

Good Tidings

December 2023



Arnold Mills United Methodist Church

Rev. Heather R. Bailes Baker

Web Page: www.amumc.org

Phone: 401-333-5203

email: office.amumc@gmail.com

A note from our pastor...

Beautiful Beloveds,

Ah, Advent...the season of waiting and preparing for the coming of Christ. Each and every year, I tell myself, "This will be the year I prepare early so I can truly savor the season." Some years, I do better. Some years, I do worse. Sometimes the task list becomes a snowball of stress, building as I barrel through December like a formula one racer, days and events blurring by. Those closest to me, pay the price, as I cross the Christmas finish-line half-present, exhausted, empty and cranky. I want to do Advent differently. I don't want to miss a moment of joy, hope, peace and love. I want to savor the season.

Thankfully, Advent is the start of a new year in the life of the church. Each and every year, Advent offers an invitation to start fresh, begin again, and finally learn how to slow down and truly be present. What if our church had one shared New Year's Resolution this Advent? Let's give ourselves, our families, our faith community, "The Gift of Being Present."

Our Advent Series, "The Gift of Being Present," offers a gentle reminder that the season isn't about hustle. Rather, we're invited to slow down, breathe, and be present to one another and to Emmanuel, God with us. In our weekly worship, our daily devotional, our weekly study we'll practice pausing and praying together. We'll remind one another with our presence, that the season isn't about buying more, baking more, doing more to prove something, but rather showing up, as we are, a gift to God and those around us. How might our worship feel if we sang every song mindfully and joyfully? How might our homes be different if we were truly present to another at meals and in conversation? How might we connect more deeply to one another if we weren't mentally multitasking and on our devices, so much of the time?

Yes, this is the same message we hear every year. *Wait. Prepare for the coming of Christ. Remember the reason for the season.* Am I the only one who needs the reminder? As we prepare to receive the gift of God's love made flesh, let's gift ourselves and one another, with the gift of presence. Show up for worship. Hop on our zoom call on Wednesday nights. Stop by Phantom Farms on Wednesdays at 11 for conversation. This Advent New Year, let's give up multitasking and barreling through the season, and be fully present to the moment.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Heather R. Bailes Baker'.

Pastor Heather

Coming This Month in Worship – The Gift of Being Present

December 3—First Sunday of Advent

Being Present with Hope

Psalms 80: 1-2; 1 Corinthians 1: 4-7, Mark 13: 24-37

Communion will be served.

December 10—Second Sunday of Advent

Being Present with Peace

Isaiah 40: 1-11; 2 Peter 3: 8-15a; Mark 1: 1-8

December 17—Third Sunday of Advent

A Special Choral Celebration

Being Present with Joy

Isaiah 61: 1-4,10; Psalm 126: 1-3; Luke 1: 41-55

December 21—7pm, Blue Christmas

December 24

10 am: Advent 4 & Christmas Eve

Being Present with Love and Light

Child & Family Friendly Worship with Story and Song

Luke 1: 26-38; Isaiah 9: 2-8; Luke 2: 1-20

7 pm: Traditional Christmas Eve Worship

Being Present with Light

Isaiah 9: 2-8, Luke 2: 1-20

Candlelight, Christmas Carols and Message

Communion will be served

December 31—First Sunday of Christmas

Adama Brown preaching

Small Group Study

Want to learn more about Christian mindfulness?

Our featured resource this season is *Right Here, Right now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness*. Did you know that Christianity has a strong tradition of the practice of mindfulness? Join with others for discussion and practice (it's easy!) in this short three week small group opportunity online. Each week we'll watch a video featuring author, Amy G. Oben, and worship series creator, Marcia McFee. It's absolutely not necessary to read the book to enjoy and benefit from the study.

7pm Wednesday Night Study —

Join us on Zoom December 6, 13, 20

December 21, 7pm (online and onsite)

Blue Christmas Worship

Sometimes even though we sing "Joy to the World," we don't feel all that joyful inside. Sometimes this holy season can feel empty and painful. It may be the first Christmas without someone you love. It may be a time of year that has always been difficult. It may be a season of stress, anxiety, depression, and fear. Sometimes we just need a quiet moment with God to reflect and gather our thoughts.

