



The Messenger

P.O. Box 1088 / 6930 Cold Harbor Road
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

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The Rev. Dr. Stephen W. Starzer, Pastor
The Rev. Darren W. Utley, Associate Pastor

December 2018



Dear friends,

Advent. If you look this word up in a dictionary (or online!) you will find a definition along the

lines of "the arrival of an important person, activity, or event." It is often used for an epoch of time such as the advent of the internet or the advent of television. For the Christian Church Year, it is the new beginning. It is an acknowledgment that all things celebrated in the fellowship of the Christian family has its origin in the incarnation of Jesus Christ!

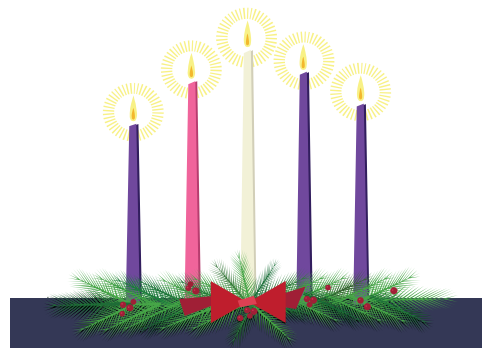
This truth is so important that the Church celebrates a whole season of Advent - to prepare for the arrival of the most important person ever to walk the surface of this planet! To commemorate the arrival of the One who is proclaimed as the King of King and Lord of Lords is something so momentous that a single day or even twelve days (the traditional 12 days of Christmas) is absolutely insufficient!

Darren and I have talked a lot this past year about the importance and the role of the Christian Year as a means of the Church reminding itself year in and year out of the whole story of God's self revelation in Jesus Christ. And that all begins with his birth as the Babe of Bethlehem - the Word become flesh and dwelling among us, as John so eloquently states.

So, in the Christian Year, Advent is for us many things. It is a reminder of the coming of the Incarnation, definitely! It is a time of preparing the way for the full celebration of Christmas, certainly! But it is also our opportunity for a new beginning - to take stock of ourselves and our faith journey. It is our chance to draw closer to the One who has taken the huge first step of coming to be among us in the Person and Work of Jesus of Nazareth!

Don't get so caught up in the whirlwind of activity in this season that you miss out on the wonderful opportunity of seeing anew the miracle that took place in a tiny backwater town called Bethlehem of Judaea.

In Christ's love,



Member News

With sympathy we remember those who we have lost recently: **Sheree Duggan's** mother, Kitty Waldrop who passed away on October 26; **Larry Harpster**, one of our own members, who passed away on October 27; and **Margaret Courtney**, another one of our members, who passed away on November 12th. Please keep these families in your prayers.

Ryan Westphal and his family have moved to 2829 Valley Springs Road, Powhatan, VA 23139.

Bill and Judie Thompson have moved to 7317 Beechbark Lane, Mechanicsville, VA 23111.

Ivy, J.M. and Tanner Lighsey have moved to 6425 Poplar Road, Quinton, VA 23141.

Please make these changes in your church directory.



Please keep the following people in your daily prayers: **Becky Clark, John Crowe's** and his cousin Ted, **Fran Hansbrough's** sister, Jane, **Kristy Harden's** brother-in law, Tony Bausone, **Marshall Hart, Ken Moore, Virginia Phipps, Mark Price's** brother-in-law, Doug Jewell, **Donna Richbourg's** great nephew, John, **Peggie Rosen's** sister Alice, **Lynn Rudolph, Joan Sprinkle, Leslie Vance, Nancy Walls, Barbara Wash** and all those who serve as missionaries abroad and those who serve our nation. Also remember those who need jobs and those in our congregation who are unable to attend church regularly due to illness or limited mobility.

Please remember our shut-ins: Evelyn Bailey, Ann Barlow, Voncile Baughman, Marie Blatt, Ruth Gatewood, Inez Hill, Stan Hiner, Laverne Longest, Myrtle Muire, Nancy Norment, Mack Perkins, Louise Setchel, Emerson & Sheila Shaw, and Bootsie Stevens.

(Please update Pastor Steve or Pastor Darren as often as possible if you wish to keep your name or your loved one's name on this list.)



Dear Fairfield friends,

Billy and I are blessed in so many ways and our church is truly a blessing. Thank you so much for all the cards, calls, flowers, food and most of all your prayers. Please continue to pray for me as it seems my recovery will be a long one.

Blessings, Nancy Walls

Dear Friends,

We give thanks for your generous gift of \$475 to the Seminary for the Carson Rhyne Fund for Polity Education. Support like yours makes it possible for us to prepare young people who are answering their call to serve, and your gift will help us maintain the excellence of teaching and learning that has been a hallmark of our 206 year history. Your generosity helps further the work of God's reign in the church and the world.

Faithfully, Richard Wong
V.P. of Union Presbyterian Seminary

Thank you to everyone for their thoughts, prayers, calls, and cards after my recent surgery. It is a wonderful blessing to be part of such a caring church family!

Pam Wells



| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Patrick Sutton | December 1 |
| Jake Mills | December 2 |
| Terri Helfrich | December 5 |
| Noah Clark | December 7 |
| Dana Franklin | December 7 |
| Terri Joyce | December 7 |
| Sheri Wodwaski | December 8 |
| Matthew Leigh | December 9 |
| Jim France | December 11 |
| Madeleine Letourneau | December 11 |
| Heather Brady | December 12 |
| Allen Boyle | December 16 |
| Donna Hohman | December 16 |
| Raquel Trexler | December 16 |
| Larry Rigsby | December 17 |
| Patrick Young | December 17 |
| Ayron Young | December 17 |
| Darlene Shegogue | December 18 |
| Matthew Trexler | December 18 |
| Carson Street | December 19 |
| Amanda Ciejek | December 20 |
| Herb Coulter | December 20 |
| Sara Gaston | December 20 |
| Eric Spott | December 21 |
| Reggie Crump | December 22 |
| Lucas Settle | December 22 |
| Marie Blatt | December 23 |
| Angela Schwartz | December 24 |
| Su Ling Trexler | December 24 |
| Laverne Longest | December 26 |
| Karen Couch | December 29 |
| Phyllis Kerns | December 29 |
| Jack Mitchell | December 29 |
| Chris Sorensen | December 29 |
| Rusty Hale | December 30 |
| Pam Wells | December 31 |



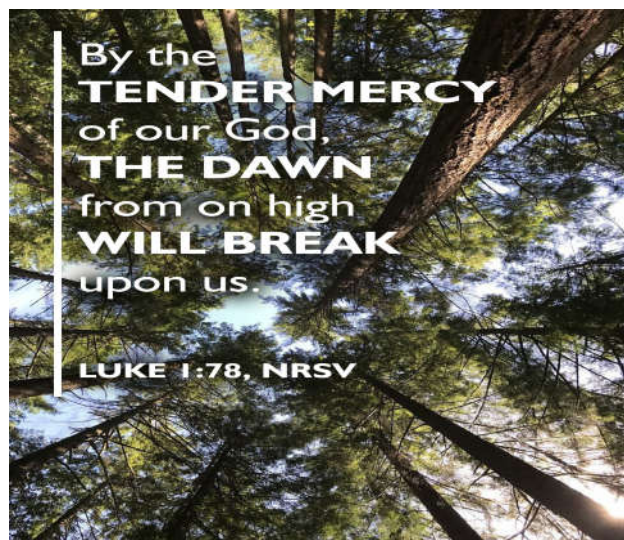
| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Tim & Julie Sutton | December 4 |
| Ryan & Emily Westphal | December 10 |
| Courtney & Randy Street | December 15 |
| Stephen & Kristen Leigh | December 19 |
| Jerry & Sheree Duggan | December 24 |
| Sam & Bonnie Penny | December 28 |

Special Dates

- First Sunday of Advent, *December 2*
- Second Sunday in Advent, *December 9*
- Third Sunday of Advent, *December 16*
- First Day of Winter, *December 21*
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, *December 23*
- Christmas Eve, *December 24*
- Christmas Day, *December 25*
- New Year's Eve, *December 31*

Memory Verse for December

"By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." . Luke 1: 78-79



Advent & Christmas Events

December 2

- ★ *First Sunday of Advent (HOPE)*
- ★ Living 'In Between' - Looking for the Fig Tree (Luke 21: 25-36)
- ★ **Advent Family Workshop, 10am** during Sunday School hour.

