

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
193 Main Street Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**DECEMBER**



**2018**

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT # 8

BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

193 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301-2842

Office Hours: M - F / 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Church Office: (802) 254-4730 / [centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org)

Website: [www.centrechurchvt.org](http://www.centrechurchvt.org)

Facebook: Centre Congregational Church-Brattleboro VT

Current news/information in the larger UCC Community:

VT Conference: [www.vtcucc.org](http://www.vtcucc.org) / National: [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

**CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP**

Minister and Teacher:

The Rev. Dr. Scott Couper: (786) 622-8473 (cell)

Music Director:

Mary Milkey-May: [music@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:music@centrechurchvt.org)

Administrator:

Bruce Landenberger: [admin@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:admin@centrechurchvt.org)

Financial Secretary:

Christine Yost: [finance@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:finance@centrechurchvt.org)

Council Chair:

William McCarty

Treasurer:

Anne Fecto

Clerk:

Connie Bresnahan

Custodian:

John Bertolini

Friends in Christ:

I rejoice now as I sit in my office, watching the snow gently fall. I look forward to this winter season with you. I anticipate our Advent sermon series entitled "The Waiting Room". I was present when my son, Micah, was born. Yet, for almost nine months previous to his birth my spiritual state sat in 'the waiting room'. During Advent, we also are in 'the waiting room'. About what are we anxious, as we wait? What are we anticipating, as we wait? For what do we hope and dream, as we wait? If we wait, we prepare! And we can't prepare if we don't know that for which we wait. Waiting is not passive, it is active! Who waits for a child by only twiddling one's thumbs? No one with any amount of excitement for the coming life sits idle. In fact, nine months is not enough time to prepare for a child. Certainly four weeks is not enough to prepare for the Christ! Join me each week, as we commune together in 'the waiting room'. Remember, during Advent we wait for Christ's birth and we await Christ's Second Coming, which some scholars and I suggest is made manifest in the work and love of this church. Amen

### An Advent Psalm

Blessed is the God of Heaven and Earth  
who gives us the bread of hope  
when we are in despair.

For too long we have been lulled to sleep,  
our senses numb from fears of war,  
terrorism, pestilence, scarcity,  
global warming, danger lurking, on every screen  
and radio call-in-show.

Sleepers awake. Look around and see. God  
is doing a new thing like a spider's web woven the dark,  
coaxing out the best in us, calling forth people in our midst to manifest  
the courage to lead, being the change we seek, showing us

though small victory after small victory  
the wisdom of compassion  
the strength of listening  
the joy of practicing respect  
the valiance of peace  
the blessing of mercy.

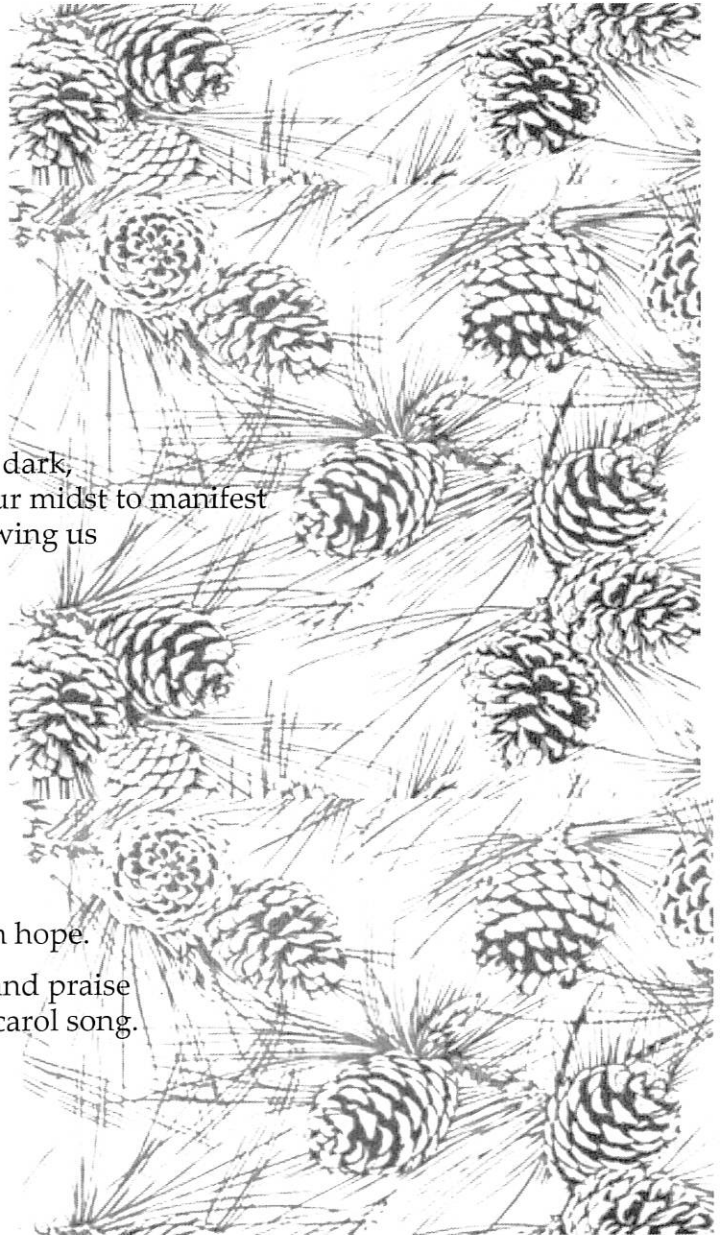
The day is coming  
as a child being born in Bethlehem,  
bringing forth a new era, a new dawn.

