



First Pres News

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rocky Mount

December 2017

153 N. Church Street
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
www.fpcrm.org
252-446-9121



Advent Is Coming

Advent is coming! Now, that may sound strange since the word *Advent* means “the Coming”.

So, what we are saying is that The Coming is coming! This year, Advent starts on December 3. Many believe that is the beginning of the Christmas Season. Certainly the retailers would like us to begin celebrating Christmas as early and as long as possible. Christmas in July sales, Christmas decorations in September, and Christmas carols on the radio before Halloween seem to become more and more invasive. “Brazil”, a movie filled with dark British humor, presented an overbearing bureaucracy that declared every day to be Christmas Eve and required everyone to offer presents because “it was good for *business*”.

We tend to rush through Advent in the Church as well, jumping to the joys of Christmas. There is always the desire to sing Christmas hymns starting after Thanksgiving. But Advent is a season of the church on its own with its own hymns and traditions. It is a time of preparation not only for the Christmas season but for the Christian life.

There is an excitement about anticipation that brings life to ordinary day to day existence. If you ever “stumbled” across the Christmas presents your parents hid under the bed and secretly peeked, (I, of course, am not admitting to such a scandal) you know the deflation of excitement experienced on Christmas morning when you tried to fain surprise.

We have not suddenly made it as Christians, we are in a constant state of becoming. The Biblical images of a journey or a race for the Christian life speaks to this process. We have the destination in mind, the Kingdom of Heaven, but the journey is a great part of the experience. We should savor every moment as well as make preparations, asking questions along the way like: How can I be more like Christ in my treatment of family, friends, and strangers?; How can I deepen my relationship with the God who walks with me?; How can I share the grace given me to others who so desperately need it? This we do in preparation for the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

As the countdown of Advent comes, we should do more than tick off the shopping days till Christmas or make the house ready for company. We should examine ourselves to see where we are in our Christian walk and what the next step should be. Merry Advent everybody!

Scott

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Scott Solether *Parish Associate:* The Rev. Dr. Preston Smith
Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator: Lydia Wingo Kane *Church Ministry Coordinator:* Dionne Seale
Financial Secretary: Jeanne T. Shannon *Director of Music:* Jim Smith *Organist:* Virginia Vance
Sexton: J. J. Jeffries *Assistant Sexton & Nursery Attendant:* Charity Lodge *Nursery Assistant:* Mary Hilliard

Faith & Fellowship

...with First Presbyterian!



BROWN BAG Bible Study

Brown Bag Bible Study meets on Mondays at noon in the Session room unless otherwise

noted. All are welcome to bring a lunch and join in for fellowship and thoughtful biblical discussions!



Men's Breakfast Fellowship
Tuesday
December 12, 2017
7:00 a.m.

Start your day off on the right foot and gather in the fellowship hall for breakfast and thoughtful discussion. On Dec. 12, the group will plan on doing youth volunteer training in preparation for being ready to begin mentoring in January!

WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP

FAITH. FOOD. FUN.

All are welcome for a covered dish meal in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. followed by a program in the Session Room at 6:45 p.m. Please note: the group will not gather on December 20 or 27.



Monday, December 11 at noon
Church Parlor

Join us for good food and fellowship as the Lunch Bunch gathers to break bread! We will enjoy brunch fare such as quiche, hot fruit, broccoli casserole, ham rolls, dessert and sparkling cranberry juice. If you are not already on the "permanent list", please notify the church office if you can attend. Faithful volunteers prepare and serve the food, and a basket is passed for contributions to offset the cost of the meal. While geared towards retirement age folks, all are welcome!



Benvenue Country Club
December 5, 2017
5:30 p.m.
\$33 per person

- * 5:30-6:00 p.m. Social time with punch and bar snacks provided; cash bar available
- * 6:00 p.m. Dinner served with a menu including chicken crepes, dinner salad, fresh fruit, asparagus, yeast roll, brownie wedge à la mode, and coffee, tea or water.
- * Please bring a canned food item for the Covenant Homes food pantry.
- * The deadline to participate was November 24.

