December 3, 2017
*Early Worship Service
9:00am in the Chapel
*THE BRIDGE
10:55am
in the Fellowship Hall
*Traditional Service
11:00am in the Sanctuary
*Korean Worship Service
11:00am in the Chapel

December 10, 2017
*Early Worship Service
9:00am in the Chapel
*THE BRIDGE
10:55am
in the Fellowship Hall
*Traditional Service
11:00am in the Sanctuary
*Korean Worship Service
11:00am in the Chapel

4:00 to 7:00 pm
Nativity Festival
(begin on Trinity Street)

*Child care is provided.

THE FLAME
First United Methodist Church, LaGrange, GA
Christians . . . SERVING, CARING, & SHARING

1 CORINTHIANS 13 -- CHRISTMAS VERSION

"Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen cannot love God whom they have not seen." (1 John 4:20)

“If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shining balls, but do not show love to my family, I’m just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my relatives, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my spouse and in-laws, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crystal snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ in my own household, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child or grandchild. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse or call the relative. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens. Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way but is thankful they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust. But giving the gift of love to our families (and all people) will endure.”

As we prepare for the coming of Christmas, I pray that we will all recall love as the greatest gift we can offer each other, especially as we give it in and among each other as the family of God!

Remember, God loves you and I do, too! 

Pastor Brian

HOMEBOUND CHRISTMAS COMMUNION

As part of his annual tradition, our Senior Pastor will be sharing Holy Communion with all of our church’s local Homebound members prior to Christmas. Homebound members: please be on the lookout for him to come and visit with you.

To verify you are on our homebound list, or if you have a specific time that you’d prefer he visit, please contact the Church Office at (706-884-4635) or email churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org.
Wednesday Evening Weekly  
Serving from 5pm to 6:30pm

WEW Meal on December 6, 2017  
Menu: Chicken Parmesan Casserole, Corn on the Cob,  
Salad Bar, Dessert.  
Children: Hot Dogs & PB & J sandwiches

WEW Meal on December 13, 2017  
Menu: Breakfast for Dinner  
Children: Same & PB & J sandwiches

Call or email the church office at 884-4635 by NOON on MONDAY to make your meal reservation.  
Cost: $0 for those 2 years & under, $3 for those 3 years-12th grade, and $6 for adults.

REMEMBRANCES RECEIVED

Memorials
Mr. Raymond Rambo - Nancy & Mike Peterson  
Mr. Fred Willingham - Nancy & Mike Peterson

A Security Update

A house of worship was once considered to be one of the safest places to be. The times in which we live today, however, seem to have brought the world, with its crime and uncertainty, right into the place we deem most sacred. In a further attempt to ensure the safety and security of staff, visitors, and worshipers at LaGrange First, members of our Security Committee have recently met and will soon implement many changes on campus.

The beginning of these changes consists of enhanced security measures within our Children’s Building, slightly modifying the times in which exterior doors on campus will be accessible, completely restricting access to our buildings through a small percentage of exterior doors, and the installation of hardware which will allow nearly all of our interior doors to be locked should a crisis situation arise on campus. There will be new training for our Staff and Usher Team members on the use of portable radio devices during worship services and Sunday School hours.

While we are also working on additional measures for the near future, these are a good start. If there are other specific safety improvements that you would like members of our Security Committee to consider, please email the Church Office at churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org or the Security Committee directly at safety@lagrangefumc.org.

You’re Invited to 2017 Leadership LaGrange
Saturday, December 9, 9:00am to 12:30pm

2018 Leaders Please Mark Your Calendar for our “LEADERSHIP LAGRANGE,” Saturday, December 9, 9:00am-12:30pm

9:00 -10:45 am (Fellowship Hall) – General leadership orientation meeting for all new and returning 2018 church leaders, as well as anyone else who desires to learn more about our church leadership structure and processes.

11:00am – 11:45pm (Fellowship Hall) – Church Council Member Orientation (For all 2018 Church Council members)

12Noon - 12:30 pm (Chapel) – Leadership Commissioning Service (for all new AND returning leaders)

Christmas Decorations

A donation of $12.00 toward the cost of the Christmas decorations may be made in honor or in memory of someone. If you would like to participate, please fill out this form and return it with your check marked “Christmas Decorations” on or before December 5th. A list of all those honored will appear in The Flame printed on December 12th.

In Honor ___________  
In Memory ___________

Of: ____________________________________________________________________________  
By: ____________________________________________________________________________
Thursday Lunch Club  
December 7th, 12 Noon, Fellowship Hall

First Baptist Church on the Square’s  
New Horizon Choir

For reservations for the meal & program call or email the church at 706-884-4635 or churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org. Cost is $6 per person. All are welcome!

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DECEMBER SERMON SERIES

9am & 11am “Traditional” – COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS
Are you tired of the rat race of the popular Christmas season? …the hustle and bustle that today’s holiday has become? Well, beyond the tinsel and the garland is a need for each of us to reconnect with what is familiar and real, both in our families and in our faith. No matter where life’s journey has taken us, Christmas is the time to come home. In this Advent sermon series, Dr. Germano will help us explore attitudes and spiritual postures that can better equip us to deal with the stress of the holidays and to focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Offered each Sunday at our 9am Chapel and 11am Sanctuary Traditional worship services.

10:55am “THE BRIDGE” – The Messengers of Christmas
The angels that appear in the story of Jesus’ birth would have been very comfortable in our world of social media. Their messages were often short and to the point with their favorite line being #DoNotBeAfraid. Join Rev. Trent as we look at the stories of these Christmas messengers. Throughout this series, we will reflect upon what their words mean for us and how we can bring about #MoreHope, #MorePeace, #MoreJoy to all the world.

