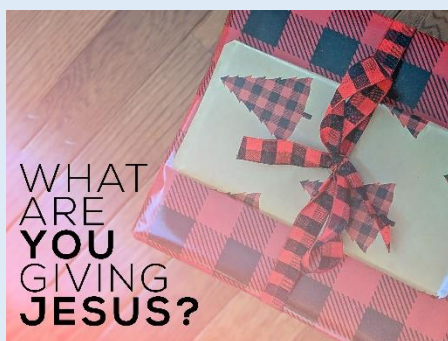


The Spire

December 2019



Dear Family and Friends of Park Place,

Christmas shopping season is here! The process of shopping has changed with the onslaught of on-line shopping. When I look back, I remember going store to store with my Dad looking for that perfect gift for Mom – touching the softness of a sweater – or sampling the fragrance of a special gift she would love. I remember as a child I only had a few dollars to spend so making the perfect choice was critical. The selection process began by focusing on Mom, what she liked, what I thought she would want, need or appreciate. Next came the selection process, and in some cases an appeal to Dad for a little more to spend, because I had found the perfect gift but was short on funds.

I wonder if 2000 years ago there were conversations in Heaven about gift giving. I wonder if the angels gathered around discussing the perfect gifts for the people on earth, people they watched over, people in need that God had placed into their care. I wonder if after each angel had decided on their gift, they all gathered before God and told him what they were giving that year. Each wanted to give the best they had, not because of competition with other angels, but rather because they truly loved the people God had placed in their care.

I imagine if such a gathering actually occurred, God would have listened with joy and thanked each angel for selecting the perfect gift. Then I picture God rising from his throne and looking to his Son on his right, and saying, “The time is now. The perfect gift, which we promised so long ago, which is in so much need now – now is the time to give it. I will give my only Son to the people – a gift of perfect love given because I love them.” So God’s gift of love, his only Son, left the glory of Heaven, was wrapped in the body of a babe and born in a stable in Bethlehem. God knew what each of us needed, and He selected the perfect gift, the gift of his Son, Jesus.

This Christmas as we are looking for that perfect gift for a friend or family member, may we remember the sacrifice God made, the love he showed, and remember in our own shopping that the love we wrap our gifts in is more valuable than any item we can find in a store or on-line. May the Lord richly bless each of you this Christmas season.

In Christ’s love and mine,
Pastor Bill

November Worship Participants



Greeters & Ushers: Ginny Platt & Cathy Shute; Shirley Harris & Ginny Platt; George & Lois Grenier; Hailie & Mike Padula

Lay Readers: Darlene McMillan; Cathy Shute; Andrea Padula; Andrea Padula!

Coffee Hour Hosts: Ginny Platt; Darlene McMillan & Sara Morrissette; Mike & Hailie Padula; Sara Morrissette & Wayne Patenaude.



Greeters & Ushers are needed. Please consider being a Greeter for Sunday worship. This “job” is so important, you are the first person, people see when they arrive for worship. It’s so nice to be greeted with a happy, smiling face as you enter the sanctuary.

Coffee Hour needs TWO HOSTS per week in December. If you’d like to host a Sunday, please fill out the sign-up sheet downstairs in the hall. Thank you!



Worship Schedule

Worship begins at 10 a.m. each Sunday Morning!

December 1: 1st Sunday in Advent: Holy Communion Worship – 10 a.m. with Pastor Bill leading– Deacons: Set-up: Darlene McMillan / Serving: Leslie Brouwer & Ginny Platt / Coffee Hour 11 a.m./ Sinai Church 1-3 p.m./ Holiday Retirement Home-Visiting & Singing! 2 p.m. All are welcome!

December 8: 2nd Sunday in Advent: Worship- 10 a.m. with Pastor Wayne leading /Coffee Hour - 11 a.m./Annual Budget Meeting following worship service / Sinai Church 1-3 p.m.

December 15: 3rd Sunday in Advent: Worship – 10 a.m. with Pastor Bill leading / Coffee Hour 11 a.m./ Sinai Church 1-3 p.m./ Poinsettia Orders are due today! /Prayer Shawl Ministry 2-3:30 p.m./ Singing at Winter Wonderland 5p.m.

