

*Joy to the  
World!  
the  
Lord is Come.*







Dear Friends,

*“ . . . the angel said to [the shepherds], ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing to you good news of great **JOY** for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’” Luke 2:10-11 (NRSV)*

I have emphasized the word “joy” in the above passage because this season is one of joy, at least for many people. Yet, there are also a number of people who find no joy during the Christmas season. It is a “blue Christmas” for them because of the loss of a loved one, or they are alone, or they have bad memories of Christmases in their lives. We don’t know that might have happened to bring them to the place of “blue Christmas,” but we can honor where they are and befriend them.

Yet, “joy” isn’t always the exuberant and excited celebration that we usually envision. Sometimes, joy is the underlying foundation of just making it through another day or have a sense of calm and knowing that, no matter what, God is with us.

The shepherds certainly didn’t have a lot about which to be joyful. As the “lowest” on the social scale, they were often shunned, had bad reputations, were considered thieves, and outcast from the rest of the community. Amazingly, God sent angels to announce Jesus’ birth - not to King Herod or the temple leaders - but to the lowly shepherds who humbly stood in front of the manger and were blessed by the presence of God in a child.

They rejoiced and found joy in their lives, perhaps because the message was that the angel said “great joy for all people!” The message of inclusion must have sounded amazing to them. They could live with hope and joy in their hearts for the special privilege of having seen the Christ child who was the promised Messiah.

This year is the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the carol “Joy to the World,” and that is why our theme includes the word “joy” throughout the season. Interestingly, the carol was never intended to be a Christmas song, and here is a link to the story behind the song: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-joy-to-the-world>

However, whenever we celebrate Christmas, this just has to be included because it provides uplifting music for our worship experience and a sense of celebration at Jesus’ birth.

Let us celebrate with JOY this year! Praise God for all we have been given and for joy in the midst of struggles as well as in the midst of celebrations.

Grace and peace, Rev. Deb





### **Backpack Ministry/End 68 Hours of Hunger Update**

This program continues to thrive and, though it's hard for me to believe, we have now started our 10<sup>th</sup> school year. We are currently serving 96 children total from all 6 Portsmouth schools and Birch Tree Center (school for Autistic children in Newington). We have been very fortunate with fund-raising this summer – Pease Tenant Assoc., Liberty Mutual/Protective Insurance and Proulx Real Estate all did big fundraisers for us and we added over \$16,000 to our funds. Amazing how God makes things happen! As always, I want to thank the faithful volunteers who work all school year to make this happen. If you would like to get involved in this ministry or learn more about it, please contact me directly at [jen\\_b76@yahoo.com](mailto:jen_b76@yahoo.com) or 603-801-3886.

Jen Berry, Backpack Ministry/End 68 Hours of Hunger - Portsmouth Coordinator

**Seacoast Family Promise** – SFP is going strong. Our next rotation is December 22 - 29, and we currently have (4) families in the program – a total of 14 people. All of the families we worked with in 2018 and 2019 to date have moved to stable housing and have remained there. We have had 9 cars donated this year for our current and former families. This is such a blessing, since without reliable transportation, these families cannot succeed. If you know of anyone who might have a vehicle available to donate (it is a tax deductible donation), please let them know we always have a need for them and they will change a family's life forever by doing so.

If you would like to volunteer, we have opportunities available to help with prepping the Sunday school rooms for family arrival, cleaning them up when it's over the next week, dinner crew for Friday night and we could always use new overnight volunteers. Many of the current volunteers in this program have been doing it all 15 years, so some fresh volunteers would be appreciated. There is a training session for new volunteers at Bethany Church in Greenland on Sunday Nov 3rd if you think you might be interested. I will be attending. We also need cash donations to purchase breakfast and lunch food items when the families are here.

This program definitely changes lives and I am proud that our church is a part of it, along with 20+ other congregations in the Seacoast NH area. If you think you might like to help and experience the joy of changing people's lives firsthand, please contact Jen Berry at [jen\\_b76@yahoo.com](mailto:jen_b76@yahoo.com) or 603-801-3886.

