

# Steeple Chat

The weekly update from your church



## In our Church this Sunday, December 8, 2019 The Second Sunday of Advent



SECOND SUNDAY  
OF  
*Advent*

**10:00 a.m. Service in the  
sanctuary**

**Message by Pastor Paige Besse-  
Rankin**

*An Advent Intruder*

*Isaiah 11: 1-10; Matthew 3:1-12*

**Lighting of the Second Advent  
Candle**

**Mission Moment:**

Community Action Partnership

**Children's Message by Pastor  
Paige**

**Music Ministry**

The First Parish Choir:

*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

David Angerman and Joseph Martin

**All are invited to a time of Fellowship and Refreshments  
following the service.**

**Child care is available during the service.**

### In Steeple Chat this week:

- \*Advent Devotionals
- \*Church Supper
- \*Sunday School
- \*Adult Class
- \*Saint Nicolas Day
- \*Rev Paiges's Corner
- \*Advent/Christmas
- \*SS Mission
- \*Mystery Parties
- \*Offering Envelopes
- \*Worship Recordings
- \*Ingrid's Reminders
- \*Blue Christmas

**ADVENT  
CONSPIRACY**

Turn Your Christmas Upside Down

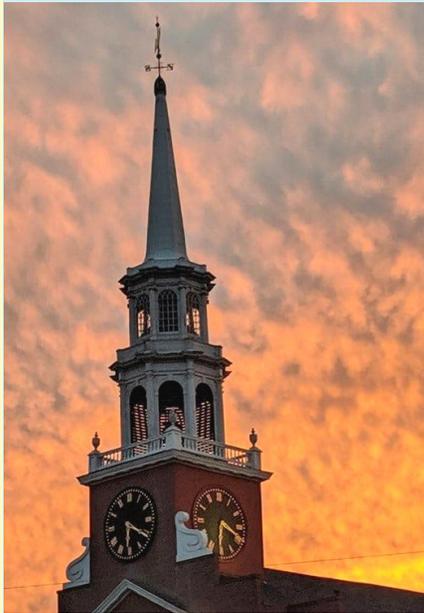


WORSHIP FULLY SPEND LESS GIVE MORE LOVE ALL

### Advent Devotionals

We have a number of Advent  
devotional resources available

- \*Christmas Dinner
- \*Weather Closures
- \*Thrift Shop
- \*Stephen Ministry



in the Atrium.

On our church Facebook page, we are doing the “Picture Advent” series that everyone is welcome to join.

If you are enjoying the “Advent Conspiracy” materials, they offer an online daily devotional at: <https://adventconspiracy.org/devotionals/>



## DECEMBER CHURCH SUPPER

**THIS Saturday,  
December 7, 4:30-6:00  
p.m.**

Special Pot roast menu with all the fixins'.  
\$12.00 per adult; Kids \$5.00

Holiday music while you dine.



## In Our Sunday School *Sunday, December 8 schedule:*

**9:00 The New Testaments Sunday  
School Class**  
in Room 6

**Sunday School begins this Sunday with First Kids Gathering at 9:30 a.m. in Nazareth Hall.** We will be on a normal schedule this Sunday, attending the first part of the service in the sanctuary, and then returning downstairs for classes following the Children's Message. Youth Choir will rehearse immediately following Sunday School classes.

***Sunday, December 8***  
**8:50 a.m. Adult Sunday School**

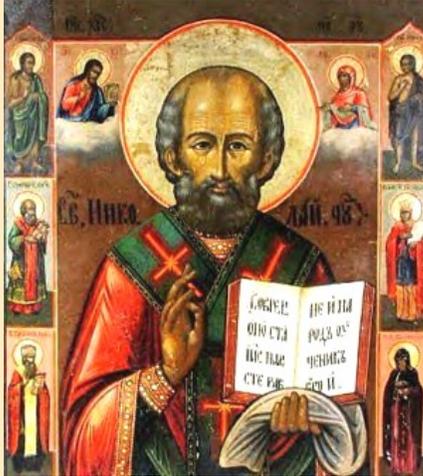
The Adult Discussion Group will

# Adult Sunday School Class



meet this Sunday, December 8, at 8:50 in Room 8 on the lower level. All are welcome to join the group for informal discussion.

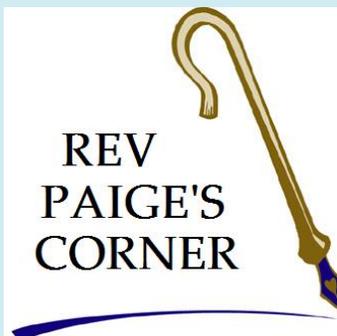
## Happy Saint Nicholas Day



The man behind Santa Claus was a Christian Bishop who lived between 270 and 343. He served in an ancient Greek maritime city of Myra (modern-day Demre, Turkey.) There are many legends about St Nicholas, including his concern for the poor. After his parent's death, he is said to have distributed their wealth to the poor. The most popular story was that he rescued 3 girls from forced

prostitution by dropping sacks of gold coins through the window of their house so their father could pay dowries on them. Another version of the story includes the coins tossed through the window landing in stocking hung to dry by the fire.