Volunteers are asked to bring reception food items (cheese straws, nuts, dessert bars, sausage balls, etc.) on a labeled serving dish to the Christmas Concert being held here at First Presbyterian on December 17 at 4:00 p.m. Items can be left in the church kitchen prior to the concert if properly labeled and/or stored in the refrigerator if needed.



*Our Heritage,
Our Mission*
Capital Campaign Update

TOTAL PLEDGES TO DATE:

\$1,184,095.11

FUNDS RECEIVED (through 10/31/17):

\$1,100,451.99

(same amount as previous month)



**The church office will be closed
December 25, December 26, and
January 1 for the holidays.**

MAKES CENTS



Please review the below church income and expense data for the month shown. The prior month is not available as of the newsletter print date. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office with any questions.

Pledges and Loose Offering through October, 2017

Month – to – date \$ 41,565.31

Year – to – date \$ 520,427.64

Expenses through October, 2017

Month – to – date \$ 46,158.37

Year – to – date \$ 491,485.63

A statement will be mailed the first week of December. If you have questions on your 2017 pledge or your Capital Campaign pledge, contact Jeanne in the church office. If you plan to sell stock for your 2017 pledge or your Capital Campaign pledge, please notify Jeanne Shannon. This process take 2-3 weeks from the stock trade to depositing the check. Due to church and bank office days/hours, contributions to your pledge must be received on or before December 28th to count towards your 2017 pledge.

We welcome and appreciate your 2018 pledge! Pledge packets were mailed in November so please complete a pledge card and either put in the offering plate, drop it by or mail it to the church. As a reminder, prior year pledges are not assumed to continue, so please submit a pledge card to continue giving.

Jeanne's church office phone: (252)446-9121 , ext. 23

Jeanne's email: jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org.

Jeanne's office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:30-2:30 p.m.



Stewardship 2017

2018 Stewardship packets were mailed on November 14th to those that were not picked up at the either the Stewardship luncheon, the November Lunch Bunch or the November Session meeting. Please complete a pledge card and put in the offering plate or drop it by or mail it to the church. As a reminder, prior year pledges are not assumed to continue so please submit a pledge card to continue giving. There was an error on the 2017 Pledge breakdown analysis chart and a correction slip was placed in the packets that were mailed.

Below is the corrected amount:

Category	# of	Amount
1-499	22	\$ 3,146.50
500-999	11	\$ 6,817.00
1000-2999	49	\$ 83,002.00
3000-4999	21	\$ 79,640.00
5000-9999	21	\$131,254.00
10000+	8	\$295,200.00

132 \$599,059.50

Children's Ministry Activities in December



- Sunday, Dec. 10 Gingerbread Workshop after worship
- Wednesday, Dec. 20 Parents' Afternoon Out

Youth Ministry Activities in December



- Sunday, Dec. 3 Lunch after church at location TBA
- Friday, Dec. 8 Breakfast at Highway Diner with Lee at 6:15 a.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 9 Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Sam's Club (10-2)
- Sunday, Dec. 10 Gingerbread Workshop after worship
- Sunday, Dec. 17 **5:00-6:15 Middle School Christmas Gathering at the Honeys' home
- Sunday, Dec. 17 **6:30—8:30 High School Progressive Dinner at the homes of the Seales (appetizers), Turnages (entrée), and Warners (dessert)



Our very own Mary Watson was celebrated by the Meals on Wheels staff on the occasion of her 88th birthday with a wonderful reception in the fellowship hall on November 2. Her energy and servant's

heart is an inspiration to us all!



The Presbyterian Women wrapped toys and clothes for their Christmas family that consists of a mother and baby girl. What a nice Christmas for our family!





COMMUNITY OUTREACH



We will again be supporting the Peacemakers Toy Store by asking folks to drop off new, unwrapped toys here at the church (on the stage of the Fellowship Hall) no later than **November 30**. There is a list of suggested items on the Community Outreach Board. Parents with limited resources are able to purchase these items at heavily discounted prices on **December 8 & 9** for their children and the revenue produced goes back into Peacemakers programming. Volunteers are needed to work the Toy Sale on either Dec. 8 or 9 with shifts beginning at 9:00 a.m. Please sign up on the bulletin board across from the Session Room.



