

The Dover Church

Sunday, December 1, 2024 - 10:00 AM

First Sunday in Advent



The Slotnick Girls

THE DOVER CHURCH IS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION
IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND SERVICE SINCE 1762

Welcome to The Dover Church. Sunday morning worship is perhaps the only occasion where people of all generations spend time together in the same public place. This is one of our great joys. Different people at different ages worship in different ways. Some are bouncy and some are silent. We ask that everyone welcome each other and embrace these differences.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

GATHERING MUSIC Prepare the Royal Highway David Cherwien

WORDS OF WELCOME

All are invited to join in speaking or singing when bolded words appear.
If you have a prayer request card, the ushers will come by after the sermon to collect them.

LIGHTING OF OUR ADVENT WREATH

The Candle of Hope
The SlotnickFamily

Reader 1: Today we light the first candle of Advent, the candle of Hope.

Reader 2: We put our hope in the one to come, the promised one who comes from God to bring good news of salvation.

Reader 1: We hope in the one who will lead us to walk in the light of the Lord.

Reader 2: We hope he will not let us live in dark valleys, but on the high mountain of God.

Reader 1: We light this candle of hope.

People: Mighty God, creator of the world, break through all that keeps us from you. We ask for your mercy and reform us in your image. This Advent, fill us with hope in you and the coming of Christ. Amen.

HYMN OF ADORATION **O Come, O Come Emmanuel** Lyrics on Wall

MOMENT OF QUIET CONFESSION & REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND PARDON

Pastor: God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it.

People: God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Our Advent Candles

EXCHANGING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

HYMN

O Splendor of God's Glory Bright

260

CHILDREN MAY LEAVE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

GOD'S WORD FOR US

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O Lord our God, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that as the scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

from the PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

Isaiah 40: 1-11

from the GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Luke 3: 1-9

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

ACT OF PRAISE

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!
Amen.**

SERMON

“Being the Good News in the Wilderness”

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S GRACE

CALL TO PRAYER AND OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Once He Came in Blessing

Wilbur Held

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Pastor: The Lord be with you,

People: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts:

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God:

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine.

Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened and may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, in all your children, and throughout all of creation. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Everyone is welcome to celebrate with us. You do not need to be a professing Christian, a member of this church, or even certain you know exactly what this is all about. Communion is about grace and blessing both of which depend upon God who welcomes you whoever and wherever you are.

THE BREAD

The Congregation may partake of the Bread as soon as it is received. A rice cake option is available in a small cup on the Bread plate if one chooses. Words that may be shared while passing: "The Bread of Life."

THE CUP

The grape juice is white and the wine burgundy. The Congregation may wait until all are served and then receive together. Words that may be shared while passing: "The Cup of Blessing."

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Thank you, O Holy One, for life in the Spirit of Jesus: for gladness in the bread and cup, for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends, for the glory of creation, and for the mission of justice you have made our own.

Give us the gifts of this Holy Communion: oneness of heart, love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies, the will to serve you every day, and life that never ends. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN OF PARTING

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People**115**

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

WALKING OUT MUSIC There's a Star in the East (Rise Up, Shepherd)
Karl Osterland

LAY LEADERS IN TODAY'S SERVICE
DEACONS ON DUTY: Dottie Rother
USHERS: Ham Hackney & Daniel Swayne-Gerrish
SCRIPTURE READER: Kristen Griebel
SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP:
BULLETIN COVER ARTIST: The Slotnick Girls

*Please join us for fellowship and refreshment in Kraft Hall
following this morning's worship service.*

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Birthdays and Anniversaries

We wish Happy Birthday to the following people: **Sadie Slotnick, Lori Johnson, Hope Shue and Carolyn Develin**

Birthday wishes are for December 1, 2024 to December 7, 2024. Please let us know if we have forgotten anyone!

Announcements

Calling all Artists for Advent Bulletin Covers!

Bulletin Artists Needed! We are starting to plan for Advent! And we are looking for young artists who would like to draw a picture for our bulletin cover - for the 4 Sundays in Advent and Christmas Eve. Please sign up and submit your drawing by the **Tuesday** of

To sign up, use the link in the eNews or contact martha@thedoverchurch.org.

Advent Wreath Candle Lighting

Each Sunday in Advent and on Christmas Eve, one of our traditions is to have families light our advent wreath candles at the beginning of worship.

