



REV. DAN YOURKEVICH!

Dan grew up in Oshawa and attended Albert Street United Church where he was confirmed. He became a candidate for ministry through Albert Street United Church and Oshawa Presbytery. After earning a Bachelor of Arts at The University of Toronto and a Master of Divinity at Queen's University in Kingston, Dan was ordained by Bay of Quinte Conference in May 1977.

Dan served Buckhorn Pastoral Charge while studying at Queen's and the First Nations people started calling him Mr. Dan. In Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, and in several pastoral charges in Ontario, he soon became known as Rev. Dan. Dan shared in ministry in places like Tavistock, Simcoe, Peterborough, Uxbridge and Toronto to name a few.

After serving at Port Hope United Church, Rev. Dan retired in November 2012. While living in Courtice, Rev. Dan was appointed to St. Paul's United Church in Bowmanville, where he retired again in December 2013. This fall, Rev. Dan served Faith United Church while their minister was on Sabbatical. Dan and his wife Joanne now live in Oshawa and have been part of the Westminster United Church family since June of 2014.

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A Christmas That Will Last

This Christmas, when you've finished wrapping and unwrapping the gifts, and all the food is eaten, what will have brought the greatest meaning? For many people, fulfillment comes from meaningful relationships. And I suggest, that for a Christian, the most meaningful relationship is with Jesus.

In our fast moving world, it is hard to develop relationships that are worthwhile, but this is the purpose of Advent and Christmas. For Christians, Advent is not a season, but a decision! It is a time to refocus our lives, to seek again the transforming power that we discover within the measurement of a manger. Christians believe that Jesus comes to bring that transformation to our lives and the world.

So this Christmas, we invite you to share in life at Jesus' House. Part of the life we share is worship.

On Sunday **December 6, 10:30 am,** we will hear about "**That Desert Experience**" aided by our contemporary music group, **S.A.L.T**.

Sunday **December 13, 10:30 am,** we will celebrate "**Rejoice Sunday**" with the help of our Westminster Choir. And that evening at **7:00 pm.** our Wellness Committee will conduct a Service of Lessons and Carols.

Sunday **December 20, 10:30 am,** we will try to answer some "**Christmas Questions**" with the help of our choir accompanied by trumpet and other special music. That evening at **7:00 pm,** we will recognize the longest night of the year with our **Longest Night Service.**

Then on **Christmas Eve, December 24**, there will be services celebrating the birth of Jesus at **2:00 pm, 4:00 pm, and 6:30 pm,** with a *lively* crew telling the story of an innkeeper, entitled "**O Restless Night.**"

Christmas Eve at 10:00 pm, our final service of the day will share a "Christmas Passion" as we celebrate Jesus' coming with a Candlelight Communion.

Jesus is coming to Westminster United for a **Christmas That Will Last**, and you're invited. Looking forward to seeing you!

Rev. Dan





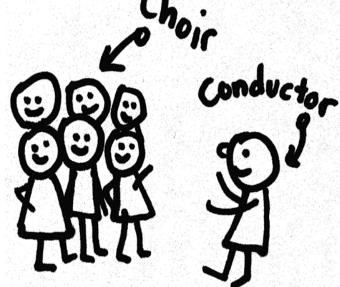
FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL,
PLEASE REFRAIN FROM USING SCENTED PRODUCTS WHILE AT WESTMINSTER!
THANK YOU!

A NOTE FROM OUR CHOIR DIRECTOR...

It doesn't bother me one bit that I pull out Christmas anthems for Westminster's choir, sheet music for my community band, and help arrange music for the youth Christmas Eve play in the middle of October. Some people shop, plan decorations or write cards early. Some of us do music!

The chancel choir is preparing anthems, solos and duets for the season of Advent including participating in the evening Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, December 13, led by the Wellness Committee, and the 10 pm Christmas Eve candlelight communion service. The Lessons and Carols service will also feature a solo by young Meredith Kennedy.

The music of trumpeter, Kathleen Booth, will enhance our Christmas Sunday (December 20) celebrations.



The youth have been busy rehearsing for our annual Christmas Eve nativity play. "O, Restless Night" is loosely based on "Jesus' Christmas Party" by English writer, Nicholas Allan. The story of the inn-keeper, irritated by the numerous visitors to his packed inn, comes alive with humour, bright carols played by the "Inn Band", vibrant dance, contemporary music and, of course, the arrival of live animals. It is a family oriented evening celebrating the birth of Christ. Tell your friends! Don't miss it! Thursday, December 24, 2 pm, 4 pm, 6:30 pm.