Many observe December 6 as the feast day for St Nicholas and in some countries children receive gifts on this day. What a long journey from this model of sacrificial giving to the poor to the jolly guy in the mall.



## **Beyond the stick and mud**

So I have often wondered how Jesus managed to have such a tremendous impact spread around the world working with stick and mud as teaching tools. (John 8). We, on the other hand, feel hampered when the copy machine breaks down or computers misbehave!

You may have heard us throwing around some new names this fall – “Breeze”, “Basecamp”, and “Zoom.” These are some tools that we are using to make it easier for us to communicate and to work together on the many projects of the church.

“Breeze” is a database program that helps us keep track of everyone and access contact information more easily. It also gives us some communication tools to more easily email and text groups in the church and it allows us to do some online signups. Most folks in the church won't get into the Breeze database. You might, however, respond to an online form to sign up for something.

“Zoom” is a program that allows us to bring people together in an online

meeting with either video or phone connections. For instance, this week, we had a couple of zoom committee meetings so people didn't have to drive in the snow.

Basecamp is our new way of sharing documents and having conversations and collaborating on projects. It has sections for committees and for project groups.

If you aren't familiar with any of these programs, don't worry! They are generally easy to interact with. And we are always offering alternative ways to communicate and sign up and get information so those without internet or computer access won't be left out.

There will be a short informational meeting this Sunday, December 8 in the Parlor at 11:30 am to introduce these tools for those who would like to learn more or have questions about how to use them. We will offer the same meeting again on January 12 and we are always available for individual tutorials if requested.

Blessings,  
Rev Paige



**Our Advent and Christmas Services**  
**ALL are welcome at First Parish Church**

**Sunday, December 15 ~ 10:00 a.m. Service--Third Sunday of Advent**

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

Message by Pastor Paige Besse-Rankin: *Choose to Be Courageous*  
Music Ministry by First Parish Choir and First Parish Ringers

**Sunday, December 15 ~ 7:00 p.m. Blue Christmas Service**

*Dover Area Religious Leaders Association will host a special worship service for those struggling during the Christmas season.*

This candlelight service will focus on prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle--and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness.

**Sunday, December 22 ~ 10:00 a.m. Service--Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*A Service of Scripture, Readings, and Carols*

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Come and let your soul be stirred and heart be moved as we journey through the Advent and Christmas music and scripture passages. Traditional music and readings combine to repeat the timeless story of this blessed season.

We conclude with singing the *Hallelujah* Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*.

**Tuesday, December 24 ~ Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

Our two candlelight services each feature familiar carols sung by all, accompanied by the majestic pipe organ. We conclude each service by singing *Silent Night* together as the beautiful sanctuary is lit only by candles.

**4:00 p.m. Candlelight Service for All Ages**

Story for Children of all ages by *Pastor Paige Besse-Rankin*  
Distribution of the Light/ *Silent Night*

*A time of Fellowship and Refreshments, hosted by the Gould family, will be held in the Parlor on Christmas Eve between our two services. This time is intended for any folks who wish to remain following the 4 pm service, or arrive before the 7 pm service. We especially invite our college-age members to attend this event.*

**7:00 p.m. Festival Service in Music and the Word**

Candlelight Procession of the Choirs—*O Come, All Ye Faithful*  
Music by *Youth Choir, First Parish Choir and First Parish Ringers*  
Christmas Message by *Pastor Paige Besse-Rankin*  
Distribution of the Light/ *Silent Night*

**Our Sunday School Mission for**  
December is *Sharing the Spirit Shoeboxes for Children*

Please pick up an empty shoebox from Ingrid after worship in the atrium to take home and fill for a Pre-K child.

Suggested items are: Drawing pads, coloring books, washable markers & crayons, little toys, mind games, children's books, non-liquid hygiene items – Toothbrush, toothpaste, little hairbrush or comb Socks, hair accessories, gloves, scarves, hats, non-chocolate candy: Swedish Fish, Caramels, Gummy bears, candy canes. Add your personal touch - Make-your-own crafts; Toddlers - Baby Wipes and Hard



Cover Children's books. A personal note/card from your family – if you include your name and address it's possible that the child could write you back!



Is this week's storm making you feel house-bound?

Don't worry about the winter blahs - Mystery Parties are coming in January! Stay tuned .....



Offering envelopes for 2020 are now available in the atrium.

If you do not see your name on one of the boxes and you want envelopes, please fill your name and email address (or phone number) on the sign-up sheet located next to the boxes. You may also notify me, Steven Hall, at

[oldbass113@gmail.com](mailto:oldbass113@gmail.com). I will notify you of your assigned envelope number and when your envelopes can be picked up at the office.

Thank you, *Steven Hall*, Collector.



**Worship Service Audio Recordings** now available!

Each week, we record the audio portion of our Sunday services. These recordings are now available as mp3 files through our Basecamp software program.

If you do not already have access to Basecamp, you may register by filling in the registration form posted on the Breeze program Here is the link to sign-up:

<https://fpcdover.breezechms.com/form/55811a>

When you get to the Basecamp homepage, scroll down to the Projects section and click on "Worship Recordings".



