

Return Service Requested

The CHALLENGE December 2019

South United Methodist Church
with Rev. John Marshall



“Where the joy of life in Christ overflows”

Sunday Worship Schedule

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

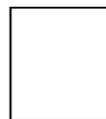
10:45 a.m. **Sunday School**
For All Ages

11:45 a.m. **Contemporary Worship with**
Wildfire Worship Band in the Café
Children’s Story 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: office@southumc.com
Web address: southumc.com

February Challenge Deadline:
Sunday, January 19, 2020



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- 9:30a - Traditional Worship with Choir and Children’s Story
- 9:45a - Sunday School for Nursery-Grade 3
- 10:45a - Sunday School for all Ages
- 11:45a - Contemporary Worship with Wildfire Worship Band
- *December 8th Combined Service 10am
- *December 24th 5:30p Family Service 10p Traditional

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THE CHALLENGE DECEMBER 2019

Report of the Pastor to the Church Conference
December 3, 2019

Jesus said, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask the Lord; ask him to send more workers into his fields.” (Matthew 9:37-38)

Each year in preparation for our annual church conference I am asked by your pastor to write a report about my previous year’s ministry. What follows is a summary of that report...

A pastor is called by our Lord both to be a worker and to pray for more workers. As a worker I lead worship services, preach and teach the Word and administer the sacraments. Caring for the members and friends of the church is another aspect of my work. This work consists of calling, visiting and emailing, all in an effort to convey the congregation’s concern and prayers for one another when we are sick, hurting or grieving. I officiate at roughly 12 funerals or memorial services each year. These services are held at the church, a funeral home or at the graveside. When there is “A service of Death and Resurrection” at the church, I am grateful for the team of people we have to care for the grieving through worship and fellowship.

It is also my privilege to pray with and for other workers. God has wonderfully answered these prayers. South Church is blessed to have a hard-working team of staff people. This team of people provide leadership for our efforts in worship, education, outreach, communication with you and the community at large and caring for our buildings and large campus. South Church is also blessed to have a wonderful team of volunteers who teach Sunday School, help lead our youth group, sing or play in our musical ensembles, lead and participate on our committees, coordinate our numerous outreach programs and prayer ministries. We can always use more workers, but I am thankful for the one’s God has already provided. If you’re reading this, thank you for the work you do for our Lord and His people through the ministries of South Church.

As to temporal affairs, on a daily and weekly basis, I work with a dedicated staff team all of whom serve part time. I lead our weekly staff meeting, typically Wednesday mornings in my office. I also take an active role in the work of our Board of Trustees and Finance Committees, as together we look after the property and finances of the church. This typically involves attending 10 Trustee meetings a year and 6-8 Finance meetings. Financially this is an important time for the church. As previously shared, our offerings have been down significantly in September and October. November has been slightly better. But in order to continue funding all of our ministries, to carry on our Lord’s work in this region, we need to finish 2019 strong. If you are able to make a yearend gift in addition to your normal giving, that would help South Church finish the year strong. As each of us gives generously to the Lord through South Church, we will continue to see God touch people’s lives. We need your help to keep our Sunday school, youth group, young adult, caring and outreach ministries growing and serving! (Cont. on pg 3)



December 2019 Worship Themes

Christ is Coming

December 1, 2018: 1st Sunday of Advent: "Time to Wake Up!"

Scripture: Romans 13:11-14 An Urgent Warning

Focus Verse: "The night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light..." (Romans 13:12)

Theme: We can prepare for the Lord's return by doing good in and through Him.

December 8, 2019: Advent 2: "Christmas Pageant" (one 10am service!)

Our Sunday school children and youth will present a traditional Pageant entitled "The True Story of Christmas" followed by a pancake breakfast (downstairs in Cooper Hall) hosted and prepared by our youth.

December 15, 2019: Advent 3: "Joy for the Lord's people"

Scripture: Isaiah 35:1-10 Joy for the wilderness and dry lands

Focus Verse: "Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." (Isaiah 35:4)

Theme: When the King comes, there can be joy for His people.

December 22, 2019: Advent 4: "Peace for the Lord's people"

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-9 The peaceful kingdom

Focus Verse: "His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear..." (Isaiah 11:3)

Theme: When the King comes, he will fairly judge the world.

