

# Ministry @ DHUMC

Drexel Hill United Methodist Church

December, 2022

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

## Snow had Fallen, Snow on Snow

### *Pastor's Message*

*And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. Luke 1:31, New Revised Standard Version*

December can be heavy going for some of us, and sometimes, maybe all of us. Whether we accept Christmas as a religious festival or work to contrive an opportunity to eat, drink, and be merry with a bleak mid-winter party, Christmas always has a lists and expectations stage. This year, we are far less concerned with the COVID-19 that complicated our plans in the last few years, though it lingers in the back of our minds as a vague threat. December can leave many feeling worn out with giving and planning. . . or loneliness - rather than filled with the much hyped tidings of comfort and joy. I reckon we've all been trained to present ourselves as jolly at this time of year, no matter what is really going on inside us. An empty laugh, nevertheless, can long echo hollow in the soul. It is a sad realization to have been left out in the cold because there is "no room at the inn," or near the fire, or around a family dinner table.

Our world around us tends to party before Christmas and then pack up the festival as soon as "the big day" is over. For the faithful, this can be an alien time of the year, because in contrast, the Christian tradition struggles to see the weeks of December as a time of

waiting and expectancy, a period of scarcity and preparation, with the partying starting only on the first of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Still, the quiet and the pregnant emptiness is not always a bad place to be. The discipline of hoping, of expectancy, can have its abundant blessings. Only in the dark night have we any chance to see our star. This is a deceptively simple lesson – try looking for stars in the sunlight. The roundness of an expectant mother enroute to Bethlehem is a simple sign of the divine lurking hidden in our midst.

Whatever kind of December you are experiencing, God is with us. Live this month, this week, this day . . . this moment. Bill Keane was a Philadelphia boy, who worked for the old Philadelphia Bulletin, and was the cartoonist who drew Family Circus. He said, "Yesterday is history; tomorrow is a mystery; today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present."

Peace,  
Russell J. Atkinson



*Oh Immanuel, God with us, truly in this Advent season we celebrate that you are not hidden in some faraway cloud, but you chose to be with us in the blur and mystery of our lives. In the midst of lists and rush, you are with us as a song that echoes in our minds, as the light of a candle, as a card from a friend. They are signs of your presence.*

*We turn to you this season and pray that you would birth joy and healing, blessing and hope in us.*

*Let something wonderful begin in us – something surprising and holy.*

*May your hand be upon us. Let your love fill us. Let your joy overwhelm us.*

*Let our longing for you be met on a coming holy night. Immanuel with us once again. Amen.*

#### **Ministry@DHUMC**

A monthly newsletter for the membership of DHUMC.

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## **Coffee and Conversation**



We have renewed 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 11am to 11:50am where we will



gather in the Gym to hear a psalm and reflect on it briefly,

and then engage in light exercise – walking the neighborhood if the weather is fine, or some activities like stretching in the gym, shooting basketball (no recording devices allowed). Some of you may know of other activities that fit in the realm of light aerobics.

## **Administrative Council Meeting Update**

The next Administrative Council meeting, originally scheduled for last month, will now be held on Monday, **December 5, 2022**, at 7:00 p.m. As always, the meeting will take place on Zoom, so shortly before 7:00, please look for Pastor Atkinson's invitation to sign on. If you aren't a member of the Administrative Council but would like to sit in on the meeting, please contact either Becky Harbison at [rrharbison@verizon.net](mailto:rrharbison@verizon.net) or the church office at [office@dhum.org](mailto:office@dhum.org), and you will be added to the Zoom invitation list. Looking forward to seeing you then.



## **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 1, 2022**. Hope to see you there!



## **DHUMC Response to Gun Violence**

In December we will continue to organize for the year ahead in several key areas such as education and awareness, community events, advocacy, and youth and schools among others.

Please consider attending our meeting after the service on **December 11th**. We are ready to establish solid direction for 2023 covering several key areas. Our modest start in 2022 is the springboard for moving forward in faith recognizing that God does have a role for us to carry out in bringing about change. There is a place for everyone in DHUMC's response to gun violence.





Russell Atkinson, Pastor

## December Worship Services

### Second Sunday of Advent

December 4, 2022  
Isaiah 11:1-10,  
Matthew 3:1-12  
“Advent, Totally”

### Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2022  
Isaiah 35:1-10,  
Matthew 11:2-11  
“Unmet Expectations”

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2022  
Isaiah 7:10-17,  
Matthew 1:18-25  
“Signs”

### Christmas Eve

December 24, 2022  
Isaiah 9:2-7,  
Luke 2:1-20  
“The Decisive Move”

### Christmas Day

December 25, 2022  
Isaiah 52:7-10,  
John 1:1-14  
“A Little Christmas Story”



## Christmas Blessings

## Lay Reader Schedule for December

- 4 Sally Mullin
- 11 Barbara Felton
- 18 Becky Harbison
- 25 Alex Mullin



*Merry Christmas*





# December Worship Notes

## To Bethlehem and To Kingdom Come

*Almighty God, give us grace, that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in 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.*

*The First English Prayer Book, 1549*

Though Christmas can be a troubling time to some, mostly, to use a familiar seasonal phrase, it reminds us of “comfort and joy.” Using many familiar characters and episodes, Christmas tells the story of Jesus’ birth. All the well-known Christmas scenes point us in the same beautiful direction. We may surprise ourselves with how much of the scripture account we can recall word for word. It is not at all by chance that we all seem to have vivid memories of Christmas; singing the carols, worshiping in the candlelight, and hearing that mystical passage, the prologue to the Gospel of John.

Advent is much more of a challenge and (perhaps I can begin an argument) is more important for us disciples. Firstly, Advent covers a wider scope. Advent celebrates Christ coming again at the close of the age, and it celebrates those events when the Christ continually comes; post-resurrection experiences, where two or three are gathered, and in the Lord's Supper. Advent illuminates for us that the time between incarnation and final coming is one of continual imminence. Christ is coming now; not only in the past or in the future!

This set of ideas can be illustrated for us by considering the squabble generations of scripture translators have over the Aramaic word *maranatha* (the word shows up in 1 Corinthians 16:22). To see the word’s double meaning depends on the division of the syllables: *marana tha* means “come, our Lord,” and *maran atha* means “our Lord has come.” Examining the original texts does not conclusively show which way to split the word – much to the frustration of the literalists, the entertainment of the playful, and the benefit of the faith. The term was significant in early Christian spirituality and has meaning for many Christians today.

In *O Come Emmanuel: Scripture Verses for Advent Worship*, William Marshall states, “It is only because Christ is present with us now that we long and pray for his fuller manifestation.” Here Marshall has made a *maranatha* statement. Both are crucial to understanding the expectation and celebration of the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany Seasons.

Again this year, the people of Drexel Hill United Methodist Church will celebrate the season with parties, presents, and meals. We will join with friends, believers and otherwise, in warmth and hospitality. We will also behold *Maranatha: Come, our Lord. Our Lord has come.*

# 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 18, 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 or in the Narthex on **December 4<sup>th</sup> or December 11<sup>th</sup>**. Last day to order will be December 11<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!

## Crafters & Fellowship Meetup



The 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. In September the group was able to donate items to the Nationalities Service Center for refugees with chronic pain. 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. If you have a craft you would like to share, please come to the Bohn Parlor on **December 15<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00 p.m.

