



# Crossroads

*News from South Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ*

*45 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105  
(413) 732-0117 [www.sococh.org](http://www.sococh.org)*

*We are an inclusive community of faith; courageously following Christ;  
serving our neighbors in love.*

## December 2019



**We begin our journey to Bethlehem.**

**Join us for Advent Rejoice Night programs on Wednesday,  
December 4, 11 & 18, with "Dinner Church" beginning at 5:30  
p.m. Enter the church through the Guild Room or Alley door.**

## From the Bridge Pastor

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Hi South,

I'm here, your Bridge Pastor. We will start seeing more of one another in December, as Advent begins. Plan to gather on Wednesday night, December 4, for the first Advent Rejoice Night "Dinner Church," 5:30 – 7:00 pm Parish Hall. Invite friends to join – it will be an informal, but prayerful space of food, conversation, candles, song and blessing.

Advent is the cusp of beginning. It is like being in the entry hallway in a house you've never been in before, or like having decided to quit a job that was making you miserable but not yet knowing what you'll do next, or like finding yourself in totally new relationship or living situation or season of feeling either by choice or by accident or by loss; it's like being pregnant and due in 3 weeks; it's like being the partner of someone who is pregnant and due in 3 weeks; it is being inside a space just about to begin, wonder-full and nerve-wracking at once.



Something has ended, and yet something new is not quite begun. There are signs all around of some big change coming, but in the cusp of beginning, there is still so much unknown and we are still trying to figure out where the signs are pointing, what they are saying. We know the story of Christmas well, we retell it every year, so sometimes the unknowingness of Advent gets lost.

But fear not, I hope to take us more fully into the bewilderment of Advent! This may not sound appealing – entering bewilderment. Don't we have enough of that in our lives?! Exactly *because* we have so much bewilderment in our lives, we are lucky to get to turn to the guide of Advent. The liturgical season of Advent is rich with stories for paying attention, for listening inside bewilderment, for carrying a hope in what is on the cusp of beginning, for being oriented toward the new way that is emerging but not yet begun.

"How do you live in an age of bewilderment, when the old stories have collapsed and no new story has yet emerged to replace them?" This is a question Yuval Noah Harari poses in his book, "21 Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," which I recently read.

We live in an age of bewilderment. Old stories have collapsed, and no new story/stories have emerged yet to replace them. This is true beyond the church, and it is true of the church. And specifically, it is true of South.

Theologian Paul Tillich, writing in 1955, describes something about Christianity which is very much connected to the bewilderment we are feeling now and the challenge of discerning a way into the new being: "Christianity is more than a religion; it is the message of a new

Creation...Christianity is the message of the New Creation, the New Being, the New Reality which has appeared with the appearance of Jesus who for this reason, and just for this reason, is called the Christ. For the Christ, the Messiah, the selected and anointed one is They who bring the new state of things."

We are lucky to have good guides in the stories of this faith we are intrigued, named, claimed by.



Onward into the cusp of beginning,

- *Rev. Lindsey*

**DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE (All services except Christmas Eve are at 10 a.m.)**

December 1 (Advent 1/Communion)	Rev. Ute Schmidt
December 8 (Advent 2)	Rev. Lindsey Peterson
December 15 (Advent 3)	Rev. Lindsey Peterson
December 22 (Advent 4/Pageant)	Rev. Lindsey Peterson
December 24 at 4:00 p.m. (Christmas Eve)	Rev. Lindsey Peterson
December 29	TBD

**Please Pray for**

Mike Wright, Elaine Lentino, Paul Hills, Rev. Louis Mitchell, Kelleen Weed, Bob Dowd, Jeff Johnson, Jane Closson, Rubin Reyes, Bob Stack, Beverly Lynch, Silvio Vasquez and his family in Venezuela, Peter Nelson, Renee Silva, Pastor Clemmons, Anthony Wysocki, Karen Buske, Ginny McCray, Don Russell, Roland Fenton, Bert Montagna, Deborah Price, Dan Myers, Irene Rappa, Dot Strebel, Stella Boulware, Shirley McCready, Beryl Kress, Ginny Robbins, John Burriss, Migdahlia Vasquez and Jose Medina.

*(If you would like to be added or removed from the prayer list, please call the church office 413-732-0117 or email: [secretary@sococh.org](mailto:secretary@sococh.org))*

## From the Moderator

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### What Are We Waiting For?

As I begin my annual trek down to the cellar to haul the boxes of holiday decorations up for their annual unveiling, I wonder “what will this advent season bring?” Will this be the year I can finally see this season through the “glass half full”? Some years, I dread the approach of the Christmas season. The idea of spending what feels like “forced time” with family and getting overwhelmed by the expectancy of gift giving is enough to make me want to pull the covers up over my head and sleep December away.

But, putting up the Christmas Tree and decorating the house are always a good beginning, especially this year. 2019 has been a period of waiting for me and I come into this Advent season full of expectancy for what God’s arrival, again, into my life and the life of South Church will bring.