For these reasons, we're offering "Blue Christmas Worship." Come experience quiet, reflective, and comforting worship. Come hear gentle carols, comforting scripture, and prayers that acknowledge the full emotional experience of being human

**One thing I hear each year, is "I'm not feeling sad. I love this time of year." Great. Consider coming to offer the gift of your presence or offering someone a ride. Come pray and sing with those who are feeling grief, loss, anxiety, pain, etc. Offer empathy simply by being with others.

Present: At Phantom Farms

A new offering this Advent Season

Meet Pastor Heather, Wednesdays at 11am for conversation and connections over coffee. No agenda.

11 am, December 6, 13, 20

Phantom Farms

2920 Diamond Hill Rd, Cumberland, RI 02864

Arnold Mills Cemetery

Karl Ikerman

Give each other the gift of a lifetime.

In thanksgiving for another good year this side of the turf, the Arnold Mills Cemetery is offering a 10% discount to all AMUMC members, their friends and relatives for the month of December.

Merry Christmas.



As part of our commitment to justice, our church is selling Fair Trade Coffee and Tea, partnering with Equal Exchange.

We are currently selling:

Organic Coffee — \$10/bag

French Roast Ground & Whole Bean
Breakfast Blend Ground
Decaf

Organic Tea — \$4/box

Chai
Irish Breakfast

Chocolate Bars — \$3/each

Milk Caramel Crunch with Sea Salt

Make checks payable to AMUMC, Memo: Fair Trade

Check the coat room to see what we have available today! If you have special requests, questions or suggestions, please contact Pastor Heather or George Jutras, office.amumc@gmail.com .

Coffee sales benefit our church and small coffee growers, and help build justice in the world.

Meals in the Park

On November 26th we served our guests a ham and savory rice dinner with a side of vegetable soup and homemade desserts. We served over 160 meals. Our December meal is New Years Eve December 31st. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer on this afternoon. Also please consider making some homemade desserts for this meal. Thank you.

Karen Oswain 401-749-3609



Richard Dunn Memorial

Please pray for the family of Richard Dunn. Richard, a long-time member of our church, died October 25. His wife Anne described his last day and month as "happy days," and expressed her gratitude for the gift of good days with him. You can read his obituary [here](#). His memorial will be December 3, at 2pm, at the New Hampton Community Church in New Hampton, NH.

Missions Committee Church Report

December 2023

Meals in the Park

On November 26th we served our guests a ham and savory rice dinner with a side of vegetable soup and homemade desserts. We served over 160 meals. **Our December meal is New Years Eve December 31st.** Please let me know if you would like to volunteer on this afternoon. Also please consider making some homemade desserts for this meal. Any questions, please contact Karen Oswain 401-749-3609

The Franklin Farm Community Garden and the Historic Metcalf-Franklin Farm Preservation Association

The volunteers at Franklin Farm have completed the 2023 harvest season! The gardening areas are sleeping for the upcoming cold season and the Winter Rye has germinated to prevent erosion and enrich the soil when it is plowed in the Spring. The trails and fields are still available for visitors to wander around and enjoy the beautiful open space. Any questions, contact Pam and Chip Thurlow: thurlowcp@gmail.com; 401-333-1235.

Habitat for Humanity

The current project is to erect **two** duplexes at **83 & 85 Oakland School Street in Burrillville, RI.** The second duplex foundation requires a final installation and in the next few weeks volunteer groups hopefully can be assigned the various construction tasks. **We will notify AMUMC volunteers when we can return to the work site as we have done previously.**

Cintas Clothing Donation and the St. James Episcopal Church Clothing Closet

The twice monthly clothing donations continue from the Cintas Warehouse in Woonsocket to the St. James Church clothing closet. The delivery schedule is posted in the coat room. Those items can be placed in the hallway at our church and they will be delivered to St. James Church by our volunteers.

Dave's Marketplace Day Old Bakery Donations

Since 2016, volunteers from AMUMC have transported day old baked goods three times each week to the Cumberland Senior Center, the Northern RI Food Pantry or the Woonsocket Shelter. The schedule of the three donations each week and the many volunteers making the deliveries is posted on the bulletin board in the coat room.

The Woonsocket Shelter

The Woonsocket Shelter has received donations of persons care items and household items (sheets, towels, quilts, curtains, etc.) for families to relocate into independent living when they leave the shelter. In addition, AMUMC volunteers have been donating day old baked goods from area supermarkets – currently Dave's Marketplace – for over 15 years to the shelter. On Fridays, Elton and Rachel Odom make the weekly deliveries to the Shelter.

