

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Today: CHRISTMAS PAGEANT – KIDS LEAD US IN WORSHIP

We're so grateful to have our children and youth lead us in worship today and share this beloved and foundational story of our faith. We give thanks also for the families, teachers and others in the UCW community who have offered their prayers, love and support as we prepared for today!



Christmas Pageant

Today: CAROL SING with the residents of the Norwood Health Center, 1:30 p.m.

All ages are invited to join this joyous tradition, as we bring holiday cheer to our friends at the Norwood Health Center. Please plan to gather at the church at 12:45 p.m. We'll go over a few songs, and then carpool together.

CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE: Friday, December 20th, 7:00 p.m.

We will gather in the beauty of Memorial Chapel off the UCW sanctuary for a reflective, candle lit service of prayer, contemplative music and quiet. In this service we make space for what may not be so merry and bright. We hold what is broken in our world and in our lives. We hold the losses we are experiencing. We acknowledge our need to be held by each other and by God's love.

CHRISTMAS SUNDAY: Sunday, December 22nd, 10:00 a.m.

On this fourth Sunday in Advent we light the Advent candle of Love and celebrate with festive music and song "*Ubi Caritas*" - Where there is charity and love, God is there.

COMMUNITY CAROL SING: Sunday, December 22nd, 5:00 p.m., Parish of the Good Shepherd

We are invited to join our neighbors across the street for a time of carols and readings.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS: Tuesday, December 24th, 6:00 p.m.

In this intergenerational service, we gather around the manger as we hear the story of Christmas through lessons and carols. We wonder at the good news of God with Us in the glow of the candle lit sanctuary and we go out into the night as Joy to the World rings forth.

TODAY'S FELLOWSHIP HOUR- ALL ARE WELCOME!

Thank you to the Hadley Family for laying our table and hosting our fellowship time this morning. If you would like to host a future, after-church Fellowship Hour, please sign up through the Sign-Up Genius webpage. The link can be found on the UCW website at ucw.org and in the Friday e-blast.

CHURCH MATTERS – SAVE THE DATES

MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

Sunday, Jan. 26th immediately following worship, and a preparatory session on **Sunday, Jan. 12th**

The Church Council invites all members of the Union Church community to meet on January 26 for three important items:

1. A briefing from our Communications Committee on a Statement of Purpose, an outward-reaching description of who we are that can be used on our web site and in publicity
2. A vote on adding four words to our Church Covenant (our promise to each other within the church) to update our language with respect to being open to all:

“We, the members of the Union Church in Waban, true to our founding principle of being an inclusive church, covenant together to nourish and to sustain in our common life and practice a fully welcoming and affirming church for all persons. Welcoming all persons who seek to join with us in a commitment to love God and our neighbors, affirming the inclusive love of Jesus, we are open to all, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, ***gender identity and expression***, nationality, ability or economic circumstance. We invite all to full participation in our worship, membership, leadership and life of this church”.

3. A creative and interactive conversation about our visions for the church so that we may set our priorities for our spring stewardship campaign and budget-setting process the coming year. This session will set the context for the spending plan we will vote to adopt in June.

*To prepare for this important meeting, members of the community are invited to engage in conversation and reflection on the importance of being open to all regardless of “gender identity and expression”. We will gather on the stage immediately following worship on **Sunday, Jan. 12th**.*

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

CAROLING AT NORWOOD HEALTH – This Afternoon, December 15th at 1:30 p.m.

All ages are invited to join this joyous tradition, as we bring holiday cheer to our friends at the Norwood Health Center. Please plan to gather at the church at 12:45 p.m. We'll go over a few songs, and then carpool together.

PARENTS GROUP – Tonight, December 15th, 7:30-9 p.m. at UCW

Come find a moment of peace and joy with others doing the good and hard work of parenting this season! We'll gathering around tea, cocoa and cookies to share Advent reflections, warm and supportive conversation, and time together.

NEXT SUNDAY – Teachers Breakfast December 22nd, 8:30 p.m.

Teachers and anyone interested in our ministries with children on Sunday mornings is invited to gather in Amy's office for some holiday goodies, to celebrate and debrief about the pageant, and look ahead to the New Year!

SAVE THE DATE: CITYREACH OVERNIGHT SERVICE TRIP

Friday - Saturday, January 10th-11th

Donations of travel-sized toiletries, used men's outdoor clothes, blankets, sleeping bags, carrying cases/bags, and new underwear or white socks are VERY MUCH APPRECIATED!