December 7 & 8

- ★ A Hanover Christmas, 6:00-9:00pm at **Camp Hanover** - a candlit trail winds through the woods, transporting you back in time. Along your journey, meet other travelers, shepherds, kings and angels. Immerse yourself in the greatest story ever told....

December 9

- ★ *Second Sunday of Advent (PEACE)*
- ★ Living 'In Between' - Repent and Follow (Luke 3: 1-6)
- ★ Poinsettia orders are due.
- ★ Angel Tree presents due back.

December 11:

- ★ The Fellowship Circle will have their Christmas luncheon at Anna's Restaurant at 12:00pm.
- ★ The Joyful Readers meet at The Pasta House at 6:30pm for their Christmas dinner. Don't forget your stocking gifts!

December 16:

- ★ *Third Sunday of Advent (JOY)*
- ★ Living 'In Between' - What Then Should We Do? (Luke 3: 7-18)

December 21:

- ★ **Blue Christmas Service**, 6:30pm in the sanctuary. For those who have had losses – a loved one's passing, a relationship broken, a job lost, or other circumstances, we offer this special worship service. Let the holidays become a time of peace and reflection. We will pray and sing and light candles in celebration of life and for hope and healing in Christ, the Light of the World. Please join us.

December 23:

- ★ *Fourth Sunday of Advent (LOVE)*
- ★ Living 'In Between' - Can They Hear Us Singing" (Luke 1: 39-55)

December 24:

- ★ Church Office closes at 12 noon.
- ★ 5:00pm - Christmas Eve Family Service - all ages are welcome to worship in this family-friendly service.
- ★ 7:30pm Candelight Worship, Living 'In Between' - Salvation from the Margins (Luke 2:1-20) - in the hush of the evening, all gather in the light of Christ's birth.

December 25

- ◆ *Merry Christmas!*
- ◆ Church Office is closed.

December 26

- ★ Church Office is closed.

December 30

- ★ Services at 9am & 11am. Living 'In Between' - The Sounds of Silence (Luke 2: 39-52)

BILL DOBSON'S MEN OF THE CHURCH GROUP

Every second Tuesday the men of the church get together for breakfast and a devotion to get their day going right. They meet at the Cold Harbor Restaurant around 6:00-6:30am to eat together and discuss projects and/or ideas of things the men of the church can do for our church family and groups that need our help. This group is for men of all ages! The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, December 11th**. Call Billy Putze 804-338-3233 with any questions about the men of the church activities. You never have to reserve a seat, we will always have an opening for you.



Prayer
Shawl
Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets monthly for fellowship and to share ideas and projects. **The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Ministry is Wednesday, December 5 at 10:30 in the Barlow Parlor.**

Anna Barrowclough



The Super Singles are a group of single, divorced and widowed members who get together on the second Sunday of each month and go to lunch! This month they will be going to Debbie's Kitchen

on Mountain Road off 295 on Sunday, **December 9th** right after the 11:00am service. Join us! We will meet in the parking lot at 12:15pm and car pool over.



Library News:

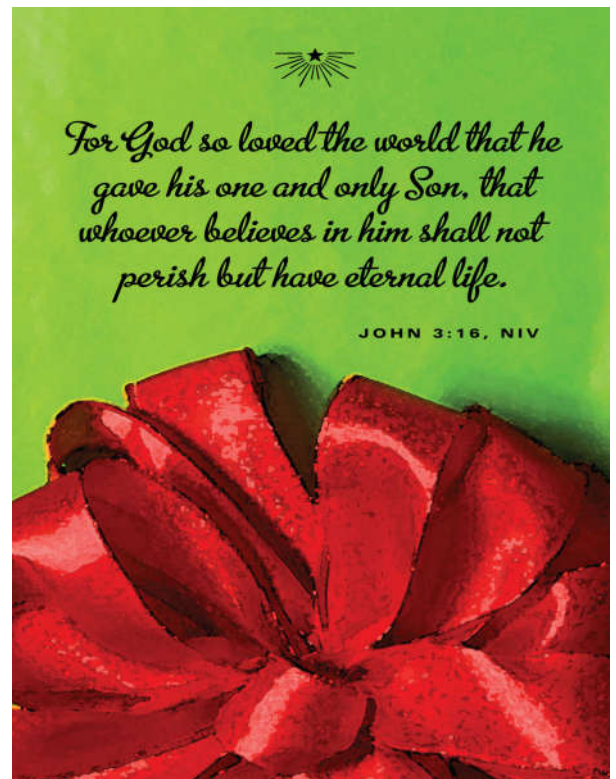
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." John 3:16

As we enter into this Christmas season of giving let us never forget that God gave us the gift of salvation and eternal life.

In the midst of our busy holiday activities take time to relax and enjoy some inspirational Christmas reading. New to our library this year you will find The Noel Diary, A Redbird Christmas, and A Merry Little Christmas. New to the children's library you will find The Newborn King, The Christmas Pageant and The Animals of Christmas Eve.

In this Christmas season as we begin to exchange gifts with our friends and family remember that God gave us each and everyone the greatest gift ever given. Christmas Peace and joy to you and to those you love.

Merry Christmas
Elizabeth Covington



Committee News

Mechanicsville Churches Emergency Functions (MCEF) www.4mcef.com One Stop Shop (OSS)

Just a reminder of the product we will concentrate on for December (if you want to).

December – pasta sauce

If you prefer to do your own shopping for the pantry, whatever you can share is always appreciated. **The pantry needs include applesauce, protein beans, rice in one lb. bag or smaller.**

THE NEXT DAY TO CONTRIBUTE FOOD FOR THE FOOD PANTRY IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

The One Stop Shop activity during the month of October:

- Total sign ins – 197 (representing 628 persons in the households)
- Total new clients – 14
- Total # bags of food given out – 315 (includes 57 Thanksgiving Bags)
- Total #bags of clothing (all ages) – 81
- Total # bags of linens – 15

For these counts we use the brown grocery bags with handles. A family of 1-2 receives one bag of groceries and a family of 3 or more receives 2 bags.

Closet needs: bath towels, hand towels, washcloths, queen size sheets

- Only WINTER clothing is now being accepted for men and women. Children's summer and winter clothes can be accepted provided there is enough room in their closet at MCEF. We are concentrating on winter clothing but kids grow so fast we accept summer too.
- After the first of the year there will be new guidelines for clothing and linen donations. Unfortunately, many inappropriate donations are coming in and it is overloading the sorting team that looks at every item. MCEF is not able to use many of the donations which is sad. Remember that MCEF CAN accept clean, gently used, sized clothing for the family. No fancy clothes, no suits, no household items, no shoes.

Many times, non-profits become a dumping ground for unwanted, dirty clothing that can not be used by anyone. MCEF tries to provide a sense of dignity for those who find themselves in need of what this non-profit offers.

As we come to year's end a huge **THANK YOU** goes out to all who have supported MCEF in

2018. The work of this non-profit couldn't be accomplished without the help of the Mechanicsville Community.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

The Stewardship and Finance Committee

would like to thank everyone for making their pledges during the Stewardship Campaign. Your financial commitment for 2019 allows us to effectively plan for the coming year. If you have not turned in your pledge card yet, feel free to drop it in the offering plate next Sunday or mail it to the church.

As the year draws to a close, we want to express our appreciation to the many members who "catch up" their pledges during the month of December. If you are unsure if you have fallen behind or by how much, give the church office a call to find out where your pledge for 2018 stands. As you are planning your giving for next year, please consider signing up for E-Giving. E-Giving makes it easier for you to fulfill your pledge to Fairfield by scheduling a regular contribution from your bank account. It also helps smooth out the church's cash flow, allowing us to manage expenses more easily. If you would like more information on E-Giving or help with changing your contribution to match your new pledge level, please contact the church office or a member of the Stewardship and Finance Team.

