

# POLK CITY Living Weekly

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## BLESSED MESSIAH ART MADE FROM TRASH

BY JACKIE WILSON

A stunning, vibrant nativity scene displayed at the Polk City United Methodist Church might look like a typical decoration at Christmas time.

But study it more closely. Each colorful square is a piece of trash. There's an empty pistachio bag, a mouthwash ad and a cereal box. All of these squares combine to make one giant art piece titled the "Blessed Messiah."

Pastor Wendy Musgrave explains how the unusual art piece has become the talk of the church. For her fall worship series theme, she came up with the topic, "Bless This Mess." It's a look at stories where humans may fail, yet through the "messiness," God is there, blessing the mess in a person's life.

Musgrave's first career was as a



The congregation of Polk City United Methodist Church contributed pieces of garbage to create a work of art.

graphic designer. She came up with a plan, sketched her idea, then asked the congregation for help.

She provided 240 squares, which were labeled with a certain

color. Members were instructed to color, paint, or find an object in that assigned color. They were encouraged to use recycled items or any item laying around the house. Each week, youth groups, kids and adults returned the colored squares. She didn't reveal what the outcome might be.

"No one had any idea. How could a square of garbage turn into something?"

Once all the squares were turned in, she took home the pieces, assembling 12 squares on each poster board, for a total of 20 poster boards.

"I was a little nervous. I wasn't sure all the individual squares would be interesting enough," Musgrave admits.

UMC, CONTINUED ON BACK

### POLK CITY WEATHER FORECAST

**FRIDAY** HIGH 52 | LOW 36

Mostly cloudy and mild



**SATURDAY** HIGH 44 | LOW 27

Low clouds



**SUNDAY** HIGH 50 | LOW 26

Sunny and mild



**MONDAY** HIGH 45 | LOW 24

Abundant sunshine



**TUESDAY** HIGH 48 | LOW 29

Mild with times of clouds and sun



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

# DOES HAT ETIQUETTE STILL EXIST?

Hats off to you. Or maybe hats on. The answer primarily depends on where you are at, what sex you are, and what generation you are from. Or does it?

Many people wonder if it is wrong to wear a hat indoors. According to Southern Living, hat etiquette does still exist. The story cites the Emily Post Institute, which says removing hats “traces back to medieval times when knights would remove their helmets to identify themselves” and to show a “gesture of respect.” Hat etiquette also has roots in Christianity, the story claims, as it has long been considered customary for men to remove their hats upon entering a church. But that’s just men. For women, apparently, it is OK to wear hats in church.

I remember the church pews of my youth having metals clips on them, and I would click them up and down during the service until Mom threatened to put my nose in one. Those clips, I was clearly told, were for men’s hats. Yet, I never saw a hat in one.

The U.S. Flag Code says men

— not including those in military service uniform — are to remove their hats during the National Anthem, the pledge of allegiance and when a United States flag passes by during a parade. Once again, women are not required to do so.

Historically, men’s hat etiquette designates that all hats should be removed upon entering indoors. Historically, women’s hat etiquette designates that dress hats are allowed to be kept on indoors. And, of course, hats are always welcome at the Kentucky Derby.

Baseball caps, beanies or berets. Trucker hats, turbans or top hats. Hats are certainly not in short supply. In fact, Wikipedia lists more than 140 types of hats with photos.

Meanwhile, when to wear or not wear a hat is seemingly all over the board. Pro golfers remove their hats to shake hands. Orthodox Jewish men wear hats, even in church. In 1983,



the Catholic church removed its mandate that prohibited men from wearing hats in church. And some teachers and principals have given up asking kids to remove their hats in the classrooms.

My father, like most men from his generation, almost always wore some type of hat when outdoors. Indoors? Never. And the men of his time seemingly always removed their hats whenever the American flag was involved. I try to follow suit, but I find fewer and fewer people joining me.

Bad hair day? Supporting your favorite team? Covering up a bald spot? It doesn’t matter. Wearing — or not wearing — a hat today seems to be, for the most part, a personal decision.

