



# The Hancock Herald

December 2011

## Join Us for Manger on Sunday December 4

**Inside this issue:**

From the Sr. Minister	2
Hancock Holiday Fair	3
Stewardship	4
Capital Campaign	5
Manger Sunday 2010	6-7
Order Poinsettias	8
Children's Ministries	9
Congregational Care	10
Notice Board	11

Please join us for Hancock's 142nd Manger Sunday December 4th during worship. Hancock, along with 40 other churches and groups in Greater Boston, collects and delivers gifts to City Mission Society's distribution center in Winchester. With the help of sorters and shoppers, the gifts are distributed to families less fortunate during the Christmas season.

Please bring your gifts unwrapped. Wrapping paper brought separately is welcome. Cash gifts are also always welcome. A list of suggestions can be found below. Please remember that only new items are appropriate as

gifts. Hancock's generosity on this occasion has always been appreciated.

Sorting/shopping days are Saturday 12/10 and Sunday 12/18 from 1:00-3:00. Contact Pam Cochrane ([pam.cochrane@hancockchurch.org](mailto:pam.cochrane@hancockchurch.org)) if you would like to help out.

Volunteers will be needed to help deliver the gifts to Winchester on Sunday, 12/4 between 12:30 and 1:30 (vans especially helpful). Please contact Anita Chanoux (781-862-5122) or [achanoux@hotmail.com](mailto:achanoux@hotmail.com) for more information and to volunteer.

**SOME GIFT SUGGESTIONS:**

- Winter coats, sweaters and sweatshirts (esp. large sizes)
- Hats, mittens, gloves, scarves
- White socks and underwear
- Blankets and backpacks
- Toys, games and books for all ages. (especially for teens-sports equipment, iTune gift cards etc)
- Gift cards from Target, CVS, Walgreens, Kohls etc. (suggested amount \$15.00 or larger)

## Intergenerational Caroling, Sunday December 11

**COME SING WITH US!**

For more than 20 years, Hancock Members have prepared for Christmas by sharing the melodies of the traditional carols.

This year we have revised the schedule to make the event more feasible for families with young children. We'll meet at the Church at 3:30 PM to divide into groups & get directions. From 4:00 PM until approximately 5:20 PM we will make our rounds to spread the joy of Christmas by visiting & singing carols for our shut-ins.

We will then meet back at Hancock at 5:30 PM for a pizza & salad dinner hosted by the Music and the Arts Committee in the Dining Room. We'll end the event in time to attend the evening worship service @ The Well.

Please plan to bring your family and help us to spread the joy of the Christmas Season!

We need to know how many people will be participating in order to plan both the carol-



ing routes and the meal. If you plan to participate, please register either by calling the church office at 781-862-4220, sending an email to Nathan Martin ([rocknate@gmail.com](mailto:rocknate@gmail.com)) or by signing up in coffee hour.

**LexMedia Cable TV Schedule**

Watch Hancock Services on RCN 3, Comcast 8 and Verizon 35 at Sunday 9:55 am (LIVE) and 7 p.m.

**Bedford Cable TV Schedule**

Watch Hancock Services on Comcast 10 and Verizon 40 on Sundays at 7 p.m. (with a one week delay).

**LexMedia**

You can also watch worship live at [lexmedia.org](http://lexmedia.org).

## From the Senior Minister



Dear Friends,

As I write, Thanksgiving Day is just a week away. It has long been one of my very favorite holidays. The foundational impulse behind a day of giving thanks is a spiritual one: we have another to thank for the blessings of life. To celebrate Thanksgiving Day is to recognize, at the center of our hearts and minds, that we did not create ourselves, or the world around us, and even if we have worked hard to provide shelter for ourselves and our loved ones, we have done so using materials and time given to us as a gift.

We sometimes hear people saying that no one gave them anything, that they are where they are today solely because of their own hard work, pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps. There is a kernel of truth in this observation, for no one can doubt the virtue of making the most of one's gifts, or one's time. But then, that's the rub: our gifts, our talents, our time, have all come from another source, whom we know to be God. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus asked his disciples whether any of them could, by worrying, add even a day to their span of life (Matthew 6:25 ff). It's the very same point. We're *given* life, and we can only treat it as a gift, because we cannot make it for ourselves.

