

November 1, 2020

10:00 am

## **Twenty-second Sunday After Pentecost \* Communion**

*Monroe Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming congregation.  
Our deacons and pastors hope you will feel at home here. No matter who you are or  
where you are on life's journey, we welcome you in Christ's name*

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### **Prelude**

For Love of God's Beauty

Clara Schumann, 1841

### **Welcome & Announcements**

*A special welcome to those who are joining us virtually today from the Hancock United Church  
of Christ in Hancock Maine, while their pastor Rev. TJ Mack is away.*

### **Opening Prayer**

Joanne Malia, Deacon of the Day

### **UCC Statement of Faith**

*We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our  
God, and to your deeds we testify:*

*You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before  
each one the ways of life and death.*

*You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.*

*You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets  
and apostles.*

*In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come  
to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the  
world to yourself.*

*You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus  
Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.*

*You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your  
servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist  
the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in  
his passion and victory.*

*You promise to all who trust you, forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage  
in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and  
eternal life in your realm which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be  
unto you. Amen.*

### **Call to Confession– Unison Prayer - Silent Prayer**

*Holy one, you call us to be people of faith, yet we are often people with doubts.  
We doubt that love can grow again in relationships where anger and bitterness  
reign supreme. We doubt that peace can come in places where hatred, violence  
and racism reign supreme. We doubt that the hungry can be fed where despair  
and hopelessness reign supreme. Help us to remember that You specialize in  
impossibilities; walk on water, heal the nations; forgive sins; and set the captives  
free. Forgive us and show us your power, Amen. ~silence~*

## Words of Assurance

### \*Passing of the Peace

#### Morning Prayers

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

#### Offertory

Meditation

Norman Dello Joio, 1945

*Our offering plate may be found on the hospitality table as you leave worship today.*

*You may also choose to give online at [www.mcc-ucc/donate](http://www.mcc-ucc/donate).*

#### The Sacrament of Holy Communion

*At MCC, Communion is open to all who wish to participate. Individual sanitized cups of juice and a gluten-free wafer may be found at the hospitality table.*

#### Scripture

1 Kings 17:8-16

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah, saying, <sup>9</sup>'Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.' <sup>10</sup>So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.' <sup>11</sup>As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' <sup>12</sup>But she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' <sup>13</sup>Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup>For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.' <sup>15</sup>She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. <sup>16</sup>The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

#### Communion Meditation

*God Among Strangers*

Rev. Jennifer M. Gingras

#### Invitation & Words of Institution

#### Sharing the Bread and Cup

#### Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

*We give thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.*

#### Benediction

#### Postlude

All Creatures of Our God and King

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**God is still speaking, welcome** to all who are worshipping with us today, in-person and online!

## Our Pandemic Commandments

In order to keep our community members safe, please follow these gathering guidelines:

- Thou shalt stay home if you feel sick or have a fever (and catch us on YouTube/Facebook)
- Thou shalt wear a mask (if you need one, just ask!)
- Thou shalt maintain a holy distance of 6 ft from a neighbor (even when passing peace)
- Some pews are taped off, to allow space between the seating of households. Please respect the tape, enter/exit from the side of the pew that is open.
- We have provided hand sanitizer and tissues in the pews, please use carefully as the chemicals are corrosive on wood and other surfaces
- We have slightly propped open the two front windows and church doors to allow for optimum air circulation and HEPA filtering, the heat is on and lap blankets are available

Worship is live streamed on church's You Tube Channel under CCLI Streaming License #2169137 on: <https://www.youtube.com/monroecongregationalchurchucc>, as well as on our Facebook page "Monroe Congregational Church, UCC"

Please join us for a time of fellowship following the service in Wilton Hall.

We also offer a virtual zoom coffee hour at 11:30:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81347810863?pwd=SERMb1ILNUZLdHVNc3VMcmswcEthUT09>

✦We are an **Open & Affirming** congregation of the United Church of Christ, and we invite everyone to join in the full life and ministry of this church. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance and welcome to all persons, inclusive of every age, race, ability, economic and social status, nationality, faith background, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital standing and family structure.

