

THE VILLAGE NEWSLETTER



www.gilfordcommunitychurch.org

December 2017

Issue 12



December 1&2 Christmas Fair
December 5th Senior Citizen Rotary
Holiday Dinner
December 10th Christmas Pageant
December 13th Poinsettia Orders Due
December 24th Christmas Eve Services
at 10am and 6pm

*See calendar on page 13 for additional
December events.*





New to our church? Would you like to learn more about it? Would you like to join the church?

Come join Rev. Michael Graham and others to learn about our church and what we can offer you.

Watch this space for notice of our next Meet and Greet, held on a Sunday after worship service in conference room A.

The Village Newsletter is a monthly publication of Gilford Community Church

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Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00 to 2:00 pm
The office is **CLOSED EVERY FRIDAY**



Birthdays

- 2 Twyla Rose Wixson,
Barbara Hauck, Joseph Shea,
William Stephenson
- 3 Carolyn Drake
- 4 Brenda Stowe
- 5 Morris Harrison
- 6 Adeline Wixson, Harry Woodley
- 7 Alexander Bailey, Britta Mueller
- 8 Carl Carder, Carol Howard, Phil Carter
- 10 Dick Peterson, Kathy Lacroix
- 11 Walter Flinn, Connie Russell
- 12 Peter Allen, Rick Hopper,
Sarah Cook, Zach & Anya Arenstam
- 13 Maxwell Sawyer
- 14 Andrew Pike
- 16 Ethan Roys
- 17 Chris Leggett, Penny Franciosi
- 18 Jill Clark, Nicholas Bailey, Brynn
Blackwelder, Nils Babcock
- 19 Kristie (Greenlaw) Goehausen, Beth DeMeo
- 20 Jayne McAllister, Derek Tomlinson, Lee Miller
- 21 Janet Haley

- 23 Hannah Wixson, Nick Arenstam,
Dianne Lauffer
- 25 Lori Erickson
- 26 Holly Vieten
- 27 Joseph Wernig, Kent Baron
- 28 Joan Stephenson
- 29 Paula Ellsworth, Elias Arvidson



Anniversaries

- 06 Hans & Kathy Dahll 1980
- 10 Chris & Thais Whitehead 2010
- 16 Carroll & Sandra Stafford 1961
- 17 Opal & Mathew Roys 2000
- 22 Chet & Skye Devarney 2007
- 24 Tom & Jennifer Boucher





Every month, when I sit down to write my newsletter article, I look at what I've written in previous years for that particular month. I look back before looking ahead. I found last year's piece still meaningful. I tweaked it just a bit.

Both of my daughters asked me the same question over the Thanksgiving Holiday: "Dad, what do you want for Christmas?" I knew at some point they'd ask, so I'd given it some thought. What do I want?

As a child, I did what many of you probably did. I waited all year for the new bicycle, the new basketball, the baseball bat and mitt. Christmas was a reward for a kind of patience; it taught delayed gratification. Today if I "need" a new pair of running shoes, I buy them. If I want a book, I order it on Amazon.

Although I don't really need anything, there are lots of things I want. I want my daughters, Katie and Holly to have a deep happiness, but also for life to challenge them in constructive ways. I want my son-in-law James' new business venture to be successful. I want my grandchildren, Jaden and Graham to grow up to be loving, responsible, generous and compassionate. I wish the same for the little one still inside Holly. I want them to realize how much they already have and how little they need. I want to continue to grow old with my Cindie. I want to move into our new home, the Dexter's home. I want my father to continue to age gracefully and to be surrounded by people who love and appreciate him. I don't want, but know it would be good for me to be more willing to step outside my comfort zone. I want 2018 to be a good one for the Gilford Community Church. I hope my wants aren't wishful thinking, but thoughtful wishing.

I'll close with a Christmas Prayer I read this morning.

Spun into a velvet darkness,
we greet this midwinter night.
Promise of wonder, delight, and hope,
lie waiting for us to capture them
and make them real,
building a world that shimmers with beauty.
Into the moments between
receiving and giving,
may we weave a tapestry of celebration;
and as we cherish the gifts it has to offer,
might the beauty, truth, and goodness
that resides within us all
be illumined with new meaning for each of us.
May the world spin this night into wonder.
as those born into love
yet ever seeking it,
we offer ourselves to this quest.
Amen.

