



THE BEACON

NOVEMBER 29, 2015

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 19

Deadline for the next BEACON is Friday, December 18, 2015—Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For those who live without sufficient food, water, shelter, or safety; for veterans and those in active service; for peace and peacemakers; for areas in strife around the world.

Prayers for Jim Dow, son of Dick & Chris, undergoing treatment for cancer;

Prayers for Betsey Cummings, recovering from surgery;

Prayers for Steve Edmondson, recovering from heart surgery in Boston;

Prayers for the mother of Jill Saxby, recovering from a serious accident and a fall.

Prayers for Claude and Jean Vauchon, continuing to recover.



LOOKING AHEAD IN WORSHIP

December 6 Second Sunday of Advent

8:30 a.m. Chapel Worship with Communion

10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship with Communion, Meetinghouse Choir and Sunday School. Cindy Maddox will give the message. Fellowship time follows in Guptill Hall with Kids' Quarter Store.

December 13 Third Sunday of Advent

8:30 a.m. Chapel Worship

10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship with Meetinghouse Choir, Children's Choir and Sunday School. Cindy Maddox will give the message. Fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

5:30 p.m. Advent Vespers with Meetinghouse Choir and Guest Musicians

December 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 a.m. Chapel Worship

10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship and Children's Christmas Pageant. Cindy Maddox will give the message. Fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

5:00 p.m. Longest Night Service for those who are struggling this season

December 24 Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. Family service with carols and a simple telling of the story, along with a surprise for each child, followed by a birthday party for Jesus

7:00 p.m. Worship with carols, readings, solos and Communion ASL interpreted for members of the deaf community

10:00 p.m. Service of Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight with the Meetinghouse Choir.

OFFICE HOURS 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Friday, December 11, we will go to the Magic of Christmas, leaving the church at 1:00 p.m. We have a limited number of tickets so call if you're interested.



Thursday, December 17—1:00 p.m.—meet at church to go to Sue Steven's house for a Christmas Party. Come enjoy company, eat cookies, maybe sing and just celebrate this holy season. You "may" bring cookies, but it is definitely not mandatory!

Wednesday, December 30—meet 9:00 a.m. at IHOP for breakfast. Contact Kathy if you would like to come and don't have a ride.

Thursday, January 7- SAM meeting at 1:00 p.m. to discuss new ideas for the New Year.

THE KIDS' QUARTER STORE

The fourth annual Kids' Quarter Store will be open on December 6th! This unique opportunity is for children ages birth to 12 years old to shop for gifts for their family and friends. All items will be sold for 25 cents each. No one over the age of twelve will be admitted unless accompanied by a child! The sale takes place after Sunday services at 11:15 a.m. in Guptill Hall. I am looking for donations from the congregation for small, new or gently used, washable items to add to our gift selection. I particularly want to encourage children to give gifts to friends and siblings so toys, sports equipment and books would be greatly appreciated. Think small and encourage all in your family to donate. Please leave items in the church office. Thanks in advance for all your help. ~ Sue Ross (329.7704)



EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY THEME

December—Soup
January—Toiletries



IRS REGULATIONS REGARDING CONTRIBUTIONS

With the end of the calendar year approaching, please plan ahead for gifts that you would like to be tax deductible for 2015.

In general, gifts/pledges must be received by the church office by **December 31**, in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2015.

However, checks that are written and postmarked in 2015 will be deductible in 2015, even though they may not be received by the church in 2015. Stock transfers must be received in our brokerage account at Morgan Stanley

Smith Barney by December 31. Checks that are placed in the church offering on the first Sunday of 2016 (January 4), will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2015, even if the check is predated to 2015 or was actually written in 2015.

Additionally, please do not file your 2015 tax return until you have a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Per the IRS, your contributions may not be tax deductible if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions.

~ Nancy Irving (business@fccucc.org)

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY—AND GIVING

The **Mission Mall** will accept donations to support a number of agencies and programs in our area. You will be provided with inserts with information about your chosen groups for your Christmas cards for those you wish to make a gift in their name. Mission Mall catalogs for Year-round giving will also be available.

Community Crisis Ministries Christmas Gifts – the CCMF committee has placed ornaments on the curved wall in the hallway just outside the sanctuary. Individuals and families can decide which child's wish list they would like to fill. These donations go to South Portland or Cape Elizabeth children referred to us by any number of social service agencies or programs serving our community.