All you who walk in the land, have faith and live in hope.

O taste and see that our God is good. Give thanks and praise  
to God who leads us on with stars and angels and carol song.

O Blessed is the God of Heaven and Earth.

-Ray McGinnis, Canada  
*Gifts in Open Hands* (2011)



**From Council Chair, BILL McCARTY**

It is a wonderful time of the year – and the busiest. Many things are being planned and accomplished at home and at Centre Church-Advent Season, Christmas Eve services, and on and on.

We are all busy, but it is important to remember why we have this Season. Christmas with a capital C.

Council met on Tuesday and made a few decisions and changes. Board and Committee meeting times will now return to the previous schedule and each Board or Committee will schedule its own meeting schedule and time. However we will have a brief Board "Summary" presentation after Church services on the third Sunday of the month. All Boards will give a brief synopsis and highlights of their Board activity – all are welcome.

The computer and church program are being updated so that we once again can experience and enjoy a consolidated Church wide calendar. Hopefully this will better coordinate our many Church activities.

This computer update is being accomplished from a most generous gift from the Marty Fenn estate.

The Annual Church Financial Meeting is scheduled for 20 January and all Boards and Committees have been requested to submit their 2019 budgets to our treasurer, Anne Fecto. Budgets and financial matters will be reviewed, discussed and voted upon at the 20 January meeting. Plan to attend!!

Due to the Holidays the December and January Council meetings have been moved to 18 December and 15 January, both at 6:00pm. As is our custom, all interested Members and Friends are welcome to attend Council Meetings.

**CENTRE BELLS**

The newsletter of  
**Centre Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ**

**December 2018**

**From Music Director, MARY MILKEY-MAY**

I'm not sure what happened to the fall, but somehow, we are about to begin Advent. Yikes! Though, with the latest snow storm I have to admit it is "beginning to feel a lot like Christmas".

The Children's choir sang twice in November (making it 4 times since reconvening mid-September) and the kids have already begun rehearsing Christmas music for the upcoming Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. They will hopefully be able to present four or five newly learned songs during this service.

The adult choir will also be presenting a variety of Christmas anthems with hopes of feeding your musical soul during Advent. Many thanks go to Lisa Keller for helping us out on several anthems lately and a hearty welcome to Olivia Brisson who is joining the choir. Also, special thanks go to Alison Hale for her wonderful flute playing on Thanksgiving Sunday and for her helping out the alto section. Equally thrilling was having Jenifer Ambler back in the choir loft.

**NEW OFFICE HOURS**

**Monday - Friday: 8:30am – 12:30pm**

**WOMEN'S SPIRIT**

This group meets each **Thursday at 4:30pm** in the library and is continuing the shared reading and discussion of John Selby Spong's book, UNBELIEVABLE. Pastor Scott joins the group when he can, and adds background Biblical facts that helps the group clarify some of the book's statements. This group is open to everyone who has a spirit of curiosity and adventure in exploring the New Testament and it's role in our personal Christian adventure.

