

grafted

December 2014

MORROW
MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

Morrow Memorial United Methodist Church Newsletter



Advent 2014: Getting Ready

We invite you to join us for a special Advent season at Morrow Church as we prepare to celebrate Christmas.

Read on for a preview of our Advent ministry events!

Christmas Eve Services

- DEC. 24 WED.**
- 3:30pm - Live Nativity
 - 5:00 pm - Children's Service
 - 7:00 pm - Family Service
 - 11:00 pm - Candlelight Service

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Getting Ready for Christmas

Advent Greetings from Pastor Chris Heckert

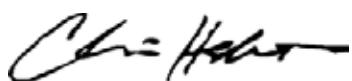
At my house, like many of you, we are already getting ready for the Christmas season. We are stringing lights, putting up greens, and swinging to holiday music by Vince Guaraldi and Harry Connick, Jr. Just getting ready for the holiday brings so much joy and anticipation!

Advent is the season in which we prepare for the message and celebration of Christmas. For the four weeks leading up to Christmas Eve, we name contrasts - darkness and light, despair and hope, violence and peace, sorrow and joy, hatred and love.

Only by naming the darkness can we truly appreciate light. The first verse of one of my favorite Christmas carols, "In the Bleak Midwinter," shows us this perfectly: "Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone." The carol goes on to declare that it is here, in these cold, hard days of winter, that we can see and feel the love of God that changes our hearts.

This Advent season, find ways to get ready for Christmas: sing songs, light lights, help others, read the Christmas story—and receive and experience the gift of Christ, our light in the darkness.

Grace and peace,



Rev. Chris Heckert, Senior Pastor



**In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen,
snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter,
long ago.**

In the Bleak Midwinter, UMH 221

Family Ministry Events for Advent

Morrow Church offers a variety of engaging Advent events for children to learn about and experience the Christmas story. We invite your family to join us for the Advent season as we ready our hearts for Jesus's arrival on Christmas Day!



DEC.

6

Family Service Event,
4:00-5:30pm

Join us for an afternoon of service to support Morrow Church's outreach partners: Meeting Emergency Needs with Dignity (MEND), Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), First Friends, & our visitation ministry.

We will assemble letter-writing kits for asylum-seekers held in detention; make casseroles for the Bessie Green Center; decorate Christmas cookies; & make greeting cards.

We will finish up the evening with a pizza together. Contact the church office to let us know you are coming.

DEC.

20

One Starry Night,
9:00am-12:00pm

One Starry Night is an exciting opportunity for children to meet people in the marketplace of Bethlehem and learn about the special night when Jesus was born.

Children will visit with the innkeeper, shepherds, candle-maker, print-maker, carpenter, rabbi, & others who will share the real story of Christmas. Parents are invited to journey through Bethlehem at the end.

Don't miss this special event!

Join Us for the Parsonage Open House

DEC.

7

SUN.

Please join us for a time of fellowship and refreshments on Sunday, December 7, from 3:00-5:00pm at the home of Pastor Chris and Kimberly Heckert, 12 Roosevelt Road.

Come to the Candlelight Carols Dinner

DEC.

14

SUN.

Join us for dinner after the Candlelight Carols Service on Sunday, December 14, at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall. The dinner costs \$12/adult and \$6/child (under the age of 14). Make your reservations online or through the church office by December 8.

Feasting & Fundraising for HAPI



Progressive Dinner Raises \$700+

There is no better way to build and sustain connections with each other than sharing a delicious meal and great conversation. Lucky for us, we had both at our annual Progressive Dinner!

Pastor Paul Prevost, our special guest from Haitian Artists for Peace International (HAPI), shared about our mission in Haiti, met new supporters and church members, and reconnected with old friends. We raised over \$700, which will be entered into the matching grant for the UMC #GivingTuesday on December 2. Your collective generosity is much appreciated by the HAPI community!

We would like to thank our generous hosts for the evening: Andrea and Robert Northfield; Andrea and David Wren-Hardin; Sue Goodman; Paula Marchese; Dorothy Wetzel and Dan Sugarman; Penelope and Ted Brackett; and Connie Thompson and Antonio Zurlo. We extend our special gratitude to our event coordinators, Melinda Wilkening, Sheila Kenny, and Scott Shultz. We also thank Andrea and David for hosting Pastor Paul (including a 3:30am wake-up call for the airport!) and Melinda for accompanying him into New York City during his stay.

Upcoming Opportunities



Share Your Christmas Card

Save money on postage by posting your family's holiday card to the Christmas Card Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall, sponsored by the United Methodist Women (UMW).

We invite you to donate the money you save to the HAPI (Haitian Artists for Peace International) Mission Fund.

