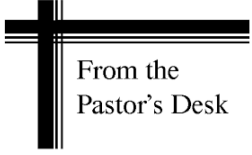


# The Crier

December 2020

St. Philip's United Church of Christ



From the  
Pastor's Desk

## Preparing during Advent

Our tradition values this time of year as a challenge to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord. We imagine the Christchild, the Christmas Story and seek to align our spirit to God's love shown there.

But **living** during the CoVid 19 era includes heightened anxiety. Jesus said: "Do not be afraid" many times. Here is a link to 33 times the bible tells us Jesus spoke that message: <https://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/debbie-mcdaniel/33-verses-to-remind-us--we-do-not-have-to-fear.html>

Anxiety has some negative consequences but it has some positive ones, too. Feeling vulnerable to the virus helps us cope and bonds us together from a physical distance, and slows the spread of the virus. So our anxiety - while uncomfortable - is a good thing right now, especially if we manage it well.

At the same time, we must carefully avoid panic and spreading anxiety to others. We do this by setting aside time periods for purposeful calm, and mindfully engaging in normal daily activities.

So let's all strive to seize opportunities to share lightness and humor. And to find moments of hope and resilience. For example, what if we assign a time to tell our best stories of resilience and hope in our responses to the pandemic. We could even share such stories we've heard or read.

It also may be helpful to make two lists: 1. of what you can control and 2. what you cannot control right now. One helpful advice professional I read suggests radical acceptance of the situations we cannot control, and measured focus on what we can do.

So let's stay physically safe from the virus by doing all the recommended things. Consider those actions as an offering to God that not only decreases transmission of the COVID-19 virus, but also helps anxiety management. Stay home when you can. When outside the home, wash your hands thoroughly and frequently. And please wear your mask well. I look forward to gathering with you again someday. Between now and then, stay resilient.

<https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/copingresources/covid19>

Pastor Mike Krewson



# St. Philip's Mission Statement

*St. Philip's United Church of Christ is a loving  
Christian community believing in  
Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit*



## St. Philip's Vision Statement

**Our  
Vision  
Statement**

We are called to the body of Jesus Christ, with:

Minds to study God's word,  
Mouths to proclaim the Gospel,  
Eyes to see the needs of others,  
Arms to welcome all,

Hearts big enough to share God's love with all God's children.

## **December Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to our members who will be celebrating a birthday in December.

The following words will be heard on the 1st Sunday of each month....

*"Happy Birthday to You!,  
Happy Birthday to You!,  
Happy Birthday Everybody!,  
and God Bless you!"*

Gail Knoll	1	Zoe Azzara	18
Alex Balzer	2	Madeline Williamson	18
Linda Kotthoff	5	Devin Coleman	21
Nicholas Balzer	7	Chloe Armistead	24
Kim Tangeman	7	Karen Nickel	26
Sarah Witte	9	Katie Eason	28
Carla Moran	11	Ashley Henson	30
Robyn Mikusch	15	Scott Stevenson	30



Contact the Pastor



Feel free to call Pastor Mike anytime:

Cell (618) 789-2203

Office (314) 843-5100

or email

[pastormike@stphilipsucc.com](mailto:pastormike@stphilipsucc.com)



Paul Harvey

Judy Hickman

Russ Hickman

Harry Jennings

Pam Kelly

Gail Knoll

Walter Knoll

Bob Leber

Bud Leonard

Brian Malin

Marilyn Milne

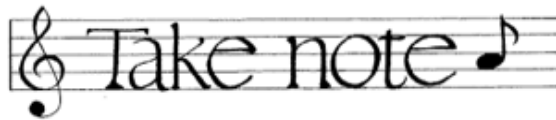
Jered Nagle

Alice Noland

Janet Remmers

Dottie Vinyard

Paula Williams



## Choir Rehearsals

### We will notify you when Rehearsals resume

The Choir rehearses the Anthem and Hymns for the upcoming Sunday worship service, however, are not meeting in person at this time. New members are always welcome. There is no audition – anyone with a love for music and a desire to sing is invited to join. Rehearsal lasts usually about an hour and we always have fun! Contact Mike Orzel, our Music Director, for more information.

## LITURGISTS - Virtual Readers



The liturgist reads the scriptures during worship. We will provide the reader with the scriptures, and instructions on how to read virtually, via email several days prior to the service allowing you time to become comfortable in reading to the congregation.

