

January 2025

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The Immediate Path into 2025

Pastor's Message

So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived!

*2 Corinthians 5:17
Common English Bible (CEB)*

As a high school boy, I was fond of quoting Mark Twain, "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow." These days though I find safety in the ever-increasing number of confessed delayers I discover. Research reveals that about a quarter of us self-identify as chronic procrastinators.

In 1920s Vienna, Russian psychologist Bluma Zeigarnik observed that waiters in a café easily recalled the details of a bill before customers paid, but if questioned about the bill after the customer had paid, they strained to remember anything at all about what had been ordered. Following thorough experiments, she concluded that the completion of a job provides us closure, freeing us from the worry that picks at our nerves while the job remains unfinished. The waiters' trick was to keep "spinning the plates" of the

open orders in their heads whilst letting those which are completed "fall." Once completed an order could be forgotten . . . so why not get it over with? This commonly felt fretfulness to carry a task through to completion is known in the psychology business as the Zeigarnik effect. The best way to get something done is to begin. And this motivational wisdom works not only forgetting out of bed or completing the household chores - in my case as a preacher it works in preparing a sermon.

Putting things off can have harmful effects on communities as well as individuals. Getting started was at the heart of Martin Luther King's non-violent strategy for changing our nation from the small first step of a bus boycott. "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step." Reverend King admonished, "How soon "not now" becomes "never." Advancing in the hope that others will follow can be a lonely business, but God knows it is often required of us. As the American psychologist and philosopher William James put

It "Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task."

For 2025, let us all pray that procrastination not be the thief of our time. Let us seek God's good guidance in granting that each day we act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly in faith.

A blessed New Year to you all,

Russell J. Atkinson



Coffee and Conversation

Please stop by for our coffee, tea and conversation time after church service on Sundays. This is not only an opportunity for refreshment- it is a good time to say hello to visitors and find out a little about them, as well as greeting people you



know. Feel free to take your cup outside as well. This all happens at the back of our Sanctuary, where there is ample room to sit or stand and talk. Please do stop by and say hello to someone you would like to get to know better, even if you don't like coffee!

Heavy Psalm/Light Exercise and Fellowship Hour



Join us every **Tuesday** at 11 am to 11:50 am where we will gather in the parking lot to hear a psalm and reflect on it briefly, and then engage in light exercise – walking the neighborhood. Please come and join us.

Upper Darby Food Bank



The Upper Darby Food Bank is there to help people in need. Please note we will reopen on **January 6th**. Our hours of operation are: 10am to 12 pm. We are located at: 7766 Wayne Avenue in Upper Darby.

The Food Bank is always looking for donations and appreciate all of our supporters and their help all year round.



Bacon, Toast, and the Heavenly Host

If you've got an appetite for the Word of God and a good breakfast, come on out to the Perkins Restaurant, 706 N. Lansdowne Avenue in Drexel Hill (just a short hop from the high school) the first Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is **January 2, 2025**. Hope to see you there!

Ministry@DHUMC

A monthly newsletter for the membership of DHUMC.

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Email Diane Volpe at

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DHUMC Administrative Council Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of DHUMC's Administrative Council is on Monday, **January 13, 2025**. The Council will meet on Zoom beginning at 7:00 pm. Shortly before 7:00 pm, please look for Pastor Atkinson's invitation to join the meeting. If you aren't a member of the Administrative Council but would like to sit in on this meeting, please notify the church office by phone at 610-259-2104 or by email at office@dhum.org, and you will be added to the Zoom login list.



Russell Atkinson, Pastor

January Worship Services

Epiphany Sunday

January 5, 2025

Isaiah 60:1-6

Matthew 2:1-12

"Wise"

Baptism of the Lord

January 12, 2025

Isaiah 43:1-7

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

"The Beginning of a Journey"

Second Sunday After Epiphany

January 19, 2025

Isaiah 62:1-5

John 2:1-11

"What is a Miracle?"