Make checks out to Morrow Church and designate "UMW HAPI Fund."

Donate a Poinsettia for the Altar

Donate a poinsettia for our altar this Christmas in honor or memory of a loved one.

We ask for a \$15.00 donation per plant. Return your completed form (which you can find online or at the church office) by December 17. Please note "Christmas Poinsettia" on your check.

You may pick up your plant after services on Christmas Eve.

Join Our Adult Mission Trip to Mizak, Haiti

We will leave on Saturday, March 14, and return on Sunday, March 22. The cost is \$1,000 per person. Scholarships are available (contact Pastors Chris or Brenda for more information).

Email Melinda Wilkening at mwilkening@verizon.net by December 7 if you are interested in going. A \$100 deposit is required to hold your spot, which you can bring to our meeting after the 10:30am worship service on December 7.

Light Up Your Spirit with Advent By Candlelight - Dec. 2, 7pm



Advent is a season of preparation, anticipation, and excitement. Our preparations often become the focus of the season, with many of these tasks falling to women.

Advent By Candlelight is an evening for women, by women--for the preparers, by the preparers--to help women focus on the anticipation, excitement, & joy of what it means to welcome Christ into our lives again and again, to

make space for God with us. It is a time for women to gather at the beginning of Advent to be inspired, cared for, and fulfilled.

Join us for "Love Came Down at Christmas," an evening of food, music, story, & poetry on Tuesday, December 2, at 7pm in Fellowship Hall.

Worship at The Table - Dec. 3, 8pm



This Advent season, take time to prepare and nurture your spirit for the coming of Christmas. We invite you to join us in the

chapel on Wednesday, December 3, at 8pm for The Table, a unique worship service specially designed by Pastor Chris.

We will gather for prayer, receive inspiration, and share in communion. This monthly service will engage your senses through art, ritual, and diverse music styles.

All who hunger for a deeper spiritual experience this Christmas, come to the table.

Celebrate the Season with Candlelight Carols - Dec. 14, 4pm



Morrow Church's beloved Candlelight Carols service will be held on Sunday, December 14, at 4pm.

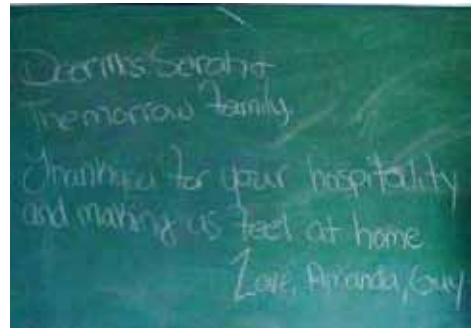
This special service tells the Christmas story through selected readings and carols, featuring the Morrow Chancel Choir and the Lyrica Chamber Orchestra Brass presenting John Rutter's "Gloria."

Also playing and singing will be Morrow Church's Youth and Worship Arts Choirs as well as the Children's and Adult Bell Choirs.

Admission is free & open to the public. A freewill offering will be taken to support the pastor's discretionary fund.

Join us for dinner afterward at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall. The dinner costs \$12/adult and \$6/child (under the age of 14). Please make your reservations online or through the church office by December 8.

Host a Family in Need This Christmas - Dec. 14-20



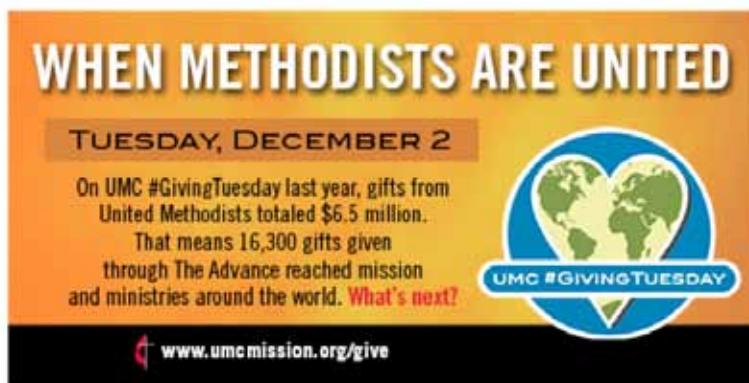
From December 14 to December 20, Morrow Church will host families in need through the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). We will transform our classrooms into

private, comfortable living spaces for families, and we are in need of volunteers and donations.

We need volunteer dinner hosts (5:30pm-7pm); evening hosts (7pm-9pm); & overnight hosts (9pm-7am the next morning). Please sign up through the church office or through the online form at morrowchurch.org/ihn/.

We also are in need of monetary donations to fund our hospitality expenses. Please note "IHN" on your check.

Unique Ways to Give This Advent



directly to the designated project.

