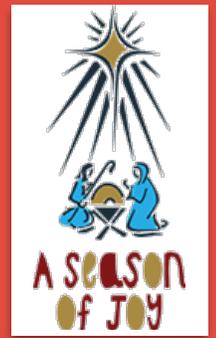


**First Parish United Church of Christ
(Congregational)**

P.O. Box 228, 176 West High Street,
Somersworth, NH 03878-0228

Rev. Mark Rideout, Pastor
Church Office: (603) 692-2057
An Open & Affirming Church

www.somersworthfirstparish.org
firstparishsomersworth@myfairpoint.net



December, 2017

Faith Formation



Thank you to all who donated Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes. With your help, we are able to send 41 shoeboxes to children in need.

Cookie Walk!!!! The Cookie Walk will be held on Sunday, Dec. 3rd, following worship. We are asking you to bring in 4 dozen homemade cookies or bars. The Faith Formation committee will set out all the cookies, and after worship anyone may come down and purchase 2 dozen assorted cookies for only \$5! This money goes into the summer camp account. For the past two years we have helped Cassidy go to Horton Center. This year Cassidy plans to return to Horton Center and she is trying to convince her cousin to attend with her.

White Gifts will be received on Sunday, Dec. 10th, during worship. Jinny Burgess will be providing the tags with the wishes of children in the Somersworth area. These tags will be on the Christmas tree in the Narthex. Please choose a tag, purchase the wish, wrap this gift in white tissue paper and a red bow, tie the tag to the gift, and place it back under the tree on or before December 10th. The gifts will be brought up onto the altar on Sunday, Dec. 10th.

On Sunday, Dec 10, from 1-3pm, the Faith Formation committee is hosting an **Advent Workshop**. As well as our families, we are inviting families from the local area to attend. There will be tables set up where children can make various Christmas ornaments. We will also have an area where parents can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee and a cookie with Pastor Mark. If you know a family who would enjoy this, please tell them about it. If you would like to come



Dear Ones:

As the daylight is so diminished by early evening, car rides after supper now reveal that Christmas trees have been set up by many folks on the major roads I drive in Somersworth, Dover and Rochester. I've seen brightly lit trees on enclosed porches, a few in living room windows, and many electric candles in the widows...all signaling...what?

When I see the window candles, I remember a story that offers one explanation for the placing of a candle in the window.

A woman named Martha, and her son, Peter are in the sitting room of the house where they live. Martha grew up with the first light in the house on Christmas Eve being a special Christmas candle, which Martha had made. This "first light", Martha says is rooted deep in the heart's kindness. "There was a time, Peter," Martha began in a remembering way, "when people walked in darkness. Then a light came and the light was the life of the Child who was born this night. The Bible tells us about it." Martha looked down at Peter dreamily as she repeated the old loved words, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful—" [From "Once In the Year" by Elizabeth Yates]

Friends, we look to the light revealed in Jesus the Christ. We see reflected in his life, a pattern for ours. We use the light of Christ to dispel the shadows of this world, in order to embrace hope, trust, compassion, kindness, humility, purpose. We stand in the strength of this light to face down oppressive words and ways, change habits and attitudes that diminish rather than build up. We journey comforted by the deep heart of this light which does not take away pain, sorrow, hurt, brokenness, or even death—for this light that we know so well, and at times take for granted is amazing grace, unconditional Love.

Let's be honest, so much of "the holidays" is really fluff! Intentionally walking in the Light of Christmas means placing signs of hope where they become a stumbling block to the seeking—your sharing through nameless acts of kindness that add to the joy of God's gift to your neighbor.

Because you can. Because God asks it. Because your heart needs the reminder that you lean into selflessness in order to dispel the shadows of this world. And then, it will be a "Merry Christmas!"

~ Peace and Goodwill to All, Pastor Mark.