Margaret Motum



This incredibly creative committee has been working diligently on our behalf these past weeks. They are Anita Amos, Ken Lomax, Barb Shields, Anne Butler, Joan and Jim Ward,

The Sanctuary Committee members are part of the Worship Committee and are in dialogue with Rev. Michelle Robinson as we move through the liturgical year.

The Narthex is meant to be warm and inviting as well as having a focus. Many people enter our doors each day. Some are dropping off or waiting for their children, some are participating in our many programs, some are looking for comfort and some just wish to sit quietly and be still. Whatever their need, we trust that they are being met at Westminster. Our Narthex is our first impression to anvone walking in our doors, and thanks to the caring and the creativity of this team, our first impression says, "Come in and make yourself at home".

As one moves into the Sanctuary itself, the Chancel is before us with its tasteful dossal curtains, pulpit hangings and window decorations, all perfectly timed to the Church Seasons.

There is always something to engage us and during this season of Advent, one of the changes you will see will be the new, seasonal "stained glass" window hangings in each of the four windows on the east wall of the Sanctuary. Anita, Anne, Barb and Joan have again performed their magic and we are grateful to be the recipients of such beautifully, artistic creations.

We give thanks to Anita and her Committee for continuing to provide beauty, solace and a truly worshipful atmosphere for all to enjoy, regular worshippers and visitors alike.

Special Evening Services in Advent

On December 13th, at 7:00 p.m., the Wellness Committee will be presenting our annual Lessons and Carols service. This is a lovely evening of seasonal music interwoven with an Advent message. This year's theme is **The Gifts We Bring**.

On December 20th, at 7:00 p.m., the Wellness Committee's **Longest Night** service offers a time of care and concern for those who may be grieving or sad during this Christmas Season or for people who are feeling stressed or 'out of sync' with the seasonal emphasis on happiness, togetherness and family gatherings.

On December 24th, at 2:00, 4:00 and 6:30, the annual Christmas Eve Play will be presented by our youth. This is always a joyful and exciting event, enhanced by the appearance of live animals. At 10:00 p.m., we will celebrate the birth of the Christ Child at the Candlelight Communion Service.

CAROLLING AT THE COLONIAL

Come One, Come All! (this is not a Choir only event, it's a "Let's make a Joyful Noise and Sing Praises" event)

> Let's get together and spread some Christmas Cheer to the residents of the Colonial Retirement Residence

> > Sunday, December 6th 6:30pm

101 Manning Road, Whitby (corner of Manning Rd. and Brock St.)



"No, to Bottled Water"

Westminster U.C. has discouraged the use of bottled water for some time. We all know that plastic is not biodegradable. It just breaks down into smaller bits. The residue is found littering our streets as well as in landfills and dumps. Often these particles are taken in by fish and birds.

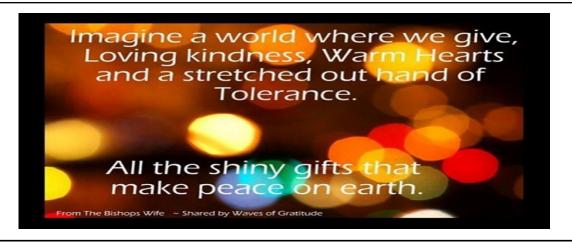
A recent article in the *Toronto Star* draws this issue to our attention again, "Why are we willing to pay for water which often comes right out of the tap, put in plastic containers and sold back to us for many times what we have already paid for it?" In Canada we pay a high price for something that is plentiful and relatively cheap.

Of course, the Star notes," there is nothing new about inventing needs and desires where neither exists. What bottlers offer is less to do with water than convenience". We are told we need 8 glasses of water a day and therefore we must constantly drink or "we would shrivel up and die". Drinking water from a bottle has become socially acceptable.



Durham water has been found to be pure and more than safe to drink. Why pay exorbitant amounts for bottled water? Purchase a water bottle which can be refilled at home. Put it in a place near where you exit your home. This will remind you to fill it before you leave. Or fill it each night and put it in the fridge. Nice, cold water that you know is pure and inexpensive ... and environmentally friendly.

