

## Listen to Christmas

### *Pastor's Message*

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'*

*Luke 2:13-14*

The traditional scene is a stable next to a hotel in Bethlehem . . . and all the while, the rest of the world celebrates Christmas reading Dickens, reciting Clement Clarke Moore, or shopping Amazon. All seek the iconography of Christmas, but for the faithful disciples the stable is at the center. The son of Mary is born. Against the numerous sounds and distractions of a world that doesn't know (and if it does – doesn't much care) the first cries of a baby say God's supreme intervention into this world. For disciples a moment to celebrate, and for the world . . . a story, a myth, a puzzle, perhaps.

This traditional scene, the birth of Mary's son, foretold in prophesy and song, is far from anticipated. No one knew when or how God would fulfill that ancient prophesy. Few could have entertained the idea that fulfillment would come in the form of a vulnerable baby, born

of anonymous parents turned away because 'there was no room in the inn'. Many looked for the Great leader of the nations, Commander-in-Chief of the armies of God's wrath, the ultimate political Overlord, or the religious Prophet Almighty upholding traditionalism. A baby born in poverty, however? No, that could not be.

Mary's son will live his life amidst vulnerability, injustice, weakness, and death. Because Jesus knew these things God knows us in our weakness, in our moral dilemmas, in our lack of faith. We, in turn, see the presence of God who understands our human condition. Mary's son has bridged the divide between the transcendent perfection and those who need hope, love, and compassion most; people like you and me in a world such as ours. God comes to persons financially adrift and offers an anchor. God comes to those surrounded by death in Palestine, Ukraine, and Sudan and promises peace. The Son of Mary suffers with us - suffers in the refugee camps, beside the sickbed, in the heart-broken - in the experience of those who

wonder whether there is any point to going on.

Hope, love, and peace; the words Christians use at Christmas seem far removed from the experience of this world. But to those who identify the Son of Mary with weakness, the message is hope, love, and peace. No one long believes the Christian faith is easy. But in the weakness of the birth in the stable, God becomes one with us. At the Lord's Supper we say: we are one with God, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world. The stresses of the world remain: poverty, armies marching, cruelty. Our faith is challenged. But at the stable God's love leads to the Savior who becomes one with us.

Christmas blessing to everyone!

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 and 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.

## **Hanging of the Greens**



**December 14<sup>th</sup>** will be the *Hanging of the Greens* in the church Sanctuary. Everyone is invited to participate in decorating the tree and hanging the wreaths throughout the church. Please check the upcoming church bulletin and the Friday Update for the exact time. Come out and share in the holiday merriment!



## **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 5, 2024**. Hope to see you there!

## **Ministry@DHUMC**

A monthly newsletter for the membership of DHUMC.

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## **Tuesday Morning Faith Bible Study**

Why don't you join us every Tuesday Morning for Bible Class? We are a group who gather to read and talk about Bible themes. We meet in person in the Church Office as well as online via ZOOM. You are very welcome to give it a try and, if you like what you see, please attend. **Important:** you'll need a Bible. We'll begin at 9:30am and finish a little before 11am. The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81458981321?pwd=SmFRQopLS21kUmdhZHNRnRnJmbnFyUT09>



Russell Atkinson, Pastor

## December Worship Services

### First Sunday of Advent

December 1, 2024  
Jeremiah 33:14-16  
Mark 13:24-37  
Rev. Tatgenhorst Guest  
Preacher

### Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 2024  
Isaiah 40:1-11  
Luke 3:1-6  
“Be Prepared”

### Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024  
Zephaniah 3: 14-20  
John 1:6-8, 19-28  
“Anticipation”

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024  
Micah 5:2-5a  
Luke 1:26-38  
“This Pregnant Pause”



### Christmas Eve

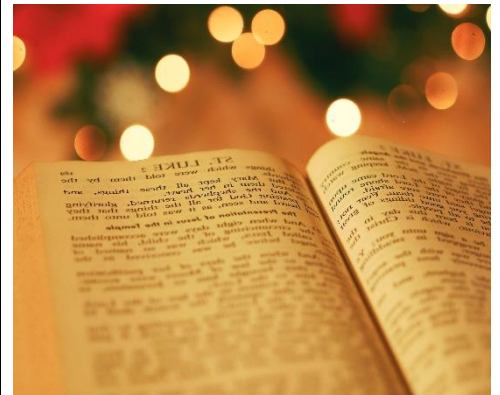
December 24, 2024  
Titus 2:11-14  
Isaiah 52:7-10  
Luke 2:1-7, 2:8-20  
John 1:1-14  
Festival of Lessons and  
Carols/Candlelight Service

### First Sunday of Christmastide

December 29, 1924  
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
Luke 2:41-52  
Sharing Christmas Poems  
Christmas Fellowship  
Breakfast

## Lay Reader Schedule for December

- 1 Keith Chase
- 8 Marion Mendimasa
- 15 Anne Simon
- 22 Malcolm Scott
- 29 Jane Leggieri



# Merry Christmas



# November Worship Notes

## Advent All Around Us



For those souls not overly distracted 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 Mark 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.

# 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 22nd, through to 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and December 15<sup>th</sup>**. You can also call the office to request a form. Last day to order will be December 15<sup>th</sup>. The plants will still be \$10.00 each. Let's fill our Sactuary with beautiful poinsettias this Christmas season!

## Darts: Iron Sharpens Iron

Spend some time with a nice group of people in the Rainbow Room and chuck a few darts at a board. A new fellowship opportunity around darts will meet every Monday evening at 6:30 pm. Check the Friday Update for dates.

There will be metal-shaft darts in various weights, but also traditional Philadelphia darts with their turkey feather flights. We'll play Around-the-World, 301, and Baseball. Someone might suggest another game.