If you are interested in serving as a liturgist, please let Tammy, the Office, or Pastor know and indicate the method of receiving the readings.

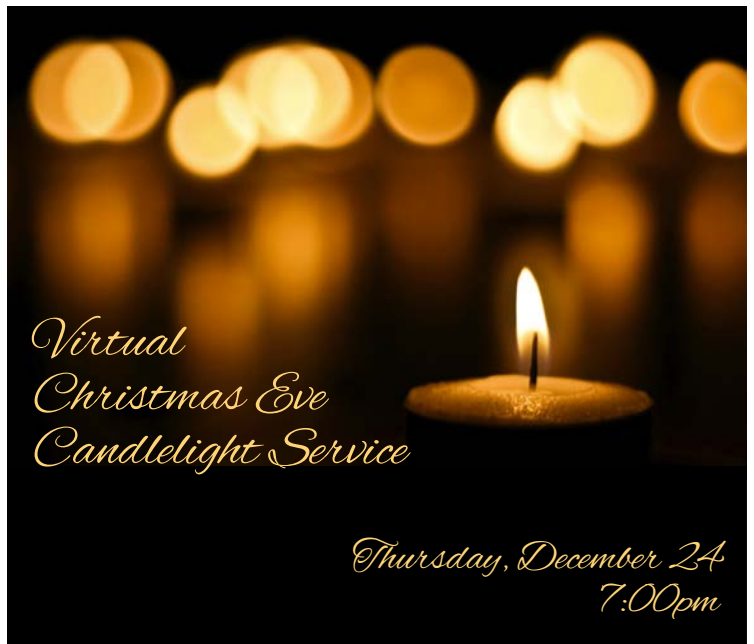
Thank you for your consideration,  
Tammy Knoll



## BOTTLE CAPS & CONTAINER LIDS COLLECTION

Clean plastic caps and lids from many containers will be collected and recycled by an organization that makes park benches.

We will collect these items **through the end of the year**. You can dropoff your lids on the table just as you enter church. Thank you to all who have donated over the past year - you've helped the cause and helped the environment at the same time.



## OUTREACH MINISTRY NEWS

Our Advent plans include our traditional Cap and Mitten tree and "Adopt a Family" through Feed my People. The skinny little Charlie Brown Christmas Tree is in the Gathering Space. Since we have not resumed in-person worship, caps, mittens, gloves, and scarves can be dropped off at the home of Barbara Barnes, 10548 Stephenson Drive.



Starting on November 30, we will collect monetary donations to purchase gift cards for our family: Jackie 48, Nellie 10, Joeline 9, and J.J. 19. Money should be sent to Kathy Shelton, payable to St. Philip's, with "Adopt a Family" on the subject line. Feed My People suggests a donation of \$250. Outreach Ministry will purchase gift cards for a grocery store and for Walmart, so that the family can purchase holiday food and gifts. If we collect more than \$250, funds will be used to help pay down outstanding utility bills.

We are blessed to have the opportunity to spread Christmas cheer to those who are less fortunate. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## CONFERENCE CALL BIBLE STUDY MONDAYS in DECEMBER 10:00am

Each week on Monday at 10:00am you are invited to Bible Study and conversation. You may join online (Zoom) or by phone. Call any of the numbers below ahead of time for help in joining.

We will study scriptures for the next Sunday, and check in with each other. You don't have to read ahead.

Pastor Mike Krewson 618-789-2203 or 314-843-5100

Pam Henson 314-520-3663

Please consider joining us to keep in touch with other members.



## LOGOS

If you haven't made it to LOGOS yet and you'd like to join, let me know! We're meeting virtually on Wednesdays at 5:00pm. We would love to have you join us. You can contact me at [andreatukin@gmail.com](mailto:andreatukin@gmail.com) or (314) 566-8633.

We'll meet the following days at 5PM with this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81348674380>

Following are the topics for our upcoming meetings:

December 2      The Legend of the Poinsettia

December 9      What is Peace?