December 22: 4th Sunday in Advent: Worship – 10 a.m. / Pastor Wayne leading with Rev. Marilyn Kendrix preaching / Coffee Hour 11 a.m. / Sinai Church 1-3 p.m.

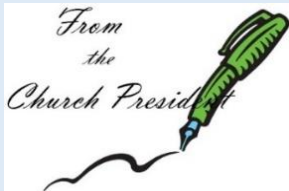
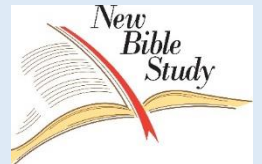
December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service- 5:45 p.m. / Coffee Hour 11 a.m./ Sinai Church 1-3 p.m.

December 25: Christmas Day Worship Service 10 a.m. Pastor Bill leading.

December 29: Worship Service 10 a.m. Pastor Bill/ Coffee Hour 11 a.m./ Music & Prayer Night - 6 p.m.

Our Bible Study Continues...

There will be no class on Monday, December 2. Our two remaining classes will be on Monday, December 9 & 16 at 6:00 PM. Our study meets downstairs in the church hall.



Dear Family and Friends,

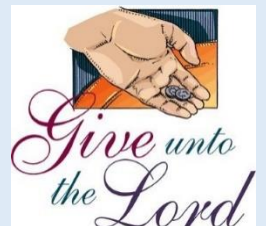
So many ways to wish someone Happy Holidays... Tis the Season, Feliz Navidad, Seasons Greetings, Joyous Noel and the best, Merry Christmas. As we celebrate Christ's birth, I have received the best gift of all – the gift of friendship and love from my Park Place Family and Friends. Each of you is so special and

help fill my spirit. I would like to sincerely wish everyone a safe, happy and healthy holiday season.

With the Season's Blessings,

Shirley

Stewardship Time is here! You should have received your annual stewardship letter and pledge card by now, if you haven't please call the church office to let us know. As we plan for our Church budget for the coming 2020 year, we ask you to think of your 'Giving to God' also. Prayerfully consider what you give or if you don't give to Park Place, please consider giving weekly or monthly. We work for the Glory of God and need you, your wonderful talents and your faithful giving.

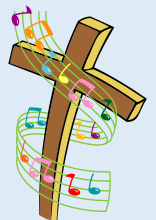


Park Place Congregational UCC Missions

Please remember All are welcome to join any activity or just drop in to see what is going on!

Let's Sing!

We will be going to The Holiday Retirement Home in Manville, RI, and sing to/with the residents for about an hour on December 1. We'd love to have you join us.



Thrift Shop – Stop on Buy!!!

Come stop by during our regular shop hours of Wednesdays & Saturdays from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Great clothes to choose from for the young kids to teens and adults! We also have great treasures to find, from jewelry to framed art to knickknacks! Come see what peaks your interest.



Our Prayer Shawl Ministry continues to add to the lives of all who receive them; so much so that we are running very low on our wonderful prayer shawls! **New Prayer Shawls are always welcomed!** Our meetings are every 3rd Sunday of the month from 2-3:30 p.m. Hope to see you December 15! Please continue to make shawls when you are unable to attend the group. Prayer shawls should be 25-30 inches wide and 70 inches in length.

Christmas Food Basket

Our Annual Christmas Food Basket Collection. Please bring your Non-perishable food items to church on Sunday mornings and place in the box in the Narthex. We'd like to help those in need have a delicious Christmas dinner for their families. \$20. Gift cards for Turkey/Ham purchases will be appreciated. Please keep in mind this is for a Christmas dinner not a regular food fundraiser. Thank you for your generosity!



Dear Church Family,

The Deacons are seeking your support for a food sharing program that would collect 10 specific items that have been recommended on numerous sites to provide a nutritious and portable “lunch to go” for the homeless or someone in need of a meal. In addition to the food provided in the bag, we would like to add a personal note of encouragement, hope or support.