2017 Advent/Christmas Opportunities for you, for others

An insert outlining ways for sharing and outreach into our community is included in this newsletter. As you prepare heart and home for Christmas consider ways to be a First Parish Church "presence" in our community. Invite, include and involve someone who needs a church home. Come, join together in worship—this list offers many ways to be the church in our community. Be attentive to any advance sign-up to show your commitment: *Cookies* [12/3], *Flower Orders* [12/10], *White Gifts* [12/10], *Women's Fellowship Hour of Diversion* 12/3], *RRH Wishes* [12/17]. Sign up if you plan to participate in the *Somersworth Christmas Parade* 12/2].

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship - 10:00 AM

Sunday School - 10:00 AM

Fellowship Time Follows Worship

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month.

Ministers: The People of the Church

Pastor: Rev. Mark A. Rideout

Christian Education Coordinator:
Susan Vollkommer

Moderator: Richard Whitten

Co-Clerks: Patty Cote & Debbie Hall

Treasurer: Linda Farrell

Assistant Treasurer: Richard Shepherd

Organist/Choir Director: Bette Daley

Newsletter Team: Debbie Hall-Editor,
Priscilla Chellis-Calendar,
Luise Watman-Birthdays/Anniversaries



Responding for Disaster Relief

There have been many natural disasters over the past several weeks—repeated hurricanes, earthquakes, ongoing fires. Financial donations are **encouraged** as a way to respond. You may do this through our church, by cash or check, simply identify it is for Hurricane Relief. We will channel checks through United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries, OR, you may choose to send your donation directly: on the web, go to www.ucc.org, search for Disaster Ministries, and follow the prompts to donate.

Nursing Home
Ministry



MINISTRY OF PRAYER & CONCERN

Lucille Berry, *Studley Home*, 15 Eastern Ave.,
Rochester, NH 03867 335-1241

Bertha Carr, *Rockingham County
Nursing Home*

117 North Road, Brentwood, NH 03833

Gail Day, *Langdon Place of Dover*, 60 Middle
Rd, Dover, NH 03820

Rev. Bill & Pat Hamel, The Manor at Canyon
Lakes, #210, 2802 West 35th Ave., Kennewick,
WA 99337-2583

Audrey Loika, 1 Huntington Common Dr., Apt.
208, Kennebunk, ME 04043

Bob Philbrick, *Berwick Estates*,
75 Portland St., So. Berwick, ME 03908

Dorothy Blaisdell, Janet Giffin,

Dorothy Storms, *Wentworth Home*,
795 Central Ave., Dover, NH 03820

*--and all who are residents in long-term care and
assisted living facilities in our area.*



Christian Sympathy

is extended to the family of **Alan Fletcher**
[11/2], his wife, Julie, and wider family
including stepdaughter Rachel (Gregg)

Fournier.

May the deep peace of the Lord surround this family.

Our Monthly Newsletter

can be accessed entirely online! Check it out:
www.somersworthfirstparish.org. Paper
copies are available in the Narthex. If you
prefer to have the newsletter sent to you
in the mail, please send \$20 with your name and address
to: First Parish Church, P.O. Box 228, Somersworth, NH
03878, Attn: Newsletter Editor.



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Craig Breden [health]

Eric Burgess [health] *Jinny Burgess' son*

Gerri Cannon [healing]

Mark Dudley [healing] *son of Carroll & Barbara Dudley*

Dan Gaudreault [healing] *Sue Boucher's nephew*

Gloria Martel [health] *Linda Farrell's mother*

Helen Merrill [health] *Sharon Brown's mother*

Janice Wentworth [healing]

Those affected by the many natural disasters—earthquakes,
fires, hurricanes; the recent violence in Las Vegas—and
violence in any community—with the prayer for peace, and
access to resources for affordable healthcare—mental health,
primary care, treatment and recovery from addiction.

AND ongoing prayer focus during these days:

- For our Carroll-Strafford Association Churches, and specifically in December, Union Congregational Church, Union, NH and their pastor the Rev. Dr. David Maleham.
- That God will bless and guide our Transitional Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Charles Buck, and Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Richard Slater
- Recovery effort for all natural disasters.
- For all those who are living with cancer; those who are living with mental health concerns, and those who support them as they walk pathways of healing.
- Faith formation ministries for all ages - for building strong faith foundations, at all ages and stages of life.
- Working together in community to address addiction to drugs, and anything that takes away from wholeness in life-and the building of community to implement strategies for prevention, while providing resources for treatment and recovery.
- Love God. Love Neighbor. Love Self.
- Those serving in the Armed Services and in support capacities around the world.
- Peace in our world; harmony in our relationships, hope in our active response for transformational change.
- The UKAMA Partnership between the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe and the NH Conference UCC.
- Continued invitational ministry and mission here at First Parish United Church of Christ: invite, include, involve in the good news way of Christ!
- Advent reminds us of the presence of the Holy in human flesh, in Jesus the Christ.



- | | |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 2 | Ray Mathews, Teri Ann Cox
<i>Bill & Teri Ann Cox</i> |
| Dec. 6 | Cori Brown, Drew Allen,
Michael Allen |
| Dec. 8 | Charles Drake, Ida Patterson,
Carolyn Libby |
| Dec. 15 | Keith Dinger |
| Dec. 18 | Pat Whitten |
| Dec. 20 | Ellen Plaisted |
| Dec. 22 | Mike Sirois |



MISSIONS

There are many opportunities during the Advent season to share your time and talent as a member of First Parish Church. Please refer to the "2017 Advent/Christmas Opportunities for you" sheet that is included in the back of this Newsletter. Some ideas from the list are:

- Friends of Riverside has put out a gift request list
- White Gifts are being collected during worship on December 10th
- Somersworth High School is collecting gently used clothing and toys, the hat and mitten tree will provide hats and mittens to local schools, and as always the Food Pantry box is located in the Narthex.

Please take a moment to check out the Christmas Opportunities sheet and see where you could help.



For 116 years the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been an expression of God's love and light in the world. The Christmas Fund provides UCC congregations an opportunity to reach out in kindheartedness to those who have faithfully shepherded our churches and who now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs.

The theme of the 2017 Christmas Fund offering is Shepherding The Light, and the goal is to raise 1.7 million dollars to help support these ministries of light and love. The recipients of these gifts have faithfully served the church and now, in their time of need, we can be the church to them.

Your generous donation to the offering will enable the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance to provide supplementation of small annuities, retiree health premium supplementation, emergency grants, and a Christmas Thank You gift check to individuals and families in need.

The funds collected for the Christmas Fund provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay church employees. These funds do not support programs or institutions, but people. With your continued generosity, more individuals will receive the support of the church in their time of need.

You are invited and encouraged to shepherd God's light and love, and support to this year's appeal.

DELEGATES

The duties of a Delegate are to represent First Parish UCC at the NH Conference Annual Meeting (October time frame) and at the Carroll-Strafford Association Spring and Fall Meetings and occasional special meetings and then share the information and guidance gathered. This is an opportunity to do some mission work by representing our church along with meeting new people from across the State. Interested? Talk to current Delegates Geoff and Nancy Day, Marc and Patty Cote or Pastor Mark.



DECEMBER LECTIONARIES

First Sunday of Advent - Purple

December 3, 2017

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Second Sunday of Advent - Purple

December 10, 2017

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Third Sunday of Advent - Pink or Purple

December 17, 2017

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:47-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve - Purple

December 24, 2017

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve - White

December 24, 2017

Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2: (1-7), 8-20

Christmas Day - White

December 25, 2017

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

First Sunday after Christmas - White

December 31, 2017

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

A Gentle Reminder:

* Sunday Bulletin announcements/information needs to be in writing to the Church Office by MONDAY, or, you may e-mail it directly to Debbie Hall at kenanddebbhall@comcast.net

* Monthly Newsletter items MUST be submitted by the 3rd Friday [OR as noted in the monthly newsletter calendar]. Earlier is better! Email directly to Debbie Hall at kenanddebbhall@comcast.net Written items may be left in the pocket on the copy room door as well (just let Deb know!).