Sign up for a date that works for you using the link in the eNews or by contacting martha@thedoverchurch.org

2024 Reverse Advent Collection for A Place to Turn

The Dover Church congregation has a beloved annual holiday tradition of collecting donations over the Advent season to support our neighbors in need. This year, once again following the wonderful example of our High School Youth Group's Agape Sunday Thanksgiving Food Drive, the Mission in Action Committee is inviting you to participate in a "Reverse Advent" collection on behalf of A Place to Turn, a Natick-based food bank serving the Metrowest communities.

Typical Advent calendars have small gifts, chocolates, or readings which surprise us each day during Advent. For our 2024 Reverse Advent Calendar, the Mission in Action committee is encouraging you to give instead of receive. We will be distributing Reverse Advent donation boxes along with a wish list from A Place to Turn of non-perishable items that are most needed at this time.

For each day of Advent, **starting on Sunday, December 1st and continuing to Sunday, December 22nd**, put one of the items from this wish list into your box. Feel free to decorate your box! **Please bring your filled box to the church on December 22nd for a congregational blessing.** We will bring all donations to A Place to Turn in Natick after Christmas.

Advent Workshop

Be sure to join us after worship on **Sunday, December 8th** for Advent Workshop! It will be another fun year full of favorite traditions (Advent wreath making, cookie decorating) along with a sprinkle of new activities (ornament making, holiday cards for first responders, and painting with Toni)! All are welcome, bring a friend!!

Spread the Light this Holiday Season

Join us to celebrate the season of light in an interfaith community service event on **Sunday, December 8th from 4 - 5:30pm in Kraft Hall**. Kids & adults of all faiths encouraged to attend. Seasonal treats will be served, but you are encouraged to bring a dish from your faith or tradition to share.

- Music, food, and sharing of religious traditions
- Create and deliver cards and luminaries to seniors in the Dover community
- Create a banner to spread the message of Peace throughout Dover

Sponsored by the Dover Interfaith Peace Group in collaboration with Pastor Max Olmstead, The Dover Church and Rabbi Jennifer Rudin, Congregation Derech HaShalom.

Order Poinsettias for Christmas!

We will again be taking orders for poinsettias! Look for the 2024 Poinsettia Order form link in the e-news. Order forms will also be in the pews and Betty will be taking orders during coffee hour.

Orders and dedications should be in by **December 16th**. The plants will be displayed in worship on Sunday, December 22nd and 24th.

Christmas Pageant

On Third Advent, December 15th, during worship, Sunday School will recount for us the Christmas story live and in person! Our "Once Upon A Manger" pageant will come to life with simple costumes and a large cast of young people and our church congregation. Teens will narrate as multitudes of angels, shepherds, animals, wise people, Mary, Joseph and a star capture the holy chaos, the miracle, the surprise, the mystery and the joy of our Savior's birth!

If your child would like to be a part of this year's pageant, please reach out to martha@thedoverchurch.org.

Saging

Our "Saging" group is scheduled to gather this morning after worship from 11:30 AM-12:30 PM and again on **Wednesday, December 11** from 9:30-10:30 AM. We will meet in the Church Library unless otherwise noted. This group is going to help

each of us develop our innate spiritual wisdom, as well as tap into the spiritual wisdom of our tradition.

Grief Workshop

Join us for the next grief workshop on Wednesday, December 4th at 10:00 AM in the church library. In this group, we share stories of our lives, listen to one another, and delve into books that we may find helpful. Perhaps the greatest gift of this group is the safe space where we are able to put into words our deepest discord. People grieve losses of all kinds: a spouse or family member, an unwanted change in life, memories. The main point of this group is to remove any stigma from grief as a weakness or something to get better from. We are trying to integrate our grief and move forward into this new life.

Women's Spiritual Friendship

Our Women's Spiritual Friendship will meet again on **December 18th at 9:15** for a festive celebration! We'll share breakfast as we talk about female friendship/mentorship through the lens of Elizabeth and Mary. There will also be an optional cookie swap for all who want to participate! Please let Kayla or Leslie know if you are up for bringing a breakfast dish to share!

Candles for our Teen Pilgrims

Our Women's Spiritual Friendship Group has crafted some beautiful candles, many of them Christmas themed, that are for sale in support of our teen pilgrimage this coming summer. You can see the candles for sale in coffee hour or by stopping by the church office during the week. Suggested donations are \$10 or more per 3 inch pillar candle or pair of taper candles, \$15 or more for 6 inch pillar candle. All proceeds will mitigate the costs for our teens traveling to the Taize monastery. Thank you!!

