

*Our Mission is to be an inclusive community of faith that preaches the word of God, teaches the love of Jesus Christ and reaches out to all through the Holy Spirit.*

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

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Words from Rev. Whiston

Christian Education News

Did You Know

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Happenings

**Sunday Worship** 10:30 am  
(Nursery Care provided)

**Sunday School** 10:30 am  
**Classes**

**Hymn Sing Sundays**  
(last Sunday each month)  
10:15 am



December 2012

## Words from our Minister

Though most of the world celebrates the new year on January 1, the church calendar celebrates Advent as the beginning of the year. From the Latin for 'coming' or 'arrival', this season of the church was originally set aside as a time of fasting and prayer, a spiritual discipline to fully (as much as anyone is able) prepare oneself to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Centuries ago, it was a lengthy time of six weeks (similar to Lent which precedes Easter), but now is a four week season. And is hardly a time of fasting!!

I think of Advent as one of the first gifts of Christmas. A gift in the form of a reminder not to lose myself in the craziness of the calendar, in the temptation of shopping, in the madness instead of the message. If we begin our four week journey with such a prayer written upon our hearts, we are more likely to be spiritually enriched and moved by the marvelous and mystical working of God.

Set aside time for yourself to experience the richness of traditions and music and customs and foods, many of which are offered through programs here at South Church. For whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. *Charles*

### This Year Will Be Different

Who among us does not have dreams that this year will be different?

Who among us does not intend to go peacefully, leisurely, carefully toward Bethlehem,

For who among us likes to cope with the commercialism of Christmas which lures us to tinsel not only the tree but also our hearts?

Who among us intends to get caught up in tearing around and wearing down?

Who among us does not long for:  
gifts that give love?  
shopping in serenity?  
cards and presents sent off early?

Who among us does not yearn for  
time for our hearts to ponder the Word of God?  
moments kneeling and bursts of song?  
the peace of quiet calm for our spirit's journey?

This year we intend to follow the Star instead of the crowd.

But, of course, we always do intend the best. (And sometimes best intentions tend to get the best of us!)

This year, when we find ourselves off the path again (and we invariably will!) let's not add yet another stress to our Advent days, that of "trying to do Christmas correctly"!

Instead, let's approach the birth of our Lord with *joyful* abandon!

By Anne Weems, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*





### Christmas Bible School

Join us for a **Christmas Bible School** and **Pageant Rehearsal** on Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Our Board of Christian Education and teachers will gather to share the Christmas story with our children ages 4 years old to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We will make crafts, play games, eat a healthy snack, and sing Christmas carols during the afternoon.

At 4:00pm we will head over to the church sanctuary to practice for our **Christmas pageant** being held on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am. Pick up time will be at 5:00pm at the church. Please contact me at [heather@southchurchucc.org](mailto:heather@southchurchucc.org) if your child would like to participate. We would love to have them!

### Nursery Care

**Pageant, December 16** - Nursery Care  
**Christmas Eve 4:00pm service**– Nursery Care  
**Christmas Eve 7:30pm Service** - No Nursery Care  
**December 30-** No Church School or Nursery Care  
**Nursery Care and Church School**  
**resume on January 6th.**

### H.O.M.E.

On the weekend of November 9-11, 6 middle school youth and I ventured to Orland, ME to an artist's co-op named H.O.M.E. There are 5 homeless shelters, a thrift shop, and a food pantry located on the property, as well as other places. While we were there, we met with other youth leaders and middle school youth from around the state. We volunteered our time putting together wreath boxes and stacking firewood. We also served a dinner to the area's people who needed to be fed. We played many games together and laughed a lot. It was a fun time being with one another.



### Live Nativity

This year, our **Live Nativity** will be held on Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm on the front steps of the church. As always, we would love our middle school and high school youth to participate by being a shepherd, the Angel Gabriel, Joseph or Mary. This is our traditional opportunity for our South Church community to share the story of Jesus and His birth during Prelude weekend in Kennebunkport. If your youth would like to participate, please contact me at [heather@southchurchucc.org](mailto:heather@southchurchucc.org).



### Advent Wreath Making

Please join us after church on Sunday, December 2nd in the Community House for our annual **Advent Wreath Making**. Advent wreaths are a Christian tradition that symbolizes the passage of the four weeks of Advent. It is usually an evergreen wreath with four candles and often, a fifth, white candle in the center. Beginning with the First Sunday of Advent, the lighting of a candle can be accompanied by a Bible reading and prayers. An additional candle is lit each week until, by the last Sunday before Christmas, all four candles are lit. Many Advent wreaths include a fifth, Christ candle which is lit at Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The Board of Christian Education will supply all the materials needed to make a wreath as well as a pasta lunch with drinks and dessert! A sign up sheet is located in the hallway of the church.

## You Should Know...

### Poinsettia Plants

The deadline for ordering a poinsettia plant for Christmas worship or to be delivered to someone home-bound is December 9, to Sarah in the front office.

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### Annual Reports

A reminder, that all committee and officer reports for the Annual Report are due to Sarah in the office by December 28, please.

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### Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 27, following the service of worship. Snow date is the following week, February 3.