We are making these bags “Heavenly Snack Packs” and if possible, we would love to create enough to have some on hand for someone who comes by when the church is open and we would also love to be able to hand out one to everyone we serve on Park Place’s Soup Kitchen, Saturday February 8.

Mission Items needed for our Heavenly Snack Packs: single serve tuna or chicken snack kit; single serve fruit cups or applesauce; meat snack stick (i.e. jerky) peanut butter crackers, breakfast or protein bars (avoid chocolate), individual bags of chips, individual boxes of raisins or dried fruit, pudding packs, individual packs of cookies or a sweet treat, small bottled water. If you could bring any of these items to church on Sundays, it would be greatly appreciated. Please put donations in the box in the Narthex.

Irving’s Children...

This past Saturday November 23, we had the pleasure of meeting a man named Irving. Irving came into the soup kitchen with 10 kids ranging in age from 6 to 16. As we spoke with them and watched them we learned that not all the children were Irving's. Irving volunteers for Homeless RI and these children have been dropped off to him by their parents. In most cases these kids and their parents are homeless, one of the kids he had just met that day had a 10 month old sibling who was wrapped in plastic to keep the child warm. Shirley went into the thrift shop and found some blankets and a small size jacket. I went into my trunk and gave him 8 pairs of gloves and a couple of hats I had bought the night before to donate at work. The kids ate everything put in front of them and were so happy and grateful to have this chance to have a good meal and dessert. We sent Irving and the kids home with food from the pantry, as well as leftovers probably close to 8 bags of food. The next day at church we recounted the story as emotional as it was and decided as a church to help them out. We are looking for donations for toiletries, hats, gloves and warm winter clothes to help out. He does not always have the same kids but if we can get a mix of boys and girls items that would be awesome. Size ranges are 6 to 16. Any items would help and I can tell you they would be appreciated.

Thank you and God bless,
Andrea Padula



Thank you ...

The Deacons asked for donations of items for Heavenly Snack Sacks and on November 23, we had at least 50 of each of the 10 items on our list to fill our bags ... we asked for donations to help with the cost of food for a special meal for our turn at the Soup Kitchen on Thanksgiving ... \$90 came in ... we asked for pies ... and we had pie ... we served 80 people ... and have a lot of pie left to share at coffee hour and Praise and Worship ... we asked for volunteers and can



never express enough gratitude for the 12 people that served our guests with love on a very busy Saturday. We asked for donations for baskets and trust we will be able to respond to the 3 - 4 calls we've had for help with a holiday dinner ... Thank you! "What God does for us, he does through us" ... I give thanks for this faith family that stays mindful we are God's church ... and to our pastors who answered God's call 10 years ago, when things were rough. Before the Soup Kitchen a man from Michigan stopped by who went to Sunday School here when he was 5 and wanted to spend some time in the sanctuary. He asked me how we afford 2 Pastors ...it struck me ...we are blessed with 2 men who answered a call, not an employment opportunity, who give so much and lead us to remember who's we are and who we serve. Happy Thanksgiving and God Bless this Park Place Family.

Darlene & Board of Deacons

The Spirit of Giving

A highly educated Southern woman named Lottie Moon headed to China in 1873 after rejecting a marriage proposal. She served as a missionary there for almost 40 years, enduring tough conditions and meager resources. Through detailed letters home, Moon conveyed the "desperate need" for more workers.

To honor Moon, in 1918 the Southern Baptist Convention renamed its annual missions collection for her. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering commemorates the dedicated missionary who once asked: "Is not the festive season when families and friends exchange gifts in memory of The Gift laid on the altar of the world for the redemption of the human race the most appropriate time to consecrate a portion from abounding riches and scant poverty to send forth the good tidings of great joy into all the earth?"