* Monthly calendar dates and times are submitted directly to Priscilla Chellis at prchellis@comcast.net

* Updates on birthdays, anniversaries may be sent to Luise Watman at lewatman@comcast.net

Note: If you serve on a committee, please communicate directly with your Committee Chair if you are unable to attend a scheduled meeting or event.



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Greetings All, we had our last meeting on Saturday, November 11th Veteran's Day. We sat down to another great breakfast and talked about different subjects. Sports is always a good conversation as well as different things that have happened over the past month. Our Boston Celtics are a very good team again this year with a lot of new players brought in during the off season. The Patriots are also another good team despite all the injuries to key players. Will we see another championship? Time will tell.

The Veteran's Sock and Toiletries Drive went very well again this year. Our local "Sock Lady" Kandy Provencher joined us for breakfast and we exchanged the donations after the meeting. She takes care of all the distribution to our Veterans around the area. She was thrilled to know we will be making this a yearly event. We would like to thank everyone for their generous donations and look forward to next year.

Our next meeting is on Saturday, December 9th at 8:30am in the Church Hall. Feel free to join us for the best breakfast in town and bring a friend.

Submitted by Dave Hamel for "Da Boys"

Christmas Parade

Berwick/Somersworth Christmas Parade & Winter Gala will be held on Saturday, December 2nd, 2017. It will take place in and around Somersworth Main Street and Library Plaza. Times are being firmed up, and will be shared in the Sunday bulletin as well as the December Newsletter. First Parish Church is planning to be a parade participant. The theme this year is: "All I Want for Christmas". With a combined parade route that we believe will include parts of downtown Somersworth and Berwick, there will be some walking involved! For now, put the day and date on your calendar. We'll keep you posted via the Sunday Bulletin and email. We've been asked, and have agreed to lead the Christmas Caroling at the City Christmas Tree Lighting, which will follow the parade. Again, times to be announced. Please—if you have mobility issues make sure you plan ahead, bring your own chair, etc.



Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, will offer their affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings at First Parish UCC on **1/5 / 2018**. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. **In order to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call 1-888-653-6441 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle or text the word circle to 797979**



Pastor Mark will be on vacation 12/26/17—1/3/18 Emergency Pastoral coverage and Deacon contact are being coordinated and will be shared via the bulletin. In the event of an **emergency need**, please call the Deacon contact, who will be in touch with the minister on call. Non-emergency church family needs are channeled through the Deacons, who can assist with a visit, phone call, or in some other way.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

It is already December! This year has flown by. The Women's Fellowship has had a very productive year. We had successful fairs, gave a scholarship for children at Lydia's House of Hope to go to various camps, made walker bags for residents at Riverside Rest Home, teamed up with the Men's Group for a Silent Auction and gave the proceeds to the Community Food Pantry and the church's general fund, and we just had our Holly Daze Fair which raised \$3282! It was a busy year. The best part is the wonderful community of such committed women who come weekly to make items and share fellowship with each other.

We are now looking forward to our "HOUR OF DIVERSION" which will be on Sunday, December 3rd from 2:00 to 4:00. The theme this year is, "Taking Time to be Together". This will include a luncheon and ask if each lady would bring a wrapped Christmas ornament that is either home made or purchased. We have a little fun activity planned to go along with it. This is a time for the women of the church to have the opportunity to spend time together and enjoy each other's company before the busy holiday season is upon us. If you would like to bring another lady with you, we would love to have them join us! There will be a sign up going around or you can call Kathy Latchaw at 603-427-8958. We look forward to seeing you!

If you didn't get to the Holly Daze Fair, you still have time to buy something. We will have a mini-fair at the Spaghetti Supper on November 25th.

Blessings.
Kathy Latchaw



CANCELLATION POLICY

CANCELLATION POLICY Yes, we've had to do this before! The weather can, and does change. When at all possible, worship WILL take place. But, should the decision be made to cancel worship and/or Sunday School, every effort will be made to have this information available by 8AM Sunday on **radio station WTSN 1270 AM, AND television station, WMUR, Channel 9.** Every effort will be made to leave a message on the voice mail at the church [692-2057]. Please understand that if the church loses power, while voice mail may work; it still may mean that the church does not have electrical power. These decisions will be made taking into consideration the present or anticipated weather, traveling conditions and whether or not Pastor Mark [and others] can get out of their driveways! Please—use common sense in your decision to drive on a snowy Sunday!