For more information, visit
www.rockymountpeacemakers.org.

If you have large items to donate for the Peacemakers Thrift Store, simply contact Peacemakers at 252-212-5044 to schedule a pick up of items.



Volunteers are needed to serve as substitutes on occasion!

Contact the MOW office for more information at 252-446-4336.



The following items can be brought to the narthex area of the church on the first Sunday of each month or you are welcome to drop items off anytime in the volunteer office beside the church office vestibule:

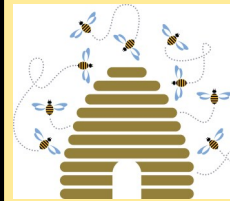
Tar River Academy

Be sure to check out the wish list for Tar River Academy on the bulletin board outside the church office describing school supplies, food, hygiene items, and baby supplies needs and non-perishable food items such as peanut butter, crackers, nabs, Vienna sausages, cereal bars, granola bars, canned ravioli or spaghetti, ramen noodles, and canned soup.

United Community Ministries

Paper products and #10 size cans (preferred) of either vegetables or canned fruit are especially

Conetoe Family Life Center



Volunteers are needed to help prime and paint approximately 100 beehive parts on Saturday, December 2! Meet between anytime you can between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the basement of the Church of the Good Shepherd Day School. Remember this is oil based paint so wear old clothes. Gloves and makeshift aprons will be available.

We are collecting items for the food closet at Covenant Homes and they can be placed on the back table of the Session Room between now and Dec. 21. The following items would be appreciated: 10 1/2 oz. soups, 7 or 8 oz. cans/containers of vegetables, Mac & Cheese, fruit; individual servings of grits, oatmeal, cereals, cookies and crackers, chicken, tuna, and Vienna sausages.

TROOP 55 NEWS

Troop 55 presented a check to the Red Cross on November 6, 2017.



TROOP 434 NEWS

Troop 434 continues to work to complete the Silver Award. The girls organized the recreation and games closet at The Wright Center on November 20, 2017



Covenant Homes Update:



Members of our church planned 4 fun activities for the residents of Covenant Homes. The residents made a fall display for outside, 3 fairy gardens, 5 different ornaments for a fall tree in the lobby, and planted mums, pansies, and cabbages at one of the gazebos. What a fun morning we had!



The **Handcraft Ministry** will meet on Tuesday, December 5 at 1:30 p.m. in the home of Frances Guerry.



This wonderful ministry provides prayer shawls, blankets, etc. to those in need of God's warmth!

Presbyterian Women Update

- The Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team will meet on Monday, December 4 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room.
- The Circle of Friends will meet on Monday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the home of Mary Perry. Chris Fenno and Roslyn Gragg will lead the lesson on Hebrews.
- The Circle of J.O.Y. will meet on Tuesday, December 12 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room and they will cover Lesson 4 of the Hebrews Bible study.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM

Janice Smith, Moderator

Diane Dixon, Vice-Moderator

Tempie Fuller, Secretary

Frances Guerry, Historian

Bobbi Weeks, Together in Service

Roslyn Gragg, Circle of Friends Leader

Martha Tesoro, Treasurer

Leigh Skeen, Spiritual Nurture

Linda Amerson, Together in Service

Nancy Richardson, Circle of J.O.Y Leader



Upcoming Special Performances for Advent and Christmas 2017:

- Joy Gift program—Sunday, Dec. 10 at 11:00 a.m. (Rehearsal—Saturday, Dec. 9 at 10:00 a.m.)
- Christmas Concert—Sunday, Dec. 17 at 4:00 p.m. (Rehearsals—Thursday, Nov. 30 at 7:00; Thursday, Dec. 14 at 7:00; Saturday, Dec. 16 at 10:00 a.m. with orchestra)
- Christmas Eve Service—Sunday, Dec. 24 at 5:30 p.m. with pre-service music at 5:10 p.m. (Rehearsal with chorus only—Thursday, Dec. 21 at 7:00 p.m.; Rehearsal with chorus and orchestra—Friday, Dec. 22 at 4:00 p.m.)