The Wellness Committee



JaM (Jesus and Me) - News

December 6 – Regular JaM classes – Mary/Joseph/Angels

December 13 – Jesus' Birthday Party!

December 20 – Jam Session

December 27 – No J.a.M. Classes (including Nursery)

January 3 – No J.a.M Classes (including Nursery)

January 10 – All J.a.M Classes Resume!



Christmas Hampers

As in the past, with your generous support, we will be helping over 70 families enjoy a happier Christmas this year.

To adopt a Christmas Child/Family and find out their gift wish, stop by the Narthex this Sunday, Dec 6th and pick up a Gift Tag!

Unwrapped gifts are to be returned on Dec. 19th from 1-4 to the church.

Deliveries will be made after church on Dec 20th.

There are still volunteer opportunities for picking up the groceries on the morning of Dec 19th and delivering the gifts on the 20th.

Sign up after church or email Joanne at jmmacpherson@rogers.com





- That Robert Motum (son of Margaret and Ron) has arrived home from his studies in Wales. Welcome back, Robert!
- * That friends and/or relatives of our "kitchen choppers", led by Shirley Penny, come to Westminster just to help. We appreciate them and thank them.
- * That "Divorce Care" meets in our church for weekly sessions at various times of the year. It is led by our own Carolle Harding and is fully subscribed. This is an outreach programme and we are grateful for the participation and leadership.
- * That the Bible is carried, open, to our Communion Table in the chancel each Sunday for a couple of reasons. It symbolizes *the Word* going through and around God's people and it is there with the candles burning open to all as it brings light into the world.
- * That our Sanctuary has a labyrinth in the floor that is open to all at various times of the church year. There are many suggestions concerning walking the labyrinth. One is "centre and savour". Take a few moments to prepare, contemplate and relax. Ask your mind to rest, and allow your body (through walking) and your spirit (through listening) to do the work. If you are unable to walk, we have lap labyrinths available. We will follow up with other creative suggestions re: the labyrinth in future editions of this column.
- * That there are now 62 subscriptions to the United Church *Observer* at Westminster. We trust you will be better informed about the wider church as you read this award winning periodical. One can subscribe at any time of the year through the church office.
- * That Emma Cullen is the 2014-15 Eastern Ontario Senior Ladies skating champion. She has competed at the National Championships as a novice woman and her goal is to qualify for this year's Nationals as a senior.
- * That as we wrote some time ago, Kerry Delaney had a terrible fall early this past summer. She had major injuries that required surgery at Sunnybrook Hospital. She was transferred to St. John's Convalescent Hospital for further treatment. Following her discharge, she needed ongoing physiotherapy at St. John's for two months. Members of Westminster have driven her to her appointments during those two months and also provided meals during her convalescence. Westminster is making a difference in people's lives.
- Did you know that Sheldon Suepaul had his debut at producing when he was asked to be the Associate Producer of "The Melville Boys" which recently had a successful run at The Oshawa Little Theatre?
- Did you know that Steven Suepaul graduated from The Second City Comedy Theater this summer and had a truly funny and outstanding Conservatory Graduate Celebration Show in August? And did you also know that he and 3 other graduates formed the "Peggy Molson" team which competed in the Big City Improv Festival TKO Tournament, and that after three tough rounds, they won the finals held on Oct 20, 2015? Hats off to our "artists".

A note from our Treasurer...

If you use envelopes for your offering, they have a new look. There is no date on them, so there is no waste! You can use them until they are gone. Don't worry; when you run out, there will be a card in the box to order more.

It's Mitten Tree time again!

Kindly bring in new mittens and gloves and place them on our tree in the Narthex, so that school children in need might enjoy warm, cozy hands from those with warm, wonderful hearts!

Thank you for your kind donations!



United Way Contributions

If you contribute to the United Way through your workplace, you can now direct your donations to Westminster United Church.

Once a year, most employers will offer you the opportunity to renew or sign up for payroll deductions, using this money as a donation to the United Way.

The United Way will direct your donation to the charity of your choice, as long as they are listed as a valid Charitable Organization and have an official number to prove that they are.

Most businesses and companies address this subject in the fall, so it may be too late for this year.

If this is the case, kindly think about helping Westminster when you register or renew next year.

Thank you for considering this request...and please be sure to indicate:

Westminster United Church, Whitby

(there are others who share our name) and our Charitable Organization Number 11929 4742 RR0001



HEY KIDS!