Michael



Christmas Mittens & Tags

The Outreach Christmas Project is in full swing. This year we “adopted” 2 families to shower with our Christmas Love. There are 2 boys, 2 girls, and 2 adults. In addition, we are helping to support St. Vincent DePaul’s Children’s Foundation Christmas Program with the purchase of children’s undergarments, socks and PJ’s. On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, we were overwhelmed with the response from our church family. There is still time to participate in the Outreach Christmas Project with a donation of money or gift cards (for clothing, groceries or gas). **Please return the gifts in a gift bag with the mitten or tag attached by Sunday, December 3, 2017.** Items can be placed in front of the Outreach Closet in the foyer or to the church office. Thank you for your generous support of the Outreach Christmas Project and we wish you all a Christmas season filled with Hope, Love and Joy!

The Outreach Committee



Thanksgiving Baskets – Thank You!

Outreach Committee would like to thank the GCC members and friends for your participation in our annual Thanksgiving Basket distribution. Because of the abundant response, over 50 baskets were given to individuals and families in the community, as well as Belknap House, Carey House and New Beginnings. Outreach and all the recipients truly appreciate your generosity. Thank you, thank you, thank you!





The choir has had a wonderful time bringing you songs of home and harvest during the Thanksgiving season. We are very much looking forward to the Advent season with all of the glorious music it brings. You can look forward to familiar carols along with new works for the Christmas season. Along with performing at the Christmas Eve service we will also bring in the new year at a special Epiphany Service in January at the Gilford Methodist Church.

You can also look forward to a sacred holiday concert from the Pemi Choral Society right in our sanctuary on Thursday, December 14th. They will be singing Pinkham's Christmas Cantata, along with other great pieces. The choir is led by Will Gunn and many GCC members sing along, including Carol Gellert, Nancy Frost and AJ Coppola

The Carter Mountain Brass Band (May Stewart and Alex Stewart are a part of this group) will be presenting it's Christmas Concert at the United Methodist Church on Sunday, December 3rd.

The Bell Choir is back into the swing...or should I say, "ring" of things. We are thrilled to welcome two new members, Carey Blandford and Barbara Stinson, to our already wonderful group of dedicated ringers.

If you are interested in joining the choir don't hesitate to see Carolyn or AJ after any Sunday service or come to rehearsal Thursday nights in the sanctuary from 6-7pm. We hope to see you soon!

Musically Yours,
Carolyn and AJ



Church Attendance for November

5th	189
12th	201
19th	193
26th	196



The 31st annual Rev. Ray Wixson Memorial Gilford Senior Citizen Dinner and Holiday Celebration will take place on Tuesday, December 5th, at 5:30pm at GCC. This event is put on every year by the members of the Gilford Rotary Club to thank the seniors of Gilford for their many contributions to Gilford over the years.

There will be a traditional turkey dinner with all the fixings at 6pm with entertainment by local students starting at 5:30pm. To make your reservation, please call Sandy at 524-3134. Transportation is available if needed. If you live in Gilford and are 62 or over, you won't want to miss this fun-filled holiday celebration.

Christmas Food Baskets



Ham will be provided by GCC.

Place the following items in a small round plastic laundry basket.

5lb Bag of Potatoes
1 Jar Pork Gravy
2 Cans Whole Kernel Corn
2 Cans Sliced Carrots
2 Cans Yams
1 Can Cranberry Sauce
1 Jar Applesauce
2 Boxes Instant Pudding Mix – Chocolate or Vanilla
1 Box Dessert Mix – Brownie Mix, Cookies or Cake mix w/can frosting
1 15oz Can Sliced Pineapple
1 64oz Apple or Cranberry Juice

Note: The above listed sizes are for reference only. Ounce sizes may vary per product purchased. Shopping store brand labels is accepted and recommended.

If unable to provide the entire basket of food, please feel free to donate any of the items on the list.

Please bring your donations to the church no later than Sunday, December 10, 2017.

Contact Molly Notkin with any questions: mpnjuggler@gmail.com or 832-9178. Thank you for your generous participation!

The **deadline** to submit for the January Newsletter is Thursday, December 21st.



FRIENDLY KITCHEN is **Friday, December 22nd**. Please sign up downstairs on the bulletin board to volunteer.

The Friendly Kitchen Committee serves lunch at the Salvation Army at noon. The menu consists of a choice of American Chop Suey and brownies.



Coffee Hour Hosts for December

- 12/3 Membership Committee
- 12/10 Care & Concern Committee
- 12/17 Cookie Swap
- 12/24 Christmas Eve, **No Coffee Hour**
- 12/31 New Year's Eve, Looking for Volunteers to Host

Please contact Jessi Fleck at jfleckjr@metrocast.net or 728-5671 if you would like to help set up, clean up or provide a food item during one of the coffee hours. Many thanks!