### Thank you for assisting in this morning's worship!

- **Trustee:** Frank Wittenauer
- **Deacon:** Joanne Malia
- **Usher:** Arlene Redmond
- **Counter:** Tom Briggs



to the following people and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number is birth date)

James Allen <sup>(03)</sup>

Kate Barnhart <sup>(05)</sup>

Mark Malia <sup>(07)</sup>

Sean O'Hara <sup>(03)</sup>

Diane Fraser <sup>(05)</sup>

**Happy Anniversary** to the following people and to anyone we may have missed, we will keep you in our prayers. (Number in parenthesis is anniversary date):

Gilles & Joyce Rousseau <sup>(02)</sup> Ken & Laurel Post <sup>(05)</sup> Mike & Leanne McEvoy <sup>(06)</sup>

## ***In Our Prayers***

**Clark and the Gingras family** in the loss of Clark's father **Armand**.

**Jackie Ajello** (Michele Mount's mother); **Michael Barresi** (Maria's Son); **Jennifer Bittar** (Loraine Zeiner's friend); **Byron Brown & Bruce Bryant** (friends of Will Duchon); **Cheryl Ciambriello** (Wendy Colegrove's friend); **Dot Dralus**; **Matt Duchon**; **Eleanor** (Michelle Cardentey's mother); **Dave Fuller** (Gail Olson's brother); **Karen Guinness** (Jennifer Nivison's friend); **Meredith Gibson** (Paul & Judy Coward's niece); **Lily Grace** (Maria Barresi's baby cousin); **Rachel Fracassini** (Jack & Linda Fracassini's niece); **Donnajean & Ken Fredeen**; **Gary & Julie Hedine** (Nancy Hedine's son & daughter-in-law); **Mary Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's mom); **Rachel Heerema** (Julia Gutierrez's sister); **Bob Heffernan** (Ann Zeiner's son-in-law); **Brian Hopkins** (Donna Konkol's cousin); **Vera James** (Jenn Wissink's mother); **Kelti** (friend of Liska Gutierrez); **Mary-Margaret Logan** (Andrew's mother); **Beverly Lowrey** (Jackie Bleakney); **Jacquie MacLean** (Jennifer Nivison's friend); **Nicole Malia**; **Mike** (Janie Allen's son); **Rev. Jonathan Miller** (Paul & Judy Coward's friend); **Olivia Morrison** (Donna Nickdow's niece); **Joe Mumper** (Julie McClenathan's friend); **Kathy Nivison** (Andy's mother); **Pat Nugent**; **Ocampo family** (friends of Liska Gutierrez); **Bob, Missy, Jason & Mark Olson**; **Ray Osborne** (Colegrove's Family friend); **Dean Perosino** (Gayle Hammond's brother); **Geno Piacentini** (Karen MacDonald's husband); **P.T. Philip** (Liz Sampson's father); **Norman & Jan Ricker** (Linda & Jack Fracassini's friend); **Barbara Rivel** (Judy Coward's friend); **Regina Roberts** (Kathy Maiolo's niece); **Kelly Rodman** (Angela Cross' friend); **Alfredo Rodriguez** (Osirus Gutierrez's cousin); **Roshong** (Judy Coward's nephew); **Noah Santiago** (Shari Carrano's great-grandson); **Connor Scalia** (Jen Nivison's friend); **Hunter Scalzo** (Angela Cross's nephew); **Carlos Serrano** (Kathy Maiolo's cousin); **Al Shaeffer**; **Yessika Siccardi** (Sampson family friend); **Bernie Sippin**; **John Skarupa** (Barb Pellegrino's brother); **Christine Stadler**; **William Stadler** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's nephew); **Tom & Jane Steen** (Jessica Pfalzgraf's father & step-mother); **Christian & Dain Steiner** (Julie McClenathan's nephews); **Claire Stenzel** (June and Myron Winger's granddaughter); **Ellie Swindlehurst** (Joanne Malia's mother); **Olga Terwilliger** (Nancy Hedine's sister-in-law); **Ian Thompson** (Gary's cousin); **Dick Thompson** (Gary's cousin); **Meg Trogolo** (Paul & Judy Coward's niece); **Richard Turco** (Jack Fracassini's cousin); **Ruth Wakeley**; **Susan Walker**; **John Whitbeck**; **Rita Wissink** (Larry's mother), **Margaret Woodruff** (Mike Pfalzgraf's mother); **Charles L. Wynn, Sr.**, (and his mother) **Alleane Wynn** (friends of Will Duchon); **Allen Zeiner** (Ann Zeiner's son)