## Nursery School News



On Wednesday, December 7th we are looking forward to “Teddy and Me and Mrs. Claus Makes 3”. Mrs. Claus will be visiting school and the children will get their picture taken with her and be given a gift. The children will bring their favorite teddy bear or stuffed animal to school. Our classrooms have been very busy making beautiful Christmas crafts and listening to Christmas

stories and music. We will be on Christmas Break from December 20th to January 2nd and return to school on January 4th. In January we will start working on the alphabet and winter fun. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year! Denise and Jennifer

## 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. The email invitation will go out a few minutes before the meeting at 9:30 am. Please contact Pastor Atkinson (610-675-7187 or [pastor@dhum.org](mailto:pastor@dhum.org)) if you would like to be included on the Zoom invitation.

## Red Cross Drive.... Thankyou!



Thank you so much for hosting a blood drive with us on November 4th. We were able to collect 24 pints of blood at the drive. The blood collected, because of your efforts, will go on to help save the lives of 72 local hospital patients. We could not fulfill our mission at the Red Cross without you.... thank you! The next blood drive scheduled for Monday, **June 26, 2023**. Please mark your calendars.

# Happy Anniversary!

Happy 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary to Pastor Russell and his wife Barbara! The congregation celebrated with the happy couple after services in November.



# Outreach Committee News

## Christmas Card Drive

Thanks to everyone who contributed gift cards to our Thanksgiving food drive. We were able to give five deserving families from the Upper Darby School District \$200 each toward their Thanksgiving Festivities. The gift cards were from Acme, Target, Walmart, Giant and ShopRite. How wonderful to share our blessings with others at Thanksgiving.



Now, starts our Christmas Gift Drive! This drive will also support families in the Upper Darby School District. Again, we are asking for gift cards. This time we would appreciate gift cards from Target, Walmart, Marshall's, Old Navy and other appropriate stores for Christmas giving. Gift cards are easier for us to buy, and the families appreciate the autonomy of doing their own shopping. We will be accepting the gift cards up to Sunday, **December 18th**. We will deliver them to the school district on the 19th, and the district will deliver them to the families. Thank you for helping us to continue this important and long-standing tradition of our church.



## Christmas Cards Delivered

This year, DHUMC had the opportunity to write a message on Christmas card to prisoners. Members wrote encouraging notes to these men and women and the cards were delivered to the Conference Prison Ministry Team in November. Thank you to all that were able to spread some Christmas joy to those who are in prison this year.



## Upper Darby Food Bank



We are getting many new families and pre-covid families coming back because of the high food prices and food stamps don't go as far. People were able to get food many different places this year. We have been overwhelmed with donations from The Agnes Irwin School, Aronomink, Garretford, Hillcrest and Highland Park Schools as well as the Boy Scouts. No one in our area, Upper Darby Township, Milbourne, Havertown and parts of Lansdowne should go hungry. 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 close on December 22 and reopen on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.** We will continue to serve our customers out the window on Wayne Avenue.

## 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)

# Drexel Hill United Methodist Church Calendar

# December 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	1 Bacon, Toast & Heavenly Host	2	3
4 Second Sunday of Advent	5 7pm Administrative Council Meeting	6 Men's Fellowship	7 Bible Study	8	9	10
11 Third Sunday of Advent	12	13 Men's Fellowship	14 Bible Study	15 Crafters Meetup	16	17
18 Fourth Sunday of Advent	19	20 Men's Fellowship	21 Bible Study	22	23	24
25 Christmas	26	27 Men's Fellowship	28 Bible Study	29	30	31

## 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  
 Helping with communion Ushering  
 Singing in the choir  
 Community Outreach  
 Hand out lunch on the Parkway  
 Helping in the Sunday school  
 Addressing Gun Violence  
 Maintenance of the building Gardening  
 Media/digital/newsletter  
 Prepare after-church refreshments

### Contact:

Sally Mullin  
 Charles Webb  
 Dan Matarazzo  
 Helen Campbell  
 Russell Atkinson  
 Helen Campbell  
 Dave O'Connell  
 Alex Mullin  
 Diane Volpe  
 Jane Todd

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If you don't use email but would still like to reach out to serve in an activity, just contact Pastor Atkinson at 610.259.2104 and he will get you in touch with a leader in your interest.