



Return Service Requested

The CHALLENGE December 2012

South United Methodist Church
with Rev. John Marshall



"Where the joy of life in Christ overflows"

December Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m. **Traditional Worship with Choir**
Children's Story in the Sanctuary
Communion served monthly

10:45 a.m. **Sunday School**
For All Ages

11:45 a.m. **Contemporary Worship with**
Wildfire Worship Band in the Café
Communion served monthly

Contact Information:

Church office: (860) 647-9141
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00a-12:00p
Tues, Thurs 6:00p-9:00p
Email address: info@southumc.com
Web address: southumc.com
January Challenge Deadline:
Sunday, December 18, 2012



**SUNDAY
WORSHIP
SCHEDULE**

- 9:30a - Traditional
Worship with Choir
and Children's Story
- 9:45a - Sunday School
for Nursery-Grade 2
- Dec 9th - One Service
at 10:00a
- 10:45a - Sunday School
for all Ages (Children,
Youth and Adults)
- 11:45a - Contemporary
Worship with Wildfire
Worship Band

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DECEMBER
ISSUE**

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THE CHALLENGE

DECEMBER 2012

The Light of Christmas

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12, TNIV)

Dear Friends,

One of my favorite parts of the celebration of Christmas is the lights. As a child, I used like to watch my Dad climb up on a ladder and string a cord of big, bright colored lights across the front of our house. Most people seem to be fond of lights at this time of year. They may be the tiny antique white variety or perhaps the newest thing, cool LED lights, or may be the larger colored lights. Light is a central symbol for this time of year. As we know the early Christians adopted December 25th as a good day to celebrate our Lord's birth since the Romans and pagans were already celebrating. The rest of the world was marking the Winter solstice, December 21st, the shortest day of the year.

In this dark time of year; December is the month with the least amount of daylight, it is easy to get down or even depressed. It is a time when we need additional light. We also need more of what light can represent. We need more hope at times when we are tempted to give up. We need more love, when even our hearts can feel chilled or embittered. In these anxious times, we all long for peace and serenity. In these weeks leading up to Christmas when we can get grumpy or discouraged, we need a source of real joy, independent of the amount of sun we have, or how long a day is.

***Jesus gives us the hope,
love, peace and joy that
we all search for. "***

And so we celebrate Christmas. We decorate with lights in our windows, on our trees, bushes and roofs. More importantly as Christians we look to Jesus Christ, "the light of the world." Christ himself claimed to be this light of the world: something, someone, absolutely indispensable to every person in the human family. Jesus gives us the hope, the love, the peace even the joy that we all search for. Of Jesus, the apostle John wrote, "***In him was life, and that life was the light of all people.***" (John 1:4) And just as we need physical light, we need the spiritual light that Christ offers. We need the release from guilt and sin that Jesus Christ alone provides. We crave the unconditional love that Jesus so generously offers. This Christmas season as we switch on our Christmas lights and once again light candles, may we welcome this same Jesus, the light of the world into our hearts and lives.

As we celebrate Christmas this year at South Church, do take note of the various opportunities to experience Jesus; the true light of Christmas. We will hold Christmas Eve Services at 5:00pm, 7:00pm and 11:00pm. Please be in prayer for this wonderful annual celebration of our Lord's birth. Please also invite your family and friends because everyone needs light this time of year, everyone needs Jesus!

Terry, Jeffrey and I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a new year filled with God's greatest blessings. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve with you as together we proclaim by word and action, **Jesus Christ, the light of the world; Jesus Christ, the light of Christmas.**

Merry Christmas,
Pastor John



December Worship Theme

Advent: Ordinary people preparing for an extraordinary Messiah

For the weeks leading up to Christmas this year, we will be looking closely at the lives of the key figures in God's sending of his Son to this world. We will see how God used a member of the religious establishment, an eccentric young man and a trusting teenage girl to accomplish His great purpose, the wonder of incarnation.

December 2, 2012 Scripture: Luke 1:5-20

Zechariah: the skeptical would-be father

Key Verse: "The angel said, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.'" (13)

Theme: God uses us: in spite of, and because of, our doubts.

December 9, 2012 - Pageant Sunday - "The Mouse's Tale", One service at 10:00 a.m.
Overview of Christmas Story from Gospel of Matthew...

December 16, 2012 Scripture: Luke 3:7-14

John the Baptist calls people to prepare their lives to meet the Messiah

Key Verse: "Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." (8)

Theme: When God changes our heart on the inside, it should be reflected in our behavior on the outside!

December 23, 2012 Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

The angel tells Mary that she will give birth to the Messiah.