Wonder Wednesdays

Registration is now open for our Spring Semester, which will meet on 1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 3/12, 4/2, and 5/7. Students must register for the semester in its entirety as lessons will build on each other. The fee for the program is \$180 for the semester. Scholarship assistance is available for any family who needs it. Register on our website or through the e-news.

Prayer Chapel

Meets on zoom **Wednesday from 12:30 to 1:00 PM**. It's a time to check in with church family, share joys and sorrows, and be in prayer together. Zoom links for meetings can be found on the church's website calendar of events.

Tea and Check-In

We meet **Thursdays, at 3:00 PM** in the library. A time to check in on your friends and to hear the news of the parish. All are welcome.

Volunteer on Sunday Mornings

Are you able to help on a Sunday morning with ushering, being our liturgist, or scripture reader, or by hosting our coffee hour? To volunteer you do not need to be a member. Use the link in the e-News, sign up during coffee hour or contact the church office admin@thedoverchurch.org. Please sign up as you are able.

Dedicate Flowers on Sunday Morning

On Sundays we have a beautiful flower arrangement on the altar that is dedicated to a loved one. If you would like to dedicate flowers for Sunday morning, please speak with Betty Brady on Sunday morning to claim a date, look for the sign up sheet in Kraft Hall during coffee hour, or sign up online using the link in the e-News.

2025 Offering Envelopes Available

If you would like a boxed set of weekly offering envelopes for 2025, please let Nancy know and she will set them out for you in the narthex. Each set is numbered to make record keeping clear and convenient and to save you the time it may take to write your name and date on the general envelopes found in the pews. Nancy's email address is nancy@thedoverchurch.org, or she may be reached by phone at 508-785-0957.

Hanukkah Celebration

The annual Hanukkah celebration will take place on **Saturday, December 14, 2024** from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the Charles River School Cafeteria, 6 Old Meadow Road, Dover. All are Welcome! This free event is made possible by Dover residents and friends. Contact shalomdover@gmail.com with any questions.

A Stewardship Update

Thank you to everyone who has submitted a pledge— via the mail, email, or online— for our 2025 Stewardship campaign. As of end of day Tuesday, November 26, 2024, we had received 77 gifts totaling \$234,934.87 (56.3% of our \$417,000 goal)

- Victoria Babcock
- Brad & Barbara Baker
- Keith & Amy Barnett
- Judith Barr
- Bill Barrett
- Mike & Beth Benjamin
- Bob & Sandy Boynton
- Betty Brady
- Judith Bursiek
- Jim Cardell
- Jeff & Anne Carter
- Joe & Soo Chang
- Paul Cichocki & Cindy Ostrowski
- Pam Clayson
- Melvin & Marian Clouse
- Mark & Valerie Constant
- Peggy Cross
- Tom & Maggie Danielski
- Bob & Judy Davis
- Scott & Leslie Decker
- Ed & Kristen Dennison
- Tom & Carolyn Develin
- Daren & Christina Dougherty
- Charlie & Katie Engle
- Edie Forrester
- Chip & Liz Gibson
- Scott & Kristen Griebel
- Ham Hackney
- Betty Hagan
- Bruce & Linda Hain
- Jimmy Hain
- Jon & Liz Hartnett
- Gunnar & Vida Heskestad
- George & Lynne Hong
- Gene & Mary Hornsby
- Jack & Laury Hunt
- Glenn & Cynthia Jensen
- Chad & Lori Johnson
- Mike Kendall & Alida Coo-Kendall
- Joan King
- Tom & Wendy Leeds
- Charlie Long
- Nancy Mackay
- Eli & Anne Manchester
- Jim & Sara Jo Marble
- Roger & Dottie Mark
- Beth McGaw
- David & Callie McOsker
- Linda Means
- Jane Moore
- Doug & CynDee Novitch
- Don & Jane Ocker
- Max Olmstead & Marie-Laure Grillet
- Bradley & Kimberly Paster
- Dave & Carol Patey
- Alexia Pearsall
- Bob & Linda Pettit
- Craig & Jeanne Rafter
- Flo Revers
- Hadley & Jeannette Reynolds
- Toni Richards

A Stewardship Update (*continued*)

- Dottie Rother
- Sally Shoemaker
- Nancy Simms
- Daniel Swayne-
Gerrish
- Connie Sweeney
- Dick & Janie Sylte
- Nakhle & Randa
Tarazi
- Ben & Kelly Taylor
- Newton & Kathy
Thompson
- Lawrence Tsen
- Trudy Walsh
- Dave & Sheryl Weden
- Steve & Gina White
- Gunnila Whiting
- Eli Willems
- June Wright

Thank you for your con-
tinued support of our
church.