The first Sunday of every month is **FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY** and members/non-members are invited to bring donations to church with them.

Food Pantry requests for the month of December

Toilet Paper
Tuna Fish
Mayonnaise
Hot Cocoa
Oatmeal
Spaghetti Sauce

For **New Beginnings**:

(Please label these donations "New Beginnings" and bring to the church foyer):

Toothpaste
Q-tips
Shampoo
Body Wash
Deodorant
Soups
Tomato Sauce
Sides/small servings, Mac & cheese etc
Peanut Butter





Each year, our Flower Committee decorates our sanctuary in keeping with the joyous Christmas season. You are invited to purchase a poinsettia (\$10.00) for EACH loved one or couple whom you would like to recognize, and their names will be in the Sunday bulletin on December 17th.

Your donations will also help to cover the cost of poinsettias delivered the week before Christmas to area shut-ins.

Attached is my check for: _____

Given by: _____

PLEASE PRINT NEATLY.

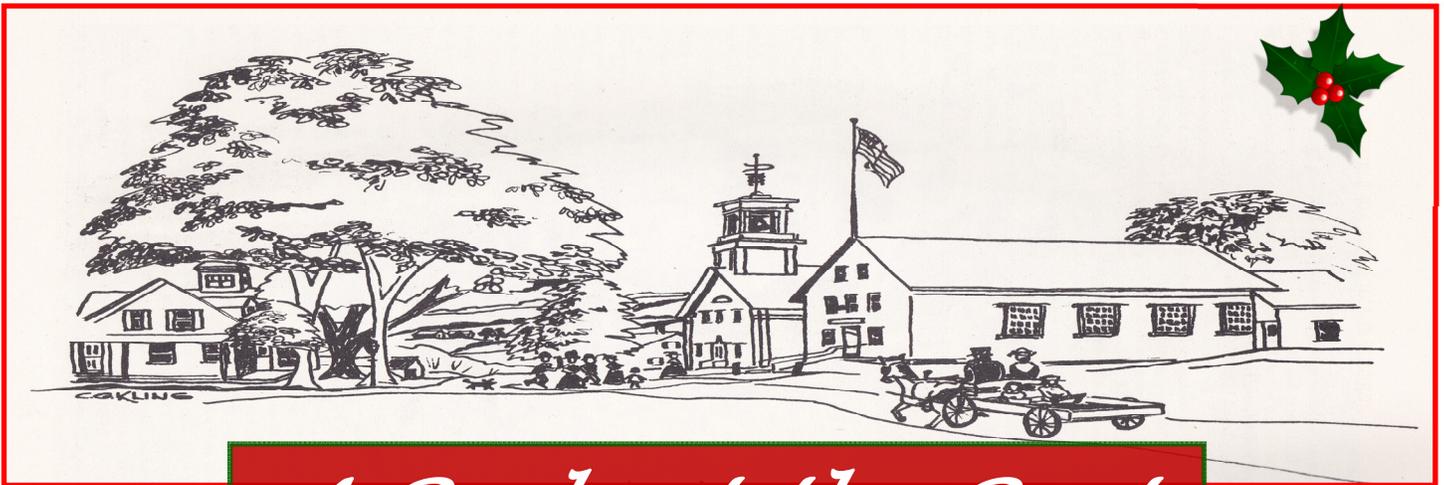
In loving memory of **OR** *To celebrate the life of* (Please circle which one)

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The church office will accept your completed form. It is expected that the payment be made with the form. Please make your check payable to the Gilford Community Church and indicate that it is for poinsettias. Thank you for your gift!

DEADLINE TO ORDER: Wednesday, December 13th by 2pm.



A Peek at the Past
Yesterdays at our Church
By Judy Buswell

"We Have Never Heard a Better Christmas Sermon!"

According to the *Laconia Democrat*, Rev Harold R. Brennan scored high marks for his sermon on Sunday, December 25, 1921 at the Free Will Baptist Church on Potter Hill in Gilford Village, now the Gilford Community Church. Sitting in the pews that Sunday were two congregations: the Gilford Baptists and the Gilford Methodists whose church home at that time was located on Belknap Mountain Road across from the Gilford Bandstand and Village Field. For a short time these two congregations agreed to worship together with one minister so they could share resources and better utilize their cash reserves.