Third Sunday After Epiphany

January 26, 2025

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Luke 4:14-21

"Allow Me to Introduce Myself"



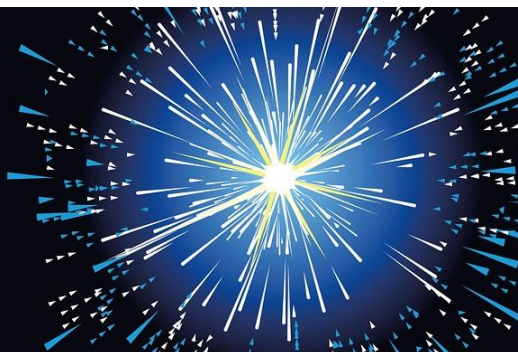
Baptism of the Lord

Lay Reader Schedule for January

- 5 Sally Mullin
- 12 Barbara Felton
- 19 Becky Harbison
- 26 Alex Mullin



Happy
New Year





January Worship Notes

A Season of Epiphanies

Originating in the Eastern Church, Epiphany celebrates the manifestation, “showing forth” of God’s salvation to the Gentiles. In Matthew’s gospel, we learn that early visitors to the Christ child were magi, who probably traveled from Persia (contemporary Iran) to visit Jesus sometime after his first birthday. Later in history, the tradition of the traveling kings merged with the Western celebration of Christmas based on Luke’s narrative. Thus, the Twelve Days of Christmas emerged as the season of the Nativity, beginning with Christmas Eve and Jesus’ birth, and ending with Epiphany—the showing of God’s glory to the world. As Jesus is the “light to the Gentiles,” so Epiphany is a celebration rich in symbolism that including light, incense, and gift giving.



As a celebration in the Church, Epiphany is actually older than Christmas! It has been celebrated on January 6th for centuries, but as a concession to our very secular lives, our United Methodist calendars annually shift our observance to the nearest Sunday before that date. Epiphany invites families to participate in rich, imaginative, and playful rituals. The entire Epiphany of the Lord story is found in Matthew 2:1-12. With a little planning, you can incorporate a number of delightful traditions into your Sunday school class and family celebrations (children or childlike adults are essential too).

Here is a wonderful little observance of the season that you could co-opt for your home. I spent Epiphany in a little town in eastern Bavaria in 1992. Though the season was cool, damp, and dim the townspeople made merry parties in their homes. Walking from one gathering to the next, I noticed the lintel above each front door had chalk marks: 19 + C + M + B + 92. In some European homes, it is customary at Epiphany to mark the lintel above doorways with symbols of blessing. You might invite your children (or convince your parents) to mark your own front door with these symbols: the date, the initials of the Magi—Casper, Melchior, and Balthasar (names and number are not found in the bible story, by the way, but come to use through tradition), and four crosses. Order these symbols in the following way, 20 + C + M + B + 25 (current year), with the four crosses representing the four seasons. In the new year, this marking serves as a blessing over the entire household. Be artistic and creative. The marking may be made with chalk or on a piece of cardboard that has been decorated with colored markers and designs.

Your Pastor Went to Hurricane Helene Relief Response Mobilization

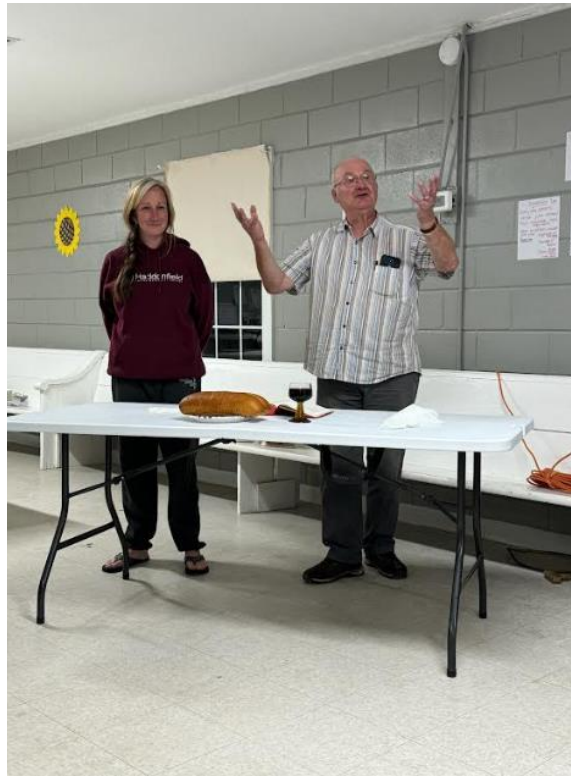
In the wake of the devastating impact of Hurricane Helene, an Early Response Team (ERT) from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference and the Greater New Jersey Conference of the United Methodist Church was mobilized to offer assistance in Northern Georgia. Your pastor was part of the team. The team of 11 volunteers, led by Rev. Cricket Denton, the Disaster Response Coordinator for the Greater New Jersey Conference, arrived ready to provide vital aid and relief to residents grappling with the aftermath of the storm.



Pastor Atkinson provides the crucial weight required to the trunk that allowed the chain blade not to bind.