The Adopt-A-Family Gifts

The Adopt-A-Family Christmas gifts were delivered on Sunday, November 26th and will be forwarded to their families in the beginning of December for distribution to the families. Thank you AMUMC members again for your generous donations to those families during the holiday season.

Happy Basket Donations

The annual holiday gift giving was a wonderful success again for the HAPPY Basket Program. We raised over **\$900 for the volunteers to purchase Christmas gifts for Cumberland children** and we will be collecting boxed and canned goods in the beginning of December for distribution to those needy families. **Our collective generosity confirms our reputation as the "Amazing" Arnold Mills United Methodist Church.**

The Autumn Villa Stocking Stuffer Donations

In early December we will be collecting, for the fourth year, Stocking Stuffer items for the residents of the Autumn Villa Assisted Living facility on Diamond Hill Road in Cumberland. A bin will be on the church porch for members to make those donations during the week when the office is not open to receive them – Tuesday through Friday; 8 AM to noon.

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Playing Cards
- Board games
- Arts and crafts
- Paper and pens
- Body wash
- Body sprays
- Cologne
- Shaving items
- Nail polish
- Jewelry
- Stockings
- Coloring books
- Crayons
- Colored pencils

Chip Thurlow,
Chairperson, AMUMC Missions and Social Concerns Committee

CLIMATE CARE - SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAICS / HEAT PUMP COMMITTEE

Thank you to everyone who responded to our online survey or provided input at listening sessions during coffee hour. There appears to be strong support for all of the climate care measures being considered, and fairly consistent rankings for prioritizing measures. The team will be meeting the week of December 10th to make final selections and begin obtaining quotes as we work toward approval from the Trustees and the Church Council. Since the currently available funds are not sufficient to complete all the measures desired, we will combine a prioritization process with fundraising to proceed with what measures are attainable in 2024. While we haven't formally kicked off our fundraising, end-of-year contributions for climate care projects are encouraged. Please send any such contributions to the church and designate the funds for "climate care measures". Please feel free to reach out any time with ideas, questions, concerns or feedback to Dave Larson (adl21412@gmail.com or 401-225-9530). We look forward to hearing from you.

Peace,
Dave Larson
Cell 401-225-9530

2023 Trustees Wrap-up

As 2023 comes to a close, the care that your trustees have shown to Arnold Mills UMC's buildings and property was highlighted at our Annual Conference. In case you missed it, here's a recap!

- We received \$1100 in memorial gifts in 2023.
- Donations totaling \$16,986.31 were received which are dedicated to our Sustainability Project.
- Our major project was the repaving of the small parking lot and area in front of the church. The driveway and large parking lot were seal coated and striped.
- New Handicapped Parking signs and posts have been ordered and will be installed soon.
- The roadside sign was cleaned and repainted.
- Stage One of having our organ restored was completed, but unfortunately led to complications still to be resolved.
- As part of complying to Safe Sanctuary requirements, glass windows were installed in the four office doors.
- A lavatory handle/lock was replaced.
- We met with representatives of the Cumberland Police Department to review security concerns.
- In order to prepare for a Fire Department Inspection, we were advised by the chief that we had multiple deficiencies. So... we cleared all the hallways and stairway exits, cleaned out the basement and closets wherever circuit breaker boxes are located, labeled all the fire extinguishers, replaced batteries in security lights, disabled an incorrect exit light, installed two required exit lights in the sanctuary, stopped using electrical extension cords where dangerous, and had GFI outlets installed for the downstairs dehumidifier and on the stage.
- The elevator was inspected and will be serviced in December.
- Our first Carbon Footprint Fair was held.
- Energy audits by RISE were completed on both the church and the parsonage.
- Habitat for Humanity now rents office space from us.
- Cargill Hall was rented for two family reunions and a Diwali Festival.
- The parsonage projects included a chimney inspection, the replacement of exterior lights, electrical upgrades, new shower/bath fixtures, and repairs to the deck stairs.

So, as you can see, we are constantly striving to keep our place of worship welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone.

Merry Christmas!

Lindsay Gettinger, Fran Carr, Scott Murphy, Tom Cabana, Dave Larson, Tom Hetherington, Mark Farnell



Tips for December 2023 Greening Your Decorating

Christmas lights are symbols of the Light that came into the world with the birth of Christ. Enjoy them and **use LEDs wherever you can** to take care of the world that Jesus lit up with his presence. You can also give a package or two of the lights to someone you love to help them love creation.