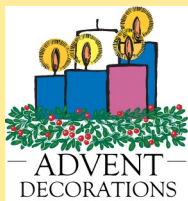
No choir rehearsals on Wednesday, December 20 or December 27



All women of the church are invited to the Presbyterian Women Christmas Tea on December 14, 2017.

Stop in between 11:00-1:00 p.m. at the home of Beth Turnage

Annie Daughtrige is also co-hosting.

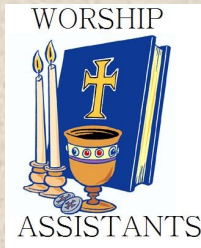


Advent season is fast approaching! The Worship Committee will be decorating the sanctuary, vestibule and chapel on Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. If you can

help on that day, please contact Annie Daughtrige or Beth Steed.



The Circle of Friends and the Circle of JOY made up 22 hygiene bags that were given to the new residents of Covenant Homes at a "Meet and Greet" gathering on November 21. The bags included soap, hand sanitizer, toothbrushes & toothpaste, shampoo, body lotion, deodorant, mouthwash, and wash cloths.



*“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,
serve one another
with whatever gift each of you has received.”
1 Peter 4:10*

December 3, 2017

Communion will be served by intinction

Head Usher: Joe Brown

Ushers: Gordon Vestal, Edie Reeves, Tom Steed, Beth Steed

Greeter: Mary Lou Fountain

Acolytes: Mari Robin Tharin, Shelton Honey

Liturgist: Laura Durham

Children’s Sermon: Scott Solether

Advent Wreath: Taylor Phillips family

Nursery Helper: Christie Sondergard, Tricia Vestal

Communion Preparers: Randy Adams, Sally Adams

Communion Servers: Randy Adams, Sally Adams, Russell Proctor, Taylor Phillips

December 10, 2017

Head Usher: Russell Proctor

Ushers: Christie Sondergard, Emily Sondergard, Diane Dixon, Bobbie Lambeth

Greeter: Nancy Proctor

Acolytes: Virginia Feagans, Bea Barnhill

Liturgist: Catherine Lilley

Children’s Sermon: Lydia Wingo Kane

Advent Wreath: Fisher and Wiggins families

Nursery Helper: Katherine Fisher

December 17, 2017

Head Usher: Russell Proctor

Ushers: Christie Sondergard, Emily Sondergard, Diane Dixon, Bobbie Lambeth

Greeter: Nancy Proctor

Acolytes: Walker Rose and TBA

Liturgist: Anne Mosley

Children’s Sermon: Randy Adams

Advent Wreath: Dillon and Lucy Rose family

Nursery Helper: Ann Dill

December 24, 2017

11:00 a.m. Worship

Head Usher: Sonny Foster

Ushers: Pell Foster, Sylvia Phillips, Laura Durham, Kay Wester

Greeter: Jean Kitchin

Acolytes: TBA

Liturgist: Randy Adams

Children’s Sermon: Scott Solether

Advent Wreath: Liz and Jim Woodard family

Nursery Helper: Linda Amerson

December 24, 2017

Evening Service at 5:30 p.m. with Pre-service Music
beginning at 5:10

Ushers: TBA

Acolytes: Jillian Schrimper and TBA

Communion Preparers: Nancy Richardson, Becky
Parks, John Turnage

Communion Servers: Nancy Richardson, David Farris,
Marianne Farris, Jay Gardner, Mike

Gaynor, Anne Mosley, Becky Parks, Lisa Rowe, Ben
Roberson, Kate Tharin, Janice Smith, John Turnage

Advent Wreath: Mary Scott family

December 31, 2017

Head Usher: Sonny Foster

Ushers: Pell Foster, Sylvia Phillips, Laura Durham, Kay Wester

Greeter: Jean Kitchin

Liturgist: David Farris

Children’s Sermon: Scott Solether

Nursery Helper: Jay Gardner

Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW
US!



