



Good News

Plymouth United Church *of Christ*

December 2023

Published monthly by
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*Cross Illumination for
December is sponsored by
Allen & Cathy Christensen
in honor of their
grandparents and those who,
like them, lead us in faith.*

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Candlelight Family Service of Lessons and Carols Sunday, December 24 10:30 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.



Christmas Eve

A family-friendly worship service of praise for the birth of our Savior with special music and a beautiful candlelit Silent Night.



We will decorate our church on Saturday, December 2 starting at 10 A.M. A soup lunch will be provided after we finish. If we get enough help, we should be done in a couple hours!

December Worship Calendar

10:30 A.M. Worship
Communion the first Sunday of the month

December 3

1st Sunday of Advent

Hunger offering

Isaiah 64:1–9; Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19;
1 Corinthians 1:3–9; Mark 13:24–37

December 10

2nd Sunday of Advent

Prayers for the People

Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13;
2 Peter 3:8–15a; Mark 1:1–8

December 17

3rd Sunday Advent

OCWM offering

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11; Psalm 126 or Luke
1:47–55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24;
John 1:6–8, 19–28

December 24

4th Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16; Luke 1:47–55 or
Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26; Romans
16:25–27; Luke 1 26–38

December 24

Christmas Eve

6:00 P.M. Lessons and Carols

December 31

1st Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10–62:3; Psalm 148;
Galatians 4:4–7; Luke 2:22–40

Prayer Ministry

In December, we are praying for these individuals/families: Dana Wachs (Beverly Wickstrom), Len Weisfeld, Adam (Alyssa) Wendt, Ron & Nancy Wendt, Keith & Deb Zehms, Sam, Hannah

December Food Drive

Starting on December 3 and going until December 17, we will have a food drive for Feed My People. Here is a list of items they are looking for: canned chicken or tuna, peanut butter, nuts, canned fruit or vegetables, powdered milk. The following items should include ingredients that are low in sodium or are whole grains: cereal, pasta, rice, crackers, canned or boxed soups, boxed entrees, pasta sauce, single serve easy open meals. Non-food items needed: diapers, wipes, laundry soap, toilet paper, paper towels, tissues.

Please watch the use by dates on cans and packages. If they are expired, they will be thrown out. Monetary donations are also welcome. We will have collection baskets in the Gathering area, by the sanctuary. Please be generous.

Food for Thought

Communion will be December 3. We will be serving communion or we will have the sealed cups for you. We will also be taking our offering for the Community Table.

We will have a pot luck on December 10 as a conclusion to our Stewardship Drive. Pledge cards will be mailed out December 5 to be returned by December 10.

We are still recording our worship service to view on Facebook, for those who feel safer at home or can't make it to worship. COVID is starting to increase slightly, but the new booster is now out! Make sure you get a booster and also your flu shot.

Please don't forget our homeless friends. Mike and his crew are out checking on the homeless to make sure they are okay. Please keep them in your prayers. Here are the items on their current needs list: Hoodies sizes L, XL, 2XL especially, Sweatpants sizes L and XL especially, Backpacks—larger in size, not child/youth size, please, Gas/Food cards—OK for "Fuel Only," Food cards for fast food, convenience stores, etc., Financial Donations. We have a collection box in the Gathering area.

Also, don't forget our Birthday challenge. We are challenging you to make a donation in your birthday month corresponding to your age. The money will be put toward future capital improvements, such as parking lot resurfacing. So December birthdays—it's your turn!

Come and visit our libraries. We have one curbside for anyone to use and we've started one inside in Fellowship Hall. Different books are added frequently.

If anyone knows of a family member or member of this congregation who is in the hospital, please let the church office know. Unless someone tells us, we don't know if you're in the hospital.

A big THANK YOU to everyone that helped in anyway with our 'Tis the Season Sale! It was a huge success! We made over \$3000 for our General Fund!



December Birthdays

4	Irma Shepler
5	Terri Gilbert
9	Pastor David Aaron Adams
11	Alice Daniels
22	Cathy Stygar

Memorials

Birthday Challenge:
Maria Patton

Kolache Baking Class

Lynn McFadyen will be teaching a kolache baking class on January 18, 2024 beginning at 9 A.M. This class will be held in the church kitchen and can accommodate 8 participants. The cost of the class is \$10. Lunch will be shared at the church while the dough is rising. Class will conclude when the baking and clean-up are complete. Call the church office for your reservation at **715-835-5475**. **Registration is on a first come, first serve basis, so please sign up by January 2, 2024.** Specific details will be sent to participants in January.

Dear Friends and Family of Plymouth,

Advent is right around the corner. Please join us on the morning of December 2 as we decorate the building for Advent/Christmas. This is always a fun time to make our church beautiful and preparing for Christmas and getting to know one another better through conversations while we work and at lunch time as we share some delicious food.

Our worship theme during Advent is “The Gift of Presence.” Beyond the wrappings and bows of the gifts under the tree lies an emptiness, a loneliness. The statistics on despair right now are sobering, much less the personal experience you or your loved ones may have with this “phenomenon” we are experiencing. One of the best ways to address a topic in community is through our community worship. This is because when we talk out loud about it, when we realize we are not alone, and when we search for the intersections of our faith narrative, transformation is possible. And then the fast-track to transformation is “practice.” We put our actions into play outside of worship, inspired by what we have experienced in worship. So this season we will be more “present” in order to work to dispel loneliness, emptiness, and despair. We will discover that our own presence is a present to others—and this is better than any gift money can buy.

One of my favorite Christmas carols is “In the Bleak Midwinter.” The melody is haunting and beautiful, but the words are so meaningful to me—it’s a Christmas carol that isn’t about celebrating Jesus (though that image is in the carol) but

more about our relationship to Jesus, written from the perspective of the poor person wondering what kind of gift they, as a poor person, could give to Jesus. In the last verse, the writer says they could give a lamb if they were a shepherd or could do something profound if they were wise, but they are poor, and so it finishes with the answer: “Yet what I can I give Him // Give my heart.”

The gift of our presence—the gift of our heart—is all that Jesus asks of us, and when we offer our hearts, our presence, to one another, through that comes a reduction in suffering, an increase in healing, and a greater sense of the beloved community.

December 24 falls on a Sunday this year, and instead of doing the fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning and the Christmas Eve service at night, we will be offering the Christmas Eve service at the morning and evening times.

Welcome the new born Jesus into your heart by being present at his birth that day!

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>December 2023</h1>					1	2
						10:00 A.M. Advent decorating
3 <i>Hunger offering</i> 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Communion worship 11:30 A.M. Leadership Team	4	5 10:00 A.M. Quilters 7:00 Dartball Plym at Chapel Hts	6	7	8	9
10 <i>Prayers for the People</i> 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship 11:30 A.M. Pot luck	11	12 10:00 A.M. Quilters 6:30 Dartball Bethesda Gold at Plym	13	14	15	16
17 <i>OCWM offering</i> 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship	18	19 7:00 Dartball Plym at Rock Creek	20	21	22	23
24 <i>Christmas Fund offering</i> 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship 6:00 P.M. Lessons and Carols	25 <i>Office closed</i>	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship						