



DATES TO NOTE:

Saturday, Dec 3
Christmas Concert
7:30pm

Sunday, Dec 11
YPP Bake Sale
Congregational Meeting
12:00pm

Wednesday, Dec 21
Longest Night Service
7:30pm

Christmas Eve, Dec 24
Family Service
(Christmas Pageant)
4:00pm
Candlelight Services
7:00pm & 10:30pm

Christmas Sunday
Communion
Lessons & Carols
One Service — 10:45am

The Disciple



I didn't know what to expect last July as I sat in the large auditorium at Purdue University with 5,000 youth and adults waiting for the worship service to begin. It was my first time at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. The service turned out to be lots of fun, engaging, energizing and inspirational. There in that auditorium I saw the word that is our theme word for Advent this year. As the liturgy flashed up on the screen, I saw the word, "Expect." It wasn't made to stand out from the other words on the screen. It just jumped out at me, as if speaking to me about how to approach Advent this year.

As I've looked closer at the word, "expect" really is a great word to describe what we do during Advent. The Latin form of the word means to "look out for," which is definitely an Advent thing to do. Here are some of the dictionary definitions for "expect":

- to regard (something) as likely to happen,
- to regard (someone) as likely to do or be something
- to believe that (someone or something) will arrive soon.

All of those definitions are about Advent. Advent is this time when we believe something is going to happen, someone is likely to be something and do something, someone will arrive soon. Advent is expecting God to show up, to become one of us, to be among us, to bring God's good news into the world. And it is certainly a time to renew our belief that not only did God arrive 2,000 years ago, but that God will come again soon.

What do we regard as likely to happen when the presence of God arrives? What will

Emmanuel, God-with-us, do when our long wait is over? How will our lives, our life together and this world be different when the presence of God takes on human form and dwells among us? Those questions help us examine our own expectations of Advent and Christmas so that we live and follow God's mission for the world.

In one of our Advent scripture passages this year (Matthew 11:2-11), a group of people approached Jesus after all the miracles and teaching he had done and asked, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" Another translation asks the same question this way, "Are you the One we have been expecting, or are we still waiting?" The questions invite us to think about what we believe Jesus will do and what he can and continues to do. What do we expect to happen in our lives, in our community, in our nation and world when God shows up? The Bible gives us signs to watch for and even calls us to live those signs of God's presence. God calls us to live not as if Christmas hasn't happened, but as clear examples that God's presence is among us already, shaping who we are, how God intends the world to be and what it means to trust that God will one day come again and finish what was started on the cross and in the empty tomb.

What are we expecting from Jesus this season? What hopes and expectations do we have that Christ's arrival will fulfill and accomplish? As we light the Advent candles each Sunday, we will name our expectations for the coming of the Light into the world and reflect on what God expects from us. We'll celebrate the good

(Continued on page 2)

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news in the music our choir performs throughout the season. We'll give gifts on Sunday, December 4th to families of those in prison, to people without proper clothes for this winter season and families who do not have gifts to put under the tree. We'll name our brokenness, pain and struggles at the Longest Night Service on December 21 and celebrate the good news of our lives and this world on Christmas Eve. Then, we'll gather for a Service of Lessons & Carols on Christmas morning at 10:45am and worship on New Year's Day at 10:45am, celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper both days, as we live into the expectations God's presence brings for this world God loves.

Join us in waiting expectantly this season, expecting God to arrive, looking for the signs of God's presence at work among us and celebrating the Light dawning in new ways through the One who is Emmanuel, God-with-us, our Savior and Lord.



Tami and I joined other religious leaders in leading the community service of thanks on November 20 at the Hudson Valley Islamic Community Center

Chip



Longest Night Service

Join us on Wednesday evening, December 21st at 7:30 p.m. for the Longest Night Service in preparation for the Light coming into the world on Christmas morning. Sometimes known as "Blue Christmas" and traditionally held on the longest night of the year, this beautiful candle-lit worship service offers hope, support, prayer and quiet reflection to those for whom the Advent season may also bring sadness, grief, and worry. Please join us for this peaceful and comforting worship which provides solace and hope for the Light which is coming.