First Presbyterian Rocky Mount

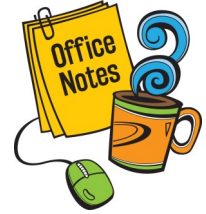


@FPC_RockyMount



fpc_rockymount

Contact Information Updates: Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121 or dionne.seale@fpcrm.org of any email, address, or phone number changes so we can keep our database up to date.



The church office will be closed Dec. 25 and 26. Unless otherwise posted, our office hours are Monday—Thursday from 9:00-5:00 p.m. Please contact the church in advance should you need access to the building during non-office hours.

Heartfelt thanks for the many ways my church family continues to minister to me with cards, calls, food and especially prayers. Special thanks to Preston for his visits and prayers. I hope that I will soon be able to return to church. I really miss all of you, and I look forward to meeting our new minister.

Love,
Evelyn Reese

Communications Deadlines

- We publish the “First Pres” newsletter monthly. The newsletter is either emailed or a hard copy can be mailed to those without email. The deadline to submit information is the third Thursday of each month.
- The weekly email update is sent out via Constant Contact on Wednesday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Wednesday. *
- The church bulletin is printed on Thursday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Thursday. *

*unless otherwise announced

WELCOME New Members



Emily and Chris Watson joined the church on October 29 and their sponsors were Anne and Paul Kinnaid. The Watsons are expecting their first child in February 2018.



Jami Barnhill joined the church on November 19 and her sponsors were Rob and Chrissy Barnhill. She is pictured above with her children, Jack and Kate Powers.



We decorate our Sanctuary during Advent with beautiful poinsettias which are made available by your donations to honor and remember special friends and/or loved ones. Envelopes are available in the Narthex or from the church office for you to pick up and enclose payment along with the name(s) of those you wish to honor. You can either place your envelope in the offering plate during worship or return to Dionne Seale's church mailbox. A donation of \$18 per poinsettia is appreciated. A special bulletin remembers the honorees on Christmas Eve and the deadline to donate is **December 17, 2017.**



The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Liz Oden Woodard upon the death of her father, William A. Oden, Jr., of Washington, NC on November 21, 2017.



Congratulations to Brian and Catherine Durham Renbarger on the birth of their son, William Durham Renbarger, on November 3, 2017. He is the grandson of Vince Durham and Mary & Lee Scott.



Our thoughts and prayers are with...

THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE—Tarboro

► Tom Dill

TWIN LAKES RETIREMENT COMMUNITY—Burlington

► Liz Cole

HOMESTEAD HILL—Winston-Salem

► Nancy Liipfert

BRADLEY CREEK—Wilmington

► Gerry Gardner

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

Margaret Barnes

Jean Boddie

Janet Cooper (mother of Elizabeth Rose)

Brenda Crocker

Augusta Daniel

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Si Fuller

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

Wilda Jenkins

John McInnis (Mary Perry's brother)

Lila Michael

Gerry Niece (friend of the church)

