

THE NEW COVENANT



News of the Family from The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

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Kathryn M Huston Mission Circle

Because of the Pandemic, the KMHMC, will not be hosting “Homespun Holidays” this year. However, the Circle will continue to give \$5,000 in Love Gifts 2020, a tithe from Marion Boyd’s gift to our church.

Marion served our Lord in a variety of ways! She was in the first class of Women Elders, Superintendent of our Sunday School, the Choir, and Past President of KMHMC.

How Marion loved our children! She even created a unique way of teaching Bells to them! With her pointer stick in hand and the music laid out on the floor, our children performed!

Marion graduated from NHS and furthered her education at the prestigious Katherine Gibbs Secretarial in Providence and became an executive Secretary at the former Whitin Machine Works. She utilized these skills in all areas of her life.

Marion was past Matron of the Eastern Star and past president of the former Whitinsville Woman’s Club. Using her skill, she had past presidents take turns running the club to ease the load.

Marion, always a lady, loved to perform and utilize her subtle sense of humor. She will be fondly remembered by her portrayal of Eleanor Roosevelt in the KMHMC performances of Twentieth Century Women!

How Marion loved Her Lord and His People! We loved her back!

Bev Keeler

December
2020

The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

51 Cottage St. (church) - 7 Spring St. (office), Whitinsville, MA 01588

Phone: 508.234.8220

Website: www.whitinpres.org

www.facebook.com/whitinpres

Office E-mail: office@whitinpres.net

Rev. Dr. Susan DeHoff E-mail: sldehoff@verizon.net

Office Hours: 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM Monday * 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM Wednesday
8:00 AM—12:00 PM Friday

*The church office is CLOSED on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

In case of emergencies, please call 774-246-6313

~ December ~

MINISTRIES	Dec 6	Dec 13	Dec 20	Dec 27	Jan 3
Worship Leader	M. Thomas	S. Santoro	K. Bilodeau	C. Matchett	R. Thomas
Song Leader	K. Bilodeau	M. Sabourin	K. Bilodeau	K. Bilodeau	K. Bilodeau
Ushers	C. Matchett	L. Joyce	K. Miedema	L. Walsh	B. Giemza
Sound Board	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	M. Thomas	G. Giemza
Power Point	R. Thomas	J. Tobin	N. Redden	R. Thomas	M. Thomas

December Birthday Corner

Beth Hendrickson	12/7
Sarah Szajna	12/13
Heather Whitney	12/14
Brandy Giemza	12/17
Haleigh Reynolds	12/17
Nancy Kloczkowski	12/21
Samuel Kloczkowski	12/25
Diane Copp	12/27
Carol Pilibosian	12/28
Betty Austin	12/29
Kathy Miedema	12/30
Tanya Morin	12/30

Anniversary Corner

Tom & Cindy Frieswyk 12/28



****Sunday Morning Worship Schedule****

<i>Sunday School</i>	<i>9:30AM - 10:30AM</i>
<i>Morning Worship Service</i>	<i>10:30AM - 11:30AM</i>
<i>Coffee Fellowship</i>	<i>11:30 AM</i>

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" Matthew 18:20



I don't know about the rest of you, but over the course of the last twenty years I have found it increasingly difficult to observe The Holidays, Advent, and Christmas all in the course of four weeks. As we look at this four-week period in 2020, a year that has not followed any of the "rules" that make life at least quasi-predictable and largely manageable, I am more unsure than ever about how to make it through November 26 - December 24 with sanity intact.

The Holidays seem to be characterized by festivities that can only be enjoyed in the company of a lot of people. Scratch that for this year! This Zoom fatigued pastor does not find the thought of Zoom Holiday Parties very appealing. It is fun to get dressed up in holiday garb and join others so attired to eat party food, drink special holiday beverages, and sing holiday songs at parties. Doing so by Zoom is a non-starter. So much for The Holidays.