**BROWN BAG GROUP**

**Wednesday, December 5** at noon is the next time for anyone interested to bring their lunch and share conversation with others who enjoy sharing their experiences. The first Wednesday of the month comes quickly, so mark your calendar to join your friends. This group is open to everyone.

-Joanne MacLean

## BUILDING & GROUNDS

### CLEAN TEAM

Early this past fall, the Church Council appointed an "ad hoc" committee whose purpose is twofold: to help identify, clarify and redefine spaces within our own building complex so we can better serve today's needs of our congregation. By doing this we will be better able to more clearly recognize and support each other. The second part of the charge from Council was to thoroughly clean our space, bit by bit, inch by inch and that we have begun to do.

Our building is extensively used daily by many people who are not members of our congregation. There are many church related groups, often part of our church's mission outreach. Some groups make small, but regular monetary donations as they realize the benefit of our location, our heat, light, water, etc. We also have some individuals and organizations who rent space from us.

Another part of the "clean team's" goal is to attack, with energy, the tired and worn out nooks and crannies throughout by sweeping, scrubbing, dispersing cobwebs, polishing and painting to brighten and make our building more welcoming to everyone. As part of this, we created the "Depot," where unused items were left and then offered to anyone who wanted to repurpose them. The Depot served its purpose and is now closed, in hibernation, until it may be needed again. Thanks, everyone, who participated in this effort.

As our clean and define group proceeds, we will be looking at our total building seeking solutions to improve and update it. Collaboration and cooperation are important to us. Before any re-shuffling, condensing and reorganizing happens, we welcome your ideas and suggestions and we will attempt to keep everyone informed. We need your input, your ideas and suggestions so that we can openly share and discuss them and take them back to the Council to endorse.

In good faith

-Margo Neale, Marion Abell, Dawn Chattin,  
Bonnie Girvan, and Scott Couper

### SPACE ENVISIONING WORKSHOP

Saturday, January 12, 2019, 9-11am,  
Centre Church Parlor

You are invited to a light breakfast to learn what our small group has been doing in the past few months as we clean and help reorganize the many spaces in our extensive building complex. Our mission is to clarify space that our congregation needs and to collaborate with other groups, organizations, and renters as we look forward with fresh visions for the future. We want and need your thoughts and ideas to help create safe, welcoming spaces and to support the very worthy causes in which we have invested. Please mark your calendar to have that second cup of coffee or tea, save room for a crumpet, and bring along your creative ideas.

-Margo Neale, Scott Couper, Dawn Chattin  
Bonnie Girvan, and Marion Abell



Everyone is invited to the  
*MOMENT for PEACE*

Friday, December 7 • 5:30-6:00PM

Join Rev Lise Sparrow and a choir of the community for meditative music and candle-lighting for places in the world in need of peace.



## MISSION & SERVICE

Thank you to all who have made donations to Second Sunday offering in the last several months. *Neighbors in Need*, one of the UCC five designated offerings, brought in \$512 in October. At this time, the total for the *Boys and Girls Club*, November's recipient, hasn't been totaled.

The December Second Sunday offering is for the *Christmas Fund*. This ministry cares for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. Many of these retired clergy served multiple small congregations who couldn't afford retirement packages.

A second Special Offering will happen on Christmas Eve and will be donated to the *Samaritan Fund*, the discretionary fund used by the minister.

Season Overflow Shelter (SOS) meals have started. Our first meal that we provided was on 11/18. Thank you to all who participated. We learned that soup and chili are not an easy thing to serve because of bowls and the difficulty in transporting the food. But all else is fine! The meals are a little later this year, so we need to be at Austine campus by 6:00 in order to serve by 6:15. Our next meals are on December 2 and January 6. Look for the sign up sheet on the bulletin board by the parlor.

Looking ahead, on Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30, A Moment for Peace will be lead by Rev Lise Sparrow and the choir of the community for meditative music and candle-lighting. We will honor places in the world in need of peace.

And on Sunday, December 9 at 5:15, the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community will lead the lighting of a candle of Hannukkah, to increase awareness and support of our community members in the LBQTR population.