Key Verse: "And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus (31)

Theme: Everything is possible for the one who trusts God.

December 24, 2012 ~ Christmas Eve Schedule

- 5:00pm ~ Family Service with Wildfire Worship Band
- 7:00pm ~ Traditional Service
- 11:00pm ~ Traditional Service

South United Methodist Church Contact Information

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Web address: southumc.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/southumc](https://www.facebook.com/southumc)

Twitter: twitter.com/southumc

Text (SMS): (860) 281-SUMC [7862]

South Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. John Marshall ext. 14
Pastor of Outreach and Visitation
- Rev. Richard Thompson ext. 16
Director of Music - Earle Bidwell ext. 11
Organist - Norman McFarlane
Director of Ministries - Terry Marshall ext. 15
Director Youth Ministries - Nick Adams ext. 13
Sexton - Ken Schaller ext. 20
Assistant Sexton - Don Wilby ext. 20
Office Managers - Colleen Olbert/Patti LaForest ext. 10
Rev. Dr. Chaudoin Callaway III (retired)

COME PRAY WITH US!

To answer God's call for the church to "Carry each other's burdens" Galatians 6:2, SUMC is going to **re-establish an emergency prayer chain**. This will primarily be an email prayer chain. Its purpose will be to cover urgent prayer request needs that arise during the week until they can be passed onto the congregation for prayer on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in learning more or being a member of this prayer chain please contact Marnie Meek 860-646-6377 or sign up in Reception Hall.

Have you ever wanted to go on a mission trip but, have never been able to go??

Here's an opportunity to support a local young man on a mission trip to Haiti.

Alex LaForest will be going with a group of students from Gordon College, January 3-13, 2013.

Students will work alongside Haitian masons building houses for the community as well as completing various work projects at multiple construction sites. This is done all while building relationships with local Haitians, learning the local culture and living in community with each other. This is a phenomenal experience as they engage in a new culture and see God's work first hand.



Here is your opportunity to help Alex get to Haiti. We will be having a Dinner to help raise funds for the trip.

Haiti Fundraiser Dinner ~ Saturday, December 8th 2012 ~ Cooper Hall - 5:30 pm.

Donations will be accepted.

Seasonal Ministries invites you to... two fun opportunities a decorating party! Advent begins December 2nd and there is much to get done and it certainly goes faster with helping hands!!

We will be meeting in the Sanctuary Saturday, December 1st at 10:00 a.m.

Lunch will be provided following the decorating!! Come and join the fun. If you have any questions—just ask Patti LaForest or Brian Mohr.

Christmas Caroling at Crestfield ~ Saturday, December 22nd ~ meet in our parking lot across the street at 3:00pm ~ Pizza, cookies and hot cocoa to follow!!



Bishop's Day on CTWMA District
Saturday, December 8th 2012
Rockville UMC ~ 142 Grove Street ~ Rockville, CT

Lunch—Lay and Clergy

- 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm Lunch for anyone who would like to share a meal. Suggested donation is \$6.00 - please let the office at SUMC (860-647-9141) know if you will be attending.
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm Laity and Clergy Session with Bishop Devadhar

Youth Pancake Breakfast

December 9, 2012
11:00am ~ Cooper Hall
\$5.00 per person/\$15.00 cap for family

All proceeds to benefit the Youth Mission Fund. This past year, the youth went to Rutland, VT and served the community, which was devastated by Hurricane Irene in 2011.



This year they are set to go on another trip, this time outside of our region. Thank you for partnering with our youth in mission.

Upcoming Youth Events

All youth in grades 7-12 are welcome

- December 2— Bowling 5-7pm at Spare Time, Vernon. Meet at South UMC. Bring \$10
- December 9 — Pancake Breakfast at 11am, please come at 9am for Setup. White Shirt and Black Pants.
- December 16 — Youth Group at South SUMC. 5-7pm
- December 23 — Youth Christmas Party at South SUMC. 5-7pm
- December 30 — No Youth Group
- January 6 — Youth Group at South SUMC. 5-7pm

Music for the Season

By Earle G. Bidwell, Director of Music

*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).**



This prediction, written by the Prophet Isaiah some seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, ushers in the season of Advent, a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas.

On December 2, 2012, the first Sunday in Advent, Music Ministries has a surprise in store for the South UMC congregation. A familiar Advent anthem will be presented in a new and **spectacular** way! The debut of this arrangement promises to be an experience that will leave a lasting impression on all in attendance. Bring your friends and neighbors to the 9:30 service. They will thank you for it.