Christmas, of course, follows hard on the heels of Thanksgiving, and an often-expressed sentiment is that we should act as if every day was Christmas Day.

I like Christmas as much as the next person, but I am beginning to understand that the holiday sentiment that is best turned into a prescription for year round living is that of Thanksgiving Day. Making gratitude one's most basic posture in life goes along way toward creating peace and harmony, as well as calm and serenity in life. For when we are grateful first, destructive impulses drop away: our envy of others, our longing for more, and the often destructive impulse to seek from acquiring things the peace that can only come from being in right relationship with God.

*To celebrate Thanksgiving Day is to recognize, at the center of our hearts and minds, that we did not create ourselves, or the world around us, and even if we have worked hard to provide shelter for ourselves and our loved ones, we have done so using materials and time given to us as a gift.*

Thanksgiving Day may well be past before you read this. But each day is available to us as a day of thanksgiving. Making it so will bring us peace.

Grace and Peace,

*Paul*

## Holidays at Hancock

### Hancock Holiday Fair With Gifts That Care—Sun. Dec. 4, 11 a.m.

We're always looking for meaningful holiday giving, and this Fair provides an exciting way to honor special people with gifts that benefit local, national and international charities.

The eleventh Hancock Holiday Fair inspires us with ideas and opportunities to buy gifts that will help others throughout the world. Some of our favorite organizations will return to encourage our holiday shopping with unique hand-crafted items and cards, such as A Thread of Hope, Heifer International, Rosie's Place, Aruna Designs (Friends of India), Sharing Foun-



ation, Fuller Center for Housing, Weavers of Varanasi, Bead for Life, and City Mission Society.

Also participating will be Apabii Patchwork, Empower Dalit Women of Nepal, Chris Groves woodworking, Dan Palant with clocks benefitting the Food Pantry, and Women's Gold Shea Butter Project.

New this year, Me to We artisans will bring the best in handcrafted gifts which help to make positive social and environmental impact around the world, and Books for Africa. BasicNeeds, a group that enables people with mental disorders to live and work successfully in their own communities will join us again. Other participants include: Kinara, which supports multi-challenged people of India; and Sustainable Harvest International, a partner in Hancock's Feeding 5,000 Campaign, which helps to overcome poverty while restoring tropical forests in Central America.



Local groups will also participate, such as The Lexington Food Pantry, The Cotting School, Guiding Eyes for the Blind, Minute-man Services, and our own Hancock Youth Group will again raise money for their mission trip to Kentucky by selling delicious treats. Come and enjoy refreshments and unique music with the Joyful Noyse from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Clark Hall and the Dining-room on Manger Sunday, December 4. The Hearts and Noses Hospital Clowns will also perform. Spread the word.....share the fun!

## Christmas Handbell Concerts



The Handbell Choirs will offer two Holiday Concerts this year.

On Friday, December 16 from 10-11 am, The Morning Glory Ringers will present our second annual Weekday Holiday Concert, playing on 4 octaves of bells and chimes. This concert is designed for seniors, assisted living facilities, and families with preschoolers who prefer a weekday morning concert venue.

Our 12th Annual Sunday Holiday Concert featuring all four of our bell choirs will be presented at 2:00-3:15 pm on Sunday, December 18 on 5 octaves of bells and 6 octaves of Malmark chimes.

The theme for both concerts is "Holiday

Music Across the Ages" and includes secular, sacred, and classical pieces from all ages and cultures. Our MC, Deb Holland, will delight you with tantalizing tidbits of information about our carols and bells.

Treat yourself, your family, and your friends to an enchanting hour of holiday cheer and the magic sparkle of bells this Christmas season!

After each concert, there is an opportunity to come forward to get a closer look at the bells and chimes. The concerts are family-friendly, free, open to the public, and handicapped accessible. For questions, contact Cheryl Kraley 781-862-2209 or [cheryl.kraley@hancockchurch.org](mailto:cheryl.kraley@hancockchurch.org)

## Stewardship for 2012

We gathered around the perimeter of the sanctuary after the Faith Promise procession and looked at each other – the congregation of Hancock Church on the Sunday of Nov. 6.