### **The concerns of our world:**

*Those who serve or live in **war** or **conflict zones**; **first responders** and those who serve in **law enforcement**; those who suffer **discrimination**; those who struggle with **mental illness**, **addiction**, **divorce** or **separation**; **Caregivers**; the **homeless**, **homebound** and **refugees**; Our friends living on the **Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation** and in **Oaxaca, Mexico***

### **Those serving in the military, veterans & their families:**

South Korea: **Zachary Gingras**, Washington: **Rachel Hoffman** (Vaughan Askue's daughter), Virginia: **Chris Meneses** (Loraine Zeiner's friend), Poland: **Zachary Peters** (Jacob Parker-Burgard's cousin), Kuwait: **Steven Roshong** (Judy & Paul Coward's nephew), Germany: **Bob Peters** (Don Parker-Burgard's brother-in-law), Afghanistan: **Samuel Siciliano**, North Carolina: **Jake Terifay**



**Mustard Seed Thrift Shoppe** will reopen only on Saturdays starting November 7th from 10-2. The Shoppe is not yet accepting any donations at this time due to the overflow of merchandise we have in storage.

Our plan to reopen the doors and keep our volunteers and customers as safe as possible will include:

- Volunteers will wear masks and gloves throughout their shifts
- Hand sanitizer and wipes will be available for both worker and

shopper

- A Plexi-safety screen will be placed at the counter for the consideration of both the worker and shopper
- Dressing room will not be available to use
- A sign will be posted outside the Shoppe indicating that masks **MUST** be worn upon entering and a limit of 5 persons are allowed to shop at one time

Volunteer shifts are 10-12 and 12-2. We have a few volunteers willing to return at this time, but we need a few more to cover each shift. If you'd like to work behind the counter on Saturdays either at 10-12 or 12-2, please contact Susie Cuseo at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or call 203-268-0280 and let her know your availability. It's easy and worthwhile for the church and the community.

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### **Fall 2020 Trustees Update**

Your board of Trustees have continued to work on our campus and be the caretakers of our finances, despite the challenges of COVID-19. The planning that went into the 2020 budget approved last January did not take into account the disruptions of worship and other activities we would face as a church community later that spring. Fortunately, our YTD expenses are less due to reduced use of our facilities and utilities and we've been very careful about sticking to our budget. Overall, we are fortunate that budget tracking is strong and with your continued commitment on stewardship, we should close the year just about as we expected.

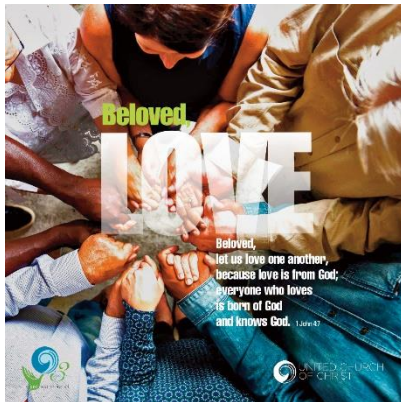
Presently, we have received 75% of the funds people pledged to give from the 2020 Stewardship drive. This is on track and we need to continue throughout the remainder of the year to finish strong. Many members have shifted their giving to the electronic Vanco system, which has made it easier for the member to give and for the Trustees to track (<http://mcc-ucc.org/donate.html> ). We are also aware of some members and friends who are experiencing financial hardship, so if you have issues meeting your pledge, please reach out to our Receiver, John O'Rourke at [jorourke224@gmail.com](mailto:jorourke224@gmail.com).

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP business loan) we applied for in the spring was granted and the \$42,700 has supported us well. Due to our small loan size, this will be forgiven and we are completing the final forgiveness paperwork on that. This has made up for the loss of income from Strawberry Festival and has helped us cover our expenses.

Our investments have steadily grown this year, from less than \$600,000 to \$625,000 in our most recent statement. Early this year, we stopped withdrawing funds from our investments, after \$22,000, to continue our push to reduce the reliance on these funds to balance our budget. The plan this year was to only drawdown \$50,000 instead of much more in past years. Another part of our budget plan (to reduce drawdowns), was to have \$25,000 made up by other fund raising activities, renters, donations, etc.