You're Invited to JESUS' BIRTHDAY PARTY

When:

Sunday, Dec. 13th (During our J.a.M class time)

Where:

Room 2/Gym

What to Bring:

Just wonderful you!

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!



The Affirming Team is very excited to announce that on Sunday, November 22nd, the congregation of Westminster United Church voted 94% in favour of accepting the following Statement of Inclusion, as part of the preparation for the final vote to becoming an Affirming Church at our Annual General Meeting in 2016.

"We embrace people of all ages, gender, race, sexual orientations, gender identity, abilities, ethnicity, social and economic circumstances, in the membership, ministry, leadership and life of this congregation"

Westminster's Got Talent!

Coming Soon...a Fun, Family Fundraiser!

It's time to reveal your hidden talents!

Whether you are 5 or 95,
there is a spot for you on Westminster's chancel stage on

Saturday, January 30, 2016 7:00 pm.

Dust off your dancing skills, your singing, instrumental or acting talents, your gift for magic, your?

Register to participate on:

Sunday, January 3

(after service in the gym)

Thursday, January 7

(6:30 pm -7:30 pm in the sanctuary)

Sunday, January 10

(after service in the gym)

Please note that there will be a \$5.00 registration fee per person

For Tickets

(please listen for announcements)

Adults - \$10

Students and Seniors - \$5

Preschool aged children - free

Family maximum - \$30

Refreshments will be available for sale during intermission.

All proceeds will go to the church's general fund. Don't miss this FUNdraiser!!!



Our own Westminster church library offers the following Christmas books for you to borrow and enjoy during the seasons of Advent and Christmas:

The Christmas Donkey (Little Fish Book about Bible Animals 2X3 inches)

The Real Night Before Christmas (hardcover) by Isabel Anders

Carol Time (Board book)

The Christmas Story (hardcover Little Golden Book) by Jane Werner

Amahl and the Night Visitors (hardcover)by Frances Frost

The First Christmas (hardcover A Pop-Up Christmas Classic)

Journeying to Bethlehem (softcover) by Marilyn Perry

Jesus, the Baby (softcover trade paper) by Kitty Anna Griffiths

Little Benjamin and the First Christmas (Arch softcover) by Betty Forell

Clem, the Clumsy Camel (Arch softcover) by Virginia Mueller

The Christmas Donkey (hardcover Little Golden Book) by T. William Taylor

Jesus Is Born (softcover)

Mary's Christmas (Arch softcover) by Teresa Olive

The First Christmas (softcover) by Janet Allison Brown

Andro, The Star of Bethlehem (softcover) by Anne Claire

The Christmas Sky (hardcover) by Franklyn M. Branley

The Story of Christmas for Children (oversized softcover) by Beverly Rae Wiersum

This is the Star (oversized softcover and hardcover) by Joyce Dunbar

The Christmas Story (softcover) by Heather Amery

Daniel Donkey in Bethlehem (Arch softcover) by Janice Kramer

The Nativity (Golden Storytime Book -hardcover) by Juliana Bragg

Santa's Favorite Story (softcover) by Hisako Aoki

We Three Kings (oversized hardcover) by Gennady Spirin

The First Christmas (oversized hardcover) by Mark A. Taylor

Alabaster's Song (oversized hardcover) by Max Lucado

A Read-Aloud Story – Baby Jesus (hardcover 3X4 inches) by Ella K. Lindvall

Angels & All Children (oversized hardcover) by Walter Wangerin Jr.

HAPPY NEWS TO SHARE

We are thrilled to announce that Winson Norman Abed was born to Jennifer Gibb and Karim Abed on Saturday, November 21st. at North York General Hospital. His aunts Heather and Laura, and his uncles Andre and James join his grandma Joanne Gibb in welcoming him to this world. The name Winson honours his father's Berber heritage and the name Norman is a tribute to his grandpa. Needless to stay he has stolen our hearts already and is training all of us to behave as he wishes.



Submitted by Joanne Gibb



Grocery Gift Cards

We all buy groceries, so why not support Westminster at the same time?

Grocery gift cards are available for purchase at face value during coffee time after service on Sunday or in the church office during the week.

THESE CARDS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

<u>5%</u> of the proceeds go directly to Westminster United Church!

A Call for Submissions

This newsletter is yours!