It was another moment of inspiration this year. If you were not there, we hope you have had an opportunity to see it on cable TV or to see Dana's sermon on the church website.

It will be a few days before Thad can provide an initial summary of our collective progress toward our 2012 goals, but it is important for each of us to reflect the

Lord's generosity in our stewardship commitment. Please help your Stewardship Committee by mailing your pledge card, dropping it off in the office, or placing it in the collection plate as soon as you can.

On behalf of Hancock Church, thank you for your commitment to our mission and all we serve.

To view Dana's sermon, visit: [www.hancockchurch.org/worship/sermons](http://www.hancockchurch.org/worship/sermons).



## Talking Faith — Tuesday December 6, 7:30 p.m.

### Talking about our faith in a casual setting

**SONGS FOR LIFE:** Often songs and poems have the strength to carry us forward in our lives. This has been true from ancient times, as the psalms can be understood to be songs for all the joys and challenges of life. Join us for an evening of sharing the Songs of Life.

We'll look together at a few classic psalms:

A Song for Lament – Psalm 42

A Song for Reassurance – Psalm 139

A Song of Celebration – Psalm 98

And you are encouraged to bring a song/poem/hymn/psalm that is power-

ful for you in your life. Paul Shupe will bring copies of a Mary Oliver poem "The Journey", which is important and powerful to him. For songs if you would like bring a CD recording we can listen to together.

Location: Home of Lois and Scott Martin – 781-270-0304, 6 Cormier Road, Burlington (just beyond Market Basket).

## Potter Library Notes

We have two very special items to tell you about this month.

Ruth W. Clark, widow of Rev. Henry Clark, has given us a copy of her VIGNETTES OF MY LIFE. You will enjoy perusing this wonderful collection of her memories and pictures. Ruth tells of her growing up, her happy years with Henry and the boys --- and so much more. Ruth dedicated this copy to all her friends at Hancock. This is a real treasure and we

are most grateful to have it in our library.

For many years we had audio tapes of the Bible on the shelf behind the librarian's desk. Recently, Jacky Deranian did some research and found that now the entire King James Bible is on CDs, narrated by Alexander Scourby.

And she arranged for us to buy the full set of audio CDs. There are 60 CDs in

all – 46 of the Old Testament and 14 of the New Testament. We ask that you sign the sheet next to the collection telling us when you took out disc #\_\_\_ and also when you returned it.

Potter Library is open during church office hours and on Sunday mornings. Please come in and take advantage of all that we have to offer – and of course, check out the book cart when it is in the dining room on Sundays.

## Food Pantry: Donate Canned Vegetables in December

If you donate food in December, please consider giving **canned vegetables**. Donation baskets are in the narthex, as well as outside the office and dining

room. Volunteers are needed for **December 10 and January 14** to help distribute the food at the Pantry. The commitment is from 8:45 to

about 11:30 am and the learning curve is short! For more information, contact Caroline Nijenberg ([carolinen@rcn.com](mailto:carolinen@rcn.com) or 781 862-4465).

## Hancock Capital Campaign Report



“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” Romans 15:7

At this time of year, as the holidays are approaching, we plan how to wel-

come our guests into our homes. We decorate our houses with festive greens and colorful baubles, create comfortable places for our guests to sit or sleep during their visit, and cook up a vast array of yummy dishes to keep them well fed. We strive to make them feel welcome, for in that act of being welcoming we make strong, personal connections with our guests.

When our congregation dreamed last spring of how we could imagine Hancock in the future, the overwhelming majority replied that we want to be more welcoming to all who grace our doors. We want to make our building accessible to all people, regardless of their mobility. We want to grow our congregation with young families, and want to determine how to welcome and engage them in the life of our church. We want to find a way to have our building, and our programs, and our congregation – indeed every aspect of Hancock - say “Welcome, you are important to us, and we are so glad that you are here”.

It is with these dreams in mind that we have been exploring how to make Hancock more welcoming. We have asked our architect, Don Mills, to find a place for an elevator, remove steps where they can be removed, and increase the number of accessible bathrooms. We have requested a plan for welcoming newcomers immediately after our service so that they can feel invited to join our community. We have wondered how a building can say to all those who enter “Welcome!”