We are grateful that the work on the ladies bathroom began Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> – thanks to the generosity of those who were able to support the project, and the drive of the team who have spearheaded the implementation.

In closing, we want to thank you for your continued commitment to MCC. This year has not been without its challenges, but we have weathered the storm together, and that is what we will continue to do. Please be on the lookout for our 2021 Stewardship mailer, coming to you soon. *In Peace, Frank Wittenauer, Chair of Trustees*



### **Beloved, Love 2021 Stewardship Campaign**

At the Monroe Congregational Church, we give ourselves to answering God's call to love. Our annual stewardship campaign, which begins on Sunday, November 1st, provides the resources our congregation needs to answer God's call.

Generosity towards the annual pledge campaign assures that our congregation can faithfully answer God's call to love, because it enables us to plan for the next year's needs. Over the next number of weeks, we will offer inspiring testimonials

about the ways God calls us to love children and youth, our neighbor, and creation here at MCC.

You should be receiving our 2021 Stewardship Drive mailer soon, which includes a pledge card. Our hope is that you can complete and return it by the end of November to the church office, either by mailing it to MCC at 34 Church Street, Monroe CT 06468 or dropping it in the plate on Sunday. For contact-free submission, go to our church's donate page ([www.mcc-ucc.org/donate](http://www.mcc-ucc.org/donate)) and download an editable PDF to e-mail to our Receiver, John O'Rourke e-mail him at [jorourke224@gmail.com](mailto:jorourke224@gmail.com).

Ministry in a time like this depends on all of us: our time, our energy, and our money. We recognize that not all of you are able to give what you could in the past because you may be facing uncertain financial futures, we understand, and our prayers are with you. Others have been able to maintain their giving, and for that we are most grateful. Some of you have even been able to increase your giving, which is very appreciated. Remember that every gift, of any and every size, counts.

Thank you for your willingness to be the hands and feet of God, to and for a world so in need of the Good News that God is love. Not just telling others about this improbable truth but **SHOWING** them it's true through your lives and in your actions. So, what's love got to do with it? Everything! Keep on sharing the love, God's love. Keep on telling the stories of love. Keep on filling the world with love. And keep on being God's love for all.



## Christian Education

**Nursery Closed** Out of an abundance of caution, nursery services are closed at this time.



### Worship Bags

We are offering "Worship Bags" for all children and youth from age 4 through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade! Bags can be colored and personalized and will become their bag, please put their name on it. You will leave the bags in the Narthex and pick it up there each Sunday too. Inside each bag is a Worship Journal with prompts, games, and coloring pages for each week, a "Bendy Jesus" and Stress Balls too. I would even encourage you to bring something that doesn't make noise from home to keep in the bag too! Lastly, if there are any needs for the bags (broken pencil, markers that don't work, etc.) please just let me know by emailing me at [debi@mcc-ucc.org](mailto:debi@mcc-ucc.org). Peace, Debi

### The Art of Advent

Greetings MCC Community! For Advent I have been planning an offering for adults which will hopefully excite you, get those Advent juices flowing, and nourish your spirits for the Christmas season.



During "The Art of Advent" we will look into different works of religious art and how they might speak to us and take on deeper meaning. You do not have to be an artist to participate, all you need is a willingness to look at some images, reflect on what they mean to you, and discuss it.

This will be a Zoom offering so there is no need to leave your homes and I can even offer this at different times – perhaps during the morning and the evening. In looking at the church calendar Tuesdays, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>, seem to be open, so I am thinking of offering this on those mornings from 10:00 – 11:00 am and then in the evening from 7:00 – 8:00 pm. **Please contact Debi ASAP at 203-444-6760 if you would like to participate in "The Art of Advent"**

**Fruit of the Spirit Sunday School:** Faith, Fellowship and Fun gathers on **November 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am**. This gathering is for families to attend (parents/guardians and children/youth, age 4-8<sup>th</sup> grade). We will gather for a Bible lesson and related activities. In the weeks in between you will receive Faith At Home activities via email and our Facebook group.



### Jr. PF Silver Lake Adventure Day – November 21<sup>st</sup>

Enjoy a day full of Adventure programming at camp! Fun, physically distanced, and safe. The morning will be spent playing together, exploring field games and low elements. We'll enjoy a bagged lunch, and then move to the high ropes course for some climbing.