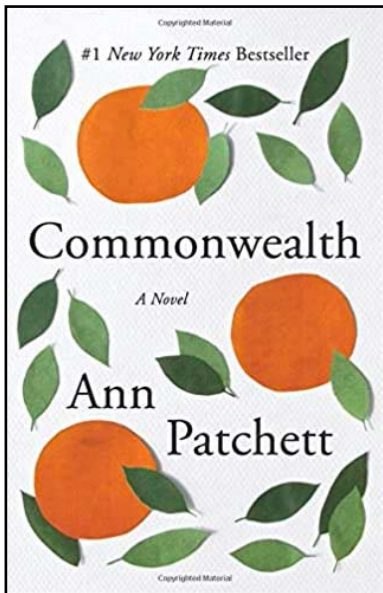
December 16     When Jesus Was Born

\*\*Christmas Break (12/23, 12/30, 1/6)\*\*

Peace and love,  
Andrea

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**BOOK CLUB NEWS** We will discuss Commonwealth on Sunday, December 6 at 11:30am. You can participate on Zoom, or by phone. The links and phone numbers are the same as at last meetings. If you need information about how to participate, contact Pam Henson.



Our next selection is A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Beckman, a Swedish comedy/drama about a grumpy old man whose life is changed when a chatty couple with two chatty little girls move in next door. We will discuss it on January 10, 2021. This book should be a nice change given the serious books we have read lately.

Virtual discussions are working out quite well. Books are checked out of the St. Louis County Library in a kit, with copies available for readers at no cost. Copies can be picked up at church or at the home of Barbara Barnes, 10548 Stephenson Drive. If you would like to join, please call Barbara at 314-843-4157.

## VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

We will resume virtual Sunday School for everyone Sundays at 9:45am. Anticipate about a 20-minute lesson for now.

Please let me know if you plan on participating in Virtual Sunday School, so I can make sure to deliver supplies to you. Email me at [andreatukin@gmail.com](mailto:andreatukin@gmail.com).

Our zoom link will be the same as it has been:  
<https://rsdmo-org.zoom.us/j/95497955422>

Thanks so much,  
Andrea



Spiritual Life Committee would like to give some suggestions for this coming holiday season. The following is from Traci Smith, a pastor from the Chicago area, has developed some ideas to make this season special while church services have returned to virtual only.



The four weeks leading up to Christmas Day are called Advent, from the Latin *adventus*, meaning “coming” or “arrival.” It is a season of waiting and preparation before the birth of Jesus, a time to prepare our hearts and our homes for the arrival of the baby Jesus.

The practices here, excerpted from my book, ***Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas: 100 Ways to Make the Season Sacred***, invite you and your family to observe a holy Advent, rooted in waiting and preparation. How will you create holy space in your home and life this season?

### 1. **Make a “not-to-do” list**

Often, we busy ourselves with endless “to-do” lists, especially during a busy season such as Advent. One fun way to turn off worry and the tendency to achieve and to do is to make a “not-to-do” list.

What are the things you and your family want to be intentional about not doing this Advent season? Maybe your not-to-do list will include “spend too much time shopping” or “worry” or “schedule.” Approach this exercise with levity and fun.

### 2. **Acts-of-kindness Advent tree**

Step 1: Find a branch in your yard and put it in a vase.

Step 2: Write down acts of kindness (see below for examples) on paper ornaments and place them in a basket.

Step 3: As you complete each act of kindness throughout the Advent season, punch a hole in the ornament and tie it to your acts-of-kindness tree.

### 3. **Ten acts of kindness for an acts-of-kindness Advent tree**

- Hold the door open for someone at the store.
- Return grocery carts in a parking lot.
- Bake sweet treats and take them to a neighbor.
- Help a family member or friend put up Christmas lights or decorate their house.
- Leave a kind note on someone’s windshield.
- Write a thank-you note to someone who serves you.
- Collect mittens and hats for a local charity.
- Pick up trash in your neighborhood or local park.
- Bring dog or cat food to a pet shelter.
- Color paper placemats and take them to a senior center.

### 4. **Advent wreath**

To make your wreath, place four votive candles on a plate in a circle with a pillar candle in the center. Light one candle per week, starting with the first Sunday in Advent (four weeks before Christmas). On each subsequent week, light an additional candle.

(continued next page)

The first week represents hope; the second, peace; the third, joy; and the fourth, love. On Christmas Eve, light all four candles as well as the candle in the middle, representing the baby Jesus.

