

# Ministry @ DHUMC

Drexel Hill United Methodist Church

December 2023

www.dhum.org

## Good Night. Sweet Dreams. God Bless

### *Pastor's Message*

*Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.*

*Thomas Cranmer, 1549*

When did you first realize you were in the dark? As a child, do you remember first learning about darkness? Was it a fright? To be tucked into bed was always a warm and kind ceremony when I was little, but the moment of letting go for the night, prayers and a kiss, was often the moment of fearing the dark. "Would you leave the door open a bit, please!" were often the last words to be spoken before I was left alone with my imagination and the darkness.

Yes, we all certainly know some darkness, but the wise will demur from saying whose darkness is the greatest. How can we know another's fear? Each of us needs someone or something to leave the door open a bit. We require assurance that there is a way forward - and someone who will offer comfort and support as we abide in darkness. Another person

sometimes brings the light - someone who never looked upon us as forlorn - someone whose inner light is so united to the True Light - God's grace in Jesus Christ.

In *The Heart of the Hunter*, Laurens van der Post describes one night sitting around a campfire with bushmen in Botswana. The only light is the fire and the night sky. The absence of any artificial light allows for a world of complete darkness once anyone moves beyond the campfire. The stars are low in the sky, their illumination so impressive on the senses that they are not only seen but heard. The author portrays the sound of the stars as "this intense electric murmur at one's ears." A woman holds her young infant up to the stars. She is singing some kind of chant and has her face lifted to the sky.

When the author asks his companions what the woman is doing, he is told that she is asking the stars to take her child's heart and to give him "something of the heart of a star in return . . . because the stars have heart in plenty . . ." The stars have the heart that seeks with courage and finds the nourishment that makes life possible.

*The image of the bush-woman holding her child to the stars of the sky is indelible on my heart . . . it reminds me so poignantly of God who came in Christ the True Light wanting us to have a heart of Light. God in Christ holds us in the sure embrace of love - a love whose invitation extends to all things, whose endurance waits for all things, whose strength holds together all things.*

We are in the season of anticipation and of preparation for the coming of the Christ, bringing the True Light to lift us out of our darkness. Give thanks with me for this amazing gift. In these long wintry Advent nights, Good night. Sweet dreams. God bless. There are always blessings in Advent.

Russell J. Atkinson



## **Coffee and Conversation**



Please stop by for our coffee, tea and conversation time after church service on Sundays. This is not only an opportunity for refreshment- it is a good time to say hello to visitors and find out a little about them, as well as greeting people you know. Feel free to take your cup outside as well. This all happens at the back of our Sanctuary, where there is ample room to sit or stand and talk. Please do stop by and say hello to someone you would like to get to know better, even if you don't like coffee!

## **Heavy Psalm/Light Exercise Men's Fellowship Hour**



Join us every **Tuesday** at 11 am to 11:50 am where we will gather in the parking lot to hear a psalm and reflect on it briefly, and then engage in light exercise – walking the neighborhood. Please come and join us.

## **New Directions for DHUMC Meeting December 9, 2023**



Join on Saturday morning from 8:30am to 11 or 11:30 am. Breakfast will be available. We will follow a facilitated approach starting with the survey results, identifying the proposed five-year priorities and begin some consideration of the kinds of actions or initiatives to advance the priorities. Your ideas are valued and needed. Please participate. Casual attire recommended. This will build team and relationships too.



## **Bacon, Toast, and the Heavenly Host**

If you've got an appetite for the Word of God and a good breakfast, come on out to the Perkins Restaurant, 706 N. Lansdowne Avenue in Drexel Hill (just a short hop from the high school) the first Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is **December 7, 2023**. Hope to see you there!

## **Ministry@DHUMC**

A monthly newsletter for the membership of DHUMC.

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## **Tuesday Morning Faith Bible Study**

Our Bible Study/Faith Formation Class will meet each Tuesday, 9:30 to 11 a.m., by ZOOM invitation and is open to everyone.

Please be in touch with Pastor Atkinson, (610) 675-7187, [pastor@dhum.org](mailto:pastor@dhum.org), if you would like to be included on the ZOOM invitation which is sent immediately before the meeting starts.