Advent and Christmas have been a mysterious combination for me ever since Advent first became the thing we celebrate in church during December. Maybe it's a generational thing, but I grew up celebrating the birth of Jesus during December, not sitting around waiting for a birth that everyone knows already happened over 2,000 years ago. As a pastor, I still believe it is important during December to focus once again on the meaning of God's coming to Earth in the form of a human being and what that means not only for faith but also for how we understand our world today in light of that birth. One prophesied Advent – Jesus' birth – has already happened, and as we wait for the second Advent – Jesus' return – our anticipation takes on more of a certainty that it will happen; after all, the first Advent happened.

Thankfully, Advent does not require large gatherings of people. One of the hallmark activities of Advent is the lighting of candles in an Advent Wreath, and that can be done individually or as a family as part of a daily (or weekly) meditation. We can meditate on our own on "The Promise Kept" and what it means for our faith. We can set aside time each day, or at least once a week, to read in the Bible the prophecies about Jesus and to go to God in prayer with thankfulness and humility.

Christmas. The word itself puts a smile on our faces and a sense of joy and gladness in our hearts. Even in the face of loss, grief, and serious illness, *Christmas* invades us with a warmth that defies description. At its heart, Christmas is about the heart. The heart of God touches the hearts of human beings with a drop of love that fills our entire being. That has been happening for centuries, regardless of immediate circumstances. Even wars have ceased for a few hours on Christmas Eve. They didn't cease so people could open expensive gifts; they ceased to remember that God came to bring Peace on Earth and good will to all people.

Christmas does not need folderol. Christmas does not need dressy clothes or fancy food. It does not need champagne or sangria or "spiked" punch. It needs a heart open to the miracle of God coming near to us in love. It needs a heart open to the miracle of our drawing near to God in love. It needs a heart that can see the divine light of God beyond the lights on a tree or the lights that outline buildings.

Advent and Christmas cannot be stopped by a disease, not even a pandemic. Every Christmas Jesus is born again in the heart of those whose hearts turn expectantly toward God. I pray God will bless each and every one of you with a heart open to receiving the miracles of Jesus' birth.

Rev. Dr. Susan DeHoff



Christmas Flowers For Our Church!

Would you like to help enhance the beauty of the church sanctuary for our Christmas services? We invite you to bring your poinsettias to church on Saturday, December 19th at the Spring Street Door from 10:00AM-12:00PM.

Please complete the form below, and either mail it to the church office or drop it into the offering plate on Sunday morning.

Please place a marker with your name in the plant so it can be retrieved easily after the Christmas services.

All forms must be in to the office by Dec. 16th to be printed in the bulletin on Dec. 20th.



A poinsettia will be donated by:

(complete as appropriate)

It will be in memory of:

It will be in honor of:

(cut out and drop into offering plate or mail to the church office, 7 Spring St., Whitinsville, MA 01588 — or e-mail information to: office@whitinpres.net)

(please print)



Thank you to Suzanne Santoro , Olivia and Bev Keeler for a beautiful Harvest decoration in the sanctuary



50 Year Picture from Heritage Sunday

Please send in photos of important events to the church office so that they can be put in the Newsletters

Deacons' Corner



It is so hard to believe that it is the end of another year! We have had one that we definitely cannot forget, either. With the Covid -Virus affecting all of our lives at work, home, and other regular activities it has been difficult for many. But we cannot let this affliction affect our spirit for Christmas. After all, Christmas is the beginning of a new season of hope. At this time we should be remembering the hope that God gave us by sending his son Jesus to earth and therefore bring us the hope of reuniting with him in heaven someday.

Yes, the greatest gift that we can celebrate at this time of year is the birth of Jesus. His birth was so humble that he laid his head in a manger bed among the animals that lived in the building he was in. Many houses today probably have some kind of picture or miniature pieces where they can be placed wherever a person wishes to put them. It is hard to imagine that this small child grew to be a carpenter, teacher, and healer for the sick, as well as a counselor for the poor (and the rich)! His life was truly a gift of love and hope to us from our Heavenly Father. He is our light as we pray to God for any gifts or concerns that we want to send to him, whether alone or with a friend.