Exploring Our Faith students, and other high-schoolers and adults are invited to join this powerful overnight service trip with our partner, Ecclesia Ministries in downtown Boston. We'll learn from and serve with Ecclesia members who are experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, share meals, and distribute needed clothing, blankets and hygiene items to guests. If you can contribute any of the items above, we would be so grateful, and will have a collection box in the Crocker Chapel. Please let Pastor Amy (amy@ucw.org) know asap if you can join us.

ADULT EDUCATION, SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

NORWOOD HEALTH / PEN PAL MINISTRY

Once a month, a group from UCW worships with the residents of Norwood Health. Many of these residents were formerly our neighbors, living at Waban Health before that facility closed. In addition to our monthly worship service, many of the residents enjoy writing and receiving cards. We know that loneliness adversely affects health and well-being and many of the residents are quite socially isolated. Writing cards is one way we can help foster connection and share the love of UCW. If you are interested in being a pen pal with a resident of Norwood Health, please be in touch with [Stacy](#).

YOGA WITH ANDREW CONTINUES: Thursdays, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Join body and spirit in an accessible yoga class. In this hour-long class, we will join breath and body both in energetic flow and restorative stretching. No matter where you are on your yoga journey, you will build strength and find a quiet restful center. This class is accessible to all body types and abilities. Please bring a yoga mat and any favorite props. Andrew has some props and mats available to borrow.

BOOK GROUP: January 28, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Our next book is "Evicted" by Matthew Desmond.

"In *Evicted*," Princeton sociologist and MacArthur "Genius" Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they each struggle to keep a roof over their heads. Hailed as "wrenching and revelatory" (*The Nation*), "vivid and unsettling" (*New York Review of Books*), *Evicted* transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of twenty-first-century America's most devastating problems. Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home, without which nothing else is possible."
(*Amazon review*)

JAVA GENTS: This Friday, December 20th, 7:00 a.m.

Java Gents is an informal monthly breakfast hour for the men of the UCW congregation and our community of neighbors and friends. Please join us for this friendly gathering of fellowship and mutual support. Buz Bedford and Jay O'Beirne host lively discussions of timely topics, and personal goings on amongst the group. (Java gents meets the third Friday of each month in the church reception room at 7:00 a.m.)

MISSION OUTREACH

NICARAGUA TRAVELERS MEETING & PIZZA: Tonight! December 15th, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

If you are traveling to Nicaragua as part of UCW's service trip in February, please join us tonight from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the church. We'll share a pizza meal, learn about the trip, and spend time connecting as a group. We hope to see you there!

MITTEN TREE 2019 – Gifts are due back under the tree TODAY!

Any questions please contact Molly Owen-Kiritsy (mollymok4@gmail.com) or Erika Pond (epond33@gmail.com). Thanks so very much for your generosity.

Homelessness and Housing

This year your Mission Outreach Leadership Team is organizing its work (and coordinating with the other areas of UCW life) around seasonal themes. We also hope to coordinate our seasonal special collections around these themes as well.

Themes are as follows:

Winter – Homelessness and Housing

February 2nd – Common Art Show at the Union Church

March 1st – Public Voices Speakers from City Mission will share their stories

Spring – Climate Change (and disaster relief)

For more information about these offerings, please see the Friday e-blast. Or please feel free to reach out to Carol Bascom-Slack, Jaap van Reijendam or Julie Heffernan.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sun., Dec. 15	9:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	The Union Church in Waban: 14 Collins Road, Waban, MA 02468
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Christmas Pageant)	
	11:30 a.m.	EOF Christmas Lunch & Caroling	
	5:30 p.m.	Nicaragua Travelers' Mtg.	
	7:30 p.m.	Parents Gathering	
Mon., Dec. 16	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
Wed., Dec. 18	10:00 a.m.	Lunch Bunch (Concert and Lunch)	
	6:30 p.m.	All Church Retreat Debrief	
Thur., Dec. 19	7:30 a.m.	Prayer Group (Memorial Chapel)	
	10:30 a.m.	Norwood Health Worship	
Fri., Dec. 20	7:00 a.m.	Java Gents	
	7:00 p.m.	Contemplative Service	
Sun., Dec. 22	8:30 a.m.	Teacher's Breakfast	
	9:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Christmas Pageant)	
	5:00 p.m.	Community Carol Sing at Parish of the Good Shepherd	

For a complete listing, and details of upcoming events, please visit our website, www.ucw.org

COPY DEADLINE: Material for inclusion in the Friday e-blast newsletter or the Sunday Announcements should be e-mailed to the office at ucw@ucw.org, by **9:00 a.m. on the previous Wednesday morning.**