It is made up of stories, articles and submissions by the people of Westminster United Church. It is a place to share what is on your mind and let people know about upcoming events. It is a tool of connection between members of this church so that we may continue to be the church in this world. It is a collection of articles that bring together all of the many facets of this church in one place. It is written by and for the people of this congregation, writer and non-writer alike, in order that all in the world of Westminster might know what is happening in the Westminster world!

Anyone is welcome to submit something for this newsletter and we look forward to hearing all of your stories, about the groups of this church and the exciting things that your lives bring.

The deadline for submissions to *The Westminster World* is the **21st of each month**. If you have an article, please send it to Bev Crumb at bcrumb@sympatico.ca.

Westminster United Church Presents **A Cruisin' Christmas**



Don't miss this amazing A cappella Group! A wonderful way to jump into the Christmas Season!



Tickets available at:

Westminster United Church 1850 Rossland Road East Whitby, ON 905 723-6442



Thank you for supporting this Fundraising Event

4047

LAUGH OUT LOUD

Good evening, Friends, and welcome to our hymn sing.

We are pleased to announce that we have a
hymn for everyone!

Our program this evening will include the
following hymns...

The Dentist's Hymn...Crown Him with Many Crowns

The Meteorologist's Hymn...There Shall be Showers of Blessings

The Contractor's Hymn...The Church's One Foundation

The Tailor's Hymn...Holy, Holy, Holy

The Golfer's Hymn...There is a Green Hill Far Away

The Politician's Hymn...Standing on the Promises

The Optometrist's Hymn...Open My Eyes That I Might See

The CRS Agent's Hymn...I Surrender All

The Gossip's Hymn...Pass It On

The Electrician's Hymn...Send the Light

The Shopper's Hymn...Sweet By and By

The Realtor's Hymn...I've Got a Mansion, just Over the Hilltop

The Massage Therapist's Hymn...He Touched Me

The Doctor's Hymn...The Great Physician

And for all you motorists out there...

90 km/h...God Will Take Care of You
100 km/h...Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
110 km/h...Nearer My God to Thee
120 km/h...Nearer, Still Nearer
130 km/h...This World Is Not My Home
140 km/h...Lord, I'm Coming Home
150 km/h...Precious Memories

News from the Affirming Team The Gay Debate: The Bible and Homosexuality

On Sunday, October 25th, Westminster's Affirming Team presented the **Matthew Vine video** --- *The Gay Debate: The Bible and Homosexuality*. This was after a delicious **soup lunch** for 50+ interested attendees in the church hall. Following the video, Peter Spratt facilitated a thought-provoking question & discussion session.

For those that were not able to attend, here is the link to the same 67-minute Michael Vine video. We encourage all to listen at your own leisure---

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezQjNJUSraY&feature=player_detailpage

This next link for a 5-minute summary about Vine's one-hour presentation, including Matthew Vine's new book (*God and the Gay Christian*):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=gmp6lLct-fQ.

Westminster's library now has a copy of this book.

Included below are the information sheets that Peter prepared for his follow-up session.

The A-Team continues to encourage all to forward questions or concerns to any A-Team member. Look for the "Open Hearts – Open Minds" button.

Goals for Today's Discussion

To explore homosexuality as seen through a biblical lens.

To continue to raise awareness about the struggles being experienced by the LGBTQ community.

How can I help others to feel safe to join-in our conversation today?

\Diamond	Demonstr	ate	respect f	or	others	through	า my	word	s and	act	ions
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- ♦ Share informed opinions, insights, 'the floor'
- Seek clarity by asking questions
- Listen for the truths of others
- ♦ Encourage others

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Facts & Assumptions:

What insights does this video provide?

What <u>new</u> information (new to me) did this video present? What don't I know and need to find out?

Reaction:

How do I feel about this film?

What am I pleased with?

What am I upset with, frustrated by, concerned about?

What if anything in this video surprised you?

The Gay Debate: The Bible and Homosexuality (continued from previous page)

Analysis:

To what extent does this information challenge or support traditional 'church' views on Homosexuality?

Resolution:

What are you taking away from this film/discussion today?

What did I learn about this topic? What did I learn about myself?

What, if anything, am I going to do about it?

What other related (Affirm) topics should we explore?

I am interested in knowing more about...? This will help our congregation by...?

