

**December
2024**



**Normandy Park
United Church
of Christ**

19247 1st Ave S
Seattle, WA

(206) 824-1770

www.npucc.org

Pastor:

Rev. Amy Hitchens

amy@npucc.org

**Music Accompanist
and Choir Director:**

Cindy Dow

cindy@npucc.org

Church Office:

Robbie Gilchrist

office@npucc.org

Office Hours:

Tuesday & Thursday

11:45 am-2:30 pm

Wednesday

8:45 am-2:30 pm

THE TOWLINE

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Our theme for Advent this year is “Gift Exchange.” Acknowledging that we as the church peddle the gifts of the Spirit and not the gifts of commerce—I want to offer to you a gift of poetry that may just feed your soul. I know it feeds mine! It is an Advent poem/prayer from author Kate Bowler, survivor and thriver of cancer:

“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” –Matthew 11:3 (ESV)

*God, we are waiting for love,
Not the simple kind or the sweep-you-off-your-feet kind,
but the absurd kind.*

*The kind wrapped in rags,
Resting in a bucket of animal feed.
Love enough to save us all.*

*Blessed are we who look for Love
Deeper, fuller, truer—than we have ever known,
Than we could have ever hoped for.*

*Blessed are we who seek you,
The light that dawned so long ago
In that dark stable.
Love given.
Love received.*

*Receive this gift, dear one.
Love has come for you.*

Blessings to you and your family this Advent season. Each week, we will take time to unpack four Advent gifts: hope, peace, joy and love. I hope you find your place in God’s awesome story, of love born anew, of love found in the most unlikely places, during the most uncertain of times. In the midst of all the uncertainty, this community of faith is here—with fun and fellowship, with space for both joy and sorrow—so please join us in all that is messy and beautiful about practicing our faith together this holy season.

In Hope,

Rev. Amy

December Calendar of Events

ONLINE: invitations/directions for accessing these events will be shared via email:

- Sunday Worship Services: 10 am
- Church Council meeting: Tuesday, December, 7 pm
- Bibles & Brews: Friday, December 13, 7 pm

IN-PERSON:

- Sunday Worship Services: 10 am, Sanctuary
- Advent Workshop:, December 1, 2nd Hour, Fellowship Hall
- Taproot Theatre-“Gift of the Magi”: Saturday, December 7, 6 pm, Southminster Presbyterian Church
- Book Discussion – Living Resistance: Tuesday, December 10, Noon, Fireside Room
- Mission Mile: Friday, December 20, 5 - 10 pm, Fellowship Hall
- Wassail Sunday, December 15, Following Worship in the Fireside Room
- Christmas Pageant & Christmas Fund Special Offering: December 22 during worship
- Caroling to the Homebound, December 22, After Worship
- Christmas Eve Service, December 24, 5 pm. Traditional carols and candle lighting. Family friendly.
- Breakfast Church, December 29th, 10 am, in the Fellowship Hall

We encourage you to wear a mask if you have a cold or cough. If you have symptoms or do not feel well, please stay home and join us on Zoom. Masks are available at church if needed.

Thank You!



Stewardship Season Final Thoughts

By Stacie Latimer

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I want to offer my gratitude for a successful and meaningful stewardship season. I appreciate the time, treasure and talent each of you brings. This season, a special thanks for for the messages shared in Rev. Amy Hitchen's sermons and writings...in all who shared their stewardship story/message at church and in letters, about what our church means to them...and in the lovely "offerings" (dual meaning) of mugs, stained glass, mandalas, cards, tablecloths, hats, Advent calendar, beaded crafts from Tanzania, and plants.

On Stewardship Sunday, thank you for sharing your gratitude for the gifts you have to offer our community. It was wonderful to share soup and fellowship together after worship.

We wanted to share those "Imagine Together" responses. I think they collectively show who we are as a church.

Thank you all again. What blessings you are.

"I am grateful for these gifts I can offer our community..."