Russell Atkinson, Pastor

## December Worship Services

### First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023  
Isaiah 64:1-9,  
Mark 13: 24-37  
“The Day Will Come”

### Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023  
Isaiah 40:1-11,  
Mark 1:1-8  
“Be Prepared”

### Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
John 1:6-8, 19-28  
“Anticipation”

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023  
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Luke 1:26-38  
“The Pregnant Pause”

### Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023  
Isaiah 9:2-7  
Micah 5:2-4  
Luke 2:1-7  
Luke 2:8-20  
John 1:1-14

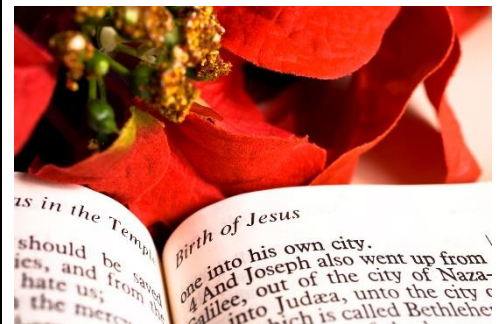


### First Sunday after Christmas

December 31, 2023  
Galatians 4:4-7,  
Luke 2:22-40  
“A Little Christmas Story”

## Lay Reader Schedule for December

- 3 Keith Chase
- 10 Marion Mendimasa
- 17 Jane Leggieri
- 24 Sally Mullin
- 31 Barbara Felton



*Merry Christmas*





# December Worship Notes

## Adventus for All Of Us

For those not distracted overly by the coming of Christmas, the diversity of sources from which this year's Advent lessons are drawn brings a big change from the seeming lock-step through Matthew we've experienced for the last few months.

The season of Advent – the word comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning “coming” or “visit” - begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year for Christians: the great cycle of telling the story of Jesus life, meaning, and ministry begins once more. In 2024, we'll be spending most of our time in the company of the Gospel According to Mark. But we'll see a lot of John and a bit of Matthew as well (after all, Mark's is the shortest Gospel, with just 16 chapters).

Although the secular world accustoms us to celebrating Christmas from the day after Halloween until Christmas Day, in both Christian tradition and on the Church calendar, the Christmas season lasts sundown on December 24 (Christmas Eve) through Epiphany of the Lord (January 6). You know about the four calling birds, the three French hens, and so forth; Christians celebrate the twelve days of Christmas.

3 December First Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37 “The Day Will Come”

10 December 2 nd Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8 “Be Prepared”

17 December 3 rd Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; John 1:6-8, 19-28 “Anticipation”

24 December 4 th Sunday of Advent  
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:26-38 “This Pregnant Pause”

December 24 th Christmas Eve 7:30 evening service  
Isaiah 9:2-7; Micah 5:2-4; Luke 2:1-7; Luke 2:8-20; John 1:1-14

31 December 1 st Sunday of Christmastide  
Christmas Breakfast in the Narthex – 9am “A Little Christmas Story”  
Carol Sing



# News Around Our Community

## Christmas Poinsettias for the Altar



We will be taking orders again this holiday for poinsettias to decorate the altar on December 24, Christmas Eve and December 25<sup>th</sup>. The poinsettias are from Miller Greenhouses in Wallingford. Please fill out an order form that you will find in the upcoming bulletins on **December 3rd or December 10<sup>th</sup>**. You can also call the office to request a form. Last day to order will be December 10<sup>th</sup>. The plants will still be \$10.00 each with one dollar being donated to Volunteers In Mission

(VIM). Let's fill our Sactuary with beautiful poinsettias this Christmas season! See attached order form.

## Crafters & Fellowship Meetup

In 2024 our crafters are back putting their needles to work making a variety of items. In the past, the group has focused on making prayer shawls, lap robes, and baby blankets for members of our congregation. Anyone is welcome to join the group for a few hours of fellowship on the third Thursday of the month. If you would like to learn to knit or crochet, someone will be glad to get you started. Please join us on **January 18th** at 1:00 pm.



**INTERNATIONAL  
VOLUNTEER  
DAY  
2023**

**December 5th**



# Nursery School News

By Denise McCarthy & Jennifer Ryan



On December 13th we are looking forward to “Teddy and Me and Mrs. Claus Makes 3”. Mrs. Claus will be visiting our school and the children will get their picture taken with her and be given a book. The children will come to school with their favorite teddy bear or stuffed animal. Our classrooms have been very busy making beautiful Christmas crafts and listening to Christmas stories and music. We will be on Christmas break starting 12/19 and returning to school on 1/3. In January we will

start working on the alphabet and winter fun.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year! Denise and Jennifer



# Outreach Committee News

## Christmas Card Drive

By Helen Campbell

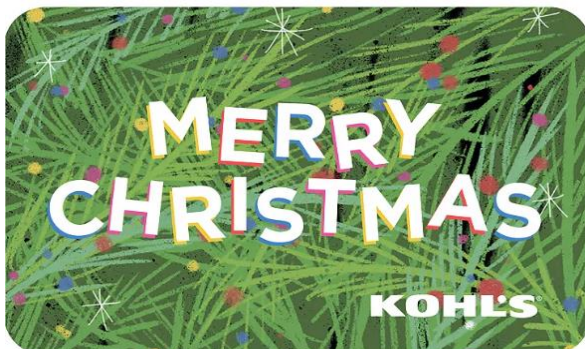
Our generous congregation did it again! We collected 42 gift cards totaling \$1,375. Four of the five families received \$150 in Acme gift cards and \$120 in Target gift cards. The last family received \$295 in Giant cards. We made five families' Thanksgiving a little more joyful. Thank you so much, everyone. Thanks to Barbara Bellini for the beautiful bags.