YPP's Annual Bake Sale—Sunday December 11th

It's the event everyone looks forward to! Stop by our tables from 8:30am to 1:00pm and let us help you with your holiday baking!

2017-2018 YPP Registration

YPP will be accepting applications for the 2017-2018 school year starting December, 2016. This period is set aside for members of the congregation and returning students. Registration opens to the general public on January 1, 2017.



Please contact Lisa Eliasson at 962-8712 to arrange a tour!



Below you will see the various ways in which you can participate in Giving Sunday. If you are unable to attend services on December 4, you may drop off items in the church office by December 10. We ask you to consider giving to one or more of these efforts.

Food Pantry Cards — Need a gift for someone that has everything? Looking for an alternative to the commercial Christmas gift? Need a hostess gift to take to Thanksgiving dinner or a holiday party? Why not make a donation to our Food Pantry in honor of a friend or

family member? Donations can be made in any amount AND they will be doubled via our matching program with the FPCY Food Pantry Trust! For each donation, you can select a card that you can mail or deliver in--person. Stop by the table in the gathering space after church.

The Hat and Mitten Tree — Have you seen the “Hat and Mitten” Christmas tree in the hallway leading into the sanctuary? The Deacons would like to invite all of you to participate in this project again this year. The hats, scarves, gloves and mittens that you provide (any time prior to Dec. 17) will be distributed during the second Food Pantry in December. Pantry clients will be able to select hats, mittens, scarves or headbands from the Christmas tree for each of their family members before obtaining their grocery items that day. “The Knit-Togethers” do an amazing job each year and contribute over 100 handmade items, but we need your help to be able to have enough to give each of our Pantry clients. It is a joyful event for ALL involved!

Bedford Prison Children’s Center — We’ve been participating in this ministry for more than 25 years. This program helps Moms learn to be better parents and seeks to ease the burden on their children. Moms “buy” and wrap the presents and give them to their kids during holiday visits. Sometimes these are the only presents their kids get.

Suggested items for smaller children include: games, art supplies, building toys, and science toys that Moms can do with their kids; baby dolls (especially dolls of color) and clothing, sports equipment.

Items for teens: gloves, hats, nice scarves, wallets, gift cards, sports equipment, headphones for ipods and phones, art kits, make up kits, and men’s grooming kits, etc.

The Prison rejects orange, green, or grey clothing.

Toys for Teens — FPCY runs a Toys for Tots distribution each December. Most of the donations received are for young children (not too surprising given the name). However, many of our food pantry clients and other people in need have older children as well. We are asking the congregation to help us supplement the Toys for Tots program with Toys for Teens — gifts for older children and teens (ages 12-18). These will be distributed on December 10. Some ideas for gifts

For girls: nail polish sets, perfume, handbags, makeup kits, dress scarves.

For boys: cologne, Axe body wash, shave kits, hair gel, model cars.

For both: basketballs, soccer balls, diaries, books, games, CDs, winter scarves, grooming kits, art supplies, gift cards.

Jan Peek/Noon Time Meal Thank you to Ruth Deemer and John and Judy Chessa for volunteering to prepare the meal for the Jan Peek Clients on Christmas Eve. If you would like to participate in this mission outreach, stop and check the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway at the Gathering Space for available dates for 2017, Questions? See Pat Prauda.

Noon Time Meal will be doing the Preparation for the Meal for the Salvation Army Tuesday the 13th of December at 1pm, { please note the time change} at the Peekskill Presbyterian church (entrance to the kitchen is off Washington Street). If you would like to help it is approximately 1.5 hours. We would like to Thank Alison Child and Margaret Gruber for Baking the Desserts this month. If anyone would like to make a dessert one month please talk to Pat Prauda.

Stewardship Commission

Have you made a pledge for 2017? The Practice of Extravagant Generosity helps us become what God wants us to be and assists us in our quest to live life as generously as God is to us. To engage the practice of Extravagant Generosity, we are inviting people to tithe (10%) or to begin a journey of proportional giving. If you are already a proportional giver but have not reached a tithe, please consider raising your giving by 1% of your income. Pledges may be made with the commitment cards on the front pew or online at myfpcy.org. If giving online, log into your account, click the green "Pledge Now" button. You'll also be able to set up electronic giving, if you wish. All gifts are an expression of our trust in God's provision for us and our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord over all of our lives. Believing that giving makes following God real, prayerfully consider your pledge for 2017.