I, for one, have been waiting for months for a sense of peace and confidence to arrive as I continue my journey as your Moderator. *“Over the tumult and through the construction dust, into our future we go....”* It wasn’t really until just last month that I began to recognize a new confidence about being the Moderator. And, what I know to be true is that, despite what may be happening all around me and South Church, all of YOU are part of me feeling more centered in this role.

And THIS is what I’ve been waiting for. God has answered my prayers. This sense of calm radiates out into other areas of my life – my marriage, my career, and how I engage with my family. Some of you have noticed and remarked that I no longer have such a furrowed brow and I appear calmer. There will still be things that happen, business to attend to and unforeseen challenges ahead, but for me, God has arrived, Hallelujah.



In our prayerful attentiveness during the Advent season, can we make room for God’s arrival – or deepening - into our spirits? Do we dare imagine how bringing the delicate simplicity of God’s love more deeply into our community could change our little corner of the world?

“The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and GOD will be your glory”. Isaiah 60:19 - **Kimberly**

South Church would like to thank the anonymous donor of \$500.00 to stock our hallway pantry shelf. Our neighbors will certainly appreciate their generosity.

### Happy December Birthday!



5 Martha Jennings 7 Susan Wood 17 Sylvio Vasquez 20 Carol Stewart

## A Parking Lot Update

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The front parking lot is scheduled to be paved with a binder coat before Thanksgiving, after which it will be open for parking. The parking lot entrance off Maple Street will remain closed through the end of construction next spring. Three lot entrances will be open on Temple Street - the entrance currently in use to the rear parking area and two new Temple Street entrances to the front parking area. The front parking area will not have parking lines at this time. Please be thoughtful about where you place your car. The Guild Room door will be accessible. The granite steps into the Guild Room have been repaired.

On Tuesday, December 3 through Thursday, December 5, the kitchen and back entryway will be closed. Many construction activities will occur concurrently. The kitchen will reopen on Friday morning and there should not be further impact to kitchen activities. The entryway will also reopen on Friday morning. Each Wednesday after that the entryway will be closed for the day until that construction is completed. While the entryway is closed access to the buzzer at this entrance will also be closed. Arrangements for those needing entrance need to be made with church staff. The Guild Room door will be accessible on Wednesdays for entrance to Prayer Shawl, Noon Concerts and Rejoice Night activities.

## Director of Music

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Before I forget, in the November issue I implied that the Tuba Christmas event which would have happened on December 8, might be relocated because of our parking lot project. In fact, the Tuba Christmas people did decide to play it safe and that concert has been moved to the Mount Tom Masonic Hall, 235 Chestnut Street, Holyoke. We hope to host them again at South Church in 2020!



Also take note that our Christmas Eve service this year will happen at **4 p.m.**, not 5:30 p.m. as has been the case in the past. It is always a great service for hearing great music, so arrive a little early to enjoy some beautiful prelude music.

However, if you just can't wait until December 24 and you happen to be free on Wednesdays between noon and 1 p.m., join us for the annual South Church noon concerts, this year happening on December 4, 11 and 18. **While construction is happening on our back entryway, come into the building through the Guild Room door.** Here's the lineup:

- **December 4:** Larry Picard will play holiday works for organ, piano, organ and piano together (assisted by Susan Wells of our choir), handbells and guitar together (with Meg Pash on guitar).
- **December 11:** Our choir basses, Carey Lape and Tabor Fisher, will sing solos and duets, and I will even join them for a few a cappella trios (think The Three Tenors, but with much lower voices). They can make quite a powerful sound, so don't sit too close.
- **December 18:** I really like this one, which features our own Jayne Newirth and George David. It will feature a few entertaining holiday readings by Jayne as well as two or three songs sung by her (unless we can cajole her to sing more) and as many sax solos by George.

Sound like fun? Join us on these three Wednesdays at noon in the sanctuary. There is no admission charge but I'm always happy to have you drop a little cash into the offering plates near the doors.

Meanwhile, you all may remember our first-ever brown bag pageant on the Sunday before Christmas last year. South Church members learned of their roles as they walked in the door last year, and everyone in the sanctuary got in on the act when it was time for the angels to appear. - **Larry**

## Thanksgiving Dinner Celebration!

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### A Message from Louis Mitchell

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Dear South Church family,

In this time of life transitions, I wanted to take time to say thank you. You have held me, supported me, prayed with and for me, loved me and let me love you. You have and will always have a special, significant and sacred place in my heart.

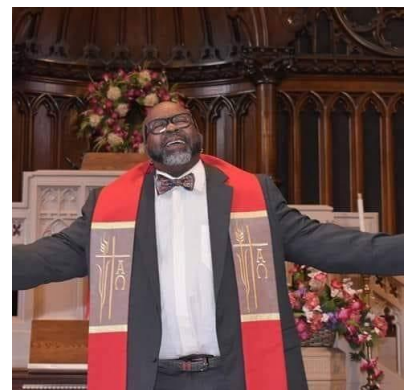
I know you've been through some rough and uncertain moments of pastoral transitions, but be at peace and know that God has you held and secure! Try not to be impatient with processes and each other. Try not to let impatient and need force you to rush. You are and have all you need until the right one comes along!