Carols by Candlelight
December 17, 2017
6:30pm

LaGrange First United Methodist Church
Chancel Choir with Orchestra

November Events

December 6 – Miss Merry Christmas will be our special guest at the Wednesday Night Kid’s Program
December 10 – Live Nativity – children will have a craft section just for them
December 13 – Children’s Christmas Party – bring diapers and wipes for the Methodist Children’s Home
December 20 & 27th – No Wednesday Night Program
December 23 – Rehearsal for Children’s Nativity, 9–10 a.m.
December 24 – Children’s Nativity presented during the 5:00 Candlelight Worship Service

UMW CHRISTMAS BANQUET
The UMW Christmas Banquet will be held on Monday, December 4th, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall with special music by Callie Hammond.

Children’s Ministry
Jeanne Jones, Director, jeanne@lagrangefumc.org
Our children were busy serving in November. With the help of the church body, we delivered 90 filled boxes to the Operation Christmas Child distribution center. Thanks to everyone who participated in this event. If you didn’t see the children perform their Mayflower skit on November 15th, you missed a treat. The FUMC children did a fabulous job acting out and retelling the story of the first Thanksgiving.

If your child would like to take part in the Christmas Nativity being presented on December 24th during the 5:00 p.m. service, please email Jeanne Jones. There will be one rehearsal on December 23rd from 9-10 a.m. in the sanctuary. There is a part for everyone who would like to participate.

Be sure to put these December events on your calendar and invite your friends.

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God Gave YOU Spiritual Gifts
Uncover your Spiritual Gifts in this 4-week Lenten Study
February 25th and March 4th, 11th, and 18th;
2:15 PM to 4:30 PM  Cost is $18 per person
Led by Pat Gilbert and Pastor Brian

Explore these questions and more
Why Am I Unique? What Spiritual Gifts Did God Give Me? What Am I To Do With My Gifts?

Watch for registration information coming your way soon.

ATTENDANCE, Sunday, November 19
Sunday School.........................159
Worship Service.....................257

ATTENDANCE, Sunday, November 26
Sunday School.........................121
Worship Service.....................235

Need to Talk? Refer yourself or a friend in need to one of our church’s confidential Stephen Ministers who can help walk one-to-one with you or them through crisis. For more information or for a referral, speak to one of our Pastors or email stephenministry@lagrangefumc.org.

Supporting Our Ministries
In addition to traditional giving methods (cash & check), you can also donate to First United Methodist Church via Text-to-Give (Text LGFUMC to 73256) or online at lagrangefumc.org/online-giving.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
Christmas Eve
December 24th
10:30am, Combined Worship Service, Sanctuary
No Sunday School, No Children’s Church
5:00pm, Candlelight Family & Children’s Service, Sanctuary
11:00pm, Candlelight Communion Service

New Year’s Eve
December 31st
10:30am, Combined Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall
No Sunday School, No Children’s Church

Our Sympathy
We extend our sympathy to Jimmy & Beth Doerr and Family in the death of his brother, Jeff Doerr, November 26, 2017.
LaGrange First UMC Members and Friends,

For over 20 years, our church has hosted our annual Nativity Festival to honor the coming of Jesus who was not only born as "God-in-flesh-on-earth," but as he who seeks to be born to live in our hearts, as well! This year, we will once again be hosting this special community-wide event on Sunday, December 10 from 4-7pm.

As you may already be aware, this year we are transforming our Festival by adding outside events such as a Living Nativity, food booths, children’s arts and crafts, and other interactive holiday experiences. We still need volunteers and helpers for these parts of the event.

However, even with these changes, the heart of our Festival will continue to be the offering of beautiful exhibits of art, sculpture, and crèches/nativity sets (manger scenes). Consequently, I want to invite you to join my family and me in displaying your nativities and artwork as we invite our community to celebrate the birth of Christ Jesus our Lord.

If you have items of any sort (nativity sets, angels, sculptures, or other artwork) to loan for the exhibit, please fill out the form below and mail it to the church, drop it off in the church office, or call or Dodie Patterson at the church office (706-884-4635, churchoffice@lagrangeumc.org). We ask that you bring your exhibit to the Church Office on Sunday, December 3rd, from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon or on Monday, December 4th, from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm. Please contact Dodie to schedule a drop-off time if these hours are not convenient for you.

The exhibit will be displayed in the church sanctuary Sunday, December 10th, 9am-12Noon, and during the Festival itself from 4:00 – 7:00 pm, and exhibits should be picked up on Monday, December 11th, between 8:30am-4:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

If you would like to volunteer for any other part of this year’s Nativity Festival or to find out more information, please contact our event coordinator Wanda-Ann Kinnaman through the church office.

In the meantime, please invite your neighbors to this special family-oriented experience as we celebrate the nativity of Christ!

In Christ,

Pastor Brian

Rev. Dr. Brian Germano, Senior Pastor

| Exhibitor: |  |
| Address: |  |
| City, ST Zip: |  |
| Telephone: |  |
| Home: ☐ | Mobile: ☐ | Work: ☐ |

Nativity ☐ Painting ☐ Sculpture ☐ Other ________________________  
All loaned items should have the exhibitor’s name  
All paintings must be framed or matted

Interesting Facts:  
Handcrafted; ☐ Unique Material; ☐  
Made In; ☐ Other; ☐

No. of Pieces:  

Brief Description:  
(Include artist and title if known)

Signature: ___________ Date ___________