Deacons' Corner

I ask for your help, Lord God,
and you will keep me safe.
You are the shelter from my every storm,
and so you hear me pray.

I ask for your help, Lord God,
And you will keep me safe.
You are the Lord, you are my everything,
And so you hear me pray.

You are the shelter from my every storm, and so you hear me pray – and so you hear me pray.

Words and music by Brian and Sherry Pearson-" You Will Keep Me Safe"

The songs we teach our children in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School never cease to amaze me. They are so simple and yet they contain the greatest truths. How can it be that we adults are capable of writing such beautiful songs for children and yet so easily forget to live out their very messages in our own lives?!

Our so called "modern day" lives seem to be so completely out of control. We are always on the run, always making or missing deadlines, overloaded with emails, junk mail, voice mail, snail mail, texts, "news" and information. We are always trying to catch up, rush, make time, or running out of time. With this last election and all of the emotional turmoil it has produced we are now living in what is being called "The United States of Anxiety." What has happened to us?? and how did we get here?!

More importantly, what is the answer? How do we calm down, slow down, find our center, re-group, take stock or

Food Pantry Item-of-the-Month

Rice

Next Dates:
December 3 & 17
January 14 & 28
9 to 11am

decide what we really need to do, when to do it, or even if we CAN do it? Life seems far from easy – we long for the old days when we could "while away the hours" - I think that is from a song – maybe "**The Wizard of Oz**" - Ha! Another children's song! These are "the best of times –

the worst of times – the age of wisdom – the age of foolishness" - Dickens, right?

In trying to deal with my own unease and underlying anxiety I recently came across the book, **Fearless**, by Max Lucado. Max talks about the many things we all fear and dread and how this fear and anxiety sucks the life out of our souls and drains us dry. It's an easy read but a powerful reminder of what we actually can do to reconnect to our Source – our Heavenly Father – the one who loves us, knows us, cares about us and has promised to always be there for us.

In one part of the book, Max talks about tackling our problems or just plain approaching life with what he calls "worry-stoppers." And what do you know, #1 on his list is.... Pray. Pray First. Don't pace up and down, don't fret and wring your hands, don't join the chorus of complainers. Simply pray. I Peter 5:7 says, "Cast all of your cares upon Him. Let God have all your worries and cares, for he is always thinking about you and watching everything that concerns you."

#2 on Max's "worry-stoppers" list is to Slow Down. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." Psalm 37:7 Let God be enough. Our Heavenly Father knows all your needs. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness and all

things will be added unto you." Matthew 6:32-33
Lucado has additional "worry-stoppers" you might like to check out as well which – so sorry - I don't have room for here.

Bottom line: We need NOT fear! Our hope is not in our own strength, not in our own might, not in our own government. Our hope is in God our Father who created us and loves us – who sustains us and redeems us. Let us move forward in these strange times with hope in our hearts, with joy, with eager anticipation, in childlike trust as Jesus instructed us to do. God will help us to see what he is calling us to do – He will show us the way.

There is much Kingdom Building to be done. The Deacons are entering a new period of discernment along with our Session as we consider where God is leading us as a church and the Deacons in their ministry. The Session has recently reviewed and approved our recommendation to move forward and make our Food Pantry a model of "Choice" thereby moving away from the older model we have used in which we hand out pre-packaged bags of groceries to our clients. With this newer "Choice model, clients will be able to make choices about the foods they will select from the shelves much like when we shop in a grocery store. This model will take a great deal of planning, organization, resources and training. We will need volunteers in new and different capacities and the clients will be shown how to proceed on pantry days to pick out foods that are more suitable and appropriate for their family's needs and tastes. Another benefit is that our resources will be optimized, streamlined and there will be less waste of foods that are not desired or appropriate for our clients.