Don has given us a vision in the form of a Master Plan for our consideration. Our first priority is to make sure that our existing capital systems, such as the roof, the walls and the fire safety systems, are in good repair. Then he has shown how we can place an elevator which can access the 6 major levels of our church so that anyone can get to the Upper Room, the Choir Room, or the Sanctuary.

We can see in his plans a way of bringing light to our building so that people can easily find their way as they go through our halls and feel that there is a sense of purpose and welcome here. He has shown us how we can tie in to our lovely Memorial Garden, so that this jewel can be enjoyed by all who enter. He has designed a flexible worship space – the Chapel – that can be combined with the Narthex on Sundays so

that we can have our Fellowship Hour in this expanded space. Then, as our newcomers leave the Sanctuary, they can feel immediately welcomed to join us, while allowing for a Chapel area for smaller services at other times. His vision is comprehensive and we’ll have to determine what part of that vision we can afford, but it does give us the first draft of a road map to follow.

But just making the Hancock physical structure more welcoming is not enough. There’s more we can do within and outside these walls, building on this foundation, to make our church life more welcoming.

We need to provide support to our service and educational programs so people – both existing members and newcomers – can always find meaningful opportunities to participate and engage in the work God calls us to do. We need to advertise to others so that they know the wonderful secret that is Hancock.

We want to reach out to the Lexington Community so that we can help our congregation to grow. Because it is in the GROWING that we can do the GOOD which is the key to what Hancock is all about. Please continue to walk with us as we carve out a mission plan for a Capital Campaign that will keep Hancock Growing on the Green for Good.

## Hancock in the Early Sixties

By Sue Rockwell

I found this item in the newsletter from the beleaguered church collector, Percy Coomber:

“On occasion we apparently have guests in the Sunday congregation who empty their purses into the offering plates - buttons, hairpins, book matches, tooth-picks, new and used. Travelers from far-away places bring interesting coins: Chinese brass, Panamanian quarters, twenty centavos pieces from Peru, five

and ten lire pieces from Italy, island krona apparently from some part of the United Kingdom.

Checks are gradually supplanting cash... I suppose if the present economic trend continues, we can expect credit cards offered on a pray now, pay later plan.

Contributors took seriously my request for prompt advice of any discrepancies in the report to contributor. 24 hours after the first reports my fan mail rose

rapidly. A number of differences were to checks being deposited in the building account and vice versa. Most of these have been properly adjusted. As I explained to one lady: “A check is just a piece of paper. It is not sacred to the bank.

You can write any love notes on it you wish. I love to see notes on them identifying the allocation of the funds. It helps materially to assure correct posting the first time.

# Hancock Celebrates Manger Sunday 2010

## Members Offer Donations to Benefit City Mission Society of Boston



## Join Us For This Year's Manger Sunday Dec. 4



### **New! Hancock Advent Blog**

Enrich your spiritual journey this season with Hancock's new Advent blog! Go to [hancockchurch.org](http://hancockchurch.org) for a link to the blog.

# Honor a Loved One With Christmas Poinsettias



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

***Every year, the Sanctuary is filled with beautiful poinsettias in memory of those loved by members of the congregation at Hancock. Dedicate a poinsettia to a loved one in your family by returning this form by Friday, December 9th along with a check made out to Hancock United Church of Christ.***

**Poinsettias Given**  
by: \_\_\_\_\_

**In loving Memory**  
of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total no. of plants:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total (\$9/plant):** \_\_\_\_\_

# Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for Hancock

***Hancock has a new member!***

***Check out the new AED located on the wall outside of the church office.***

The first five minutes after a cardiac event are the most important. If the victim is treated within this timeframe, there is a 90 percent chance of recovery. The availability of an AED on the premises greatly increases the chances of recovery after a cardiac event.

One of the items on the “wish list” developed as a result of the Capital Campaign, was an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

The Prudential Committee has made this possible and a defibrillator has been installed at Hancock.

The strategic location of the AED outside the church office allows for the defibrillator to be in a highly visible area within easy access to most traffic patterns during the week and on weekends.