## **PUMPKIN PATCH REPORT**

**A great big THANK YOU goes to everyone who helped in ANY WAY!**

**Extremely wet fields on the Farmington, New Mexico farm delayed our full-truck delivery until Sun., 9/29 at 4 p.m. Despite this last-minute change, about 75 people (ages 3 to 90) helped unload! Planet Rangers and their parents, PHS Peer Leadership and other community volunteers continue to make it possible for us to have the Pumpkin Patch.**

**PumpkinsUSA's revised Inventory Request Order Form, allowed me to order a specific number of Swan Gourds (a customer favorite).**

**Booth staffing is still our greatest need. PumpkinsUSA requires us to be open for 8 hours a day, which we divide into 2-3 hour shifts. Our 202 shift slots were filled by 25 church people and 15 of their friends/family or previous Planet Rangers parents and kids. One couple filled an unbelievable 38 weekday morning shift slots! On 15 of the shifts, a church person worked alone. Saturdays were the toughest to staff. For the first time, Planet Rangers parent/child teams could provide extra help on weekdays from 3:30-5:30 p.m. or any weekend shift; 3 families enjoyed doing this last-minute volunteer opportunity!**

**Pies were baked at church on Tuesday and Friday mornings by 3 church people every time, and 4 others when they could (including 2 "newbies"! ). A church woman generously baked 6-8 pumpkin pies every Saturday morning. We had the most orders on our last baking day.**

**Church folks also brought in yummy homemade breads, cookies, whoopie pies, and candy.**

**Our 1/2-truck was delayed due to frost on the farm. Our unload went well, despite having few volunteers. Unfortunately, many of these pumpkins were affected, rotting quickly.**

**A new tent was purchased and worked great until unusually strong winds on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> made it into a sail! A neighbor and a Police Officer wrangled it and put pallets on top to hold it down until church folks could bring pieces inside. It is unusable and will be replaced.**

**We continue to waste nothing since local farmers pick up rotten and leftover pumpkins as food for their animals.**

**Our 16<sup>th</sup> year was record-breaking! We sold over \$39,000, so our 40% profit will be about \$15,600! We had 12 \$1000 days, 3 \$2000 days, and 1 \$3,000 day (on our 1st Saturday – the earliest \$3,000 day and only \$132.50 less than our record on 10/15/11)!!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Annual Pumpkin Patch Celebration on Sun., 11/3 for all church and community volunteers!**

**Changes for Next Year: Schedule deliveries on Sunday; buy an iPad Mini to make charging credit/debit cards reliable; use an easier online signup company; need help identifying more community volunteer sources for unloading and Booth staffing.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**😊 Sue, Richards, a Very Grateful Pumpkin Patch Coordinator**



A close-up of a human hand, palm up, holding a large number of small, five-pointed golden stars. The stars are falling from the hand, creating a trail of light. The background is dark with soft, out-of-focus circular bokeh lights in shades of gold and brown.

# Remember in your prayers...

Rev. Charles &  
Anona Hartman  
Yvonne Griffin  
Dan Strange  
Anne Coffey  
Ken Young  
Rev. Bill & Gayle Gardei  
Marion Collishaw  
Sylvia Bartlett  
Gil Stebbins  
Woodie Lange  
Jim New  
Bobbie Noble  
Barbara Glidden  
Judy Doyon  
Charles Gilman  
Ruth Griffin  
Barbara Sylvester  
Barbara Millar  
Barbara Clement  
Our Denomination  
Our Church Family



# UPCOMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**12/1** - First Sunday of Advent.

**12/3** - Finance Trustee meeting will be 6:00 pm at the Parsonage.

**12/4** - Camp Wanakee will be in Sanborn Hall with their open house. Anyone one is welcome to come between the hours of 3:00-8:00.

**12/8** - Second Sunday of Advent.

**12/10** - Peace Circle lunch at Dinnerhorn will be at 12:00 pm. Place and time may change.

**12/11** - Service at Wentworth Senior Living Center, 11:00 am – carol sing.

**12/15** - Third Sunday of Advent.

**12/15** - Wrapped Giving Tree gifts due.

**12/17** - Church Council meeting will be at 6 pm in the church.

**12/21** - Seacoast Santa will be using Sanborn Hall.

**12/22** - Fourth Sunday of Advent.

**12/22** - Sunday will include the children's pageant, The Shiniest Star, which they have been preparing for since early November. Please come and see the results of their hard work and dedication.