The Deacons look forward to the task at hand and hope to have a whole new system up and running before next summer. We ask all of you for your continued prayers and support as we work to make this new model a reality. We will particularly need volunteers to help us in the following ways:

- to come on alternate Friday afternoons to help unload the Food Bank truck and stack items on the shelves for distribution the following day;
- to come on Saturdays to assist in the flow of traffic in the new Pantry Set-up;
- to prepare meals for "Loaves and Fishes" for members who are home bound after hospitalization or illness;
- to transport members unable to drive to medical tests & appointments, church functions or important errands.

Please contact any one of our Deacons or the church office if you are able to serve in any capacity. We are happy to receive your help. God Bless you all and may you have a blessed and happy Christmas!

Carol Thorne-Gaetani for the Deacons

December 11

Middle School Youth
4:30 – 6 pm
High School Youth
6 – 7:30 pm

December 18

All Youth
Christmas Caroling
3 – 6 pm

Questions? Please reach out to the church office by phone or email youth@fpcyorktown.org

FPCY YOUTH



Ryan, TJ, Aidan, Emily, Sophie and Sarah on the November 11 Midnight Run

Youth Groups will meet Sunday, December 11 - Middle School at 4:30 and High School at 6 pm.

We have something dramatic to work on in the Middle School group, so if you like theater (from either in front of the curtain or behind), please join us! Our High School group will be getting creative too. Got some old T-shirts? Bring them to Youth Group and we will give them new life in an upcycling project - and help decorate the Youth Room at the same time.

And on December 18th, join us for Christmas Caroling from 3 - 6 pm. All Youth are welcome as well as Adults who like to make a joyful noise! We will meet at the church at 3 pm then split into groups to carol to our home-bound friends and neighbors. We'll return to the church for food and fellowship time.

Are you getting Youth related emails? If you or your Youth are not already on our email list and would like to be, please send Steph a message at youth@fpcyorktown.org. You'll get reminders about upcoming Youth Group activities as well as info on how to get involved in upcoming activities in other ways in and around our congregation.

Operations Commission



It has been an eventful November for the operations commission. Many repairs have been made this month to maintain and preserve our place of worship. The circulator pump for the boiler was failing and the commission was faced with a decision, replace the motor or replace the entire unit. The conclusion although more costly, was to replace the entire unit. This decision proved to be correct as the old unit had many leaks and was not repairable. Additionally, the bathroom by the office should be up and running in a couple of weeks now that the roof leak has been taken care of.

I would also like to take a moment to thank Matt Hagar and David Lee for stepping up as interim co-chairs of the operations committee. Matt and Dave have helped immensely and have volunteered many hours to numerous Church projects.

Merry Christmas,
- Kirk Larsen, Operations Co-Chairman

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will be having their Christmas Party in Fellowship Hall this year on December 21 at noon. The Tree will be up and Lynda Spring and Stephanie Hare will lead us in song. We will also have a \$5 grab bag gift! Sounds like FUN? Why not join us for a fun afternoon. Reservations and money should be given to Pat Prauda by Sunday December 11th, or sign up on the sheet in the hallway by the Gathering Space.

Coffee Hour Help Needed

If you would like to help, there are several ways: set-up on a Saturday afternoon or early Sunday morning, re-setting for the 2nd service on Sunday or clean-up after the 10:45am service. Please see any Congregational life Member, or sign-up in the book on the dessert table on a Sunday morning.

Knitting Groups

Prayer Shawl Group will meet next on December 7th at 9:30 am and again on the 21st at 10:30am. Anyone who would like to join us in knitting is most welcome. In addition to the regular knitters who come on Wednesdays, we have at least seven off-site knitters. Contacts: Marianna Sherman (914-737-8294) or Fran Schiel (914-245-5396).

The Knit Togethers' Amazing Show and Tell will be presented on Sunday, December 4, 2016 from 9:30am-12:30pm. The show will display our year's work for our giving to others in need. View all the beautiful hand knitted items; it's fun and free! See you there.

The group will meet next on December 12, 2016 and January 9 & 23, 2017. Come and join us as we make plans for 2017. All who knit or crochet are welcome to join us. Our meetings are usually held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays, 10:00am to 11:30am in the Lounge/Rm 15. Contacts: Norean Radke (962-4370) or Lois Ostling (962-2809).