On November 8, six staff members and two congregation members were trained in CPR and in the proper use of an AED through the American Heart Association. Staff members Dana Allen Walsh, Mark Morgan, Pam Cochrane, Thad Jackson, Dan dos Santos and Julina Rundberg will be receiving a 2-year CPR/AED certification along with congregation members Joan Rutilla and Keith West.



Additional CPR/AED training will be offered in the future through Hancock and through our Boys Scout Troop 119 on various dates throughout the year. For further information about the device or participating in future trainings contact Keith West at 617-851-5199 or [marykeith.west@gmail.com](mailto:marykeith.west@gmail.com).

## Our Whole Lives Panel Discussion:

### Living a Whole Life: The Stories of Hancock GLBT Members and Friends

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, the OWL Class, HYG (Hancock Youth Group) and GLBT Allies presented an open dialogue on the topics of sexual equality and inclusiveness. The panel discussion held in Clark Hall was attended by more than forty adults, youth and parents and we thank the panelists, Eric Sherlock, Courtney Jones and Carol Counihan and moderators; Associate Pastor Dana Allen-Walsh and Director of Children's

Ministries Pam Cochrane for participating.

Hancock is an open and affirming congregation and the newly formed GLBT Allies group fosters support and program on topics relevant to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community and their families.

The OWL program, in its fifth year at

Hancock, helps 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior, equipping participants with accurate, age appropriate information in six subject areas: sexuality and human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. For more information contact: [Pam.Cochrane@hancockchurch.org](mailto:Pam.Cochrane@hancockchurch.org).

## Children's Ministries News

### Church School Kids pledge to Heifer International

During the month of November, Hancock's Church School kicked off their Heifer Mission by pledging to Fill the Ark. The four week campaign invited at home participation with a special calendar of daily challenges. Each day paired learning with action as the kids gained more knowledge of Heifer's mission and our commitment to support Heifer through the church school's weekly offering.



### Advent Begins on November 27th

The Children's Christian Education Committee invites all ages to the Advent Wreath Workshop in Clark Hall. Wreathmaking and craft activities begin at 10:20 for the kids and continues through coffee hour. Advent wreath rings, candles and greens provided, or bring your wreath ring from last year to decorate again. Live greens welcomed, for more information contact, [Pam.Cochrane@hancockchurch.org](mailto:Pam.Cochrane@hancockchurch.org).

### JYO and Manger Sunday

After Manger Sunday, the JYO kids will champion the work of the City Mission Society by volunteering to help sort gifts and donations at First Church Winchester on Saturday, December 10 and Sunday, December 18th from 1-3pm. Join us in this important mission project. No need to sign-up just come and lend a hand.

### A Caroling Sunday – December 11th, 3:30-6:00 pm

Families, singers of all ages, come to the caroling party and pizza supper for fellowship and holiday joy! Meet at Hancock at 3:30pm to then depart for caroling. We'll return to Hancock for refreshments and pizza in the dining hall and finish in time for Worship @ the Well.



Hancock JYO participates in sorting day for City Mission Society of Boston at First Church Winchester.

## From the Congregational Care Coordinator Joy Fallon

### The Love of Prayer Around Our Circle, Name by Name

My favorite part of being the Congregational Care Coordinator at Hancock may be the opportunity to pray for you all. Each time the Congregational Team gathers, we create a list of all those whom we know to be in need of special prayer, for concerns or for celebrations. We take turns, around our circle, naming you by name, and saying aloud our prayers for you, envisioning your faces.

On Sundays, when it is my turn to offer the pastoral prayers, I'm privileged to put words to the hopes and fears on our community's hearts, and to ask the Spirit to swirl in and around us, rendering the difficult bearable and multiplying our joys. We are never alone.

Why do I love prayer so much? It's the primary way I've found to have a relationship with God, time spent not learning *about* God, but *being with* the One who is Love. George Buttrick called prayer "friendship with God." Martin

Copenhaver says it's "spending time" with God. In that time and space, we get to glimpse ourselves as God sees us; as one Sufi teacher says, "If you could see yourself through God's eyes, you wouldn't believe how beautiful you are." Over time, as I pray, I'm changed.

