

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The United Methodist Book of Worship says “Advent is a season of four weeks including four Sundays. The term Advent derives from the Latin adventus, which means “coming.” The season proclaims the comings of the Christ – whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate” (p. 243). For the church, the Christmas season doesn’t begin until Christmas Eve! In all reality, for many of us Christmas started back in July or August when stores started advertising. In our house Christmas usually starts in August, when Nutcracker rehearsals would begin for Amelia’s dance studio – even though I try to hold off most decorating until after we finish Thanksgiving dinner!

No matter when you start to get ready for Christmas, in Advent we prepare for the coming of the Lord. So, through all of the decorating, present buying and wrapping, cooking, and visiting family and friends, take some time to prepare yourself. Pray. Meditate. Calm yourself in order to hear the voice of God active in your life. Volunteer time to help others. Join us at Richardson Park for Sunday worship, the Living Nativity on December 19, the Blue Christmas service at Peniel on Sunday the 20th at 5pm, and our own Christmas Eve Service with candle lighting at 7pm. At worship on the 27th we will take time to sing any Christmas carols in the hymnal that you want to sing – maybe ones we didn’t get to during worship.

I hold you all in prayer, and I look forward to a prosperous, exciting new year together in 2027. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year my friends!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Casey

United Women in Faith

By Marlene Johnson

The calendar shows December and the stores have been displaying decorations for many weeks. The Women in Faith, however, demonstrate the true meaning of this special time of year. We help others! Yes, this group is very dedicated to showing God's love to other folks.

Our November meeting brought us a wonderful new member- Patty. It is a heart-warming group that seems to grow. At our meeting it was decided to have the "Birthday Party for Jesus" on December 13th following the worship service. Everyone is invited to bring a covered dish and join us as we step back many, many years to remember the birthday of Jesus. Now, along with your covered dish, I ask you to bring something for Door of Hope or Richardson Park Elementary. The two boxes will appear in the back of the sanctuary on November 29. Items needed will be listed. It's always such a wonderful sharing time to help other folks!

During our November meeting, Veterans' Day cards were completed and delivered to the V.A. in Elsmere on November 9. The folks are always so thankful that we think of them. Guess what, a card box will appear in the back of the sanctuary on November 29 marked "cards for shut-ins". Thank you in advance for brightening someone's day.

Now, dates to remember:

1. November 29- Boxes for Door of Hope and Richardson Park school will appear. They will list the items needed.
2. November 29- Card box will appear for the V.A. and shut-ins.
3. December 13- Birthday party for Jesus and covered Dish. Reading certificates will be given at this time.
4. Read: 1 Timothy 6:18
5.

Prayer: Dear God, please show me how I may share the blessings I have with others. Amen

Blessings from Marlene

Children's Church

By Marlene Johnson



As we traveled through our Bible lessens in October and November, we met two very important persons – Noah and Abraham. My question for you – how were these people important as we approach Jesus' birthday? We will talk about this in Children's Church but I also ask the grown-ups that question.

We are now in the month of December. In Children's Church many things will be happening. The end of November will begin our exciting adventure leading to the birth of Jesus. You will receive something to help with this wonderful adventure on November 29. No, not candy! I need you to attend our class that Sunday to find the answer.

Ms. Ruth and I will be waiting for you in the back of the sanctuary!

My wish for all of you – Enjoy this very special time of year.

Blessings from Ms. Marlene



Book Club

By Paul Weaver

Our November meeting was held on Friday, November 13 at 2 pm at the church. We discussed "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury and decided it was not our favorite.
Our December meeting will be held on Friday, December 11 at 2 pm at the church. We will discuss "In a Holidaze" by Christina Lauren.
Our January meeting will be held on Friday, January 11 at 2 pm at the church. We will discuss "Winter Stroll" by Elin Hilderbrand. While it's a ways out, I think we will do "A Tree Grows In Brooklyn" by Betty Smith in February. Other coming attractions include "Travels with Charley: In Search of America" by John Steinbeck, "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi, "The Correspondent" by Virginia Evans and "The Lion Women of Tehran" by Marjan Kamali.

Thanks,
Paul

Trustees Tidbit



By Kathy Rogers

Inclement Weather Notices
Winter is coming fast and some days it seems like it's already here! During the winter months, the church may be closed due to inclement weather conditions. What is inclement weather, you may ask? Snow, sleet, freezing rain, lingering ice, heavy winds and extremely low temperatures can all be considered inclement weather events. With these conditions there is an increased risk of personal injury from exposure to cold, slips, trips and falls or driving accidents.
Before heading out to church, if the forecast predicts bad weather, call the church office (302-654-0961) and listen to the recorded message for information regarding church closings and cancellations of services or activities. Be sure to listen to the entire message and call again if the weather changes or worsens. While we will make every effort to plow the church parking lots and clear the church sidewalks when it snows, we may decide to close the church based on weather predictions for the entire day or weekend, depending on the timing of a storm.
As always, the safety and well being of our congregation, community friends and visitors is most important. If the church is open as usual but you don't feel comfortable getting out and traveling to church, use your best judgement and stay home for your own safety.
Again, call the church office at 302-654-0961 for information on church closings before attempting to visit the church when the weather is bad. Bundle up and stay safe this winter!

A Note for the Calendar
Decorating the Church for Advent – December 11, 2026 at 10:30 am – Contact Sandy Ide or Kathy Rogers with questions.