Prayerfully prepare your hearts to be pastored! Contemplate and discern the differences between a minister and a pastor. When you are ready, the right one will be ready for you!

I love you with a deep love. Next to moving away from my child, moving away from you is the hardest part of going home. I'll think of and pray for you often and I hope you'll hold me in your thoughts and prayers.

May God continue to bless you mightily!

With love, gratitude and joy - **Rev. Louis**



## December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>Advent I</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday School (SA)(N) <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday Service (SA) <b>11:00 AM</b> Coffee Hour (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Little Rock Church* (CH)	<b>2</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>6:30 PM</b> Narcotics Anonymous* (PH)	<b>3</b> (Back entry closed for construction.) <b>6:00 PM</b> Deacon's Meeting (GR) <b>7:00 PM</b> AA* (PH)	<b>4</b> (Back entry closed for construction.) <b>10:00 AM</b> Prayer Shawl (GR) <b>12:00 PM</b> Noon Concert (SA) <b>5:30 PM</b> Rejoice Night (PH)	<b>5</b> (Back entry closed for construction.) <b>2:30 PM</b> STEP* (ML) <b>7:00 PM</b> Spanish AA* (GR)	<b>6</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>7</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
<b>8</b> <b>Advent II</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday School (SA)(N) <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday Service (SA) <b>11:00 AM</b> Coffee Hour (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Little Rock Church* (CH)	<b>9</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>10</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>4:00 PM</b> Quilting Group (ML) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> AA* (PH)	<b>11</b> (Back entry closed for construction.) <b>8:45 AM</b> Breakfast Prep* (K) <b>10:00 AM</b> Prayer Shawl (GR) <b>12:00 PM</b> Noon Concert (SA) <b>12:30 PM</b> Open Pantry Staff Gathering* (PH) <b>3:00 PM</b> STEP* (ML)(GS) <b>5:30 PM</b> Rejoice Night (PH) <b>7:30 PM</b> Choir (Music office)	<b>12</b> <b>11:45 AM</b> Brief Communion Svc (CH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>2:30 PM</b> STEP* (ML) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> Spanish AA* (GR)	<b>13</b> <b>10:30 AM</b> South Church Cooks (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>14</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
<b>15</b> <b>Advent III</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday School (SA)(N) <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday Service (SA) <b>11:00 AM</b> Coffee Hour (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Little Rock Church* (CH)	<b>16</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>17</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>4:00 PM</b> Quilting Group (ML) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> AA* (PH)	<b>18</b> (Back entry closed for construction.) <b>8:45 AM</b> Breakfast Prep* (K) <b>10:00 AM</b> Prayer Shawl (GR) <b>12:00 PM</b> Noon Concert (SA) <b>3:00 PM</b> STEP* (ML)(GS) <b>5:30 PM</b> Rejoice Night (PH)	<b>19</b> <b>11:45 AM</b> Brief Communion Svc (CH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>2:30 PM</b> STEP* (ML) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> Spanish AA* (GR)	<b>20</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>21</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
<b>22</b> <b>Advent IV</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> No Sunday School <b>10:00 AM</b> Sunday Service/Pageant (SA) <b>11:00 AM</b> Coffee Hour (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Little Rock Church* (CH)	<b>23</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>24</b> <b>10:30 AM</b> South Church Cooks (PH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>4:00 PM</b> Christmas Eve Service <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> AA* (PH)	<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day – Office closed</b> <b>8:45 AM</b> Breakfast Prep* (Kitchen)	<b>26</b> <b>11:45 AM</b> Brief Communion Svc (CH) <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>7:00 PM</b> Spanish AA* (GR)	<b>27</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	<b>28</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH) <b>5:00 PM</b> Loaves & Fishes* (PH)

**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
45 MAPLE STREET  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01105**

**For information on cancellation of services or programs because of inclement weather, please consult the website: [www.sococh.org](http://www.sococh.org), the Facebook page (South Congregational Church) or look for an email blast. Cancellation of a Sunday service can also be found on the listings on ABC/FOX Channel 40/6. *Be aware that you may not see it on Channel 22 - watch Channel 40.***

<b>Larry Picard</b>	Director of Music Ministries
<b>Jacqueline Fredenburgh</b>	Office Manager
<b>Cynthia Lage</b>	Bookkeeper
<b>Jared Spencer</b>	Custodian
<b>Polly Southworth</b>	Sunday School Superintendent

Crossroads is the newsletter of South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Stories and items of Church interest are welcome and are due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for the next month's issue. Submissions should be sent to Larry Picard at [lpicard@sococh.org](mailto:lpicard@sococh.org) or by post to his attention at the church address.

*South Congregational Church UCC [www.sococh.org](http://www.sococh.org)  
A Jesus-centered, Open & Affirming Community*