**12/22** - Temple Israel will have their Lighting of the Menorah. The public is welcome. Time will be announced in December bulletins.

**12/24** - Christmas Eve service will begin at 7 pm.

**12/25** - Merry and Blessed Christmas! FUMC office is closed.

**12/25 to 1/1** - Rev. Deb will be on vacation. She will be back in the office on Thursday, January 2. If you have pastoral needs, please contact David Richards, who will be covering for her.



### **Annual Staff Christmas Gift**

The staff works tirelessly to make our church and worship special. Maureen greets us cheerfully, compiles the Beacon, Narthex, and Worship programs in the office. Bevan makes our music a joyful part of worship. Cathy proudly works to keep the church clean, and of course, we are blessed to have Rev. Deb, who is leading and teaching our church family! The Staff Parish Relations Committee will be collecting money for staff gifts through the month of December. If you are interested in contributing, please see Marilyn Stebbins on Sundays or leave your donation in an envelope in the SPRC mailbox in the church office. It can also be mailed to the church, attention SPRC. Please have all donations in by Sunday, December 22nd. Thank you in advance for your generosity. Blessings, SPRC.

### **Our Annual Church Conference, 11/20**

Rev. Lynne Mentzer presided as appointed by our DS Taesung Kung, and we celebrated the mission and ministry of our church, as well as reviewed this past year's events.

In accordance with the Book of Discipline, the trustees submitted a request to accept a bequest from the Estate of Beverlea Meadows. As many of you know, Beverlea was a member of this church, the daughter of Ethel Mundy and lovingly designated the Portsmouth First United Methodist Church as a partial beneficiary of her estate. The Church Conference accepted the bequest unanimously. See David Richards for any questions.

Please pick up your Church Conference booklet in Sanborn Hall. They are alphabetical by last name.

### **POWER OF PRAYER**

The prayer team is made up of people who would like to offer prayer during communion. There are two people who pray from a card for anyone who would like to receive a healing prayer either for themselves or someone else. Just come up, take communion, and then, if you would like a prayer for healing, step over to the team who will then pray with you. Prayer leaders for December will be Marilyn Stebbins and Christine Williams.



# **FYI!**

**We thought you might want to know!**



**FYI!**  
We thought you might want to know!

### **The Giving Tree**

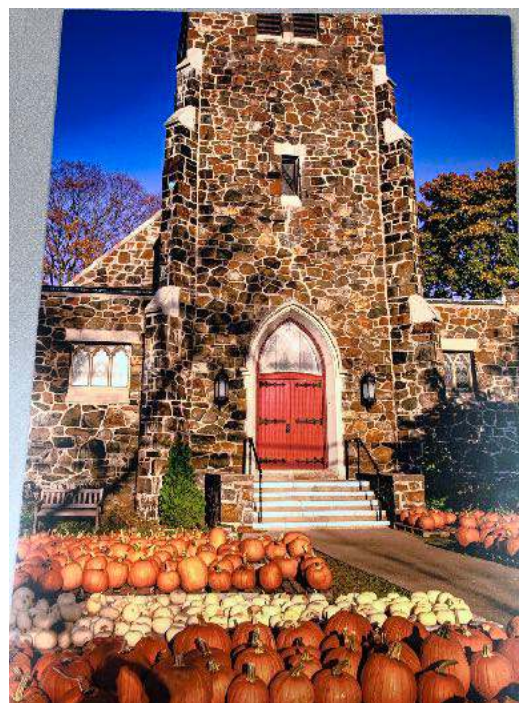
Please return wrapped gifts by December 15th. Please attach red bell to each gift. One of the families on the list for the Giving Tree is looking for two bureaus,- they can be used. If anyone has one of these to donate, please contact Sue Sarosiek.

There are still 4 hand painted Christmas ornaments featuring FUMC in the office for sale at a price of \$14. Please feel free to drop in and look them over. It might be just what your holiday tree needs.

**Donations** are being accepted for computer updates. Computers are used in the office, our financial systems, our worship service and the Narthex. The amount needed for this upgrade is \$2,000. Please prayerfully consider donating to computer upgrade. Thank you

### **Blessings Bank**

Any money collected from the Blessings Bank at the beginning of the service will go toward helping a school in Cameroon. Our donations to the school where we have a connection through our Sunday school will provide them with supplies and the ability to keep educating the children. Thank you for sharing your blessings!