Such Christmas celebrations and observances were not always allowed here in New England. Instead our early Puritans fathers were horrified by the often obscene and rowdy behaviors associated with December. They thought the winter solstice frivolities and the chaos of post-harvest traditions brought over by the colonists were an abomination that disrupted the purest order of society. The Puritans also felt the date of Christ's birth was arbitrarily selected as December 25th by rulers in Rome to accommodate both pervasive pagan beliefs and emerging Christianity. December 25th was already a Pagan holiday that celebrated the birth of the sun god, Mithra. December 25th also fell right in the middle of Saturnalia, a month of revelry dedicated to food, drink, and lewd behavior that was observed for several centuries in Rome before and after the birth of Jesus.

*(Copied from the Gilford column
in the Friday, Jan 6, 1922
issue of THE LACONIA DEMOCRAT)*

GILFORD
Methodist & Baptist Churches
Harold R Brennan, Pastor
Lord's Day Services
11:00 am - Morning worship
12:15pm - Sunday School
7:00pm - Evening Worship

The services of the past two weeks have been exceedingly helpful and interesting. "We have never heard a better Christmas sermon" was the voiced opinion concerning the sermon on "Stars and Angels". Mr Rangewald (*sic*) Olsen sang a tenor solo "No Room". At the evening service the choir sang the "Awakening Chorus" and the pastor's subject was "The Secret of a Happy Home". The subject of the New Year service was "Remember" and the evening service was "A Recipe for a Revival" which was right to the point. The attendance was unusually large at all these services and we hope to see many more taking advantage of this great opportunity of united services during the New Year which is before us."

Copied from the LACONIA DEMOCRAT
Friday, December 22, 1893

Gilford

The young people will give an oyster supper in the Town Hall, Saturday evening, Dec 30. If it is stormy it will be postponed until Monday. Old and young are cordially invited to come and have all the oysters they can eat for fifteen cents. Music will be furnished by Messrs. Rowe and Eaton. Come and see what kind of a time the boys can give.

Christmas Festivals

Gilford Village has done itself proud and happy in the two Christmas festivals which have just been held. That of the Free Baptist was held on Monday evening and the Methodist on Tuesday evening. Both were unusually excellent. The singing and speaking were more than ordinary for a small village like ours. It was a delight to listen to the young aspirants for oratorical honors. Perhaps a Daniel Webster or a Mrs. Livermore may yet arise from this obscure village to bless the world with their eloquence. But the chief point of attraction was the Christmas tree whose boughs bent low under the weight of their treasures. Which society excelled in the richness of its presents it may be invidious if not odious to give an opinion. It is enough to say that on both occasions no tree ever held richer or riper fruit. Nor were the pastors forgotten in the presents so generously made. Of those received by the Free Baptist pastor your correspondent cannot speak definitely. They were doubtless liberal like the people who made them. The Methodist pastor, (Rev. S.P. Heath) and his wife were remembered by their people in money and useful articles to the value of nearly eighteen dollars. For these tokens of love and kindness they desire to express their heartfelt thanks.

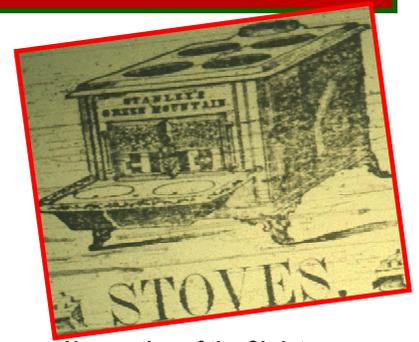
VIATOR

From the early Colonial period and through the 18th century in New England, Christmas was not a holiday but rather just another day on the calendar. In fact, in Massachusetts for a period of 22 years (1659-1681), all observances of the Christmas season were forbidden by law. When this law was abolished in 1681, not much changed in colonial New England. The notion that Christmas was evil and completely inappropriate continued over the next century before these rigid restrictions gradually began to relax.

By 1840, scattered Christmas celebrations were happening in New England communities. However, these practices were for social, secular, cultural and economic reasons and had very little to do with religion.

The pall on Christmas continued for five or six decades into the 19th century. At this time there are only meager references to Christmas in newspapers, private journals and diaries, and other accounts.

Slowly, all this restraint began to wane as the familiar poem, "The Night Before Christmas" written in 1822 by **Clement Moore**, grew in popularity. Americans began sending cards and decorating Christmas Trees, activities that



No mention of the Christmas holidays in the December 6, 1849 issue of the LACONIA DEMOCRAT. Just ads for stoves & ladies bonnets!