The ministry of Christ Jesus exemplifies the work that the Deacons do for our church. We like to reach out to members of our church to assist them with any kind of help needed. With the offering that we collected last month, it will be added towards the funds that we need to support our church family. We will serve to anybody that needs our help, and the past two to three months have been really busy with the holidays. Ever since Halloween came upon us, the whole country has had to become quite creative in many ways to make even our most important holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas more meaningful to everyone. We just need to be persistent in following the guidelines set to keep us safe, and to extend it to others along with our love and support.

As we go about in and out to stores to buy our wants and needs for the holidays, it is easy to get wrapped up in the hustle and bustle of everything we need (or want) to buy for family and friends. These, and other highlights of Christmas, also find us celebrating our family traditions of putting up a Christmas tree, decorations, having dinners with extended family members, and taking our children out just to see Santa Claus. Then there are other babies born on Christmas Day, which many may think is special. This writer, however, has constantly been reminded quite often from her "baby brother" that it is not really so special to him. This busy season also finds us baking extra special goodies like cookies, pies, cakes, and Ronda's famous caramel corn! (Which, of course, her "baby Christmas brother" thoroughly enjoys...).

Yes, this is a very special way to end the year as we celebrate the New Year coming ahead of us. In our busiest time of the year, however, let us not forget the real meaning of Christmas, and pray to God that as the New Year comes, that we can find a vaccine to stop this great pandemic from the Covid-Virus and look forward towards a new beginning of hope for the earth.

--- Merry Christmas to All!

thank you

The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone who helped with the 2020 fall cleanup day. 16 people attended which included members of the Trustees, members of Session, and members of the Congregation. God blessed us with great weather and a tremendous amount of work was accomplished. Many hands made light work.



We need your help with a few things this year to brighten our lives during Advent

1. **Family manger scenes** tell a wonderful story about how each family celebrates Christ's birth. There are manger scenes made from wood, pottery, blown glass, and even Legos. You may have a manger scene made by your child or maybe one handed down from your great grandmother. This year we would like you to share your families' manger scene(s) with the church. Just email a digital picture to whitinpres@gmail.com before December 10. We will put together a virtual montage that we will share with the entire church.

2. We would like you to take a selfie, or a short video of yourself lighting a candle and **wishing our church family a very Merry Christmas**. It can be done with a cell phone or an iPad and can be just a few seconds long. We are going to create a collection of these merry wishes and play them at 6:00 PM on Christmas Eve. You don't want to miss out on this!! If you have any questions please contact Leslie Reichert. You can email your video to cleaningcoach@yahoo.com or call the church office. We will need them by December 15.

3. **Calling all kids!** Who wants to have a virtual birthday party for Jesus? Tell your moms and dads that you need help making and decorating a cupcake (or cake) to celebrate Jesus' birthday. We will all share how beautiful your cupcakes are on December 20th, during Jr. Church. Make sure you have a candle and a way to light it! We will sing Happy Birthday to Jesus', blow out our candles, and enjoy a special treat - together. This will be during our zoom class and we will share it on Facebook Live too.



Prayers of Joy & Concern

Dave Miedema has a prayer of joy for his cousin Laura. A few weeks ago we prayed for her when she was dx with terminal lung cancer. This week Dave's sister called and said Laurie is cancer free!

Susan Mateer has passed along a prayer request from Eric for his friend Andrew and his family. Andrew's Mom, Dad, and brother all live in GA, and all have COVID. His mother passed away this week of COVID. His Dad and brother are recovering, but they still need our prayers for continued recovery and for God's peace and comfort as they grieve the loss of Andrew's mother.

We continue to hold Mark Thomas and his family in our prayers as they attend the interment service for Mark's father this afternoon.

Diane Copp left us to be with our Lord November 24th. Please keep her two sons, her daughter, and their families in your prayers.