Go live! Live trees that you can replant are kindest to the environment. A cut tree harvested from an organic tree farm will likely be replaced with two others that will also combat climate change. If you need a smaller tree, consider a potted tree you can enjoy year-round (with or without the decorations). Whatever size you need, check local nurseries. Some are beginning to rent out trees for the holidays.

If you are considering an artificial tree, **count the costs to the environment** before you buy. Artificial trees are made from a plastic called PVC, which creates [hazardous waste](#) and emissions during manufacturing. Most are shipped from China, which increases their carbon footprint much more than real trees. **If you already own an artificial tree**, use it for at least 10 years. Keep the tree in good condition so that you can pass it on to someone else who will appreciate having it and won't need to buy one.

Ask parents or grandparents to give you an ornament that has been a part of your growing-up Christmas traditions. Pass along its story to your children. Or make your own tree ornaments representing something meaningful to you. Glue family photos to card stock and hang the picture on the tree. Create some new stories to tell each Christmas.

Create less waste by how you wrap your gifts. One of the savviest zero-waste decisions is to save wrapping paper, tissue paper, bows, and ribbons to reuse each year. Or adorn your gift with fabric like a scarf (new or vintage) that can be worn. Look also for old maps, sheet music, newspaper funnies, or plain paper painted with your children's handprints and art.

While it might be fun to rip and tear into a wrapped present, the fancy paper itself is most likely to be laminated with plastic, foil, glitter, or other non-paper materials that contaminate a recycle bin. The short fibers in tissue paper make it unrecyclable too. Rather than wrapping paper, **go for reusable gift bags.**

Go retro. **String popcorn and cranberries** on cotton thread. After Christmas, put the strings outside for the birds to munch on or decompose in the soil. However, don't give in to the temptation to go back to tinsel or fake "snow" — they never decay.

Rather than buying new decorations, **turn to thrift shops and garage sales** to find one-of-a-kind used ornaments and holiday decor.

If you do buy new decorations, **keep justice in the forefront.** Make sure the items are Fair Trade, which means the workers who made them earned a living wage and didn't labor under sweatshop conditions. [Ten Thousand Villages](#) and [SERRV International](#) both sell Fair Trade holiday decor.

Invite children to make decorations. Spend time together and show them how to cut snowflakes from recycled paper. Or help them create a collage or ornaments by using greeting cards from a previous year. Or search nature for boughs of holly, evergreens, pinecones, mistletoe to decorate with. (Be mindful of allergies.) Encourage them to find delight in nature and their own creativity in reusing rather than trashing. The learning will carry on past the holidays.

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors. For more about the UM Creation Justice Movement, go to umcreationjustice.org.

Church School News

On entering the house,
they saw the child with
Mary his mother;
and they knelt
down and paid
him homage.

Matthew 2:11,
NRSV



**The children
will begin
their third
unit,
"Christmas
Around the
World".**

Important Dates

December 3: Communion Sunday,
children go directly to church
school.

Sunday School Registration

To register go to the Children & Youth
page under Education on the church
website (amumc.org). You will find a
form you can print and fill in and an
online form if you prefer registering
online. Use either one to register.

Bible Verse: On entering the house, they saw the
child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down
and paid him homage. (Matthew 2:11)

Main Idea: God sent Jesus into the world to bring
peace to all people and all nations. Today Chris-
tians from around the world prepare for and cele-
brate the birth of God's Son, Jesus.

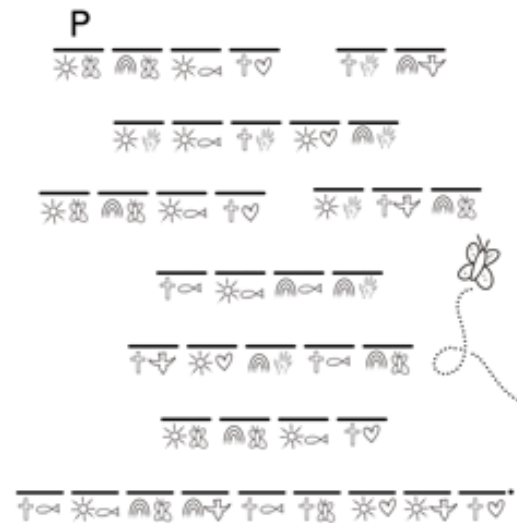
Objectives: The children will:

- * hear and experience the story of the magi visiting
the Christ child;
- * experience Christmas customs from around the
world;
- * study the stars and connect to the magi as astrol-
ogers of their time;

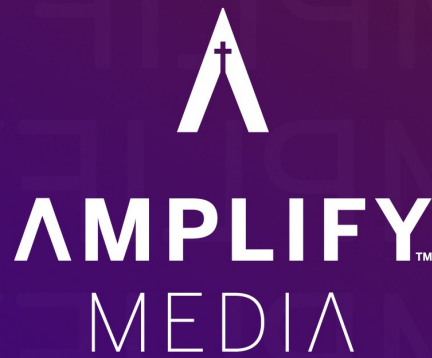
Puzzle!

Use the grid to
discover what
James 5:13-18
advises when
challenges loom.

	A	F	L	P	T
	C	H	N	R	W
	E	I	O	S	Y



NOW
Available



What if you could stay engaged and encouraged anywhere and anytime with a library of the best media for study and reflection? Through any device you now have 24/7 access to motivating stories, insightful teaching, and powerful resources. To see everything we can do with Amplify, just visit the site below

Our Amplify Website:

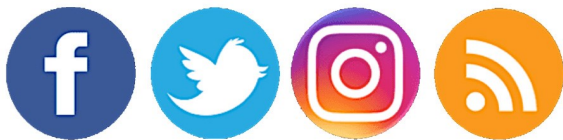
<https://my.amplifymedia.com/arnoldmillsumccumberlandri>

Access Code: DTLSGY

SPRC News

Our committee includes Stacey Johnson, Lee Ann Cotta, Cindy Mauch, Sue Therien, and Olivia Carney.
(Updated 6/6/23)

If you have any questions, comments or concerns having to do with the staff of the parish feel free to see any member of the committee or you can email us at amumcsprc@gmail.com



Arnold Mills UMC's Social Media

Find us on social media!

We are on Facebook and on Instagram.

Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Arnold-Mills-United-Methodist-Church-115722435105941>

Twitter at https://twitter.com/ArnoldMills_UMC

Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/arnold_mills_umc

Listen to sermons on our website at <http://www.amumc.org>

Prayer Requests

Prayer requests are sent out each week to every address on our email list. We understand that not everyone who asks for prayer in worship during "Sharing Our Joys and Concerns" wishes to have that information shared on the email blast. If you would like to have a prayer request included in the weekly email, please use the "Prayer Request" form on the table in the back of the sanctuary, call the office at 401-333-5203, or email office.amumc@gmail.com. Prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for one month. If you would like a prayer request to remain longer, just let us know.

AMUMC Upcoming Events

December

Fri Dec 1: World Aids Day

Sun Dec 3 - 10:00 AM: First Sunday of Advent Service

Wed Dec 6 - 11:00 AM: Meet Pastor Heather @ Phantom Farms

Sun Dec 10 - 10:00 AM: Second Sunday of Advent Service

Sun Dec 10 - 11:00 AM: Eagle Scout Bake Sale

Wed Dec 13 - 11:00 AM: Meet Pastor Heather @ Phantom Farms

Thu Dec 14 - 6:00 PM: Trustees Meeting

Sun Dec 17 - 10:00 AM: Third Sunday of Advent Service

Mon Dec 18: Charles Wesley's Birthday

Wed Dec 20 - 11:00 AM: Meet Pastor Heather @ Phantom Farms

Thu Dec 21 - 7:00 PM: Blue Christmas Service

Sun Dec 24 - 10:00 AM: Advent 4 & Christmas Eve Service

Sun Dec 24 - 7:00 PM: Traditional Christmas Eve Service

Sun Dec 31 - 10:00 AM: First Sunday of Christmas Service

**Remember, Sunday Worship Time is now
10:00 AM!**



Arnold Mills United Methodist Church
690 Nate Whipple Hwy.
Cumberland, RI 02864
Phone: 401-333-5203
E-mail: office.amumc@gmail.com
Rev. Heather R. Bailes Baker



You are welcome. Join us for Worship on Sunday!

Worship and Church School begin at 10am in the sanctuary

Livestreaming of our worship service will be available during the service for those who do not attend the service in person. After each service the video will be archived for viewing anytime.

Check out our webpage at www.amumc.org