Thanksgiving Gift Cards that were collected in November.

### The Christmas gift card drive is now on.....

We are collecting gift cards for Christmas for families in the Upper Darby School District. We are helping families who really need our help. The gift cards go directly to the families through the social workers in the district. All gift cards to local stores are welcome: Walmart, Target, Kohls, Marshall's, Acme, Giant, etc. Thank you for helping to make the holidays brighter for some deserving families.



# 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sign by Alex Mullin

As part of our 100th anniversary celebration, the Anniversary committee decided we needed to let the community know about this wonderful milestone. Alex Mullin ordered the double-sided sign from *Signs by Tomorrow* in Morton and on November 11th, Miguel Rodriquez, Jim Hatten and Alex Mullin hung the sign up in front of the Church. Jim and Miguel installed 2 hooks for the ropes holding up the sign. Miguel did the hard work of attaching the ropes from the ladder but Alex shouted encouragement and helped carry the ladder. Please everyone, keep your fingers crossed and say a prayer that the sign stays up until October 2024!



Miguel Rodriquez and Jim Hatten work together to hang the new 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary sign.



# Upper Darby Food Cupboard

By Charline Neigh



This is the busiest time of the year for the Food Bank. Unfortunately, we didn't get any Turkeys donated but we did get an abundance of other items. We are still signing up new singles and families. The Boy Scouts brought us a very large donation, as did The Agnes Irwin School. All of our regulars give extra items at this time, including gift cards for us to buy what we need. Our policy of serving out the window will not change. It's Church Policy. No unauthorized person is allowed in the building. We have a new male volunteer which is a big help in lifting heavy cases and bringing food down to us from the storeroom. We take donations on all our open hours. Please spread the word that we're here at 7766 Wayne Avenue, Bethel Baptist Church, from 10 am to 12 noon, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. We will be open **November 27th through December 19th**. Have a happy holiday!

## Happy Birthdays in December!

Here are a few birthdays to celebrate in the month of December! Please consider getting in touch with the following church members by regular mail or email to help them celebrate their special days. Let us know if your birthday is missing from our list by calling the church office or emailing [Janedt@verizon.net](mailto:Janedt@verizon.net).



12/12 - Dick Harbison  
363 Orchard Rd.  
Springfield, PA 19064  
[rrharbison@verizon.net](mailto:rrharbison@verizon.net)

12/20 - Carol Hatten  
224 James Dr.  
Havertown, PA 19083  
[jimhatteniii@aol.com](mailto:jimhatteniii@aol.com)



# We're Searching for Volunteers

Are you new to our church and/or looking for an opportunity to serve, meet people and make DHUMC a better place? There are many ways to participate. If you are crafty, maybe you could decorate a bulletin board or work on door wreaths or holiday altar decorations. You could help with the after-church coffee social. Delivering flowers to a member can brighten someone's day. Maybe we could add you to our communion guild. You could be a substitute for the counting team. If you would like to plan or work on a social event, that would be much appreciated by all. You could send cards to shut-ins. How about filling in as an usher? If you see yourself helping in other ways, don't hesitate to ask. **See the list of opportunities below...**

## Get Involved!

Worship is a blessing. Our Drexel Hill United Methodist Church is so much more! Are you looking for a way to serve through our congregation? Here is a list you might consider:

### Activity:

Delivering altar flowers  
Ushering  
Singing in the choir  
Community Outreach  
Addressing Gun Violence

Maintenance of the building  
Gardening  
Media/digital/newsletter  
Membership Committee

### Contact:

Sally Mullin  
Charles Webb  
Dan Matarazzo  
Helen Campbell  
Keith Chase &  
Dave O'Connell  
Alex Mullin  
Barb O'Connell  
Diane Volpe  
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Please contact Pastor Atkinson at 610.259.2104 and he will get you in touch with a leader in your area of interest.

# Drexel Hill United Methodist Church Calendar



december

2023

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
27 November	28	29	30	<b>1 December</b>	2/3 9 am DHUMC Together In the Word First Sunday of Advent
4	5 9:30am Bible Study 11 am Fellowship	6	7 9 am Bacon Toast and Heavenly Host	8	9/10 9 am DHUMC Together In the Word Second Sunday of Advent
11	12 9:30 am Bible Study 11 am Fellowship	13	14	15	16/17 9 am DHUMC Together In the Word 3rd Sunday of Advent
18	19 9:30am Bible Study 11 am Fellowship Nursery School Break starts	20	21	22	23/24 9 am DHUMC Word 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30/31 9 am DHUMC Together In the Word 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmastide
1 January	2	3	4	5	6/7