December 1, 2020

Dear Friends,

It’s hard to believe that the season of Advent has begun as we watch, wait and prepare for the coming of Christ, once again, into our lives and the life of the world.  We know that the Presence of Christ IS with us and all creation, but this is a unique, special time of the year for us to anticipate the love, compassion and presence of God entering into our lives.  May it be a prayerful, hopeful time for you.

As the pandemic continues, please be in prayer for those who have tested positive for COVID-19, for their families and those grieving the loss of loved ones.  Let us also hold in our hearts those who are wrestling with emotional, psychological and spiritual pain during this time, along with many who are struggling financially.  And please remember to keep our health-care workers and other front-line workers who are sacrificing so much for the sake of us all.  May our actions and contributions be partners with our prayers.

The Mission Committee will continue **collections for the Christmas Baskets this week,** collecting both food and gifts for our families this weekend. Please contact Corey Haynes at 860 763 2103 or through email at greenlady86@sbcglobal.net to sign up for food and gifts.   We will be accepting check or gift cards from anyone that would like to contribute but does not feel comfortable going out and shopping for the items themselves.  A member of the Mission Committee will be collecting both food and gifts in the rear parking lot of the church this Saturday December 5th from 1030am to noon.  We will be collecting the following food items (NOTE- please only non-perishable food items no fresh produce)
Hot Chocolate, Coffee/ Tea, Gravy, Peanut Butter, Soup, Cans of Fruit, Cereal,
Mac & Cheese, Stuffing, Cranberry Sauce, Mayo, Napkins

**Prayer and Meditation at Second Baptist Church:  Wednesday, December 2nd at 10:00am**.  All are invited for 25 minutes of quiet reflection, prayer, sharing and meditation.  We will be meeting in the Kneece Chapel Common Room.  All are invited to join us.  Please wear a mask, and bring a heart open to God’s Presence.

**Bible Study via Zoom will meet Wednesday, December 2nd at 7:00pm**.  This week and throughout the season of Advent, the Bible study will focus on the birth stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.  This week we will continue our exploration in Matthew in the second chapter.  Join us.  The Zoom invitation is below.

**Upcoming Meetings**
The Council of Ministries meets this Sunday, December 6th at 11:30am and the Diaconate meets on Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00pm.

The next gathering of the **Book Group is Sunday, December 13th at 6:30pm**.  We will continue (and perhaps!) conclude our discussion on the book “Wishful Thinking:  A Seeker’s ABC,” by Frederick Buechner.  All are invited.  Let me know and I’ll send you a Zoom invitation.

Peg and I have been recording and sharing a several-decades tradition in our home, for viewing on the SBC YouTube channel, of lighting the candles on the Advent wreathe.  Each day, there is an approximately 3-minute segment with the lighting of one or more of the candles – Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and the Christ candle – a short song, a very brief reading and singing the first verse of a couple of Christmas carols.  I hope you’ll take a look and perhaps join in.  Go to the SBC website at [www.secondbaptistsuffield.org](http://www.secondbaptistsuffield.org/) and push the blue button, “Live Streaming on YouTube” to check it out.

**Worship – The Second Sunday of the Advent Season**
This Sunday is the second Sunday in the season of Advent as we keep awake, watch, wait and prepare for the coming of the Christ Child into our lives and into the life of the world.  On the Advent wreathe, we will be re-lighting the candle of Hope and lighting the candle of Peace.  Throughout the season, we will continue offering worship services virtually, recording services from the Second Baptist Church sanctuary.  Particularly in this season of expectation, hope and waiting, we long to be together in-person, once again, but for safety concerns with rising COVID-19 rates, we will delay our return until it is safe to do so.  You will be able to see and participate in the services through our YouTube channel ([www.secondbaptistsuffield.org](http://www.secondbaptistsuffield.org/)) or our Facebook page at 10:00 am on Sundays or any time afterwards.

From the final verse of a favorite Christmas carol of mine, “In the Bleak Mid-Winter”:

                        “What then can I give him, empty as I am?
                         If I were a Shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
                         If I were a Wise One, I would do my part.
                         Yet what I can I give him:  Give him my heart.”

Peace be with you.

Tom

Thomas Carr is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Bible Study
Time: Dec 2, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/98208947190>

Meeting ID: 982 0894 7190
One tap mobile
+13017158592,,98208947190# US (Washington D.C)
+13126266799,,98208947190# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location
        +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
        +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
        +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
        +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
        +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
        +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 982 0894 7190
Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/acx5R2z9zC>