Lullaby for the Christ-child

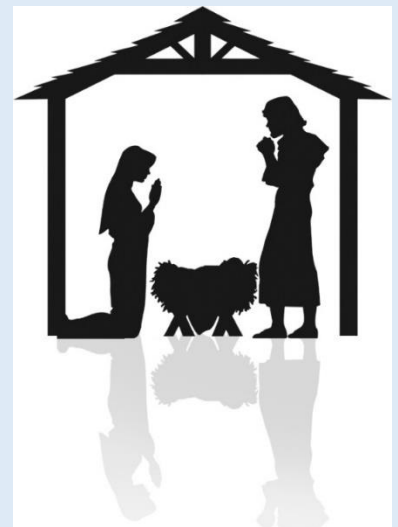
First published in 1539 in Germany, the Christmas hymn "From Heaven Above" recounts the angels' message to the shepherds and then the spiritual journey of the baptized Christian to Jesus' manger-bed.

Try singing verses 8, 9 and 13 (translated by Catherine Winkworth) as a tender lullaby of praise, a song of love and a prayer to the newborn Savior. If the original tune is unfamiliar, use "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" or "Just As I Am."

Welcome to earth, thou noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
Thou com'st to share my misery;
What thanks shall I return to thee?

Ah, Lord, who hast created all,
How weak art thou, how poor and small,
That thou dost choose thine infant bed
Where humble cattle lately fed!

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for thee.



December Memorial & Honorary Altar Flowers

December 1: The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Candy Stewart in loving memory of her brother Kenny and grandmother Ruth Horton.

December 8: The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Pastor Bill & Darlene McMillan in loving memory of his parents, Bill & Margaret McMillan.

December 15: Open Sunday. If you'd like to donate the Altar flower in memory of or in honor of a loved one, please see Terry May or Ginny Platt.



December 22: The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Ginny in honor of her Park Place Church Family.

December 24: The large white poinsettia on the Altar is given to the Glory of God by the Larson Family in loving memory of Stephen's Aunt, Pricilla Taylor.

Our Christmas Poinsettia Memorials (see insert of in the bulletins and the January Spire.)

December 29: The memory of all those who have gone to be with God and in honor of all of us who are here to love and encourage each other to continue to use the talents He has given us to bring Peace to the New Year.

(Note: Thank you for your donations of the beautiful altar flowers each week, your continued support is greatly appreciated. Please remember that payment of \$35.00 for the altar flowers is due during that month. Thank you for your attention.)

Prayers & Concerns for Our Family



Please keep these people in your daily prayers: Mike & Debbie Ziegenhagen; Jocelyn; Luis Echeverria; Joan Casavant; Bob MacLaren; Laurie; Eva; Lauryn Maples; Lori Rybak; Janet Estes; Steven; Claudia Dunn; Elaine; Bob, Nancy & Austen Lepper; Carol; John; Carlene; Karen B; Lisa Lyon; Richard Deblois, Judy O; Kathy Morrissette; Anna; Brenda; Linda C.; Stacia; Colin Walker; Charlie; Betsy; Paul; Moe; Jackie Gardikis; Josh Barber; Paul; Melanie; Gabriella; Karen; Libby; Beth Fournier; Kenny; John Peter; Michael; Virginia; Steve; Alice; Deb C; Emily; Debbie Coury; Ann-Marie; Terry; Irene Marteno- cancer; Phyllis; Joyce - (cancer); Lauren & Heather; Frank; Cory; Joanne; Katherine; Irene; Bev; Jim; Ethel; Grace; Tom; Gregg; Peter; Nancy; Eric Green;; Cathleen; Claudia Berube; Trevor Bynoe; Dianne; Bob; Sherry; Terry; All people fighting cancer.

Please continue prayers for

... the victims of the terrorist attacks across our great nation and across the world. May the Lord bring Peace to this world.

... all those impacted by all natural disasters all around the world.

... for the victims and families of domestic abuse.

... our service men and women, and veterans both old and young who have served our country with honor and pride.

Continued prayers for our homebound family members and friends: Rita Clough; Madeline Shay & friends at the Holiday Retirement Home and The Village at Waterman Lake.



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"Coming Attraction"

Advent, which marks the beginning of the church year, is "the first gleam of Christmas," writes W.E. Sangster. "It heralds the entrance of the Divine into human history; it is heaven descending to earth; it is a great event casting its brilliance before it." Sangster adds: "It is as though a trumpeter had taken his stand upon the turrets of time and announced the coming of the King. 'Get ready,' he seems to say. 'Get ready. He is coming!'"