What could be more relaxing than throwing a sharp missile at a stationary target?



All are welcome, young and old, men and women, boys and girls. For more information, call Dave O'Connell (610)986-1174, [docnea@verizon.net](mailto:docnea@verizon.net), or Russell Atkinson, (610)675-7187, [pastor@dhum.org](mailto:pastor@dhum.org).

# Upper Darby Food Bank

by Charline Neigh

People are always very generous this time of year with both food and monetary gifts so we can buy what we lack. We have a woman that crochets hats and scarves for children from 1 year through the teens. The Scouts have a special collection as does the Upper Darby School District and the Agnes Irwin School. What we lack is the donation of turkeys we used to get from Giant. *We will be closed December 20th through January 1st and will reopen on January 2nd.* Happy Holiday to all!!



## Nursery School News

Photo by Denise McCarthy & Jennifer Ryan



On December 11th we are looking forward to “Teddy and Me and Mrs. Claus Makes 3”. Mrs. Claus will be visiting school and the children will get a picture taken with her and be 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 December 17th and returning to school on January 7th.

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



# 4 Day Parent Visitation Day 2024



# 4 Day Parent Visitation Day 2024



# Outreach Committee News

## Holiday Card Drive

By Helen Campbell

Our generous congregation did it again! This Thanksgiving we were able to bless 5 families in our community with \$250 each in gift cards because of your generosity.



Thanksgiving Gift Cards that were collected in November.

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

We are now collecting gift cards for another 5 families from the Upper Darby School district. Since it is Christmas we are looking for cards from any store in the area you would buy gifts: Target, Walmart, Kohls, Marshall's, TJ Maxx, grocery stores, drug stores, etc. The cards will be due by **December 15th**. Thank you for helping to make this Christmas a little brighter for some deserving kids.





# Flood Buckets Collected

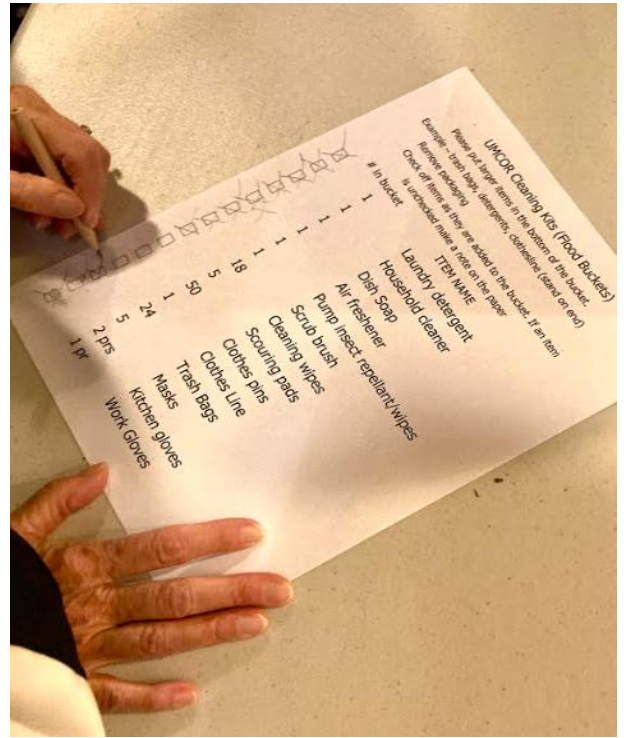
Story by Diane Volpe and Photos by Alex Mullin

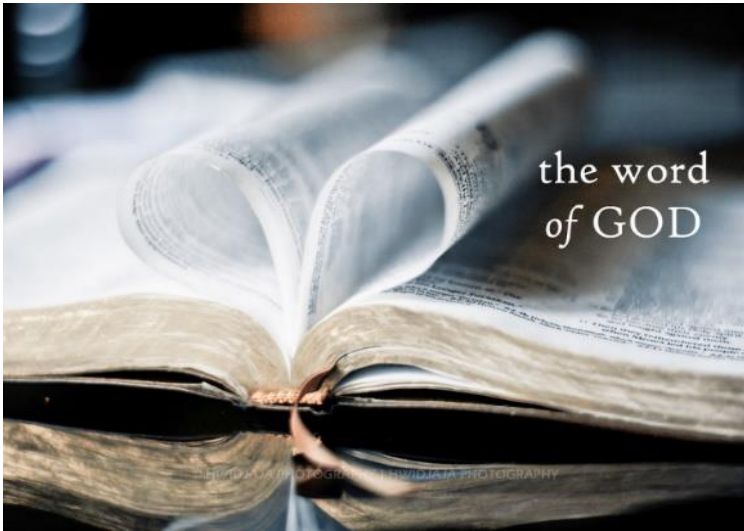
On Sunday November 10<sup>th</sup>, the DHUMC congregation assembled five UMCOR Cleaning Kits for disaster responders in the immediate aftermath of two hurricanes that hit the South. Sally Mullin helped direct the filling of flood buckets to aid in the cleanup for families affect by the recent hurricanes. Members helped by donating cleaning materials to fill up the buckets.

Also, a bucket assembly challenge was announced in the EPA Digest to gather more buckets to aid in the recovery efforts. The goal for EPA is 1,000 buckets. They will challenge each district to see who can assemble the most. DHUMC will be one of the collection points for flood buckets in our region. There is an initiative to collect these for families displaced by Helene and Milton.



**Members gather to assemble the buckets during service.**





## **DHUMC Together In The Word**

Please join us each Sunday before services for another edition of *Together in the Word* - 9:15 am in the Prayer Chapel.

## **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 Jane Todd at [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  
Jane Todd

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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.