Anne Wilgus Podesta

Evelyn Reese

Blanche Robinson

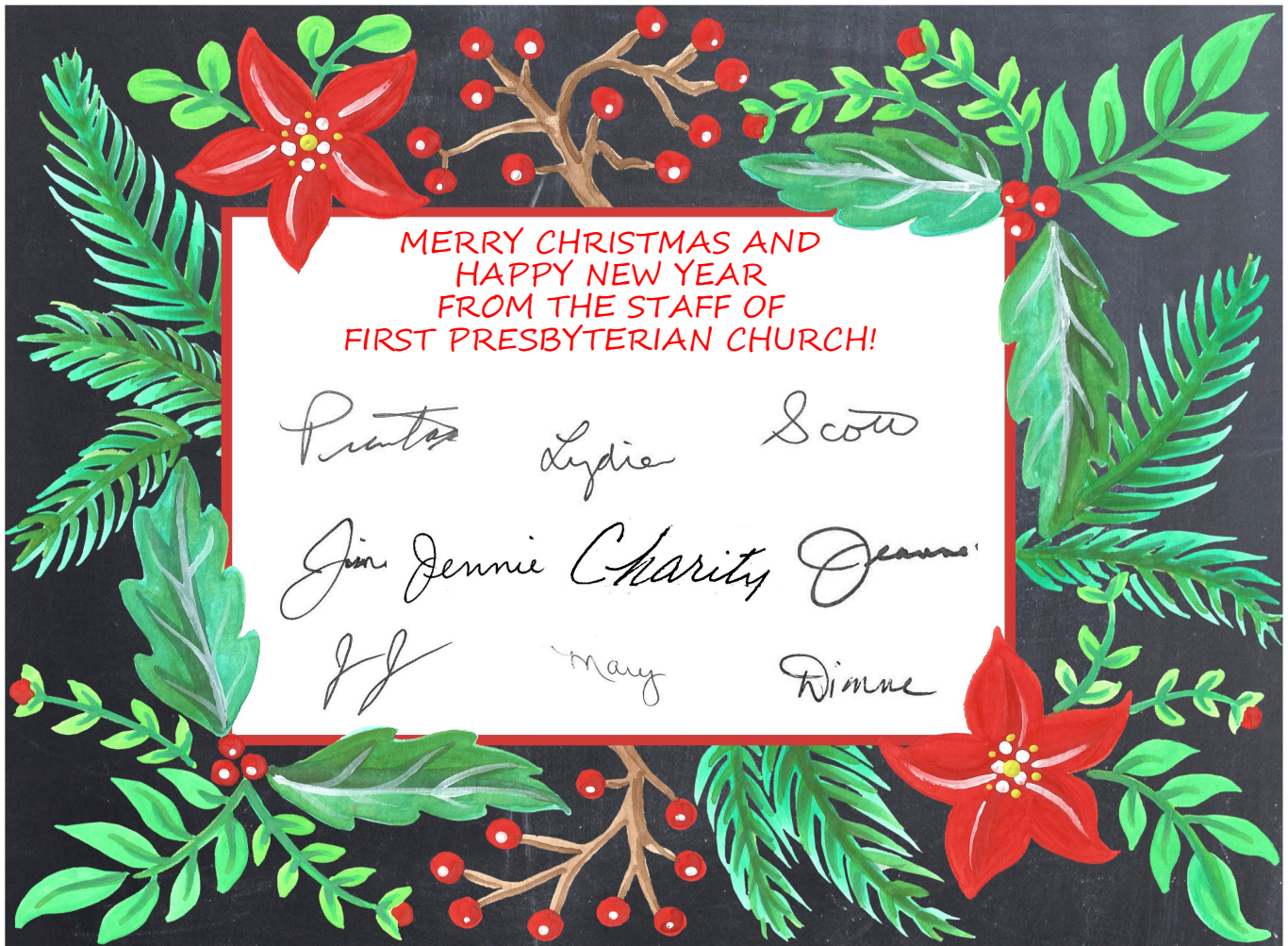
Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)

Maida Sessoms

Nancy Smith (mother of Jeannie Lane)

Alice Watson (daughter-in-law of Mary Watson)

Bobbi Weeks



December 17, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.

A sixty voice chorus, comprised of our Chancel Choir, the Nash Central High School Chorus, and the Rocky Mount Chamber Choir, will be accompanied by a 16 piece orchestra. Both sacred and secular music will be presented, including arrangements of "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" and "The First Noel," along with iconic Christmas favorites "It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas" and "Sleigh Ride." A reception following the concert is being planned in the fellowship hall.



Our Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Service begins at 5:30 p.m. Pre-service music will begin at 5:10 p.m. with a chorus of thirty voices accompanied by a chamber orchestra. Carol arrangements will include "See Amid the Winter's Snow" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Former choral scholar Jordan Winslow and our own Vivian Rogers will sing solos. Please contact the church if you need transportation assistance.