Participants will need to bring their own masks and personal hand sanitizer. The cost is \$48 per person, please contact Debi if your Jr. PFER would like to attend or if you have any questions.



**Adult PF is returning to the first and third Sundays of the month.**  
For information about Adult PF please contact Don Parker-Burgard.  
[dpburgard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dpburgard@sbcglobal.net)

## MORNING CIRCLE

Morning Circle invites the ladies of the congregation to attend our next meeting on **Wednesday, November 11 at 11AM** in Wilton Hall. We will be collecting items for Thanksgiving dinner for the Food Pantry. You know what we're talking about: stuffing, cranberry sauce, canned veggies, gravy,

even those Big Y turkey coupons, etc. Bring your donations as well as a sandwich for lunch while we hold a short business meeting.

**Wrapped gifts for the Giving Tree program need to be brought to the church office by Sunday, November 15th.** Please be sure that the gift tag is attached to it. Thank you for your generosity and kindness in providing a little something for someone who doesn't have much.

Our last meeting of the year will be on **Wednesday, December 9th at 11:15AM** in Wilton Hall where we will have a catered luncheon to celebrate the holiday season. Contact Jackie Bleakney at 203-268-5275 with any questions or comments.



Prayer Partners who've signed up this year should have received their letter and information sheet of the person they will keep in their thoughts and prayers for several months before meeting in May 2021 for the "Big Reveal" potluck luncheon held in Wilton Hall. If you have not, please contact Susie Cuseo at [thecuseos@yahoo.com](mailto:thecuseos@yahoo.com) or

203-268-0280. If you'd like to sign up, it's not too late. Volunteers can attest that it takes a moment out of their day to think about their prayer partner and wish them a great day. They may write a card or short note to them using the church's address (34 Church St., Monroe, CT 06468) as the return. We keep ourselves anonymous until next year. Thank you to those signed up already.





**Join the MCC *ZOOM* Book Club**

November 11 <sup>th</sup>	The Keeper of Lost Things by Ruth Hogan. Host: Linda Fracassini
December 9 <sup>th</sup>	Last Christmas in Paris: A Novel of World War I by Hazel Gaynor and Heather Webb. Host: Paula Haggstrom
January 13 <sup>th</sup>	The Accidental Empress by Allison Pitaki. Host: Linda Fracassini
February 10 <sup>th</sup>	The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate. Host: Peggy Villani
March 10 <sup>th</sup>	The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding by Jennifer Robson. Host: Trees Whitbeck
April 14 <sup>th</sup>	The Children Act by Ian McEwan. Host: Arlene Redmond

## **MCC Community Calendar**

### **Week of Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>**

#### **\*\*DAY LIGHT SAVINGS**

10:00 am Worship - Communion Sunday  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour  
4:00 pm Adult PF  
5:00 pm Senior PF  
6:00 pm Junior PF

### **Tues. Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **\*\*Election Day 2020**

### **Wed. Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Thurs. Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

### **Sat. Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**

Senior PF Retreat, YMCA Camp Hazen

### **Week of Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour

### **Wed. Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>**

11:00 am Morning Circle  
6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Thurs. Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

### **Week of Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour  
12:30 pm Trustees Zoom  
4:00 pm Adult PF  
5:00 pm Senior PF

### **Mon. Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 pm Church Council

### **Wed. Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Thurs. Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study  
7:00 pm CE

### **Week of Nov. 22<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am Worship **Bible Sunday**  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour  
11:30 am Deacons Zoom  
4:00 pm Adult PF  
5:00 pm Senior PF

### **Week of Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>**

#### ***Stewardship Sunday***

#### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Bibles***

#### ***First Sunday of Advent (Hope)***

10:00 am Worship  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour  
4:00 pm Adult PF  
4:00 pm Advent Campfire Vespers  
5:00 pm Senior PF

### **Wed. Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Thurs. Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>**

11:00 am Morning Circle  
6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Week of Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>**

#### ***Second Sunday of Advent (Peace)***

10:00 am Worship - Communion  
11:30 am Zoom Coffee Hour  
4:00 pm Adult PF  
4:00 pm Advent Campfire Vespers  
5:00 pm Community Tree Lighting  
5:00 pm Senior PF

### **Wed. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>**

11:00 am Morning Circle  
6:30 pm Confirmation Class

### **Thurs. Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am Bible Study

