINESS HOURS**

CHOTEAU OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Thur 9am- 12pm

**Website address: [www.umchoteau.net](http://www.umchoteau.net)**

Bookmark the address above to your own computer (add it to your "favorites" list) so you can quickly click on it and stay connected! Use the website to check what's going on and what's coming up in the life of our parish.

Check out the new additions to the website:

- Sermons—video

And don't forget our email address:

**[umc@3rivers.net](mailto:umc@3rivers.net)**

Like us on Facebook:



**@choteauUMC**  
**@bradyumcMT**  
**@duttonumc**



**"Take care of your body.  
It's the only place  
you have to live."**

— Jim Rohn



**The Leadership Meeting  
on December 18 is  
cancelled to be rescheduled  
in January 2023**

## Something to ponder . . .

### **A bank CEO's unusual view of the economy**

Sanjay Thakrar, CEO of Euro Exim Bank, LTD, boggled the minds of other economists when he gave this take on the economy:

"A cyclist is a disaster for a country's economy. He/she does not buy a car and does not take out a car loan. Does not buy car insurance. Does not buy fuel. Does not send the car in for servicing and repairs. Does not use paid parking. Does not become obese.

"Healthy people are not needed for an economy. They do not buy drugs. They do not go to doctors and hospitals. They add nothing to a country's GDP.

"On the contrary, every new fast-food outlet creates at least 30 jobs: 10 cardiologists, 10 dentists, 10 weight-loss experts, apart from people working in the fast-food outlets.

"Walking is even worse. Those people do not even buy a bicycle.

"Save your country or save yourself. The choice is yours."

— via Risa Samra, Saginaw, MI



Choteau—Brady—Dutton  
United Methodist Parish  
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Julie King-Dye, Pastor  
Lila Dunn, Admin. Assist.

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Seeking and Empowering Disciples of Jesus Christ to Love, Witness and Serve



**This month's newsletter is sponsored by:**

**Connie, Lisa, Chris,  
& Justin Bradley and Families**

**In loving memory of  
Larry J. "Doc" Poore**

Please continue to consider sponsoring an issue of  
***The Spark*** for \$40, and your sponsorship  
will be noted in the newsletter.