GREAT HOLIDAY REDUCTIONS

... FOR ...

Saturday, Dec. 24th

QUANTITIES OF NOVELTIES WHICH MUST BE CLEANED UP REGARDLESS OF PRICE

10 cent Pictures	.....	at 7 cents
25 " Novelties	.....	10 "
25 " Children's Books	.....	15 "
50 " Novelties	.....	25 "
75c and \$1 Novelties	.....	50 "

..... ON ...

SPECIAL PRICES

Furs and Garments

LOUGEE'S
DRY GOODS DEPARTMENT

Nothing outlandish about this ad in the December 23, 1904 issue of the LACONIA DEMOCRAT. Lougee's Department Store was located in downtown Laconia.

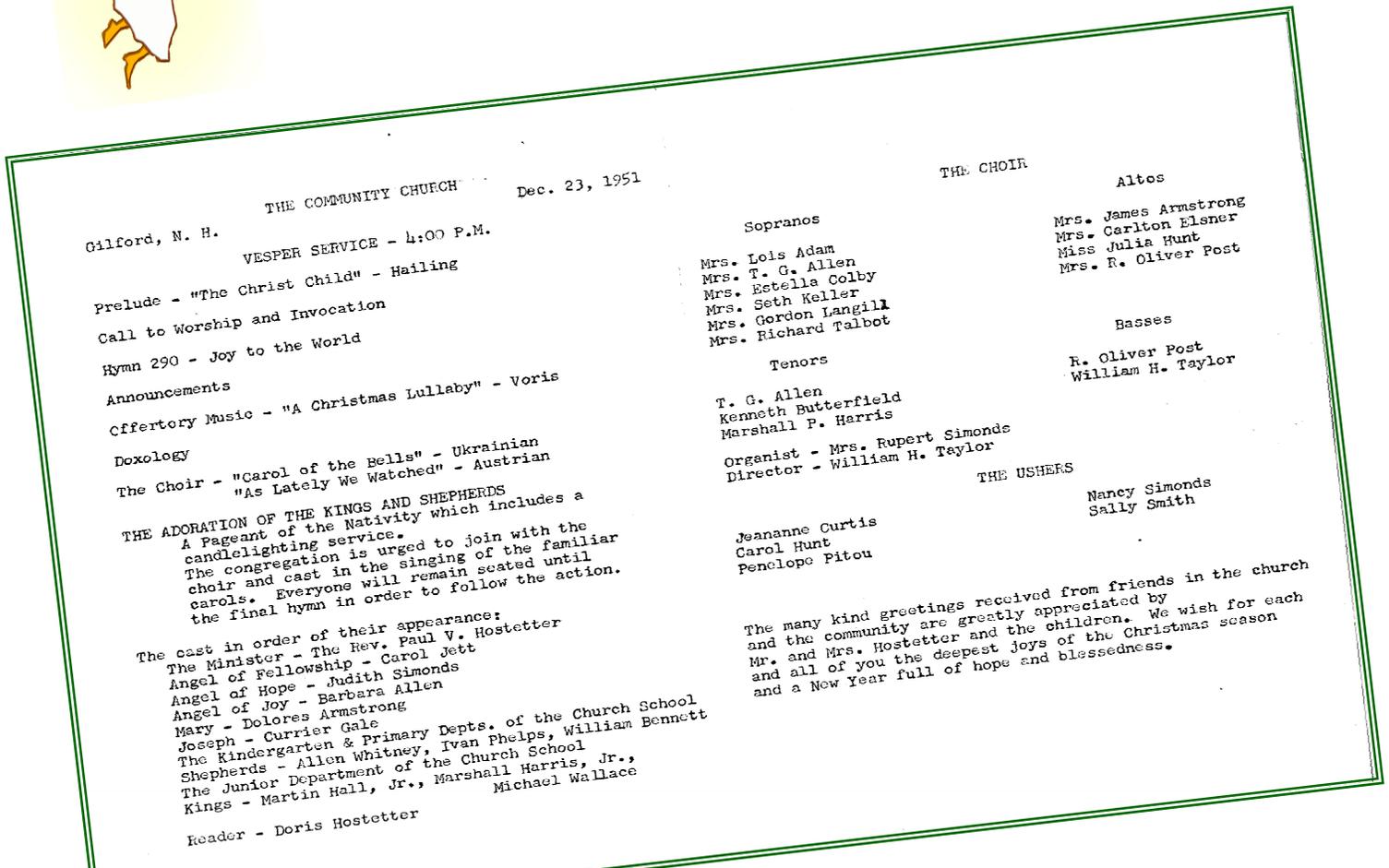
were imported from Victorian England via the popular magazine, "Godey's Lady's Book".