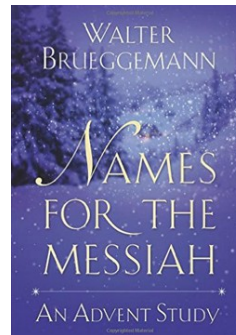
Many thanks to the generous hands and many hours that enabled us to give 98 blankets to the Linus Project this year!

Adult Education Commission

Our Sunday morning Advent study will be **Names for The Messiah**, a book by Walter Brueggemann. The four-week study (11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18) looks at the names used in Isaiah 9:2-7. From the introduction to Brueggemann's book:

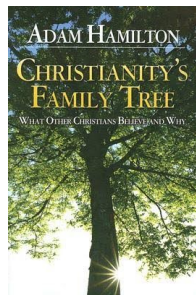
"Isaiah 9:2-7 is a well-known oracle, a divine utterance given to us, that uses four royal titles in verse 6 – Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. This Advent study will ponder each title and how the people understood it then, how Jesus did or did not fulfill the title, and how Christians interpret Jesus as the representative of that title."

Join us on one, two, or every Sunday morning as we "ponder" together. Books will be available for an \$8 donation.



Sunday Mornings @ 9:30 am

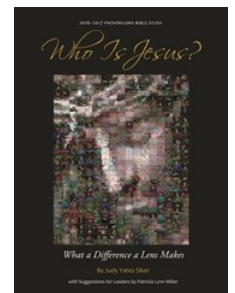
Adult Education will focus on the book **Names for the Messiah** by Walter Brueggemann. Join us as this Advent season as we ponder the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.



In January our Sunday morning focus will be on **Christianity's Family Tree: What Other Christians Believe and Why**, a book and DVD by Adam Hamilton. Join us as you are able as we study what Christians believe in each of eight traditions: Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Presbyterianism, Anglicanism, Baptists, Pentecostalism and Methodism. Our January study will begin on Sunday, January 8 and end on February 26, just in time for Lent! (Ash Wednesday falls on March 1 this coming year.)

The Women's Circle will continue to meet on the first Wednesday morning of each month, from 10:30 until noon. The group will be led by Tami and will follow the Horizons curriculum, **Who Is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes**. All

women are welcome to attend one or more of these meetings. You don't have to attend every session to get a lot out of the study!

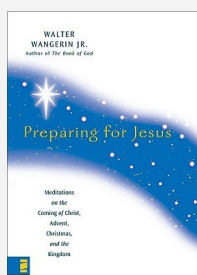
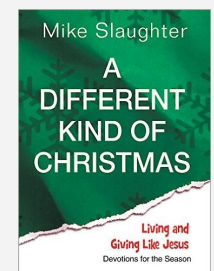


Christmas Reading from the Church Library:



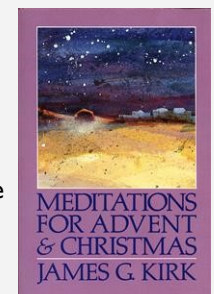
Christmas is Not Your Birthday, by Mike Slaughter (248 S). In the midst of holiday shopping, we need a reminder that Christmas is Jesus' birthday, not ours! This book will help reclaim the broader meaning of Jesus' birth and experience a Christmas season with more peace and joy than any toy or gadget could ever bring.

A Different Kind of Christmas; Devotions for the Season, by Mike Slaughter (242 S). A companion volume, containing 30 short readings. Each includes a scripture passage, a prayer, and stories about helping others at Christmas.



Preparing for Jesus; Meditations on the Coming of Christ, Advent, Christmas, and the Kingdom, by Walter Wangerin, Jr. (242 W). A devotional journey into the heart of the Christmas season, emphasizing both the intimate nature of the event and its relevance for us today.

Meditations for Advent and Christmas, by James G. Kirk (242 K). Daily Bible passages and reflections from the beginning of Advent until Epiphany, celebrating the many ways the Holy Spirit surprises us and causes us to feel Christ's presence.