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- ♥ *Friendship & Compassion*
 - ♥ *Supporting & Valuing our community members, caring about them*
 - ♥ *Acceptance & Kindness*
 - ♥ *Music/Singing/Singing in the Choir*
 - ♥ *The gift of caring & helping*
 - ♥ *Contributing to growth*
 - ♥ *Learning and work of all.*

- ♥ *Assisting as needed, volunteering my time*
- ♥ *Having the ability to contribute financially to the work of the church.*
- ♥ *Joyfulness & Rejoicing*
- ♥ *Cooking dinners for Hospitality House*
- ♥ *Visiting the elderly who are isolated because of illness*
- ♥ *Preparing food, providing meals*
- ♥ *Sharing love as needed (these days, rinse and repeat)*
- ♥ *Readiness to stand up, stand firm*
- ♥ *Parish Care and Outreach*
- ♥ *Community Meal*
- ♥ *Driving church members to church as needed*
- ♥ *Money*
- ♥ *Fixing and Repairs—not just the building but people in need*
- ♥ *Love my neighbor*
- ♥ *Teaching & Praying & Scripture*
- ♥ *Anything eco-sustainable/gardening*
- ♥ *Organizing activities*
- ♥ *Keeping an open mind & Listening*

2025 PLEDGES

If you misplaced the pledge card that was sent to you, you can call the office and request a new one... or drop in when the office is open. Or you can go online at <https://www.npucc.org/donate> and fill out an online pledge form. If you have any questions, please contact Lynn, the NPUCC Financial Secretary, at lynn@npucc.org.

ADVENT WORKSHOP, DECEMBER 1

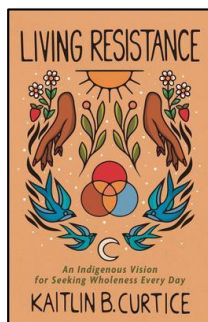
Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship. There will be cookies to frost (and eat!) and Advent ornaments to be made. We will also be passing out "Mess in the Messiah" Advent devotional booklets along with a daily calendar.

TAPROOT THEATRE – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 @ 6 PM - "Gift of the Magi"

Come to a heartwarming performance at Southminster Presbyterian Church, co-hosted with NPUCC. This performance is FREE but please register via EventBrite by clicking [HERE](#) due to limited seating. Canned donations will be gladly accepted. This beloved Christmas classic by O. Henry is retold for the stage with great humor and insight. Cocoa and locally made treats will be served afterward.

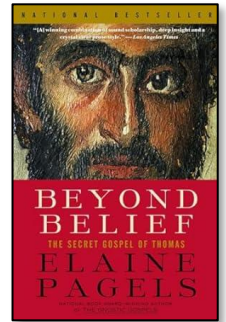
FALL BOOK DISCUSSION – LIVING RESISTANCE BY KAITLIN CURTICE – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10 @ NOON

We are discussing Kaitlin Curtice's most recent book Living Resistance: An Indigenous Vision for Seeking Wholeness Every Day in community. Feel free to drop in even though you haven't attended any of the previous meet ups. We will be continuing our discussion of Part 2 The Communal Realm.



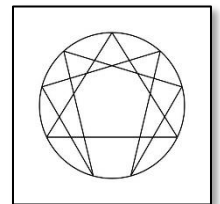
BIBLE & BREWS

We'll be meeting up via **Zoom** only once this month at 7 pm on Friday, **December 13th**, to continue our study of the Gospel of Thomas using Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas written by Elaine Pagels.



ENNEAGRAM – NO MEETING IN DECEMBER!

We will not be meeting in December; our next meet up will be Wednesday, January 22.



WASSAIL SUNDAY DECEMBER 15TH AT 11:30 am

Please bring your favorite holiday cookies to share as we enjoy Wassail, following Worship in the Fireside Room.