Unite with Methodists around the globe as we kick off this holiday season in true Christian fashion - by giving to others!

Shop Online & Earn Money for Morrow Church!

This holiday season, do your holiday shopping online at your favorite stores through UMCmarket, and a portion of your purchase will be donated to Morrow Church!

Simply go to UMCmarket.org to sign up. Once you register with your user name and password, you can download the Easy Give Button, a browser app that will allow you to shop directly at participating stores.

Just enter the name of Morrow Church when prompted, complete your purchase, and a portion of your purchase will be donated to our church. It's that easy!

UMC #GivingTuesday

On Tuesday, December 2, the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries will match up to \$1 million in gifts made online to any project through The Advance.

This holiday season, express your faith by participating in UMC #GivingTuesday, an international movement that offers us the opportunity to support organizations that have been researched and approved by the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. 100 percent of all gifts you make will be given

A graphic for UMCmarket. It features a dark blue header with the UMCmarket logo and the tagline "You Shop. We Give." Below the header is a photograph of a young child with arms outstretched, looking up. At the bottom, there is a call-to-action: "Shop online at your favorite stores and a percentage will be given to your local church." The entire graphic is set against a light blue background.

Cook or Donate Food for MEND

Since January, Morrow Church has delivered 275 casseroles, 12 gallons of Danish Beef Stew, & 120 servings of Black Bean Confetti Chili to the Bessie Green Center. Often our grocery cart is filled with non-perishable foods for local food pantries, and we have raised \$2,500.00 for MEND (Meeting Emergency Needs with Dignity). Let's continue our good work by donating our food, money, and time for families in need this holiday season! Please contact Vicki Carter at 973-414-0089 or vcarter31@aol.com to volunteer.

Join the Planned Giving Team

We invite you to join our new team in developing a Planned Giving program for Morrow Church. Over the next couple of months, we'll plan the pilot design and implementation, followed by monitoring and expanding the program during the rest of the year. We especially welcome volunteers with preferred qualifications as CPAs/Financial Planners with an interest in applying/developing estate planning expertise. Contact Jim George at (201) 349-7839 or jgeorge@foqus.biz.

Help a Family at Christmas

Morrow Church has a long history of supporting families in need during the Christmas season. If you'd like to help a family by donating grocery store gift cards and other gifts, contact Vicki Carter at 973-414-0089 or vcarter31@aol.com with the size of family and/or number of individuals you can support. Visit www.morrowchurch.org/mend/ for more information.

Morrow Church Calendar

NOV.
30
SUN.

First Sunday of Advent

DEC.
2
TUES.

UMC #GivingTuesday
Advent by Candlelight,
7:00pm

DEC.
3
WED.

The Table: Music and
Communion, 8:00pm

DEC.
6
SAT.

Family Service Event, 4:00pm

DEC.
7
SUN.

Communion Sunday
Parsonage Open House (12
Roosevelt Road), 3:00pm

DEC.
14
SUN.

Candlelight Carols, 4:00pm
Advent Dinner, 5:30pm

DEC.
20
SAT.

"One Starry Night" Family
Advent Event, 9:00am

DEC.
23
TUES.

Rehearsal for Children's
Christmas Eve, 1:00pm

DEC.
24
WED.

Christmas Eve
Live Nativity, 3:30pm
Children's Service, 5:00pm
Family Service, 7:00pm
Candlelight Service, 11:00pm

DEC.
25
THURS.

Christmas Day

JAN.
7
WED.

The Table: Music and
Communion, 8:00pm

Check our online calendar for more event details!

We seek to live as a diverse, multigenerational, Christian community where lives are transformed.



MORROW CHURCH
MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST
600 Ridgewood Rd, Maplewood, NJ 07040

Stay Connected

Find out more about upcoming events and new opportunities to grow in faith and serve others.

“Grafted” Newsletter

Read our monthly newsletter, which is distributed online, by email, & by post. Print copies are available by request.

Morrow Church App

Search for “Morrow Memorial UMC” or “Morrow Church” in the app store on your iPhone or Android device. Download it for free to access devotional resources, an events calendar, & more!

Facebook

Join our Morrow Church Facebook page and Morrow Church Facebook group.

Morrow News

Stay up-to-date with this weekly e-blast featuring Morrow Church community news and events.

Children & Youth

Check out our weekly e-blast for children & youth, which includes upcoming service activities, ministry events, & more!

Morrow Church Website

Visit us online at www.morrowchurch.org. Read the latest news, subscribe to our calendar, & more!

Download the App!



Our Morrow Church app has officially launched!

Search for “Morrow Church” or “Morrow Memorial UMC” on your iPhone or Android device to download it for free.