December 24, 2019: Christmas Eve

(Family service 5:30pm, Candlelight at 10pm)

December 29, 2019:

Traditional Worship at 9:30am with Pastor Dick, Café Worship at 11:45am with Lin Daniels

South United Methodist Church Contact Information

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Office Hours: Mon Wed Fri 9:00a -12:00p
Tues, Thurs 6:00p-9:00p

Email address: office@southumc.com

Web address: southumc.com

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

Prayer Chain: (860) 337-2793 or
prayer@southumc.com

Text Giving: 860-512-7185 (\$20 SUMC)

South Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. John Marshall ext. 14

Director of Music - Earle Bidwell ext. 11

Organists - Christopher Walton & Tatianna Lukyanova

Director of Ministries - Terry Marshall ext. 15

Director Next Gen Ministries - J.T. Himmelstein ext. 13

Sexton - Ken Schaller ext. 20

Sexton - Don Wilby ext. 20

Office Managers - Colleen Olbert/Patti LaForest ext. 10

Rev. Richard Thompson (retired)

Report of the Pastor to the Church Conference Cont.

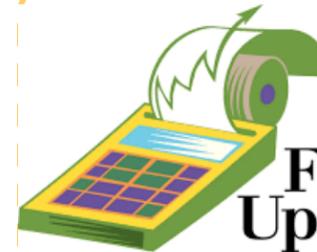
S As for continued education and spiritual growth, I recently attended a highly informative workshop on Racism at Trinity UMC in Springfield, Mass. At this workshop, I was reminded once again of the privilege associated with being a white person. Intentional effort will continue to be needed by all of us at South if we are to reach out to serve more people of color. If we are to look like the people in our neighborhood, we have work to do! Early last month, Terry and I attended the Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA) Transformed Conference at the Asbury United Methodist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. We also had the opportunity to worship at both their traditional and contemporary worship services. I hope to attend more such continuing education events in 2020 which will help me grow as a pastor and leader. To grow spiritually, daily Scripture reading, prayer and journaling are central disciplines that I practice. I take about a year and a half to read through the Old Testament. I read the New Testament every year. I also read a variety of books, periodicals and articles/posts which help me grow spiritually and intellectually. I have shared some of my readings in Newsletter articles.

U

M

C I am grateful to God for calling me to be your pastor. I look forward to working together in 2020 dreaming once again of all that the Lord might do in us and through us. On behalf of Terry and I we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

In Service to Christ, John



Finance Update

Finance 2020 Update

N To date we have received 74 pledges totalling \$259,600 for the budget year 2020.

E Our goal is 110 pledges totalling \$320,000.

W Keep up the good work! Being fully funded means we can continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ through our various ministries and outreach programs for the transformation of Manchester and beyond to "the ends of the earth"!

S

A D V E N T: The King is coming!





You can NOW support SUMC with Amazon Purchases

The Finance Committee has registered South United Methodist Church on Amazon Smile. Instead of going to www.amazon.com to make your online purchases, just go to www.smile.amazon.com, enter your email, Amazon password, add the character image, identify South United Methodist Church as your selected charity, and then start shopping. Please make sure you select South United Methodist Church in Manchester, CT because more than one charity will be listed.

How is this helping SUMC? Each purchase through Amazon Smile will result in a payment to SUMC for 0.5% of your purchase. Say your order comes to \$100.00, SUMC will be paid \$.50.

Adding Amazon Smile as a convenient fund raiser for SUMC is a step being taken by the Finance Committee to keep up with current trends. You already have the opportunity to support SUMC through Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) from your checking account and supporting SUMC from your



Young Adults

College Care Packages have been sent out to all of our students who are facing the Finals push for the next couple of weeks! Please pray for our students during this time, and join us in welcoming them back if they are able to come home for the break!



This year's Young Adult Christmas Party will be on Thursday, December 19th, from 6:30-8 pm at the Virginia Ryan Next Gen Home (21 Hartford Road)! All of our Young Adults are invited to gather together in their best ugly sweaters for food, fun, and fellowship, and plus ones are welcome and encouraged! Please RSVP to JT by text if you plan to attend: 623-670-2612

Youth Group

Our Youth will be hosting a **Pancake Breakfast** in Cooper Hall on 12/8 following the Christmas Pageant! Advance purchase of tickets will be available after each service today, and today's cost is \$3 per Child, \$5 per Adult and \$15 Max per Family. Day of purchases will be slightly raised so buy your tickets ahead of time! Youth will also be caroling for tips so please come prepared. All that is raised supports our Youth Mission Fund!

The **Youth Christmas Party** will be on 12/15 from 6-8 pm at the Virginia Ryan Next Gen Home (21 Hartford Rd)! This event will follow the Candlelight Concert and a Pizza Dinner will be provided! Youth and Youth friends are invited to a merry time of fun, food, games, and more!

Thank you to those that braved the elements and helped us park cars on Thanksgiving morning! We really appreciate your support and praise God for you and His provision!

The **Youth Winter Retreat** will be February 28-March 1 at Monadnock in Jaffrey, NH, and this will be an incredible faith-opportunity for our Youth! We will worship the Lord and hear His truth preached, play crazy games, eat lots of yummy food and grow closer together! Any Youth in Grades 7-12 is welcome to join us and should grab a Retreat Handout and Monadnock's Medical Form from outside the Youth Office or Youth Room. The cost for the weekend is \$110 with scholarship available upon request. Contact JT with any questions: 623-670-2612

- 12/8 YG @ Pancake Breakfast 11am
- 12/15 Youth Christmas Party 6-8 pm
- 12/22 YG 5-7 pm
- 12/29 NO Youth Group

Earle Bidwell

Director of Music

Tatiana Lukyanova
Christopher Walton

Accompanists



SUMC Music Ministries Presents

GLORIA!

A Christmas Candlelight Concert

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019 | 4:30 PM

South United
Methodist Church

1226 Main Street
Manchester, CT

Featuring

The Chancel Concert Choir
Wesley Ringers
Wesley Brothers Vocal Ensemble

Free will offering gratefully accepted

www.southumc.com

December 2019 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30am SS Teacher's mtg 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am 1- 3 Children's Church 10:45am SS Advent Event 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm NO Youth Group	2 6:30pm NO Young Women's Bible Study	3 12pm Bulletin Deadline 5:30pm Prayer Gathering 6:00pm Staff Parish 7:00pm Church Conference	4 11:30am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Concert Choir	5 6:30pm NO Congregational Care	6	7 7:30am Christian Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group
8 10:00am One Service w/Pageant 11:00am Pancake Breakfast w/Youth	9 6:30pm Young Women's Bible Study	10 12pm Bulletin Deadline 5:30pm Prayer Gathering 7:00pm Committee & Commission Mtg	11 11:30am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Concert Choir	12 9:00am Connect for Women	13	14 9:00am Candlelight Concert Rehearsal
15 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am 1- 3 Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 4:30pm Christmas Candlelight Concert 6:00pm Youth Christmas Party	16 6:30pm NO Young Women's Bible Study	17 12pm Bulletin Deadline 5:30pm Prayer Gathering 7:00pm Lydia Circle	18 11:30am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm NO Concert Choir	19	20	21 9:30am Knitting Group
22 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am 1- 3 Children's Church 10:45am Christmas Basket Delivery 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group	23 6:30pm NO Young Women's Bible Study	24 5:30pm Christmas Eve Family Service 10:00pm Christmas Eve Traditional Service	25 Christmas Day	26 9:00am NO Connect for Women	27	29
29 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am 1- 3 Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm NO Youth Group	30 6:30pm NO Young Women's Bible Study	31 12pm Bulletin Deadline 5:30pm Prayer Gathering	1 11:30am NO Staff Mtg 6:30pm NO Wildfire 6:30pm NO Wesley Ringers 7:30pm NO Concert Choir	2	3	4 7:30am Christian Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

DECEMBER 24

5:30PM

Family Service W/Children's Story

10:00PM

Traditional Service W/Holy Communion

EVERYONE WELCOME
SOUTHUMC.COM

South Church is Reaching out Through:

Outreach is working to provide many opportunities for SUMC members to be the hands and feet of Christ. We would love for you to join us at any time to help out with our many projects through the year!

Community Gardens: A couple of our church members are working hard at preparing raised garden beds across the street, arranging for a water supply, and planning for vegetables to pop out of the ground next Spring. One way or another, those vegetables will help to feed folks who have neither the space nor the time to grow their own.

Elementary School Support: With the closure of Washington School at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, we are working on establishing a partnership with Verplanck School. We also intend to partner with Trinity Covenant Church to continue some sort of weekend backpack/food program. Our new liaison, Michele Sawyers, will be working with Donna Costello to get up to speed.

CROP Walk: Word has it that almost \$4500 was raised this year by all the churches involved. South Church raised about \$1635 of that through our walkers (we're estimating 10 or 12) and the people who pledged them financial support.

Operation Christmas Child: The shoeboxes went out, came back, and were passed on for distribution. We can only guess what joy was felt as children opened their box and found their gifts.

Joy of Community Sharing: SUMC will adopt 15 local families this year, and provide food and gifts for Christmas once again. Food collection is underway, and we will soon need your help to buy gifts for our adopted families! Please also consider joining us to pack up and/or deliver the food baskets. A summary of the dates for food and gift collection/distribution is provided below.

