

The Steeple

December 2022

TAKE A BREAK AND TREAT YOURSELF

Advent is a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas

Bring your friends and family as we gather during this Holy Season to prepare for the coming of Jesus.

December 4 Join us for **Worship** each Sunday at 10:00. We will light the Advent candles, sing, pray and prepare for the coming of Jesus.

December 11 **Third Sunday of Advent**
Join in the festivities, 9:00 a.m.-12:30
before and after worship
Wrap Secret Santa gifts, Make a candy sleigh, cards, crafts - some for our friends at home, some for you. Sing some Christmas carols.

December 18 **Christmas Music service**
Lighting of the fourth Advent candle
A special service full of Christmas music

December 24 **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE at 7:00**

Bring the whole family and find some sanity in a frantic season. This service brings a peaceful joy to our souls. The Christ candle is lit.

December 25 Christmas Sunday service at 10:00



Have a blessed Christmas and share the real meaning of Christmas.



FROM OUR PASTOR

There seems to be so many that have passed this year, my heart and prayers are with all those whose Thanksgiving table had an empty chair. Know that your connection of love will never be broken for they send their love right back to warm our hearts until we meet again in the glory of God. May our thanksgivings be a lifestyle of gratitude and remembrance for those we were so blessed to have in our lives.

As Dot said so poignantly last Sunday when she led worship in my absence, Advent is now upon us. Advent, a time to prepare for the greatest story ever told. Unfortunately for some, the story is about a 'Black Friday' score, something you've got your eye on that you always wanted, or a vacation trip you're planning for the holiday. Can you see how that also seems to fit the trend of shortening Christmas to Xmas. After all, why begin the word with 'Christ' if in our minds the birth of our savior is a byproduct, not the cause for the celebration.

In times when you were struggling, afraid, or didn't know if you could take it anymore, where did you find peace, strength, or more importantly, hope? Could something on Amazon offer you the security, the solace that you are loved for who you are and never alone? Could a gift card promise to never forsake you no matter what direction life has taken you. Even more importantly, can anything here on earth promise you an inheritance of the Kingdom of God; life everlasting?

The greatest story ever told gives us the answer in a baby borne among us on Christmas day. The prophets foretold us of His coming, the star became His GPS for the Magi, as God sent a piece of Himself to show us the way to salvation. So let's strip away all the commercialism and self-gratifying distractions, all the lights and glitter, all the 'wants' we have for ourselves, and reconsider what this time is all about. When we put Christ back in 'Christmas', we can appreciate the importance, the life changing gift that we were given in this little baby, the Christ child, the Messiah. And the true meaning of this gift is not something we had to earn or could boast about - no - it was a gift of love: "...For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life..." (John 3:16). A gift of love that wishes our love in return and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Quite a bit different than what some would like us to not only focus on, but to believe. As true Christians, we know better!

May we be in a moment of prayer: "...Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. May that light illuminate our hearts and shine in our words and deeds. May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem this night fill our lives and become part of all that we say and do. Amen..." (Rev. Richard J. Fairchild)

For all those who are suffering, lonely, and have lost their sense of purpose and need, always remember that God loves you for who you are, exactly as you are – and so do we. Should you need someone to reach out to, an ear to vent to, or just a presence to know you are not alone, I am only a call away.

May grace and blessings be in your path,
Pastor Joe ...

CELEBRATION, CONCERNS & MORE



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

† **-Prayer List:** Carol Brunelle, Beth Dietz, Marion Winters, Samantha Snopak, Adele Reynolds, Jessica Guarnera, Dave Fanaras, Doug & Dee Brooksbank, Tim O'Donnell, Lily Marion, Kathy Washburn, Darlene Dout, Heidi Barta, Renata Cournoyer, Lucy Huegli, Bill Guarnera, Andrea Schlachter, Kelly & Steve Camp.

† Prayers & sympathy to the Family of Pauline Kiakis who died.

† Prayers & sympathy to the family of Martha Kellett who died.

† Prayers & sympathy to Sheri & Mark Felsentreger on the death of Sheri's mother, Althea Viamari.

STEEPLE LIGHTING



The steeple is lit during the month of December:

- in memory of Martha Kellett
- in memory of my sister Pauline Kiakis by Ann Felsentreger & Family.

If you would like the steeple lit for one month, the fee is \$25.00. The deadline is the 25th of the month. More than one person/family may participate. participate.



Christmas To-Do List

- ~~Buy~~ Presents *Be*
- ~~Wrap Gifts~~ *Someone in a hug*
- ~~Send Gifts~~ *Peace*
- ~~Shop for Food~~ *Donate*
- ~~See the Lights~~ *Be*



CONGRATULATIONS!

- Aimee Deren and Kody Adrian on their recent wedding in Tuscaloosa Alabama. Aimee is the granddaughter of Tom and Carol Deren.
- Megan Pinciak and Justin Boyd who were married on November 5, 2022 in Melbourne, FL. Megan is daughter of Steve & Donna Pinciak.