The Eighty-ninth edition of the **Christmas Candlelight Concert** will take place on Sunday afternoon, December 16, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. It will feature the traditional processional of choirs to the great hymn *O Come All Ye Faithful*. Also on the program is a dazzling new arrangement of *Silent Night* that pairs the carol with Bach's *Prelude in C. Glory to God* from Handel's *Messiah* will be directed by student conductor **Kirby Stally**, a Rockville High School senior who will be off to choir college in the fall. Other familiar choir selections include John Rutter's *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*, *Adoration of the Magi* from the movie *Ben-Hur*, and children's favorite *Pat-a-Pan*. The **Chancel Concert Choir** will conclude with two rousing numbers, a spiritual, *Goin' to Bethlehem*, and a gospel arrangement, *Born On Christmas Day* that will feature **Norman McFarlane** putting the Steinway grand piano through its paces.

The **Wesley Ringers** will perform *Advent Fantasy*, *I'm So Glad Each Christmas Eve* and *Alleluia, He Comes to Us* using all of the vibrant tone colors and techniques of the bells and chimes.

The **Wesley Brother's Vocal Ensemble** will bring back three crowd favorite from previous concerts. *New Star Shining* with a new saxophone obbligato, *Lo How a Rose*, arranged by **Tim Reid** and *What a Wonderful Child*.

Please gather the family, and join us for an hour and a half of inspirational music for the season.

English Standard Version (©2001)

December 2012 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 7:30am Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group 10:00am Advent Decorating
2 9:30am Traditional Worship w/ Choir and Children's Story 9:45am Kindergarten, 1 st and 2 nd Grade Sunday School Class 10:45am Sunday School for All Ages (Children, Youth and Adults) 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group - Bowling	3	4 12pm Bulletin Deadline 6:30pm Wildfire Worship 7:00pm Commission/Committee Night	5 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	6	7	8 8:00am Bishop's Day Rockville UMC 9:30am Pageant Rehearsal 5:30pm Haiti Mission Fundraiser
9 9:00 Youth Group – for pancake breakfast 10:00am Traditional Worship w/Christmas Pageant 11:00am Pancake Breakfast	10	11 12pm Bulletin Deadline 6:30pm Wildfire Worship 7:30pm Ad Board	12 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	13	14	15 9:00am Candlelight Rehearsal 9:30am Knitting 2:00pm Wedding
16 9:30am Traditional Worship w/ Choir and Children's Story 9:45am Kindergarten, 1 st and 2 nd Grade Sunday School Class 10:45am Sunday School for All Ages (Children, Youth and Adults) 10:45am Season Sharing delivery 11:45am Contemporary in Café 4:00pm Candlelight Concert 5:00pm Youth Group Party	17	18 12pm Bulletin Deadline 6:30pm Wildfire Worship 7:00pm Lydia Circle 7:30pm Staff Parish	19 No Ringers or Choir	20	21 6:00pm Seasonal Sharing Cooper Hall	22 3:00 pm Caroling @ Crestfield
23 9:30am Traditional Worship w/ Choir and Children's Story 9:45am Kindergarten, 1 st and 2 nd Grade Sunday School Class 10:45am Sunday School for All Ages (Children, Youth and Adults) 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group	24 12pm Bulletin Deadline Christmas Eve Services 5:00pm Family Service 7:00pm Traditional 11:00pm Traditional	25 Christmas Day	26 No Ringers or Choir	27	28	29
30 9:30am Traditional Worship w/ Choir and Children's Story 9:45am PreK – 2 Sunday School 10:45am Sunday School for All Ages (Children, Youth and Adults) 11:45am Contemporary in Café No Youth Group	31					

Outreach News

South Church is Reaching out Through:

Giving Tree

Each year, MACC gathers up a list of affordable dream gifts for the needy folks of all ages around town. They then post these on tags on a Christmas tree at Buckland Mall. People come by, take one or more of the tags and then buy the gifts and return them. There needs to be people at a table near the tree to offer advice, keep track of what tags have gone out, and collect and store the gifts when they come back. Our church traditionally provides staffing for the table for three of these days. Our dates this year are: Monday, November 26; Tuesday, December 4; and Saturday, December 8. All times are assigned for this year, but if you would like to be included next year, give Jane Thompson a call at 860-647-7099.

Crop Walk



On Sunday afternoon, October 20, there was a wonderful gathering of caring folks walking up and down Main Street for the annual Crop Walk. Some even carried water buckets as an act of solidarity with women all over the world who have to go long distances to get water. South Church did its part in donating and walking. Boris will be giving a more complete report as soon as the final count of all funds is complete.