Remember The Homebound and Those in Hospitals, Rehab Centers and Nursing Homes:

Leona Cook - St. Camillus Health Center, 447 Hill Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Gloria Rauth - Whitney Place, 85 Beaumont Dr., Rm 11, Northbridge, MA 01534

Ruth Hoekstra - Linwood Apartments No. 105, 670 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Jim Remillard - 20 Fair Street, Uxbridge, MA 01569

Nancy Freiswyk - Beaumont Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center, Beaumont Dr., Room 222, Northbridge, MA 01534

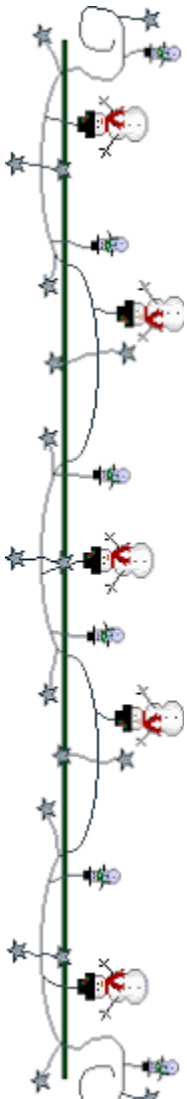
Anne MacLeod - Cottonmill Apartments #202, 17 Douglas Rd, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Making Your Requests for Prayer Known

You may use our Email prayer chain (upcwprayerchain@googlegroups.com) to share your prayer request.

Or Call (508-234-8220) or Email (whitinpres@gmail.com) your request to the church office.

December 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 5:00 Peace of Bread 7:00 Worship Committee Meeting	3	4	5
6 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	7	8	9 5:00 Peace of Bread 7:00 CGN Meeting	10	11 Newsletter Deadline	12
13 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	14	15	16 5:00 Peace of Bread	17	18 6:30 PM Book Club	19
20 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	21 7:00 PM Session	22	23 5:00 Peace of Bread	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 10 AM -12 Poinsettias Drop off
27 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	28	29	30 5:00 Peace of Bread	31		



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Church of Whitinsville**

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**News of the Church Family from
the United Presbyterian Church at
Whitinsville**

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Blue Christmas

Toward the end of the 20th century, Blue Christmas, or Longest Night, services began to be held for people in hospice care. The longest night of the year is December 21, and we are reminded that for a variety of reasons, even during the season of Advent, many people are experiencing the long night of grief, illness, death, or a variety of other situations that can put us in a dark place. "The Holidays" can be a very difficult time for people who are experiencing "a long night" in part because it seems everyone else is happy, laughing, celebrating, and overall exuding high and happy spirits. It is not a matter of people losing faith at a midnight time in life; it is a matter of experiencing our faith differently and perhaps more deeply.

There is Hope even at midnight, but it comes not with the excitement of anticipation but more as a life preserver to hang onto, one that also hangs onto us. It is Hope based on past experience of difficult times that were survived because the Author of Hope saw us through and back out into the light of day.

There is Peace, but it is not the cozy peace of a fireside. Rather it is more the "Peace that passes all understanding." It is Peace in spite of the fear, pain, or sadness. It is Peace that lets us know that God will see to it that we make it, that nothing can separate us from God's Love. After all, God loves us so much that God came to earth.

We would all do well to stop our merry busy-ness and experience Advent and Christmas *with* someone who is experiencing a blue Christmas. Such sharing can enrich the meaning of Christ's birth for everyone involved.

I like the way Ann Weems talked about this way of observing Advent in her book *Kneeling in Bethlehem*. She wrote a poem titled "Yesterday's Pain."



Some of us walk into Advent
tethered to our unresolved yesterdays
the pain still stabbing
the hurt still throbbing.
It's not that we don't know better;
it's just that we can't stand up anymore by ourselves.
On the way to Bethlehem,
will you give us a hand?

This year, find someone to whom you can "give a hand," someone you can help walk to Bethlehem.

Rev. Dr. DeHoff