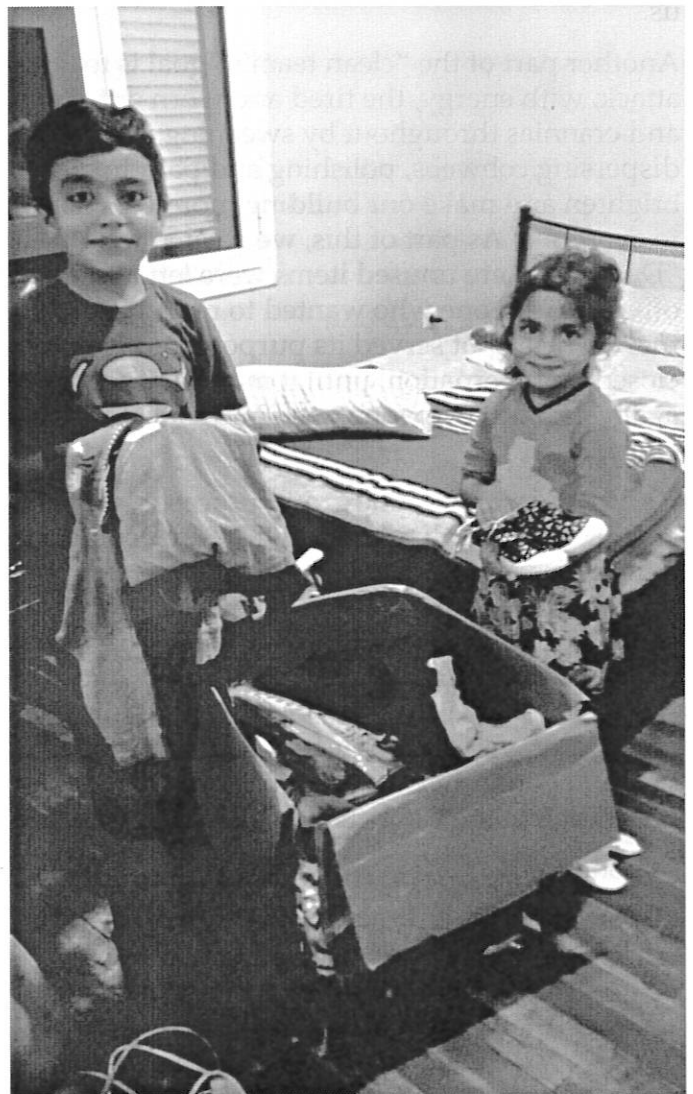
Jenifer Ambler has returned from El Salvador and the Sister Parish Conference in November. We look forward to her presentation about her trip and our sister parish in Cabinitas, hopefully in the coming months. Look for the SERV table this month at the Holiday Bazaar and during coffee hours to buy Christmas presents. Proceeds go to the Luz del Mundo Scholarship fund.

**CARRY ME HOME** would like to thank Pastor Scott and all the parishioners of the Centre Congregational Church who donated money at the special collection for Carry Me Home. We were able to send two boxes with clothing, shoes, school supplies and some toys to two Syrian families who have walked for 8 weeks to escape the war and came to Greece a few months ago.

The two families who have 3 children each (including 6month and 2month old) were very happy to receive needed clothing and shoes and the children were ecstatic to receive toys and school supplies.

Thank you again for your support and God Bless you!

-Inga Plisz Paluch and the *Carry Me Home* team.



## MEMBER CARE

**Position open:** individual willing to be a part of the Member Care Board.

**Qualifications:** A desire to help members of Centre Church family in times of illness; participate in planning for times of celebration, such as Silver Bells Sunday, All church Picnic etc. Correspondent for special occasions; attend monthly board meetings each second Sunday after church.

Equal opportunity volunteer opportunity!  
Please contact Chair, Marion Daley (802) 387 5822 / [MEDaley2@myfairpoint.net](mailto:MEDaley2@myfairpoint.net)

In the November Centre Bells there was a notice about providing a meal for a member or family of this church following a hospital stay or illness. Heidi Mario is creating a sign up sheet that will be posted on the CHURCH LIFE bulletin board. It will be there by the time you receive this newsletter.

The Administrator has taken the orders for poinsettias that they set up on a beautiful display for the Sundays before Christmas. After the Christmas Eve service you may take them home. Some are left to decorate the church during the Christmas season. Others are left to be delivered to members at nursing homes, or at home and not able to attend church. We need a couple of people to deliver these for some Christmas cheer. If you can deliver one, let Karen Rydant, Member Care contact for December know at (603)256-6374.