Free Lunch Ministry

By Joe Tucker

Free lunches are given out each week on Thursdays in Fellowship Hall from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to come for a lunch and a bag of blessings. Contributions to the bags of blessings are always appreciated. The items in the bags of blessings are bottles of water, packaged crackers, cookies, snack bars, pudding or fruit cups. There is discussion going on about changes in the program. Announcements about a new format will be coming in the near future. Please contact Kathy Rogers if you would like to share your faith with the diners or Joe Tucker or Ed Ide if you would like to help with the meal. We'd like to thank all the faithful workers who assemble the bags of blessings, shop for food, help with the cooking, and those who assemble the meals and hand them out.

Altar Flowers and Containers

If you would like to place flowers on the altar in honor or in memory of a loved one, please notify the church office at least two weeks before the date. If you would like specific colors, include that information on your order form. Please designate if you would like to keep the flowers or would like them delivered to a shut-in. It would be lovely if you could deliver them. Shut-ins appreciate visits.

Memorial Tree

We are still seeking a volunteer to manage orders for the Memorial Tree. If you are interested in helping, please contact the office at 302-654-0961 or rpumc@rpumchurch.org.
If you would like to order a leaf for the Memorial Tree, forms can be found in the back or the Sanctuary or you may contact the office directly.



Harvest Home 2026

By Paul Weaver

On Sunday, November 22, we distributed 29 Thanksgiving baskets to families in need in the greater Wilmington area. This was a record number of baskets, made possible by the outpouring of kindness by our congregation. We received a lot of food and monetary donations. Many people helped with the set up, assembly and delivery of the baskets. We also had significant help from local businesses; Wegmans of Wilmington, BJ's Wholesale Club of Wilmington, Redner's Market of Wilmington and Giant Foods of Kennett Square. This was a challenging task that had an excellent outcome. Well done people of Richardson Park United Methodist Church!







Wegmans

BJ's





REDNER'S SINCE 1970

Giant





December Birthdays

Tammy Brindle	December 1
Andrew Hughes	December 9
Rose Davis	December 12
Steven Ott	December 12
Melanie Mitten	December 14
Gladys Swain	December 21
Fran Tebbutt	December 24
Gloria Williams	December 25
Amanda Graham	December 31



December

Altar Flowers

December 6

Rich Locke

December 13

Dennis and Marlene Johnson

December 20

Poinsettias

December 27

Sandy Ide



Join Scout Troop 339!

MONDAY NIGHTS AT 6:30
Contact troop339de@gmail.com





COME ON OUT & SHOP AT

THE SHOPPE AT RPUMC

on Thursdays 11 AM-2 PM

and select First Saturdays'

PRE-LOVED GOODS

DISCOVER GREAT FINDS





CHRISTMAS ALTAR POINSETTIAS

Red poinsettias have been ordered to be placed on the Altar on Sunday, December 20. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in Memory or Honor of Loved Ones, please return this form to the church office by Thursday, December 17, 2026. The cost of each poinsettia is $9.00. A check for the total amount should be included with this order form. Please make your check payable to Richardson Park United Methodist Church, marked "poinsettias." If possible, please pick up your poinsettia after the candlelight service on December 24.

Number of Plants _____

Donor's Name _____

In Memory of _____

(for those not living) _____

_____

In Honor of _____

(for those living) _____

_____

In Memory and _____

And Honor of _____

_____

Check/Amount Enclosed: _____

Shall we deliver your flower to a Church Shut-In? YES ___ NO ___

December 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
				9am- EXT: BMG **11am- 2pm:** Shoppe Open **11:30am- 12:30pm- FH:** Free Lunch		**11am- 2pm:** Shoppe Open 
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9am- Lounge: Adult Advent Bible Study w/ Pastor Casey **10am- EXT:** Fellowship Time **10:30am:** Worship and Children's Church	**6:30pm- FH:** Scouts			**9am- EXT:** BMG **11am- 2pm:** Shoppe Open **11:30am- 12:30pm- FH:** Free Lunch	**10:30am:** Christmas Decorating **2pm- Lounge:** Book Club	**10:30am:** Christmas Decorating (if needed) **FH HALL RESERVED**
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9am- Lounge: Adult Advent Bible Study w/ Pastor Casey **10am- EXT:** Fellowship Time **10:30am:** Worship and Children's Church **11:30am- FH:** United Women in Faith- Birthday Party for Jesus	**6:30pm- FH:** Scouts			**9am- EXT:** BMG **11am- 2pm:** Shoppe Open **11:30am- 12:30pm- FH:** Free Lunch Last day for poinsettia orders		**11am- EXT:** Koinonia **6:30 & 7:30pm:** Live Nativity presented by RPUMC and Scout Troop 339
20	21	22	23	Christmas Eve 24	Christmas 25	26
9am- Lounge: Adult Advent Bible Study w/ Pastor Casey **10am- EXT:** Fellowship Time **10:30am:** Worship and Children's Church **11:30am- Lounge:** Trustees Meeting **5pm:** Blue Christmas Service with Pastors Greg Vickers and Casey Houtz at Peniel	**6:30pm- FH:** Scouts	**10:30am:** Candelabra Decoration Set-up		**7pm:** Christmas Eve Service **Church and Buildings Closed**	**Church and Buildings Closed** 	
27	28	29	30	New Year's Eve 31	New Year's Day 1	2
9am- Lounge: Adult Bible Study **10am- EXT:** Fellowship Time **10:30am:** Worship and Children's Church	**6:30pm- FH:** Scouts			**No Free Lunch Ministry** **Shoppe Closed**	CLOSED 	

The Messenger

December 2026

RICHARDSON PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Casey Houtz, Pastor

Phone: 302-722-5088

E-Mail: pastorcasey@rpumchurch.org

Office Hours: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. M-F

Please leave a message on the answering machine, if no one answers.

The purpose of Richardson Park United Methodist Church is to help people experience the amazing love of God and develop a vital relationship with Jesus Christ.