The Annual Meeting of First Parish United Church of Christ will be held following worship on Sunday, January 28, 2018. A reminder that ***ALL committees are asked to generate a report of their work*** that will be distributed in advance of this meeting.

Reports are requested to the Church Office or Church Clerk as soon after Christmas as possible. An Annual Report is a compilation of the ministries in which we are engaged, and speaks of the vision, hope and joy that we share as the Body of Christ in the world. Every effort is made to put these in an orderly packet, and distribute them [at church or by mail] prior to the Annual Meeting, which follows worship on January 21st. Assistance is needed to prepare, produce and distribute the Annual Reports. Please speak with Moderator, Rich Whitten if you are willing to help with this effort.

Remember, every church activity is an opportunity for **YOU** to invite, include and involve someone who you know into our shared life here at First Parish Church.

You are the face of First Parish Church!

DEACONS

December will be a busy month at First Parish Church! Highlights are our annual Cookie Walk, White Gifts, gifts for Riverside Rest Home and Christmas Eve worship. Look for details in this Newsletter.

Can you help during worship? There are openings for Scripture Readers and Greeters. Please consider signing up - there is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.

We are always looking for new ideas for ways to reach out to the community and always welcome suggestions. Remember, every Church activity is an opportunity for YOU to invite, include and involve someone you know into our shared life at First Parish Church. You are the face of First Parish Church. Please see any of the Deacons with your ideas.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

October's Spaghetti Supper was fun with several volunteers celebrating Halloween by dressing in their Halloween costumes. Thank you to everyone who helped before, during and after the supper. We had lots of great volunteers and the desserts were delicious, as usual. Our expenses were low this month, so we were able to contribute \$716 towards the church's general fund.

Just a reminder, we will not have a supper in December, so our next Spaghetti Supper will be held on January 27th.

We hope you have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

The last day to order a poinsettia for the Christmas worship service is Sunday, December 10, 2017.

The prices are on the order form: 6 inch-\$9, 8 inch-\$23 and 10 inch-\$32.

Kim and Robin will be setting up the floral display at 10:00 am on Dec 23 2017. If you are not purchasing a poinsettia through the church, please bring your plant to the church in advance.

Thanks, Robin



Board of Trustees

Thank you to all of those who have made pledges during our stewardship drive, it really helps us as we prepare to finalize our budget for 2018. We are working hard to keep expenses in check while realizing the need to provide all the services our congregation is accustomed to. We will be holding a budget meeting on January 14th, 2018 in the Sanctuary right after worship and we welcome your questions and feedback. Please review our current financial update below and remember your church family as we finish up this year. 😊

The Girl Scouts will be using the church hall on Friday, Dec 15th to prepare food for a bake sale.

We are still discussing and in the process of hiring an Event Coordinator position and updating our Activity Request Form - We will keep you posted as this project evolves.

We are still looking at hiring a roofing contractor to fix the roof around the elevator shaft. Gerri has scheduled an appointment in the next couple of weeks.

We have received the new Lifetime tables and chairs to replace the existing ones around the church. The old table and chairs will be offered to the congregation for a donation and the remainder will be given to a charitable organization like Goodwill.

We also would love to hear any suggestions and new ideas on how to use social media or technology to help communicate what's happening here at First Parish Church - we've discussed posting updated pictures and upcoming events to revamping the church website.

We also are reviewing the Leola Pepler Trust Fund to see if there can be a transfer of Trustee to help minimize the expensive fees we are currently experiencing with Citizens Bank - we will keep you posted on any developments.

There will be 2 open spots on our committee for anyone interested. Just speak to a Trustee! Finance Update as of 31 Oct 2017:

The Trustees continue to manage all the different aspects of our shared journey together here at First Parish and if you ever have any questions please feel free to contact any of us.