Who knows? Those hat clips on church pews might even make a comeback.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■



**Shane Goodman**

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# FUN CHRISTMAS TRIVIA QUESTIONS

## FROM PARADE

See these and more at <https://parade.com/943457/parade/christmas-trivia/>

1. Which popular Christmas beverage is also called “milk punch?”
2. How many ghosts show up in “A Christmas Carol?”
3. What are the two other most popular names for Santa Claus?
4. Which one of Santa’s reindeer has the same name as another holiday mascot?
5. In the song “Winter Wonderland,” what do we call the snowman?
6. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree?
7. Whose eyes are all aglow in “The Christmas Song?”
8. Which fairy tale were the first gingerbread houses inspired by?
9. How do you say “Merry Christmas” in Spanish?
10. Visions of which food danced in children’s heads as they slept in the poem “’Twas The Night Before Christmas?” ■

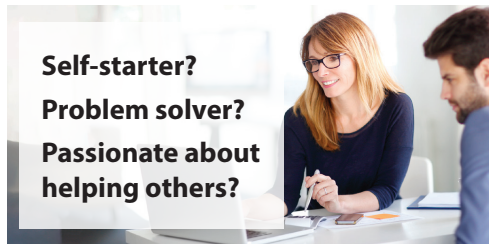
**ANSWERS:** 1. EGGNOG; 2. FOUR; 3. KRIS KRINGLE AND SAINT NICK;  
4. CUPID; 5. PARSON BROWN; 6. GERMANY; 7. TINY TOTS;  
8. HANSEL AND GRETEL; 9. FELIZ NAVIDAD; 10. SUGAR PLUMS

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Miracle on 86th Street

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[www.jollyholidaylights.org](http://www.jollyholidaylights.org)

**Gingerbread Lane**

S.E. Richland Court, Ankeny  
Facebook: Gingerbread Lane Ankeny, IA

**Prairie Ridge Church**

825 N.W. 36th St., Ankeny  
[www.ridgelife.org](http://www.ridgelife.org)

**Winter Wonderlights**

Uptown Ankeny, 715 W. First St., Ankeny  
[www.uptownankeny.org](http://www.uptownankeny.org)

**Winter Wonderscape**

Reiman Gardens, 1407 University Blvd., Ames  
[www.reimangardens.com](http://www.reimangardens.com)

**Beaverdale**

Ashby and Wallace Avenues near Beaver Avenue, Des Moines  
[www.beaverdale.org](http://www.beaverdale.org)

**Dogtown Lights**

University Avenue between 23rd and 25th streets in Des Moines' Drake neighborhood

Facebook @ Dogtown Business and Entertainment District

**First Church of the Open Bible**

2200 Beaver Ave., Des Moines  
[www.firstchurch.org](http://www.firstchurch.org)

**Miracle on 86th Street**

3600 86th St., Urbandale  
[www.urbandale.org](http://www.urbandale.org)

**Santa's Rock N Lights**

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**Lights in the Heights**

Franklin Ave., Marylynn Drive, 72nd St., and other streets in Windsor Heights  
[www.windsorheightsfoundation.org](http://www.windsorheightsfoundation.org)

**HOLIDAY FUN**

**DEC. 15-17: "Home For The Holidays, A Christmas Cabaret."** Tallgrass Theatre Company, 2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines. [tallgrasstheatre.org](http://tallgrasstheatre.org).

**DEC. 17: Michael W. Smith Christmas** at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines. [hoyshtsherman.org](http://hoyshtsherman.org).

**DEC. 21: "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical,"** at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines. [dmpa.org](http://dmpa.org).

**DEC. 22-23: "Cirque Dreams Holidaze,"** Des Moines Civic Center, \, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines. [dmpa.org](http://dmpa.org).

**DEC. 31: New Year's Eve Pops: Cirque De La Symphonie** at the Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines; [desmoinesperformingarts.org](http://desmoinesperformingarts.org).  
org ■



## RECIPE

# A FESTIVE PEPPERMINT SNACK WITH A FLAVORFUL POP

*(Family Features)* Among the many enchanting elements of the holiday season, the family traditions and familiar flavors of favorite foods enjoyed year after year bring loved ones together better than perhaps any other occasion. From decorating wreaths and trees to crafting ornaments and preparing classic recipes, it's a season of cherishing memories and creating new ones.

While there are countless ingredients that harken to the taste of holidays past, there's one sweet favorite that truly symbolizes the season: peppermint. Whether enjoyed in the familiar shape of a candy cane — the original kid-favorite — or added to recipes from beverages to desserts and everything in between, it's a delicious way to connect generations.