-Carol Jensen, Church Librarian

Many of our members & friends remember their loved ones at Christmas by helping to decorate the Sanctuary with Poinsettias.

Please fill out the form below or contact Lisa in the office (914-245-2186) or office@fpcyorktown.org by December 18

Names will be published in the Christmas Eve bulletin. You may purchase as many flowers as you wish. Each can be in honor or in memory of as many people as you wish. The cost of each poinsettia is \$10.

Name: _____

How Many: _____ Enclosed: \$ _____

Inscription: _____

Poinsettias may be picked up after the 11pm Christmas Eve Service or left for the following Sunday.



2016 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal Schedule



Calling all angels and shepherds!

Join us in sharing the joy and wonder of the Christmas story with our congregation! On Christmas Eve, our children will lead us in worship with the Christmas Pageant at the 4:00 p.m. Family Service.

Rehearsals will be held on:

Saturday, December 3, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 10, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 17, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 24, 2-3:30 p.m.

If your child (up to 6th grade) would like to participate in the Christmas Pageant, please contact Tami Seidel.

A Special Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown will be held on:

Sunday, December 11, 2016 in the Sanctuary following the 10:45am Worship Service

for the purpose of:

- the election of two Youth Elders, Jan 2017—Aug 2017;
- the election of two Youth Elders, Sep 2017—Aug 2018;
- the election of two Ruling Elders, Class of 2017;
- the election of six Ruling Elders, Class of 2019;
- the election of two Youth Deacons, Jan 2017—Aug 2017;
- the election of two Youth Deacons, Sep 2017—Aug 2018;
- the election of one Deacon, Class of 2017;
- the election of one Deacon, Class of 2018;
- the election of four Deacons, Class of 2019;

and to conduct any other business which may properly come before the meeting.

First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown
2880 Crompond Road
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Non-Profit Organization
Bulk Rate U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 20

The Disciple

December 2016

www.FPCYorktown.org

914-245-2186

office@fpcyorktown.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday, 9:00-5:00

Co-Pastors

Rev. Chip Low

Rev. Tami Seidel



Facebook.com/fpcyorktown



@fpcyorktown




@fpcyorktown



office@fpcyorktown.org

December

				1 10:00am Adult Bible Study 6:45pm Bells 8:00pm Choir	2	3 9am Food Pantry 1:30pm Pageant Rehearsal 7:30 Christmas Concert
4 Advent #2 Giving Sunday / Communion 8:30 & 10:45am Worship Services 9:30am Church School, Adult Ed, & Confirmation Knit Togethers' Show & Tell 12:00pm Youth Bells	5 7pm Green Faith	6 7:30pm Session	7 9:30am Prayer Shawl 10:30am Women's Circle 7:00pm Disciple 4	8 10:00am Adult Bible Study 6:45pm Bells 8:00pm Choir	9	10 9am Toys for Tots 1:30pm Pageant Rehearsal
11 Advent #3, YPP Bake Sale 8:30 & 10:45am Worship Services 9:30am Church School, Adult Ed, & Confirmation 12:00pm Congregational Meeting Youth Bells 4:30pm MS Youth Group 6:00pm HS Youth Group	12 10am Knit Togethers	13 9:30am Disciple 4 1:00pm Noontime Meal (Peekskill) 7:30pm Worship & Operations Commissions	14 9:00am Stewardship 7:00pm Disciple 4	15 10:00am Adult Bible Study 6:45pm Bells 8:00pm Choir	16	17 9am Food Pantry 1:30pm Pageant Rehearsal
18 Advent #4 8:30 & 10:45am Worship Services 9:30am Church School, Adult Ed, & Confirmation 12:00pm Youth Bells, Deacons 3:00pm All Youth Caroling	19 7:30pm Education	20 9:30am Disciple 4 7:30pm Mission Operations	21 10:30am Prayer Shawl 12pm Lunch Bunch 7:30pm Longest Night Service	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 2pm Pageant Rehearsal 4pm Family Service 6pm Jan Peek Meal 7pm & 10:30pm Candlelight Service
25 Merry Christmas! 10:45am Lessons & Carols Communion Service 	26 <i>office closed</i>	27	28	29	30	31