### **DONATION**

This beautiful early morning photo that is approximately 18 by 13 and mounted was donated by Richard Arnold in appreciation for all the church does for the community. Stop by the office and check it out. It will be hung in the office.



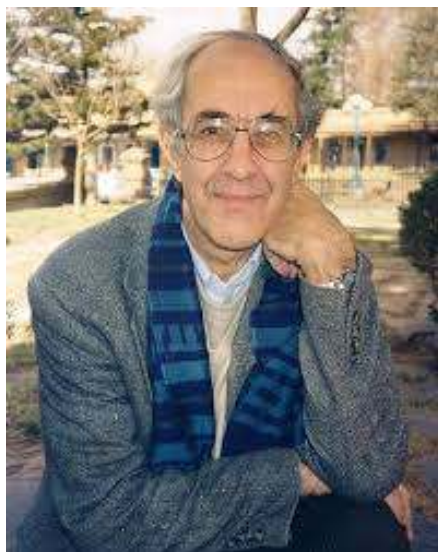
### **New Column:**

The Finance/Trustees are studying a book by Henri Nouwen, **Spirituality of Giving**, each month, we will be sharing little “snippets” from what we are learning.

From *Finding My Way Home* by Nouwen:

“Asking people for money is giving them the opportunity to put their resources at the disposal of the kingdom. To raise funds is to offer people the chance to invest what they have in the work of God. Whether they have much or little is not as important as the possibility of making their money available to God. When Jesus fed five thousand people with only five loaves of bread and two fish, he was showing us how God’s love can multiply the effects of our generosity (see Matthew 14:13-21).”

How can we generously invest in the work of mission and ministry from the abundance God has given us?



The international renowned priest and author, respected professor and beloved pastor, Henri Nouwen wrote 39 books on the spiritual life. He corresponds regularly in English, Dutch, German, French and Spanish with hundreds of friends and reached out to thousands through his Eucharistic celebrations, lectures and retreats. Since his death in 1996, ever-increasing numbers of readers, writers, teachers and seekers have been guided by his literary legacy. Nouwen's books have sold over eight million copies and been published in over 28 languages.



A few pictures  
from November  
events.







**Sylvia Bartlett**  
231 Washington St  
Rye, NH 03870

**Joette MacKenzie**  
18 Woodman St  
Rochester, NH 03867



**Marion Collinshaw**  
111 Westwood Drive  
Nashua, NH 03062



**Ruth Tuttle**  
145 Elm St  
Windsor Locks, CT  
06096



**Barbara Glidden**  
188 Jones Ave #101  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

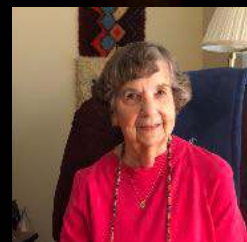


**Barbara Clement**  
Riverside Rest Home  
276 County Farm Rd  
Room 304  
Dover, NH 03830



**Gayle Gardei**  
2 Victoria Ct. #219  
York, ME 03909

**Rev Bill Gardei**  
Durgin Pines  
9 Lewis Road #127  
Kittery, ME 03904



**Barbara Sylvester**  
346 Pleasant St. #254  
Portsmouth, NH 03801



**James New**  
9 Lewis Road  
Rm#104  
Kittery, ME 03904



**Gil Stebbins**  
143 Rogers Rd  
#105  
Kittery, ME  
03904



**Woodie Lange**  
346 Pleasant St.#101  
Portsmouth, NH  
03801



**Barbara Millar**  
220 State Road, #110  
Kittery, ME 03904

## YOUR CARDS & NOTES CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR SOMEONE TODAY!

If someone would like to have a visit, or if you know a card would help, please let the church office know. We have people who send cards, and we have people who will visit. Rev. Deb gets out as often as she can, but it's so important to have congregants watching out for each other. Also, if someone is in the hospital, please let Rev. Deb know.