Income/Expense	Oct 2017	YTD 2017	YTD 2016	Change
Income	\$13,076	\$118,308	\$122,181	-\$3,873
Expense	\$10,088	\$117,436	\$128,373	-\$10,937
Net	\$2,988	\$872	-\$6,192	\$7,064
Note - Income YTD for 2017 includes \$10,500 from Investment Funds				

Gregg Fournier, Robin Hamel, Ken Latchaw, Gerri Cannon and Bruce Robbins



First Parish United Church of Christ, Congregational
176 West High St., P. O. Box 228, Somersworth, NH 03878-0228
(603) 692-2057

2017 ADVENT/CHRISTMAS OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU, FOR OTHERS

Advent Sundays *Advent Candles* are lighted weekly, beginning 12/5, with themes of: *Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and Jesus Christ*. Come, join in worship as we share the joy of preparing together for Nativity!

Advent Devotionals are on a table in the Library area. These are helpful guides for individuals and families as we journey through Advent to Nativity. These are provided free to you. The season of Advent goes from 12/3-25. Advent Calendar cards were sent to families with children registered in Sunday School, and to some of our homebound members and friends.

Somersworth-Berwick Christmas Parade & Winter Gala 2017 [Saturday, 12/2/16 2:30PM]
First Parish Church will walk in the parade, singing Christmas Carols. The theme this year is, **"All I Want for Christmas"**. Children might dress as whatever they believe helps celebrate Christmas: As a Candy Cane, Cookie, Snowflake, Jingle Bell, Angel....Adults are asked to make and carry a poster board indicating your "wish" for Christmas, such as Hope, Peace, Love, Caring, Compassion, Welcome, Inclusion, Healing, Caring, etc. We have a *"Be the Church"* banner to carry and will have handouts with an invitation to our Christmas Eve Worship on 12/24. From the parade website: "The parade begins at 25 Wilson St., Berwick, ME and ends at 81 Main St., Somersworth, NH in front of the Somersworth Plaza. Parade participants will need to be in place by 2PM. Those who will participate, and want to view the parade, can all park in the downtown area. Following the parade, all floats will be moving into the Somersworth Plaza, where there will be "performances and events...to culminate with a fireworks display at 4:30PM." **NOTE: First Parish Church has been asked to lead singing [Bill Voyer is our song-leader] of Christmas Carols at the Christmas Tree Lighting which will follow the fireworks. [4:50PM or so]. The Christmas Tree will be in the small park next to the former police station on Main Street [directly across from Station 319]. Those who choose to sing, may want to bring a chair and be in that area.** As Our Church parade participants will need to walk to where the parade begins. Park wherever it is convenient for you to do so. You will have to walk from where the parade ends, in order to join in the carol singing. Please sign-up in the Narthex, to help us plan. **Vitality Note:** *If you are planning to come, would you invite someone you know who does not have a church home to come along with you?*

Cookie Walk First Sunday in Advent, 12/3 in the Church Hall [following morning worship].
PLEASE SIGN UP TO PROVIDE 4 DOZEN COOKIES OR BARS for this delicious event.

Women's Fellowship Hour of Diversion, First Sunday in Advent, 12/3 2-4PM **Theme: "Taking Time to be Together"**. All women of the church are invited and are welcome to bring a friend or relative. Is there someone you know, who does not have a church home—extend an invitation! To help with planning, there will be an advance sign-up for luncheon, and each lady is asked to bring a wrapped ornament.

White Gifts Second Sunday in Advent, 12/10, 10AM - received during morning worship. Jinny Burgess [692-2871] is the coordinator of White Gifts. We are asked to provide **gifts for children** in our local community, which are distributed by the Somersworth Fire Department, who works directly with the Somersworth Welfare Office. The **tags with wishes** will be made available in the Narthex as soon as we receive them, eventually to be placed on the Narthex Christmas Tree. Jinny will speak prior to worship, each week! **NOTE: Gifts are wrapped in white, with a bright red bow, [with the tag you picked up]** and are brought forward during worship on 12/10.