If you are making tax and investment-related decisions as 2018 comes to a close, we ask that you consider making a contribution to the Fairfield Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is a way to support the work of the church in the long-term and across generations. It can also provide tax advantages in certain situations. Initial donations of at least \$500 can establish a Named Endowment. Additional gifts of \$100 or more can be made to any established endowment. If you have questions about the Endowment Fund, please contact Steve, Darren or any member of the Stewardship and Finance Team.



9:00am Infant/Toddler Nursery Schedule

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Dec. 2 | Mitzi Marker & McKenzie Marker |
| Dec. 9 | Sandra Brewster & Hannah Reasor |
| Dec. 16 | Angela Blue & Linda Daugherty |
| Dec. 23 | Beverly Burts & Karen Couch |
| Dec. 30 | Allison Letourneau & Majken Whitaker |

9:00am Kid's Worship

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| Dec. 2 | Angela Schwartz |
| Dec. 9 | Deb Utley |
| Dec. 16 | Pattersons |
| Dec. 23 | Donna Hohman |
| Dec. 30 | Donna Hohman |

10:00am Infant/Toddler

| | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Dec. 2 | Marge Wantz & Majken Whitaker |
| Dec. 9 | Brenda Blue & Jennifer France |
| Dec. 16 | Molly Zweckbronner & TBD |
| Dec. 23 | Melanie Rubeck & TBD |
| Dec. 30 | Pam Roberts & Molly Zweckbronner |

11am Infant /Toddler

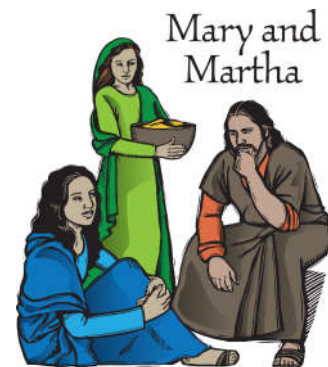
| | |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| Dec. 2 | Nikki Glass & Anne Young |
| Dec. 9 | Jan Fadeley & Angela Schwartz |
| Dec. 16 | Pam Gigliotti & Donna Hohman |
| Dec. 23 | Beth Patterson & Dale Woodfin |
| Dec. 30 | Angela Blue & Nikki Glass |

A Merry Balance

In Luke 10: 38-42, Martha gets a bad rap. After all, we need Marthas to get things done and to show hospitality. (Note that Martha is the one who opens up her home to Jesus in the first place!)

Marthas are needed in December, but holiday preparations shouldn't shift our focus from the reason for the season. When we become "worried and distracted" as Martha did (v. 41, NRSV), we're tempted to trade God's "one thing" (v. 42) for the world's many worthless things. Yet if we're only like Mary, we may forget to let the world know who we're celebrating!

So this Christmas, keep a proper balance between your innter Mary and your inner Martha. Take time to "be Mary," kneeling at the manger, so that all the merry things you do as Martha have meaning and serve the newborn King.



Reconstructing the Gospel Winter Retreat

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove grew up in the Bible Belt of the American South as a faithful church-going Christian. But he gradually came to realize that the gospel his Christianity proclaimed was not good news for everybody. Just as Reconstruction after the Civil War worked to repair a desperately broken society, our compromised Christianity requires a spiritual reconstruction that undoes the injustices of the past. Throughout Advent a number of folks in the Presbytery of the James will be reading Jonathan's latest book *Reconstructing the Gospel: Finding Freedom from Slaveholder Religion*. Jonathan's story is powerful and at times really pushes its readers to reconsider opinions and "the way things are." In January, the presbytery will welcome Jonathan for a retreat where his Southern charm and strong testimony will help us to see where Jesus is calling us to reconstruct our gospel in these divisive times. You can find more information at tinyurl.com/noracismpoj or you can email Darren, darren@fairfieldpcusa.org.