A close-up photograph of a Christmas tree. The tree is dark green and covered in numerous small, bright lights. The lights are primarily blue, green, and red, with some yellow and white lights visible. The background is dark, making the lights stand out. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# **December Birthdays**

- 3 Al Cansdale**
- 4 Jaime Berry**
- 10 Jennifer Guilford**
- 10 Shirley Russ**
- 11 Matthew Allen**
- 12 Lauren Littlefield**
- 13 Evelyn New**
- 16 Julia Burkes**
- 17 Christine Williams**
- 23 Priscilla Wilson**
- 25 Kimberly Philbrick**



# December, 2019 - SUNDAY WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE

DATE	LITURGIST	GREETERS	USHERS	ACOLYTE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	SUNDAY SCHOOL
12/1/19	Dave Atkinson	Shirley Russ	Ken & Jenya Westbrook	Jan Cansdale	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Rosie Buswell Aerial Sillanpaa
Prayer Team: Marilyn Stebbins & Christine Williams							
12/8/19	John VanReenen	Dave & Sue Richards	Al & Jan Cansdale	Alexa Langs	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Kaya Sarosiek Aerial Sillanpaa
12/15/19	Suzanne Olbricht	Kevin Fickenscher Suzanne Olbricht	Nancy Chesser Art Munson	Marilyn Stebbins	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	All Teachers: Dave R, Sue R., Aerial, Kaya, Dave A., Rosie
12/22/19	Dave Atkinson	Steve & Jeanne Westcott	Ken & Jenya Westbrook	Linda Reiber	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Children in Church
12/24/19	Dave Richards	Anne & Mike Coffey	Mike & Anne Coffey	Sue Richards	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Children in Church
12/29/19 Dave R Preaching	Sue Richards	Sue Lange	Ken & Jenya Westbrook	Marilyn Stebbins	Steve Scott	Sue Sarosiek	Rosie Buswell Aerial Sillanpaa

**NOTE - IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO MEET THE PROPOSED SCHEDULE PLEASE LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY SO WE CAN SCHEDULE SOMEONE ELSE.**





# DECEMBER 2019



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 ♦10 am Worship ♦11 am Coffee Hour	2 ♦2 pm Planet Rangers ♦7 pm AA	3 ♦ 2 pm Planet Rangers ♦5:30 pm Promusica ♦6 pm Finance Trustees ♦7 pm NA	4 ♦2 pm AFGE Local 2617 Membership Meeting	5 ♦8:30 am Doris Rice ♦7pm AA	6 ♦7pm AA	7 ♦1 pm AA
8 ♦10 am Worship ♦11 am Coffee Hour	9 ♦7 pm AA	10 ♦5:30 pm Promusica ♦7 pm NA	11	12 ♦8:30 am Doris Rice ♦2 pm Planet Rangers ♦7pm AA	13 ♦11 am AA	14 ♦1 pm AA
15 ♦10 am Worship ♦11 am Coffee Hour	16 ♦2 pm Planet Rangers ♦7 pm AA	17 ♦ 2 pm Planet Rangers ♦5:30 pm Promusica ♦6 pm Church Council ♦7 pm NA	18	19 ♦8:30 am Doris Rice ♦2 pm Planet Rangers ♦4 pm Seacoast Santa ♦7pm AA	20 ♦ Seacoast Santa ♦7pm AA	21 ♦ Seacoast Santa ♦1 pm AA
22 ♦10 am Worship ♦11 am Coffee Hour	23 ♦7pm AA	24 ♦ 7 pmChristmas Eve Service ♦5:30 pm Promusica ♦6:30 NA	25 Merry Christmas office closed	26 ♦8:30 am Doris Rice ♦7pm AA	27 ♦7pm AA	28 ♦1pm AA
29 ♦10 am Worship ♦11 am Coffee Hour	30 ♦7pm AA	31 New Year's Eve ♦5:30 pm Promusica ♦7 pm NA				



***Have a  
Merry Christmas  
& Happy New  
Year!***







## **FUMC PORTSMOUTH**

### **A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated to worshiping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors" We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



### **New England Annual Conference Tri-State District**

The Rev. Sudarshana Devadhar, Bishop  
The Rev. Taesung Kang, District Superintendent

#### **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801

Office Phone 603-436-6038 [office@fumcportsmouth.net](mailto:office@fumcportsmouth.net)

Pastor office hours - Tuesday and Thursday 9 am - 12 pm  
[call to ensure availability]

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Check out our website at [www.fumcportsmouth.com](http://www.fumcportsmouth.com)

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