When I served as a hospital chaplain this summer, my patients were sometimes startled when I asked, "For what would you like me to pray?" We don't always get asked this. But when we settle into serious consideration of this offer, sifting and sorting, discerning what we most desire from God, then we may find healing has already begun: describing the parts of ourselves that need God's touch is itself a gift, sometimes.

I take seriously Jesus' teaching that we be persistent in prayer, not because prayer changes *God*, but because it changes *me*.

We're to badger God, like a woman before an unjust judge or a neighbor desperate for bread to feed the unexpected guest, because Jesus wants us to personally engage with a God who cares for our personal welfare; ours is no traditional Middle Eastern or Mediterranean cosmic god, disdainfully aloof. We pray to Abba, "Daddy."

Many thanks to all of you who are prayerfully supporting one another, open to the transformation that it can bring to all of us. You can join us, either by praying for others at Hancock, or by letting us pray for you and your loved ones. The Hancock Cordon of Prayer is updated weekly, and contains prayers for those who have given their permission to be named; we also are happy to pray confidentially, if that is preferred. The Cordon is found by calling 781-862-4220, then pressing 3, and 1.

### Hancock Holiday Spirit



## The Notice Board



Have you visited  
The Well  
on Facebook?

[facebook.com/thewellhancock](https://www.facebook.com/thewellhancock)

**New! Hancock Advent Blog**  
Enrich your spiritual journey this season with Hancock's new Advent blog!  
Go to [hancockchurch.org](http://hancockchurch.org) for a link to the blog.

### Clap Your Hands & Sing to the Lord!



Music now available to download from the Hancock Church website or (by request) on CD. Visit the following link to download the songs from the church website:  
<http://tinyurl.com/6skh9gw>

### Have you seen the Celebration Sunday video?

It is available at  
[hancockchurch.org](http://hancockchurch.org)  
or on CD by request.

## Save the Date for a Cure for the Winter Doldrums! An Intergenerational Hancock Church Mardi Gras Party

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>When is it?</b>           | Saturday, 11 February, 2012 from 5 to 7:30 PM  |
| <b>Who is Invited?</b>       | Everyone in the church from children to senior citizens!   |
| <b>Who is Doing This?</b>    | It's a collaborative effort of the Music & Arts and Children's Christian Education Committees.                     |
| <b>What are the Details?</b> | It includes a pitch-in dinner followed by a variety show – more details will be announced as the event approaches. |

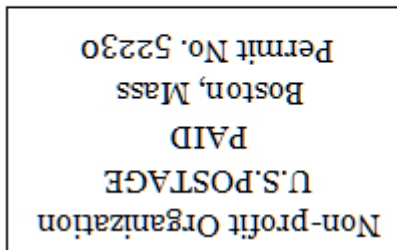


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[www.hancockchurch.org](http://www.hancockchurch.org)

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Rev. Paul Shupe, Senior Minister  
Rev. Dana Allen Walsh, Associate Minister

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**Hancock United Church of Christ, Congregational**

## Hancock Calendar

The following is a list of December services. To see a full list of services and events at Hancock United Church of Christ, pick up a church bulletin or visit [www.hancockchurch.org/events/event-calendar](http://www.hancockchurch.org/events/event-calendar).

**Sunday, Dec. 4:** 10 am Morning Worship. Advent 2 Peace. The Rev. Paul Shupe preaching.

**Sunday, Dec. 4:** 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well.

**Sunday, Dec. 11:** 10 am Morning Worship. Advent 3 Joy. Music Caroling Sunday. The Rev. Dana Allen Walsh preaching.

**Sunday, Dec. 11:** 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well.

**Sunday, Dec. 18:** 10 am Morning Worship. Advent 4 Love. The Rev. Paul Shupe preaching.

**Sunday, Dec. 18:** 6:15 pm Worship @ the Well.

**Saturday, Dec. 24:** 5 pm Christmas Eve Worship.

**Saturday, Dec. 24:** 8 pm Christmas Eve Worship.

**Saturday, Dec. 24:** 11 pm Christmas Eve Worship.

**Sunday, Dec. 25:** Christmas Day. No worship.