Contact: Kathy Sahrbeck at 799.3361 or outreach@fccucc.org

Long Creek Christmas Gift Giving - Long Creek Development Center was established for the education and rehabilitation of both male and female juvenile offenders in southern Maine. Its mission is to create and provide an opportunity for personal growth in a safe and secure environment through a variety of programs. Each year envelopes are placed on our Sanctuary Christmas Tree when it first goes up. Each envelope has a list of items a particular resident has chosen to receive. Separately, gift cards will also be accepted. Contact: Jan Hamilton at janscout@maine.rr.com or Margaret Anderson at mga@maine.rr.com
In the case of the CCM Christmas Gifts and the Long Creek Christmas Gift Giving, multiple individuals or families can share the ornaments or envelopes so many more wishes can be filled.

Mitten Tree – When our sanctuary tree is emptied of envelopes all are welcome to redecorate the tree with donations of mittens and hats for distribution to homeless children, teens and adults through Preble Street. Contact: Bob Morse at 799.3361 or rmorse03@maine.rr.com

Traditional Special Offerings:

Christmas Offering – December 20 – Each year the Mission Outreach Team selects one or more organizations to share the Christmas offering with our church. In keeping with our theme of Shelter and Safety the Team will be announcing our choice for this year on December 6.

The Christmas Fund – Christmas Eve – December 24

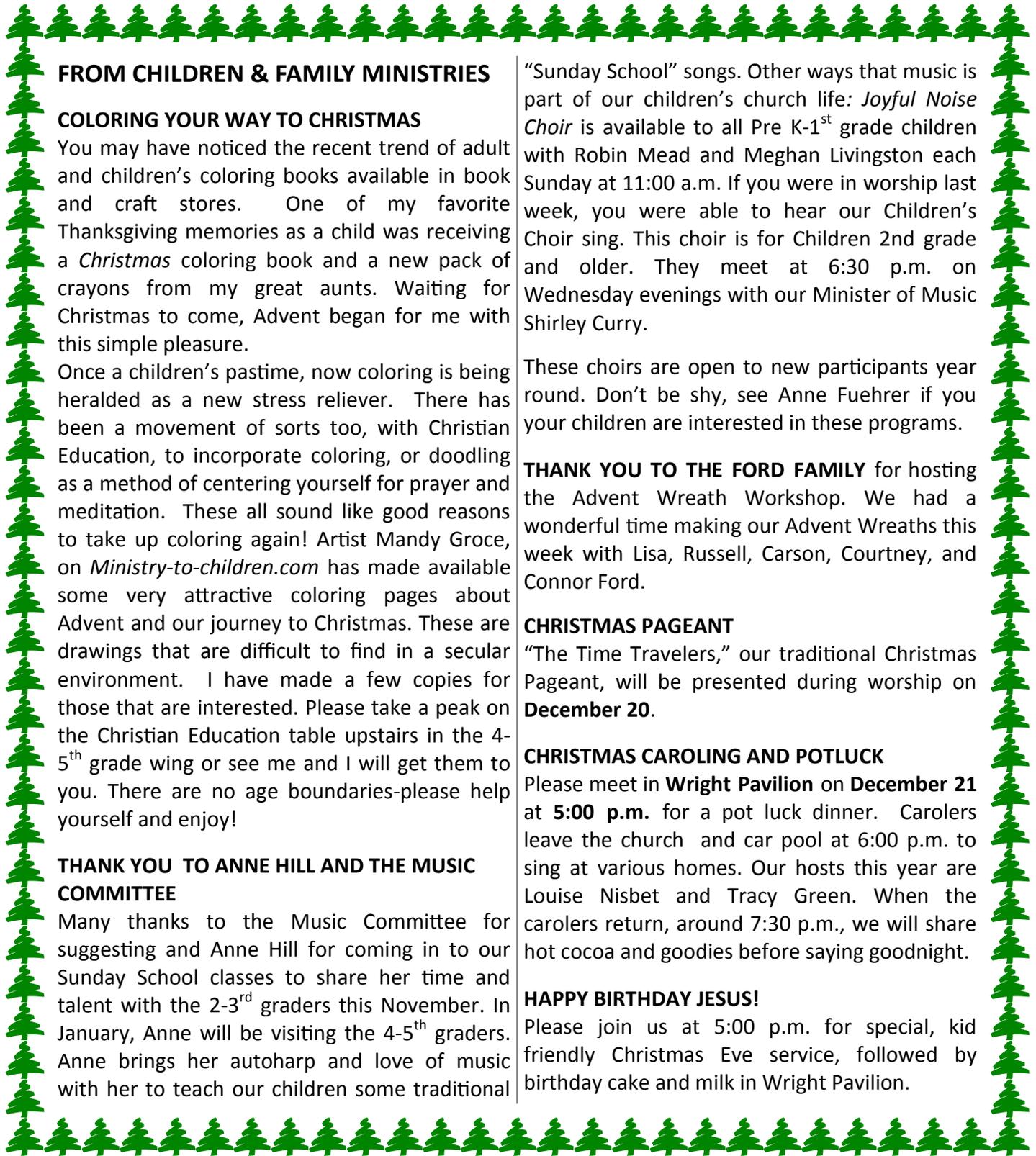
For 113 years, the Christmas Fund Offering for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a means by which we, as members of the United Church of Christ, live out the mandate to be Christ's Body in the world. The Christmas Fund is a ministry of compassion and care to those who serve our church. Your giving enables the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide monetary assistance to these individuals and families in need. Contact: Jan Bosse at 799-0528 or janbosse201@yahoo.com