The American graphic artist, **Thomas Nast**, recast Santa Claus in *Harper's Weekly Magazine* from a skinny and solemn Saint into a jolly, round, and red-cheeked fellow, the image we still revere today. In 1836, Alabama became the first state to mark Christmas as a public holiday, leading the way for other states to do the same. Finally in June of 1870, **President Ulysses S Grant** signed a bill designating Christmas as a federal holiday.

Christmas customs and traditions are still changing as the profit motive gains an even firmer footing. Every year, new trappings for this Holiday appear. Out with the stringed popcorn and in with the tree icicles! Out with the icicles and in with an artificial tree that pops out of its box fully lit and decorated!



Fortunately today this commercial frenzy is offset with Christmas Eve services and Caroling, glorious music, pageants, Nativity scenes and community tree lighting services, and well organized charitable giving. After browsing through archival materials, it is satisfying to understand how through the years Gilford Community Church has skillfully interpreted the symbolism of the Christmas season and matched its message to the needs of the community.



Discovered in one of my old scrapbooks is this bulletin for the CHRISTMAS VESPER SERVICE at our Gilford Community Church on December 23, 1951. I was one of the three Angels. ALLAN WHITNEY was one of the Shepherds and MIKE WALLACE, one of the Kings. Among those singing in the choir were GARY and LUCILLE ALLEN, PEGGY KELLER, and STELLA COLBY (Jim Colby's mother). BILL TAYLOR (owner-operator of the Village Store) was the Choir Director and my mother, DOROTHY SIMONDS, the organist. My younger sister, NANCY SIMONDS, was one of the Ushers, as was PENNY PITOU, the future Silver and Bronze Olympic Downhill Ski Medalist, and one of my closest friends, JEANANNE CURTIS who tragically died some 7 years later of a brain tumor.

Research resources for this column: Laconia Library microfilms, Internet research, and personal files)



December 1st, 5-7:30pm

December 2nd, 10-12pm

We are always in need of volunteers for this event.

Please contact Scott if you would like to help.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 3rd, 4-6pm

Our young children, and their families are invited for a Christmas Party on Dec 3rd, 4-6pm at the Gilford Youth Center. We are having a potluck so please bring a dish to share. We will also do a yankee swap with the kids, \$5-\$10 gift. RSVP Scott if you plan to attend.

Senior Dinner and Bingo

Friday, December 22nd

5-6:30pm

We will continue our monthly "Dinner & Bingo" for the residents of the Village Knolls. We will meet at 4pm.

Christmas Pageant

December 10th

We are excited to announce that this year's pageant will be held during worship service.



MS AND HS YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

We are having a Christmas lunch for all MS and HS youth members. We will be heading to Shang Hai Restaurant in

Laconia for lunch.

We will also do a Yankee Swap! All participants should bring a \$10 wrapped gift.



Birthday Party for Jesus!

Sunday, December 17th

Following Children's Time

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Worship Service at Genesis (Laconia Rehab Ctr) 10am	2 Christmas Fair 9-1pm Santa Land 10-12pm
3 10am Worship Communion Food Collection Children's Christ- mas Party	4 Chordsmen 7:15pm	5 Rev Ray Wixson Senior Dinner 5:30pm	6	7 Adult Book Study 10:30am *Chancel Choir 6-7pm	8	9 Gilford Farmer's Market at the GYC 9-12pm
10 10am Worship Hymn Sing Christmas Pageant	11 Senior Momentum 11:30-2:30pm Membership Mtg 5:15pm Church Council 6:30pm Chordsmen 7:15pm	12	13	14 Adult Book Study 10:30am Pemi Choral Society 7:30pm	15	16 Gilford Farmer's Market at the GYC 9-12pm
17 10am Worship Outreach Committee 11:15am	18 Senior Momentum Breakfast 8:30-12pm Chordsmen 7:15pm	19	20	21 Adult Book Study 10:30am *Chancel Choir 6-7pm	22 Friendly Kitchen	23 Gilford Farmer's Market at the GYC 9-12pm
24 10am & 6pm Christmas Eve Wor- ship Services 31 10am Worship	25 	26	27	28 Adult Book Study 10:30am *Chancel Choir 6-7pm	29	30 *Chancel Choir is open to those 18 years and older.