During each of the four weeks of Advent, on Sunday evening after dinner, sit around the table with your dessert and candles and go through the simple routine of lighting the candle, discussing the Advent value and ending with a simple prayer.

#### Week 1: Hope

Light: Today we light the candle of hope.

Read (optional): Psalm 25:4-5

Discuss: What does it mean to have hope? What do you think about when you hear the word hope? How can we share hope with others?

Pray: "God, we thank you for giving us hope. Help us to have hope and to share hope as we wait for Jesus to be born. Amen."

#### Week 2: Peace

Light: Today we light the candle of hope and the candle of peace.

Read (optional): John 14:25-27

Discuss: What does it mean to have peace in your heart? How can we share peace in our family and in the world?

Pray: "God, please help us to understand peace and to share it with others. We wait for Jesus to be born with hope and peace. Amen."

#### Week 3: Joy

Light: Today we light the candles of hope, peace and joy.

Read (optional): Philippians 4:4-6

Discuss: What does it mean to rejoice? How is joy the same or different from happiness? How can we share joy with others?

Pray: "God, we thank you for the gift of joy. Help us to share it with one another. We wait for Jesus with hope, peace and joy. Amen."

#### Week 4: Love

Light: Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy and love.

Read (optional): 1 John 4:7-12

Discuss: When have you felt or seen God's love? How can we show God's love to the world?

Pray: "God, thank you for showing us what true love is. Help us to love you and to love one another. We wait for Jesus with hope, peace, joy and love. Amen."

#### Christmas Eve or Christmas Day: The Christ Candle

Light: Today we light the candles for hope, peace, joy and love, and we light the center candle for the birth of Jesus.

Read (optional): Luke 2:1-16

Discuss: The day we have been waiting for is here! How does it feel to celebrate the birth of Jesus today? What does the birth of Jesus mean to you?

Pray: "God, today we are thankful for the birth of your son, Jesus, and for the lessons he teaches us about how to love one another. Help us throughout the year to share hope, peace, joy and love wherever we go. Amen."

## October 2020 General Fund Summary

### Receipts

Weekly Offering	8,786.20	
Grocery Cards	15.36	
Recycle Income	194.78	
Early Childhood Center	<u>9,500.00</u>	
Total		18,496.34

### Expenses

Spiritual Life Ministry	26.00	
Learning Ministry	100.22	
Financial Ministry	1,941.88	
Outreach Ministry	350.00	
Church Property Ministry	4,994.87	
Personnel	<u>10,795.35</u>	
Total		<u>18,208.32</u>

October Surplus	288.02
Previous Balance	<u>12,806.68</u>
October 31 Balance	13,094.70
	=====

## October Building Fund Summary

Beginning Balance	4,580.83
Building Fund Offering	620.00
Capital Improvement Fund	(417.00)
Loan Payments Rott Foundation	<u>(461.25)</u>
October Ending Balance	4,322.58
	=====

## 2020 Food Pantry Total Distributions

Isaiah 58 Ministries	2,210.00
Feed My People	<u>2,205.00</u>
<b>Total for 2020</b>	4,415.00
	=====



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>DECEMBER</b>						
1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>9:30</b> Sunday Worship Livestream on Facebook or Zoom Fellowship Online (following worship) <b>9:40</b> Sunday School Online <b>11:30</b> Book Club Zoom Meeting	<b>10:00</b> Bible Study Conf Call/Zoom Mtg <b>7:00</b> Church Council Zoom Meeting		<b>5:00</b> LOGOS			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<b>9:30</b> Sunday Worship Livestream on Facebook or Zoom Fellowship Online (following worship) <b>9:40</b> Sunday School Online	<b>10:00</b> Bible Study Conf Call/Zoom Mtg		<b>5:00</b> LOGOS			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<b>9:30</b> Sunday Worship Livestream on Facebook or Zoom Fellowship Online (following worship) <b>9:40</b> Sunday School Online	<b>10:00</b> Bible Study Conf Call/Zoom Mtg		January CRIER Articles Due	<b>7:00</b> Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship on Zoom or Livestream on Facebook		
27	28	29	30	31		
<b>9:30</b> Sunday Worship Livestream on Facebook or Zoom Fellowship Online (following worship) <b>9:40</b> Sunday School Online	<b>10:00</b> Bible Study Conf Call/Zoom Mtg			Final Plastic Lid/ Bottle Cap Collection		