Summary of key dates for December:

December 1st - Christmas gift idea cards will be available

December 15th - Christmas gifts due back at the church

December 20th - Pack up Christmas food baskets

December 22nd - Deliver Christmas food baskets

A WORD ABOUT OUTREACH RESERVE

If you've been at worship the last few weeks, you will notice that in addition to the usual insert for Christmas flowers, there is also the chance to give memorial gifts for other foci around the church, like music and education and the pastor's discretionary fund. The Outreach Committee would like to call your attention to one opportunity which is labeled Outreach Reserve.

When the church sold its second parsonage several years ago, it was decided that 10% of that in good biblical fashion should be used for others. Our committee has found that money very helpful in backing up several of our programs without increasing our expectations of the church budget or putting another request before you, but the money has now dwindled down to the point where it will eventually disappear.

Recognizing this, the Ad Board of our church suggested that there may be people who would like to respond to this reality with their special gifts during the Christmas season, honoring or memorializing those who have been dear to them.

Thanks for giving this some consideration

A THANK YOU FROM "REBUILDING TOGETHER"



We received a wonderful year-end note of appreciation for our help in the Rebuilding Together event last April and thought we should share a small portion of it:

Since its start, the program has completed over 1600 projects with an average of 900-1000 volunteers per year. The current economic times are making it even more difficult for low-income homeowners to maintain their homes or to make needed modifications for safe living. That's where this program fits in. During 2019, Rebuilding Together completed 59 projects on National Rebuilding Day and a total of 92 for the year.

Thanks to all our South UMC folks who were a part of that. The big day next year is Saturday, April 25; you may want to mark it on your calendar now.

December 2019



Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at www.neumc.org.



Advent

The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word adventus meaning "coming" or "visit," begins four Sundays before Christmas – Dec. 1, 2019 – and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year.

During Advent, we prepare for, and anticipate, the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for, and need of, forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning.

Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.

Visit www.umc.org to find a wide range of resources for celebrating Advent and for reaching out to the community during this special season.



A cup of coffee can change the world ...

Join the Christmas Giving Challenge

The October 2019 figures show NEAC Mission Shares are down \$340,239.

This means we may not be able to fulfill the missional obligations we have covenanted to support this year. There is no doubt this will have the largest adverse impact on those who are the least among us.

If 10 members from each church contributed just \$3 per day – the price of a cup of coffee – from now through Dec. 31, 2019 (\$180 each), we would meet our responsibilities to the World Service Fund.

If another 8 members joined them, we would fulfill our conference apportionment obligations entirely.

Of course, some churches have fewer members and others more who can



take up the challenge. We gratefully encourage everyone to participate as they are able; that's how we work together in the connection!

We invite each of you to join Bishop Devadhar's Christmas Giving Challenge: Submit your check for \$180 (or more!) through your local church and designate it for Mission Shares.

We, the Extended Cabinet — the bishop, district superintendents, conference executive staff, conference lay leader, and president of the Foundation — have all accepted the challenge and have sent our checks to the Conference Treasurer. We hope that you will join us.

Read the Cabinet's full message and a letter from the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CCFA) online.

www.neumc.org

CHRISTMAS MINI-FAIR - Dec 15th

in Reception Hall before and after 9:30 service

Come check out all our unique gifts and stocking stuffers!



In addition to all our other wonderful gifts available to purchase, the Craft group is taking orders for personalized Scrabble tile ornaments for \$5 each. Personalize them with the name of your favorite child or holiday word (8 letter maximum). To order your unique, handmade ornament, fill out the form in the Sunday bulletin on Dec 8th or on the back table of Reception Hall or contact Deb at (860) 645-1958 or quilter327@gmail.com by Wednesday, December 11th. Ornaments can be picked up at the Christmas mini-fair. For more information or questions, contact Ginny at (860) 646-3962 or ginhartz@gmail.com

Remember, all purchases support mission work - local and around the world!



The Gifts of Love

The Gifts of Love ... A Shop is celebrating a special Christmas Edition each Sunday of December through December 22. We will celebrate and feature groups that help people with disabilities, US veterans and economically disenfranchised groups from around the world. Know that every purchase you make benefits the group from which the product came. Special cards will be available to include with your purchase that provides additional information about the producer. New products will come out each Sunday so please check back often.

ALSO, beautiful gift Bibles and books are available for your purchase in the Gifts of Love What a beautiful Christmas gift for someone on your list!

Merry Christmas!!