Team Member on Walk to Emmaus

Pat Conti served on the fall team for this wonderful weekend of spiritual development organized by the United Methodist Church. Way to go, Pat.

Thank You Notes Received

It looks like we forgot to share that we received a nice certificate from Heifer International in response to your generous gifts last June. We also received another note from Afghanistan thanking us for our gifts of clothing and school supplies. This one came from the Volunteer Community Relation Group with nine separate signatures. We'll post both of these outside the church office.

Labels for Education

The practice of saving soup labels for special programs has an exciting history. We invite you to join in. Currently our labels are split between Red Bird Mission and Cooper Community Center in Boston.

We recently received a reminder that some products' UPC's are worth more than others. We get ten points for Emerald Nuts, Glad Food Storage, and Pop Secret 6 and 10 count boxes. We get five points for Campbell's Soups, Dannon Kids Yogurts, Pop Secret 3 and 4 count boxes, SpaghettiOs, Time Magazine and V8 Soups. Please bring any labels to the collection box in Reception Hall.



Outreach News

Winter Clothing for Washington School ~ Mitten Tree



Help keep children wrapped in caring warmth this winter.

Needed donations: for kindergarten through Grade 5

Gently used or new coats. New hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, boots sweatpants, underwear and socks. Pants/sweatpants in sizes 6-7 are especially needed.

Place your donations on our "Giving Tree" in the Narthex and Reception Hall.



Thank you for supporting our outreach for the families and children at Washington School. Your clothing donations are greatly appreciated.

Seasonal Sharing

Many thanks to all of you who helped make thanksgiving a lot happier for the 25 families who received food from South Church. At Christmas we will be providing similar foods plus a gift for each member of the family. Additionally, we are supplying gifts for residents of Green Lodge. **Food items needed:** juice, canned sweet potato, vegetables, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, chicken broth and coffee. Monetary donations will be needed to purchase pies, rolls, fresh vegetables, milk, margarine and eggs.

Christmas Gifts: there will be an index card for each person indicating age, gender, code # and a specific gift request. Cards and sign-up sheets will be in Reception Hall. Please return gifts no later than December 16th. December 21st at 6 P.M. We will sort and pack in Cooper Hall. December 23rd is delivery day for delivery of food and gifts.

Please sign up in Reception Hall to deliver food and/or bring ham or turkey.

Bill McGugan, 860-649-9072

Providing warmth and planning recovery after Storm Sandy

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Church World Service has shipped more than \$750,000 in material resources to agencies in affected areas, including Church World Service Blankets, Kits and Clean-up Buckets. Thanks to all of you who helped make this possible through "Blankets for Mothers' Day" and the "Crop Walk".

Our Published Author

Lin Daniels shared that one of her submissions to the Upper Room was accepted. It will be included in the November-December 2013 issue. Copies of the Upper Room are available at the church for a small donation. Congratulations!

Pill Bottles

We have received word that we have given 2,500 pill bottles already that will be sent to Haiti. Keep bringing them in. Collection boxes are located in Reception Hall and the Café.

SUMC Administrative Board Meeting
September 11, 2012 ~ reprint due to no Administrative Board in November
Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Deb Grehn, Margaret Callaway, Kim Grehn, Bill Hyde, Bob Thulin, Larry Fiano, Thelma Dickerson, Phil Susag, Don Wilby, Pastor Dick Thompson, Deb Ingraham, Patti LaForest, Nick Adams, Terry Marshall, Pastor John Marshall, Brian Mohr and Jake Beverage

Opening Prayer/Reading of Vision and Mission Statements:

The meeting was called to order at 7:36pm by Chairperson Deb Grehn. Pastor John said a prayer and Nick Adams read SUMC's vision and mission statements. Kim Grehn read "My Church"

Because Carol Goodwin was not in attendance, Deb Grehn asked for a volunteer to be recording secretary for the meeting, Deb Ingraham volunteered.

Draft minutes of the June 12, 2012 meeting were reviewed: The following changes were brought forward:

Corrected the spelling of Patti and Alex LaForest's last name and also added Terry Marshall as being in attendance for that meeting.

Correction under Staff Parish Relations that the position for Pastor Dick Thompson should read - Pastor of Outreach & Visitation and the position for Terry Marshall should read Director of Ministries.

Phil Susag moved for the approval of the above corrections and Bill Hyde seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

21 Hartford Road Property: Larry Fiano reported that the interior has been cleaned out. Don Wilby did the job. Question was asked if the realtor has been notified that the house was cleaned and is now ready for showing. As of the date of this meeting, the answer was no, and it was decided that Bob Thulin would notify the realtor of the properties readiness.