Church office: 413-532-0500

e-mail: office@UMCSouthHadley.org

Dr. Heather Reichgott, Minister of Music

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: 413-437-7593

Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m.

web site: www.umcsouthhadley.org

Ann Felsentreger, Secretary

FROM OUR LAY LEADER

Lately, I have attended too many funerals for people I know and for family members of friends. Nice things were said about those who are gone, and it made me wonder if they had known how people felt about them. I suspect if people could hear what was said about them at their funerals, it might be a pleasant surprise. We get caught up in our day-to-day lives with our friends, family and coworkers, taking for granted that they will be there tomorrow. But life throws curve balls and one day, one of those people is gone. Why do we wait until someone dies before we say how funny-nice-loving-helpful they were? What would happen if we decided to tell our friends and family these things while they are still alive?

Life is a gift and it can be gone in a moment. Perhaps this Christmas we can begin to tell people how we value them and what qualities they have that enrich our lives. It doesn't cost anything but may be the best gift one can give. Simple and priceless.

Wishing you peace and a Merry Christmas!

- 🎂 On December 8 Adele Reynolds will be 100 years old. Her family is asking everyone to **send her a birthday card**. They are trying to have her receive 100 cards. Her address is:

Adele Reynolds
25 Brittany Rd.
So. Hadley MA 01075

NEED MORE HATS, MITTENS, SCARVES

Yes, we will have a Christmas tree to hang the hats and mittens on. Many will be used for the Secret Santa gifts and some are delivered them to those in need. New are best but slightly used are welcome. All sizes are needed especially older youth. This small mission project has been going on in our church for what seems like forever and the children and adults who are cold appreciate the hats and mittens.



THE CASSEROLES FOR KATE'S KITCHEN ARE DUE DECEMBER 25

Thanks to all who helped, 9 casseroles were delivered in November to Kate's Kitchen.

Thank you to Donna & Steve Pinciak for delivering the casseroles.

Everyone is invited to help.

All are invited to **join the United Women of Faith** on December 14 at 10:00 a.m. on zoom. Carol Deren will lead us in devotion. Contact Ann at office@UMCSouthHadley.org and she will send you the zoom link.

UWF BAKE SALE - THANK YOU

Thank you for your generosity. The UM Women received \$190 from the bake-sale. The money will be used to support our missions.

WHITE
CHRISTMAS



As
is our
tradition,
the women
of the church
will prepare small
gift bags for our folks at
home. You are invited to
help make the cards, crafts and
cookies for the bags on December 11.
You are also invited to help deliver those
gifts, giving you a chance to visit with some
one who is unable to attend church in person. A
visit is a wonderful gift. If you will give the gift of
you, call ... or sign up on the sheet in the
sanctuary.

Share
The
Love

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- December 5: 6:30 p.m. Church Council & Trustee on Zoom
- December 10: 12:30 p.m. Christmas Caroling at Pine Grove in So. Hadley. Meet at 80 Pine Grove Dr. SH. Questions call Kathy Washburn at 413-537-0119.
- December 11: 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Before & after worship gather
All are invited to gather to make a craft, cards, wrap Secret Santa gifts, and put together White Christmas bags for our 'friends at home', and make candy sleigh & maybe cookies.
- December 13: 6:30 p.m. Education meeting on zoom
- December 14: 10:00 a.m. United Women in Faith on zoom
- December 18: 10:00 a.m. Christmas Music service
- December 24: 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service
- December 25: 10:00 a.m. Christmas Service

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS PLANTS ORDER FORM



We will be ordering our Christmas Poinsettia plants. Your cost is \$7.00 per plant. It is necessary that you enclose your payment with your order. To have the best selection of plants, your order must be in by Sunday, December 11th.

Kindly mail or give your order and payment to Ann or drop it in the offering plate. Checks should be made out to South Hadley Methodist Church.

I wish the church to order _____ plants. Paid: _____

Given in memory/honor of _____

By/from/love (please circle): _____

I will pick up my plant after church _____ I wish it delivered to a shut-in _____

I will deliver it to: _____

*******FORMS DUE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11th*******



CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Make a donation to one of the mission projects of our church

- †Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen
- †White Christmas bags for Friends at Home
- †Secret Santa
- †Food For Friends
- †Light the Steeple in honor of someone.

Return address service requested.

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075-2705
30 Carew Street
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



- CELEBRATE DIVERSITY -

All are welcome - loved for who you are, exactly as you are.
Join us for worship or join in one of our missions.

United Methodist Church

Of

Holyoke, South Hadley & Granby
30 Carew Street
South Hadley, MA 01075

Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m. in our Sanctuary and on Zoom

Pastor Joe DeGrande 413 237-6823

Pastorjoe.umcsouthhadley@gmail.com

My office hours are Tuesday 10:00-12:00 & 2:00-4:00 and
Thursday from 10:00 to 2:30. My door is always open so please stop by.
Should something be weighing heavy on your
heart, I'm only a phone call