Christmas Flowers must be ordered by 12/10, using the forms available in the Narthex.

Checks are made payable to First Parish UCC, Somersworth. The Flower Committee will purchase the flowers for everyone that chooses to participate. The form provides a place to indicate if the flower is shared in memory of/or dedicated to a special friend/family member. Plants may be picked up after the 7PM Christmas Eve Service. Any questions, please contact Robin Martin [603-749-4465] or Kim Conley [603-978-4454]

Advent Workshop Second Sunday in Advent, 12/10 1-3PM, Church Hall. There will be 10 craft stations, music, snacks, parent corner with coffee and tea. This is a gentle time for family—and while geared for elementary aged children, in the Spirit of this season of Anticipation, all are welcome! Come when you can, leave when you must. There will be church ambassadors to speak about who we are. Do you want a Bible? We will give you one! Faith Formation is providing the leadership for this “open to the community” event. Invite a friend. **Remember ~ you are the face of First Parish Church!**

Friends of Riverside Rest Home We have a list of 22 residents in the Narthex, who have given three gifts suggestions. **You are asked to provide ONE gift!** But, you are welcome to provide for more than one gift if you choose to do so. Gifts are requested by **December 17th**, and should be **unwrapped**. Please place your name next to the **ID CODE #** on the list, and the same ID CODE # on the gift(s) of the resident.

4th Sunday in Advent Sunday, 12/24 10AM **Sunday Morning Worship**

Christmas Eve Worship Sunday, 12/24 7PM *A Service of Lessons and Carols with Candle Lighting*. This includes a message for the children, and opportunity to worship as a family. You, your visiting family members, neighbors and friends are welcome to join in celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus the Christ. **Vitality Note:** *If you are planning to come, would you invite someone you know who does not have a church home to come along with you?*

~ Now and into Advent... ~

2017 Clothes and Toy Fair at Somersworth High School Collection of various items (see below) is taking place [November 15—December 14] with donation boxes at each Somersworth and Rollinsford School. **Let's emphasize: clothing may lightly used, clean/non-stained and not in need of repair (zippers work, etc.)** Types of items: clean infant through high school clothing, adult clothing, blankets, coats, hats, gloves, shoes, bags, infant equipment and lightly used complete childrens toys and books. These contributions go directly to Somersworth/Rollinsford families at no cost. Any donation is appreciated. Students sort and organize all the clothes. **FREE CLOTHING OPEN HOUSE** December 15th (5-7pm IN the High School Cafetorium and open the doors to the public. Anyone can come and take what they need. Sponsored by Student Council. Questions, call Somersworth High School 692-2431 and ask for Gail Griffith.

New Hats and Mittens are always welcomed. Please leave in the Narthex or, when the Christmas Tree is in place, on the tree.

Christmas Cards Any donations of cards will be channeled through prison ministries. Container outside Pastor Mark's office will take your donations. POSTAGE STAMPS are also very helpful. **Cards are requested as soon as possible, so that they may be used immediately.**

Christmas Card Board in the Narthex, shares your greetings with others in the First Parish Church Family. Donations from postage saved can be placed in the box provided, and will be used for local, community outreach for your neighbors during this holy season.

+ May God bless you during these days of preparation for the birth of the Christ! +

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



First Parish United Church of Christ, Somersworth NH

December 10, 2017 is the last day to place orders.

Checks made payable to: First Parish United Church of Christ

Order forms and payments may be left in the decorated Flower Committee box in the Narthex or mailed to the church and marked **Attention: Flower Committee.**

Name of Donor(s):

In Memory or In Honor of :

6" Poinsettia \$9.00 each/ Quantity_____ Total\$_____

Circle color: red white

8 " Poinsettia

\$23.00 each /Quantity_____ Total\$_____

Circle color: red white

10" Poinsettia \$ 32.00 each /Quantity_____ Total\$_____

Circle color: red white

Plants may be picked up after the Christmas Eve Service. If you have any questions; please speak with **Robin Martin 603-749-4465** or **Kimberly Conley 603-978-4454.**