Please give what you can, give what you wish, everything helps, everything is welcomed. Thank you in advance for your generosity. ~*The Mission and Outreach Team*



GIVE FEARLESSLY

What have you done to be generous this week?



FROM CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES

COLORING YOUR WAY TO CHRISTMAS

You may have noticed the recent trend of adult and children’s coloring books available in book and craft stores. One of my favorite Thanksgiving memories as a child was receiving a *Christmas* coloring book and a new pack of crayons from my great aunts. Waiting for Christmas to come, Advent began for me with this simple pleasure.

Once a children’s pastime, now coloring is being heralded as a new stress reliever. There has been a movement of sorts too, with Christian Education, to incorporate coloring, or doodling as a method of centering yourself for prayer and meditation. These all sound like good reasons to take up coloring again! Artist Mandy Groce, on *Ministry-to-children.com* has made available some very attractive coloring pages about Advent and our journey to Christmas. These are drawings that are difficult to find in a secular environment. I have made a few copies for those that are interested. Please take a peak on the Christian Education table upstairs in the 4-5th grade wing or see me and I will get them to you. There are no age boundaries-please help yourself and enjoy!

THANK YOU TO ANNE HILL AND THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

Many thanks to the Music Committee for suggesting and Anne Hill for coming in to our Sunday School classes to share her time and talent with the 2-3rd graders this November. In January, Anne will be visiting the 4-5th graders. Anne brings her autoharp and love of music with her to teach our children some traditional

“Sunday School” songs. Other ways that music is part of our children’s church life: *Joyful Noise Choir* is available to all Pre K-1st grade children with Robin Mead and Meghan Livingston each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. If you were in worship last week, you were able to hear our Children’s Choir sing. This choir is for Children 2nd grade and older. They meet at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings with our Minister of Music Shirley Curry.

These choirs are open to new participants year round. Don’t be shy, see Anne Fuehrer if you your children are interested in these programs.

THANK YOU TO THE FORD FAMILY for hosting the Advent Wreath Workshop. We had a wonderful time making our Advent Wreaths this week with Lisa, Russell, Carson, Courtney, and Connor Ford.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

“The Time Travelers,” our traditional Christmas Pageant, will be presented during worship on **December 20**.