Event details

4 p.m. Friday, Jan. 11 - 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12

Richmond Hill Retreat Center

2209 E Grace St, Richmond, VA 23223



Answer: 36 (10 in the J, 15 in the O, 11 in the Y); Jesus is at the bottom of the large O

December 2018

Fairfield Presbyterian Church

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 1:00 PM NBC Choir Practice (#30) |
| 2 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service 10:00 AM Advent Family Workshop (Heritage Hall) 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM NBC Worship Service (FC) 11:00 AM Traditional Service (sanctuary) 1st Sunday in Advent MCEF Collection | 3 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) | 4 7:00 PM Christian Ministry Teams (HH) 7:00 PM Deacon's Meeting (#20) 7:00 PM Evangelism Team (#19) 7:00 PM Missions Team (#14) | 5 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry (Barlow Parlor) 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) 7:00 PM Personnel Team (#32) 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Fairfield Ringers (Sanctuary) 8:00 PM Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary) | 6 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study (Choir Room) 7:00 PM Boy Scouts (Heritage Hall) 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Christian Yoga Class (#29) 8:00 PM Praise Band Practice (Family Center) | 7 | 8 1:00 PM NBC Choir Practice (#30) |
| 9 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM NBC Worship Service (FC) 11:00 AM Traditional Service (sanctuary) 12:30 PM Super Singles 4:30 PM REFRESH Paint Party (HH) 4:30 PM Youth Group (#31 & 32) 2nd Sunday in Advent | 10 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) 7:00 PM District Committee Meeting (#32) 7:00 PM Eagle Board of Review (#14, 19, 20) 7:00 PM OA Chapter Meeting (#29/30) | 11 6:00 AM Men of the Church Breakfast (off-site) 12:00 PM Fellowship Circle Luncheon @ Anna's Rest. 6:30 PM Joyful Readers Circle's Christmas dinner @ The Pasta House 7:00 PM Christian Administration Teams (HH) 7:00 PM Facilities Management Team (#20) 7:00 PM Stewardship Team (#26) | 12 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) 7:00 PM Boy Scout Greenbar Meeting (#20) 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Fairfield Ringers (Sanctuary) 8:00 PM Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary) | 13 10:00 AM Adult Bible Study (Choir Room) 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Christmas Party & Court of Honor (FC) 8:00 PM Praise Band Practice | 14 | 15 1:00 PM NBC Choir Practice (#30) |
| 16 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM NBC Worship Service (FC) 11:00 AM Traditional Service (sanctuary) 3rd Sunday in Advent Youth Group goes Caroling | 17 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) | 18 7:00 PM Session Meeting (#20) | 19 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Fairfield Ringers (Sanctuary) 8:00 PM Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary) | 20 7:00 PM Boy Scout Committee Meeting (#20) 8:00 PM Praise Band Practice (Family Center) | 21 6:30 PM Blue Christmas Service (sanctuary) | 22 1:00 PM NBC Choir Practice (#30) |
| 23 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM NBC Worship Service (FC) 11:00 AM Traditional Service (sanctuary) 4th Sunday in Advent | 24 12:00 PM Church Office Closes 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Service (sanctuary) 7:30 PM Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary) Christmas Eve | 25 10:00 AM NBC Worship (Family Center) Christmas Day Church Office Closed | 26 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) Church Office Closed | 27 8:00 PM Praise Band Practice (Family Center) | 28 | 29 1:00 PM NBC Choir Practice (#30) |
| 30 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM NBC Worship Service (FC) 11:00 AM Traditional Service (sanctuary) | 31 12:00 PM Church Office closes 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM REVIVE Exercise (HH) 7:00 PM NBC Watch Night Worship (Family Center) | <div> <div>November 18</div> <div> S M T W T F S </div> <div> 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 </div> </div> <div> <div>January 19</div> <div> S M T W T F S </div> <div> 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 </div> </div> | | | | |

Youth Group News



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|--------------|---------------------|
| December 2: | No Youth Group |
| December 9: | Youth Group, 4:30pm |
| December 16: | Caroling |
| December 23: | No Youth Group |
| December 30: | No Youth Group |



Many Happy Returns

Somehow, not only for Christmas,
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others,
Is the joy that comes back to you.

And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier



Fairfield Church
P.O. Box 1088
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Return Service Requested