BURIEN SEVERE WEATHER SHELTER COLLECTION SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

Please bring items to donate to the shelter (*see list below.*) Everyone that brings an item will get a goody to take home (it is also holiday cookie Sunday)

- Coats
- Handwarmers
- Sweatshirts & Sweatpants
- Sleeping Bags

- Men's jeans 32 & 34 waist & length
- Gloves – insulated
- Socks – regular athletic most needed
- Long Sleeve T Shirts - Med & Lg
- Men's Boots - 9, 10, 11 sizes
- Twin Size Blankets (not comforters)
- Hot Chocolate Packets
- Hot Apple Cider Packets
- NutriGrain Bars (or other soft type bars)
- Pudding Cups

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22 DURING WORSHIP

Get ready to dress up as a shepherd, wise person, angel, or even a variety of animals as Kirsten leads us in an intergenerational interactive pageant to embrace the Christmas story as it takes place before our eyes during our worship service. Hope to see you there... bring your relatives and friend.

MARY'S PLACE HOLIDAY GIVING

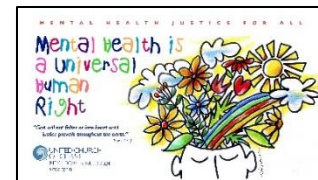
Dawn organized the Mary's Place gift tag making/selling during the month of November. Our kids met on Sunday, November 10 to create gift tags and then sold them on Sundays, November 17 and 24. Dawn will take the youth shopping on Sunday, December 1 for the children (ages 0-12) of Mary's Place with the \$386 donated. Like last year, we also put up a giving tree in the narthex for folks to pick



tags for \$25 gift cards for the teens and adults of Mary's Place... enough monies were donated for the youth to purchase fourteen gift cards.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED - UCC Special Offering

Thanks to your generosity NPUCC contributed **\$410** towards this special offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States.



CHRISTMAS FUND – UCC Special Offering – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

"And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them..." —Luke 2:9



The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. NPUCC will be taking this donation, which is one of the UCC five for five special offerings, on Sunday, December 22.

Advent acknowledges shadows and dims them with burgeoning light. So we wait in expectation for the full, radiant, overwhelming light to one day wipe out all darkness forever. This is the hope of Advent.

~ Tsh Oxenreider

CHURCH WORLD SERVICES – BEST GIFT

“Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.” —Matthew 2:11

Need to buy a Christmas gift for your grandchild or best friend? Check out the CWS “best gift” catalogue by clicking [HERE](#). Enroll a girl in school in Kenya for just \$5.00, purchase a shovel for a family in Haiti for \$7 or a pig for a family in Tanzania for \$60.



“Every Christmas I have my grandchildren, Skyla and Penton, go shopping in the CWS ‘best gift’ catalogue and then I make a donation of these gifts in their names.” ~Lynn

TAKING PICTURES OF CHURCH EVENTS?

If you’ve been taking pictures of church events, please send them to the church office office@npucc.org and Robbie will store them away in a Google photo album. Thanks!

Reducing waste around the holidays – Taken from the PSE Renewables Newsletter: Fall Edition

Reducing waste around the holidays can make a big impact. Here are some simple ways to cut down on waste while still enjoying the festivities:

- Use reusable shopping bags
- Get creative with reusable or recycled decorations
- Borrow or reuse holiday costumes
- Use recycled gift wrapping like newspaper or old maps

- Buy local to reduce shipping-related emissions
- Give gifts that don’t need packaging like memberships, tickets, subscriptions, or gift certificates
- Switch to LED holiday lights or even better, solar powered lights
- Separate your recycling and remember these items cannot be recycled: string lights, ornaments, ribbons, bows, tinsel, foil, tissue paper, bubble wrap, styrofoam

By incorporating small, sustainable choices into your celebrations, you can reduce your environmental impact while still enjoying the holiday spirit.



December Birthdays

Jeni Watson	12/7
Kirsten Pangelinan	12/18
Michael McPherson	12/27
Jill Tiffany	12/29
Cathy Barton	12/30

December Anniversaries

Barbara & Jim Gregg 12/21

**If you don't see your November birthday or anniversary
on this list and would like to be included,
please contact the church office at
church@npucc.org or 206-824-1770**