Upcoming Vote on Westminster United Church Becoming an Affirming Congregation

February or <u>early March</u>/2016 – as part of the **Annual Congregation Meeting** (ACM) and Sunday service that day, we will be holding a formal vote on Westminster United Church becoming an Affirming congregation.

Stay tuned for an exact date for the ACM in upcoming weeks.

Only WUC members can vote. There will be no proxy votes for this Affirming vote. You must attend that given Sunday to vote. If you want to vote, make sure you are properly registered as a Westminster UC member. Check with the church office. There is still time to transfer a membership from another United Church congregation, re-affirm your membership, etc.

A-Team members: Laurel Crone, Gail Brimbecom, Larry Laycock, Teena Morrow, Paul Kneebone, Joanne MacPherson and Shirley Penny



There are no extra pieces in the universe. Everyone is here because he or she has a place to fill.

Deepak Chopra



New Group — Women's Wellness

Taking care of yourself can be tricky at times. This small group will give you a chance to relax, rejuvenate, centre yourself and focus on your well-being...on your Mind, your Body and your Spirit! Emphasis will be placed on sharing techniques and strategies, including exercises to nurture physical and emotional health. Some of the topics may include: how stress can manifest in our bodies, the importance of healthy relationships, gaining personal power and strength and Yoga, including physical postures, breathing exercises and meditation.

Dates: Fridays...Jan. 8, 15, 22 and 29, from 6:30pm - 8:00pm.

There is no cost to register, but <u>registration is required</u> and spaces are limited. For more information or to register please contact **Romain** at: easeforward@gmail.com

Returning Group — Senior Fitness

Back by popular demand, this group is open to Seniors and will take place in the gym at Westminster on **Thursday mornings from 10:30am – 11:30am**. This group will run weekly (8 weeks) from **January 14th – March 3rd** and as with all our Small Groups, there is **no cost** for this activity. **Registration is required** and spaces are limited, so please contact **Katie** at ktcraigb@rogers.com as soon as possible to register or to obtain more information.

LifeKeys...Discover Who You Are!

Why Are You Here?
What Do You Do Best?
What Are You Passionate About?
What Do You Value?
What Are Your Priorities?

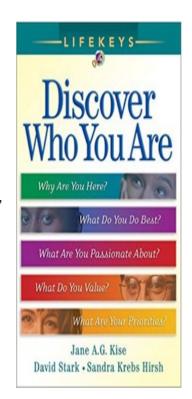
If you have ever wondered about any of these questions, or if you just want to explore the awesome gifts that God has given you, then join Cathy Shaw, our Minister of Faith Formation for this five week program.

Sunday afternoons...

January 17th — February 14th 12:00pm - 2:00pm

(Light refreshments will be available, but please feel free to bring your lunch if you would like to do so).

This Small Group is offered at no cost but registration is required and spaces are limited, so sign up today by contacting Cathy, 905 723 6442 or cshaw@westminster-uc.ca



For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;

And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And his name will be called

Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6



May the Spirit of Christmas that forever and ever endures, leave its richest blessing in the hearts of you and yours!

Merry Christmas and God's Blessings in 2016

You're invited...

A Cruisin' Christmas Concert (Church Fundraiser) 7:00pm - 9:00pm	Friday, December 4
Worship Service - Advent 2 (Peace) 10:30am Christmas Hampers List Adopt a Child (Gym) Blood Pressure Screening Clinic 11:45am - 12:15pm Carolling at the Colonial Retirement Residence 6:30pm	Sunday, December 6
Worship Service - Advent 3 (Joy) 10:30am Jesus' Birthday Party (J.a., M program for kids) 10:30am Christmas Hampers List Adopt a Child (Gym) Lessons and Carols Service 7:00pm	Sunday, December 13
Christmas Hampers - Gift Drop Off 10:00am- 4:00pm (Gym)	Saturday, December 19
Worship Service - Advent 4 (Love) 10:30am Christmas Hampers List Gift Deliveries (Gym) Longest Night Service (a service of care and concern for those grieving, stressed or out of sync with the Christmas season) 7:00pm	Sunday, December 20
Christmas Play and Service Presented by our Youth and featuring Live Animals 2:00pm, 4:00pm and 6:30pm Christmas Eve Communion Service 10:00pm	Thursday, December 24
Worship Service 10:30am (There will be no J.a.M classes or Nursery today)	Sunday, December 27
Worship Service 10:30am (There will be no J.a.M classes or Nursery today)	Sunday, January 3, 2016