**INGRID's REMINDERS...**

**Book Club – Meeting on Thursday December 12 at Adelle’s Coffee House, from 6-7:30 PM**  
**American Red Cross CPR/AED Training class – Coming on a Saturday in January/February 2020**



Dover Area Religious Leaders Association  
invites you to a special

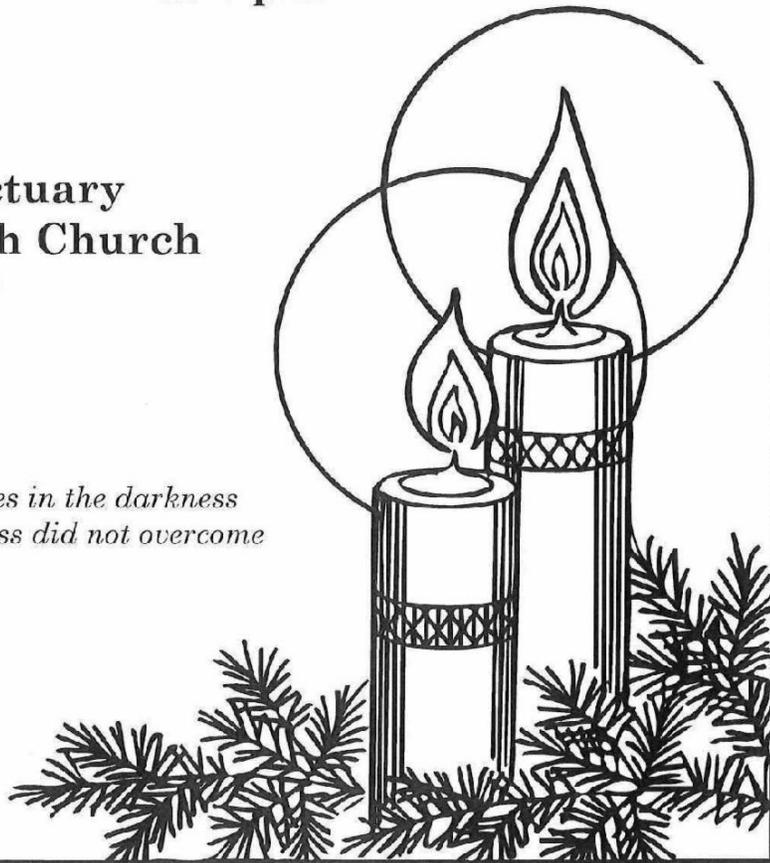
**Blue Christmas Worship Service**

**A service of hope and comfort for those who are grieving, lonely, hurting or struggling and those who love them.**

**Sunday, December 15  
at 7 pm**

**in the Sanctuary  
First Parish Church  
218 Central Ave  
Dover, NH**

*“The light shines in the darkness  
and the darkness did not overcome  
it.” - John 1*



**Christmas Day Dinner** The men's group is again sponsoring a Christmas Dinner at 5:30 p.m. on Christmas Day in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome, whether you are alone on Christmas or



## Christmas Dinner

want to come join in the fellowship after you have had Christmas with your family. We are asking the church family for donations of pies and desserts, or cash towards expenses. If anyone wants to volunteer, we will be gathering at 1:00 p.m. for preparation, and clean up starts at 6:30 pm. Sign up sheets to help are in the white binders. Please call Sam Ronda with questions-- (603) 664-6098 or at: sam.ronda@gmail.com



### Weather Closures/Curtailments

It's that time of year again when we need to talk about "what if"...regarding the weather. Here are the First Parish procedures for a "weather event":

Sunday closures/curtailments will be listed on the church web site

([www.firstparishdover.org](http://www.firstparishdover.org)), a special weather email will be sent to all who receive *Steeple Chat*. And, our church cancellations are posted on WMUR-TV Channel 9.

If driving conditions warrant, we could possibly cancel Sunday School and Choirs, but still hold our church service at 10:00. If extreme conditions prevail, then the church service will also be cancelled.

Mondays through Fridays, the church office and building will follow any weather-related closures/delayed openings/early releases as announced for the Dover School District.

**Find it at the First Thrift Shop** The Thrift Shop is open on Thursdays, 1-4 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Thrift Shop will be closed Thanksgiving weekend.

First Parish is a **Stephen Ministry Church** that provides weekly individual and confidential spiritual care for those in need. Please contact one of the following to get connected: Judy Edwards, 603-978-4789 or Dave Dickson, 603-781-9791.

### First Parish Church is Open and Affirming,

welcoming all to participate fully in the life of our church family, its ministries, fellowship, leadership, rites and sacraments, regardless of ability, race, ethnicity, social or economic situation, sexual orientation or gender identity.

**ALL are Welcome Here!**

*See you in church!*

## First Parish Church Congregational

The United Church of Christ  
218 Central Avenue  
Dover, New Hampshire 03820  
(603) 742-5664  
Visit our website: [www.firstparishdover.org](http://www.firstparishdover.org)