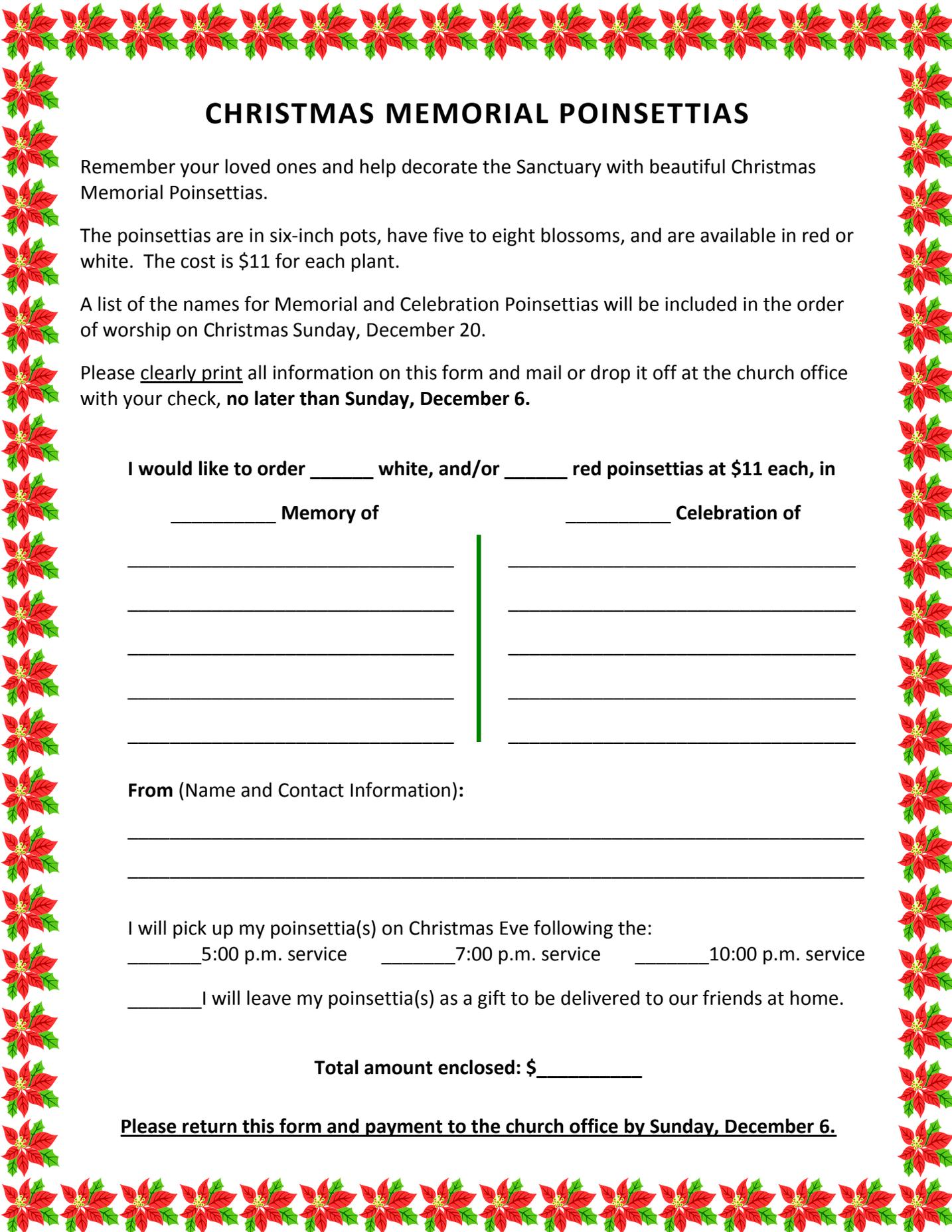
CHRISTMAS CAROLING AND POTLUCK

Please meet in **Wright Pavilion** on **December 21** at **5:00 p.m.** for a pot luck dinner. Carolers leave the church and car pool at 6:00 p.m. to sing at various homes. Our hosts this year are Louise Nisbet and Tracy Green. When the carolers return, around 7:30 p.m., we will share hot cocoa and goodies before saying goodnight.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS!

Please join us at 5:00 p.m. for special, kid friendly Christmas Eve service, followed by birthday cake and milk in Wright Pavilion.





CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL POINSETTIAS

Remember your loved ones and help decorate the Sanctuary with beautiful Christmas Memorial Poinsettias.

The poinsettias are in six-inch pots, have five to eight blossoms, and are available in red or white. The cost is \$11 for each plant.

A list of the names for Memorial and Celebration Poinsettias will be included in the order of worship on Christmas Sunday, December 20.

Please clearly print all information on this form and mail or drop it off at the church office with your check, **no later than Sunday, December 6.**

I would like to order _____ white, and/or _____ red poinsettias at \$11 each, in

_____ Memory of

_____ Celebration of

From (Name and Contact Information):

I will pick up my poinsettia(s) on Christmas Eve following the:

_____ 5:00 p.m. service _____ 7:00 p.m. service _____ 10:00 p.m. service

_____ I will leave my poinsettia(s) as a gift to be delivered to our friends at home.

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Please return this form and payment to the church office by Sunday, December 6.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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Post Office

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