Committee Reports:

Finance Report: Bill Hyde reminded the Board of the use of the expense sheet for reimbursement of expenses. Bill said that the income is still low, but expenses are under budget. Bill also mentioned he had something else to discuss under new business.

Trustees: Larry Fiano reported that the claim has been settled and repairs to the parapets will commence in the next two weeks. All stones will be sealed, all mortar and lead shields will be installed with a 10 year guarantee. Front step of church, which is tilted, will be addressed at the same time as the other work. All work on the main parsonage is complete. Work on the handicapped bathroom has been delayed, but will be underway soon.

Property Bob Thulin reported the plants have been moved, more plants have been purchased. Sue Bidwell and Joanne Thulin will address additional plantings.

Memorials: Thelma Dickerson reported that YTD 25,835.00 has been received, with \$25,000 of that for renovation and accessibility improvements to the lower level men's bathroom.

Lay Leader: Don Wilby said there was not much to report. He did mention several resources on the conferences website. Deb Grehn asked about the dates for School of Congregational Development. Dates are November 16 & 17 @ Grace Chapel

Outreach: Pastor Dick reported that he is very pleased with the response for the food pantry, Washington Street School and now for Wendy's Kids. Crop Walk is October 21 and seasonal sharing is gearing up for Thanksgiving. September 29th, Bishop Welcoming Celebration in Worcester, MA, several members are going. October 7, District Celebration - Springfield MA. It was suggested that an email be sent as to what South UMC should bring to this event. There was brainstorming as to what should be put on a poster for SUMC, such as the Café, the beautification of the church, VBS, audio/visual, new professions of faith, new members, and Sunday school.

Discussion regarding giving to Washington School, Patti LaForest suggested that we give through the Town of Manchester Human Services Department, so all of the schools benefit instead of just to Washington School.

Staff Parish: Deb Ingraham reported that there is nothing to report at this time and the committee will be having its first meeting the next week.

Seasonal Ministries: Brian Mohr and Patti LaForest reported that decorating of the sanctuary will take place December 1, 2012 @ 10am and Christmas Caroling will be December 22, 2012 @ 3PM.

Education: Terry Marshall reported that there has been a re-designation of space for the new Sunday school year and the combining of some of the grade levels.

Nick Adams reported on the Youth. They are taking ownership of the youth group. There was an Eagle Scout and friends who built two benches for outside of the church. MACC has said that our youth group is one of the most helpful youth groups and when they need help they know that can call on our youth to help. Nick reported on a group that is in development called "Greater Manchester Youth Alliance" which is made up of all of the youth groups from area churches. He also reported that the mission trip to Rutland, VT was very successful.

Pastor's Report Pastor John reported on the seven things that successful church is doing; They are: Welcoming, Worshipping, praying, learning, serving and sharing. He also reminded us that next Sunday is back to church Sunday.

Deb Grehn brought up a new topic called "Congregant's Concerns" Under this heading members of the board can bring up any issues that have been brought to their attention by members of the congregation:

The First item is Parking between the parsonage and the church. Because there are so few handicapped spaces, it was suggested that during service times, those spaces be reserved for those individual with mobility issues. It was agreed that a sign would be developed and displayed on Sunday mornings for just that purpose. Also suggested that something be put in the bulletin and the Challenge.

The next item is Elevator - currently the church does not have the funds. Nick Adams moved to instruct the Trustees to investigate the need and possible funding for an elevator, Margaret Calloway seconded, Larry Fiano opposed. Larry also indicated that it would have been better to have been asked in a friendly manner to investigate instead of being instructed.

Third - The Screen - there has been a complaint regarding the screen being up all the time and blocking the window in the back. Because this is so new, it was suggested that there is a learning curve as to what will work and what doesn't.

New Business:

Bill Hyde presented a motion to the Board to transfer \$100 per month into a holding account for the purpose of Funding the expense of a future Pastor's moving. This would go into effect October 1, 2012. Dick Thompson seconded and all approved.

Adjournment:

Next Meeting of the Administrative Board will be held October 9. Closing Prayer by Pastor John and meeting adjourned at 9:22pm

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Ingraham

The Administrative Board

The Administrative Board is the governing body of South United Methodist Church. Any member of South United Methodist Church is invited to attend Administrative Board meetings. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 11th at 7:30pm.

If you have any questions about the Administrative Board or about South Church, please feel free to contact Pastor John at (860) 647-9141 ext. 14 or e-mail pastorjohn@southumc.com.