For example, these Jingle Balls provide a perfect kid-friendly project to keep them busy rolling popcorn balls in sparkling colored sugar for bite-size bits of holiday magic. They're equal parts holiday spirit and sweet appetizer, snack or dessert. Just be sure to have an adult melt together the butter, marshmallows and peppermint extract before letting little ones show off their creativity.

This favorite is made possible by the versatility of popcorn, one of America's most beloved snack foods. Celebrated for its seed-to-snack simplicity, popcorn's smell, taste and versatility mean it can enhance any occasion as a budget-friendly solution for family gatherings. ■

## JINGLE BALLS

*Recipe courtesy of the American Pecan Promotion Board*

**Cook time: 24 minutes**

**Servings: 8**

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 12 cups popped popcorn
- 6 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 3 cups mini marshmallows
- 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
- assorted colored sugars

### Directions:

Lightly spray large mixing bowl with nonstick cooking spray. Add popcorn.

Spread plastic wrap on cookie sheet; set aside.

In medium saucepan, melt butter and marshmallows; stir until mixture is smooth. Stir in peppermint extract. Pour over popcorn, mixing until well coated. Let cool 2 minutes.

Spray hands with cooking spray and form popcorn



mixture into 3-inch balls. Gently press colored sugar onto balls. Let sit on prepared cookie sheet until cool and set.

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## STORY TIME

**Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m.**

Join Ms. Allyson at the library for stories, songs and an activity or craft. Choose the day that works best for you. Register online at our website for one of the programs each week. Every story can be logged in our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program.

## CHAIR YOGA

**Mondays, 9 a.m.**

Join Rachel via Zoom. We will be broadcasting the class on the big screen in the library, or you can join us from home. Yoga is for everyone and every body. Yoga is not for flexible people but for people who want to become more flexible. This chair yoga practice will include breathwork, mindfulness and simple, easy movements to release tension, reduce pain and restore your body to optimum movement. Props needed are an armless chair, like a kitchen chair, and a small hand towel or kitchen dish towel. Find the Zoom link by clicking on the calendar event on our website at [polkcitylibrary.org](http://polkcitylibrary.org).

## GERI-FIT® STRENGTH TRAINING WORKOUTS

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## LADIES' WEDNESDAY COFFEE

**Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon**

Ladies, join us for coffee and conversation.

## SIT N STITCH

**Thursdays, 6-8 p.m.**

Bring your current project and join us for stitching and conversation.

## MEN'S FRIDAY COFFEE

**Fridays, 10 a.m. to noon**

Gentlemen, drop in for coffee and conversation. Enjoy spending time and having a few laughs or interesting discussions with other men from around the area. ■

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## KIWANIS HOME LIGHTING CONTEST

The Kiwanis Club of Polk City is hosting a home lighting contest. Polk City residents are invited to celebrate the holidays by lighting up their home and joining the friendly competition. Proceeds from the event will go to the Friends of the Parks in support of a future ice skating rink in Kiwanis Park. Register by Dec. 15. Voting is Dec. 16-29. Cost is \$25 to enter. Prizes are \$100 for Kiwanis First Place and \$100 for People's Choice.

Follow the QR codes to register, to vote, and to view a map of participating homes. ■



REGISTER



VOTE



MAP

### UMC, FROM FRONT

She brought the completed poster boards to church, and a team helped hang them on the wall, creating a 10-foot by 10-foot piece of art. The completed project was displayed the first Sunday of Advent.

"Our mess became Messiah. Bless this mess became Blessed Messiah," says Musgrave.

The congregation's reaction was pure delight.

"Everyone was enamored by what we created. When you step back, it looks like a stained glass artwork," she says.

Members eagerly searched for the square that they created.

"It's incredible. Everyone said, 'I'm not creative' or 'I'm not an

artist.' But it's a collaborative effort."

The message of the art confirms how real life is messy.

"We often want to tidy up or hide our messiness," Musgrave explains. "Yet, this reminds us that our untidy ways are part of the hopeful story of God's redeeming love."

Musgrave is unsure how long to display the artwork. After all, it's made of garbage and won't last forever.

"It's been fun to hear what others are saying," she says. "There's so much energy around it."

The participation was high, as the congregation is known for "thinking big," Musgrave says.

"People ask, what will we do next year? It's hard to top this," she

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