Gisela Robeck continues to create illustrated letters that go out by USPS mail or via the internet to members near and far. She uses pictures to show happy events happening here at Centre Church. One of the recent ones of Silver Bells celebration is posted on the bulletin board now. Take a look.

- Marion Daley



## THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

In the rear of the sanctuary are two white cabinets, installed around 30 years ago. The Book of Remembrance is located in the one on the left side as you enter from the rear of the sanctuary. You can look through the glass covering it. You may slide it out to view the names written there.

When a member dies their family often lists Centre Church as a place where friends, relatives, acquaintances can honor their memory with a monetary gift. This money sent to the church is recorded by our administrator and our financial secretary.

Mary Bristol has been the deacon who sends the letter acknowledging the gift and the amount and thanking them for their donation to Centre Church. Then Mary passes on the names of the donors to be inscribed into the Book of Remembrance.

Right now Marion Daley is recording them in the book. If there is anyone with some printing skills this might be the job for you.

Sometimes family members send money on the birthdays of their loved ones who have died as a special gift. These also are recorded with the date of the gift.

## MAY WE PRAY FOR YOU?

It has been our custom for many years at Centre Church to submit prayer requests on those little cards found in the pew racks. The pastor reads these prior to our time of corporate prayer.

Many are requests for healing. Please be sensitive to the wishes of those you wish to pray for. Some people do not want their names or their needs for prayer spoken to the whole congregation.

These cards are for reporting joys also. Sometimes people share a joy, or tell of an answered prayer.

Usually the pastor asks if there are others that have not been submitted and people speak their requests. We *strongly* urge you to use the cards to write your joy or prayer request. Why? because most of the congregation cannot hear you speaking from the pew. It is a large sanctuary.

## PEOPLE



A word of good cheer would be warmly received by members and friends of our church who are in nursing homes, assisted living centers, or are housebound as of September 26.

**Fran Burrows**—Bentley Commons  
197 Water St., Keene, NH  
603-352-1282

**Jeanne Rueter**—Thompson House  
80 Maple St., Brattleboro, VT  
254-4977

**Nancy Clarke**—Holton Home  
158 Western Ave, Brattleboro, VT  
254-4155

**Wanda Godfrey**—Vernon Hall  
13 Greenway Dr., Vernon, VT  
254-2444

**Phyllis Hickok**  
1520 Little Blue Stem Ct., Ames IA 50014  
515-337-1956

**Jane Reed**  
461 Grafton Rd., #201, Townshend VT  
802-221-4213

**Karen Getty Peter**—Langdon Place  
136A Arch St., Keene, NH

**Dot Atomanuk**  
665 U. Dummerston Rd., Brattleboro, VT  
254-6929

*Please let the Administrator know  
if we've missed someone*

### BIRTHDAYS

3 Damon Kindopp  
7 Deborah Cope  
13 Alice Stockwell  
Isabelle Mann  
17 Phyllis Hickok  
19 Pat Austin  
24 Mary Ellen Bixby  
Sen Pu  
25 Jesus of Nazareth  
31 Roger Brown



### IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

**Michael Vose** and the **Everett Family**

**Art Freeman**, at home

**Margit Brosnan**, recovering at home from hip replacement

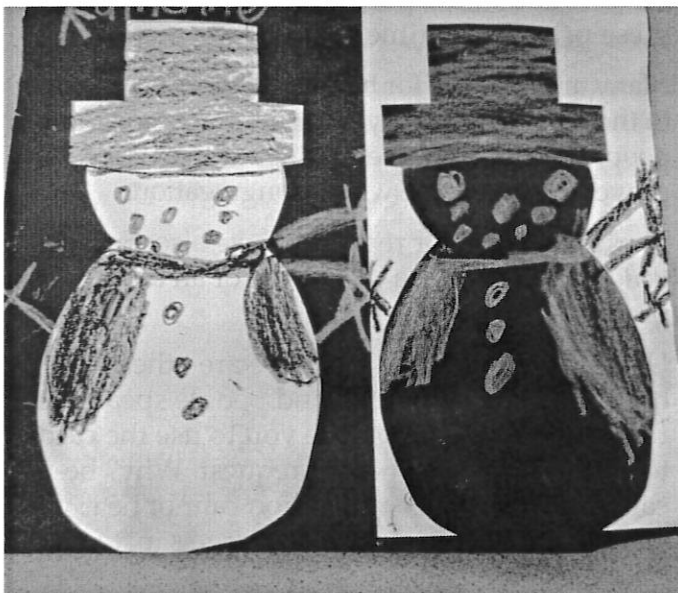
**Kim Lewis** began cancer treatment on 11/8.  
Please keep Kim and her partner, Toni McDougal, in your prayers