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### Biloxi

Based on the info session a few weeks ago, there is a smaller number of folks interested in the **April 20-27 Back Bay Mission Trip** to Biloxi than our previous trip.. We need commitments by December 31 in order to inform Biloxi the size of our group and for purchasing of plane tickets. Please let Rev. Charles know accordingly.

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### Stewardship

Your prompt return is appreciated of your 2013 pledge cards to support programs and mission for the coming year. Offering boxes will be available for pickup later this month. Additional copies of stewardship letters and pledge cards are available on the Landing table. Thank you!

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**The Women's Association is still selling pecans** if you would like to pick up one, two or more bags! \$12 for each bag.

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**Circle of Giving will begin December 2 through the Advent season.** An opportunity for alternative Christmas gifts to one of the eight non-profit groups (see bulletin board); in honor, in memory or in the name of a person you select. Sponsored by our Outreach Committee.

## Did You Know...

Did you know... that we celebrate our **175<sup>th</sup> year in 2013**?! For the past couple months, a committee has been pondering several events to take place next year to mark this anniversary. Thoughts at this time include a special meal..... a gathering of the arts..... a musical concert .....and a **special service** on Sunday January 13; precisely 175 years (and three days!) after our founding.

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Did you know... that *anyone* from the congregation can **usher** at Sunday services? It requires only that you be at church a little early to meet with the Deacon in Charge who will be very glad to see you and will guide you through the process. There is a sign-up board in the downstairs hall. Please consider volunteering for this simple way to serve your church!

### Life Journeys

Wedding	November 3	Colleen McLaughlin and Andrew Santos
Deaths	November 8	Scott Allan Higgins

## *Christmas Poinsettias*

*Deadline to order Christmas Poinsettias with a message for printing in the Christmas bulletins is December 9, 2012*

Please complete the information below for both plants and memorial gifts.  
The donation is \$12.00 per large plant (7 ½ inch pot, 2 plants per pot). **OR**  
\$6.00 for a smaller plant to be delivered for one of our 10 homebound folks before Christmas.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts will be gladly received and will be forwarded in support of Child Abuse Prevention Council of York County.

**Please indicate how many plants you wish to order.**

\$12.00 /plant for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*\*\*

\$6.00 plant for a homebound person for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*\*\*

**Total number of poinsettia plants I have reserved are \_\_\_\_\_**

**All small plants purchased will be taken to our South Church homebound friends.**

**All large plants purchased may be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service.**

Memorial Gift (in any amount), in lieu of flowers \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*\*\*

**Message as it will read in Christmas bulletins:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Given by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A telephone number in case of questions:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* Please make your checks payable to: South Congregational Church, U. C. C. \*\*\*\*\*

PO Box 414

Kennebunkport, ME 04046

If you have any questions, please call Sarah at the Church office, 967-2793



**Friday, November 30**

**6:00 pm Live Nativity**

**Saturday, December 1**

**9:00 am – 4:00pm Craft Fair**

**11:30 am – 2:00 pm Chili/Chowder Lunch**

**Friday, December 7**

**7:30 pm St. Mary Schola Concert**

**Saturday, December 8**

**9:00 am – 4:00pm Craft Fair**

**7:00 pm Seaglass Concert**

**Sunday, December 2 \_\_\_\_\_ First Sunday in Advent**

**10:30 am Worship and Church School, Nursery Care  
Communion Sunday**

**Sunday, December 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Second Sunday in Advent**

**10:30 am Worship and Church School, Nursery Care**

**Tuesday, December 11 \_\_\_\_\_**

**1:00pm Christmas Tea at the Community House**

**Saturday, December 15 \_\_\_\_\_**

**1:00–4:00pm Christmas Bible School at the Community House**

**4:00-5:00pm Pageant Rehearsal in the Sanctuary**

**Sunday, December 16 \_\_\_\_\_ Third Sunday in Advent**

**10:30 am Worship, Pageant, Nursery Care**

**Sunday, December 23 \_\_\_\_\_ Fourth Sunday in Advent**

**10:30 am Worship and Church School, Nursery Care**

**Monday, December 24 \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas Eve Worship**

**4:00 pm Family Service, Nursery Care available**

**7:30 pm Candlelight Service, No Nursery Care available**

**Sunday, December 30 \_\_\_\_\_ First Sunday After Christmas**

**10:30 am Worship  
No Nursery Care or Church School**

South Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
PO Box 414  
Kennebunkport, ME 04046  
Phone: 207/967-2793

### Lectionary Readings

**December 2** Jeremiah 33: 14-16 Luke 21: 25-36 “God Is In Charge”  
**December 9** Malachi 3: 1-4 Luke 3: 1-6 “God Has a Role for You”  
**December 16** Luke 3: 7-18 “It Wouldn’t Be Advent Without John the Baptist”  
**December 23** Luke 1: 39-45, 46b-55 “The Women Knew”

**We are on the web**  
[www.southchurchucc.org](http://www.southchurchucc.org)

The deadline for submitting  
newsletter articles is the 15th of  
each month by emailing to:  
[sarah@southchurchucc.org](mailto:sarah@southchurchucc.org).



Many thanks to the many  
who responded on short notice  
to the email plea for items for  
delivery to Hurricane Sandy  
victims.

We completely filled the  
LaPoint vehicle headed that  
direction on November 13  
with non-perishable  
foods, blankets, coats  
and the like.