**Jenifer Ambler** and **Kate Maisner** in the recent death of their aunt/great aunt, Marcy Dunne from CT

**Darrel Daley** who prepares for hip surgery on Tuesday, 18 December, 2018

**Dawn Chattin**, who broke her arm on Monday

**Joanne MacLean**, who was taken to Keene Hospital on Thursday for a pacemaker.



**SCOTT'S SERMONS** can be accessed at the church website or facebook page:

<http://www.centrechurchvermont.org/audio--video.html> -or-

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro-VT-](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro-VT-632678343519640/notes/?ref=page_internal)

[632678343519640/notes/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Centre-Congregational-Church-Brattleboro-VT-632678343519640/notes/?ref=page_internal) -or-

From the website Welcome page, click on the "Audio & Video" button in the list at top (depending on your browser, it might be immediately visible or it might come up if you click "More" or "Other" on the top right).

# DECEMBER 2018

\*Holy Communion celebrated

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b> 9 <sup>10</sup> – 1 <sup>00</sup> CHRISTMAS FAIR 1 <sup>00</sup> MESSIAH SING
<b>2</b> 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship*/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 5 <sup>00</sup> Overflow Shelter 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	<b>3</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 4 <sup>30</sup> BCC Board 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl	<b>4</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>5</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 12 <sup>00</sup> Brown Bag Lunch	<b>6</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 5 <sup>30</sup> Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting 5 <sup>30</sup> Moment for Peace	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 11 <sup>30</sup> Board Meetings 5 <sup>15</sup> Chanukah Service 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	<b>10</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>30</sup> AA District 8	<b>11</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>12</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional	<b>13</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 5 <sup>30</sup> Choir Rehearsal	<b>14 CB DEADLINE</b> 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	<b>17</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl	<b>18</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>19</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional	<b>20</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 5 <sup>30</sup> Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b> 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	<b>24 Christmas Eve</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>00</sup> Candlelight Service	<b>25 Christmas Day</b> OFFICE CLOSED 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>26</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional	<b>27</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 1 <sup>30</sup> Quilting Ministry 4 <sup>30</sup> Women's Spirit 5 <sup>30</sup> Choir Rehearsal	<b>28</b> 11 <sup>30</sup> Loaves & Fishes 7 <sup>30</sup> AA Meeting	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 9 <sup>00</sup> Book Study 10 <sup>00</sup> Worship/FIA 10 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting 6 <sup>00</sup> AA Meeting	<b>31 New Year's Eve</b> 8 <sup>45</sup> Devotional 4 <sup>30</sup> Prayer Shawl 7 <sup>00</sup> Amidon Concert					



## DECEMBER LECTIONARY TEXTS

**Sunday, 2 December**  
1st Sunday of Advent  
Jer 33:14-16, Ps 25:1-10  
I Thess 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36

**Monday, 24 December**  
Christmas Eve  
Isa 62:6-12, Ps 97, Titus 3:4-7,  
Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

**Sunday, 9 December**  
2nd Sunday of Advent  
Mal 3:1-4 or Bar 5:1-9  
Luke 1:68-79, Phil 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

**Tuesday, 25 December**  
Christmas Day  
Isa 9:2-7, Ps 96, Titus 2:11-14,  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

**Sunday, 16 December**  
3rd Sunday of Advent  
Zeph 3:14-20, Isa 12:2-6  
Phil 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

**Sunday, 30 December**  
1st Sunday after Christmas  
1 Sam 2:18-20, 26, Ps 148  
Col 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52

**Sunday, 23 December**  
4th Sunday of Advent  
Micah 5:2-5a,  
Luke 1:46b-55 or Ps 80:1-7  
Heb 10:5-10,  
Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

News items and articles should be submitted to the church administrator. Please contact the administrator with address changes or requests to be added or removed from the *Centre Bells* mailing list at: (802)254-4730 [admin@centrechurchvt.org](mailto:admin@centrechurchvt.org)