Equipped with tools, training, and compassion, the team's primary focus was on debris removal and securing homes damaged by fallen trees, broken fences, and other structural issues left by the hurricane. Their mission is to help stabilize communities so that recovery and rebuilding efforts can proceed more smoothly.

The United Methodist Church's Early Response Teams are trained to respond swiftly in disaster situations, providing help to individuals and communities in crisis. This deployment was yet another example of the church's commitment to serving others in times of need, bringing comfort and tangible support to those affected by natural disasters. Because DHUMC is part of the Conference, we are part of providing this resource.



Pastor Atkinson Concelebrates Communion with Rev. Cricket Denton of Greater New Jersey Conference.

Pastor Atkinson was the ordained elder on the team and so provided the Lord's Supper when requested. He also took a hand in preparing meals and cleaning the kitchen following dining. He was pleased to offer a brief devotional and grace at each meal.



Of course I took my turn helping out in the kitchen!



“Our goal is to be the hands and feet of Christ,” Rev. Denton explained. “We’re here to help clear the path forward for those whose lives have been disrupted by this storm.” The team remained in Northern Georgia for a week, assisting as many households as possible and offering a sense of hope amid the challenges of recovery.

The two conferences will be working together again in January to deploy a second team of Early Responders, which will be led by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator from EPA, Denise Shelton. For more information on joining the team, please contact Denise at dshelton@epaumc.church.

A pig sanctuary next to the worksite. To learn more, you will have to ask!



A key factor of the journey...chainsaw wielding. The real purpose was to offer hope.

Events Around Our Community

Guild of Layreaders

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Proverbs 25:25

Would you consider offering yourself to the ministry of layreading? Our layreaders are going to meet following the worship service on **January 12th**. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss 4 items:

1. Have Yvette Benson, our Layreader Coordinator review our current system.
2. Learn to use the new sound-system to best advantage.
3. Review the lessons that will be used January thru June to see who is best suited to reading them.
4. Discuss any concerns that layreaders offer to the group.



We'll be meeting in the front of the Sanctuary. What a blessing to be able to bring the word of Scripture to the congregation during worship. Please contact Russell Atkinson with any questions: (610)675-7187, pastor@dhum.org

Crafters & Fellowship Meetup

The Crafters gather in the Bohn Parlor on the third Thursday of the month. Even if you do not have a craft or hobby project, you are welcome to come be with friends. If you would like to learn how to knit or crochet, we can get you started. If you have a skill you would like to share with us, please do so. We come in the side door on School Lane at 1:00 pm. If you arrive after 1:10 pm, please ring the doorbell and wait a minute or two until we come down the stairs.



Come join us on **January 16th**!

UMCOR Cleaning Bucket Challenge

Drexel Hill United Methodist Church is back in the Conference newspaper because of our commitment to disaster response. Our church is the drop-off point for the South District in the current UMCOR Cleaning Bucket Challenge issued by our Cabinet.

Back-to-back hurricanes led to widespread devastation in the south-eastern region of the United States. Recovery will take years of investment. As the body of Christ here on earth, we are called to embody hope by responding when and as we can. And sometimes, the way that we embody hope is through a joyful competition. The Cabinet of EPA issued a challenge to see which district can assemble the most cleaning kits. Together our four districts can assemble and deliver 1,000 cleaning kits to Mission Central.

Here at Drexel Hill, Sally Mullin took charge of the project to receive the kits. Sally set up reception times and a cadre of volunteers to make sure the church was open.

Many thanks to our generous volunteers!



Sally and Russell amid the collected UMCOR Cleaning Kits

Photo by Alex Mullin

Nursery School News

Photos by Denise McCarthy & Jennifer Ryan



Nursery School Registration for the 2025-2026 3 day & 4 day classes begins on Wednesday, January 22, 2025. Please call 610-259-1444 or send an email to dhumns@verizon.net if you are interested in registering your child.

We loved our time spent with Mrs. Clause!



Christmas Card Drive Thank you!

Photos and Story by Helen Campbell



Our Christmas Gift Card drive realized \$1250 for 5 families from the Upper Darby School District. Each family received \$250 in gift cards. We are blessed to have this opportunity to help some of our struggling neighbors at Christmas. One hundred percent of our donations go directly to the families. Thank you so much!



DHUMC Christmas Festivities

Beautiful poinsettias and a live Christmas tree filled the Sanctuary with holiday cheer as volunteers helped to decorate to make our place of worship bright this Christmas. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped decorate the Sanctuary and purchased the poinsettias and Christmas tree this holiday season.





Photos by Alex Mullin

Undies for Epiphany

January 6th to March 4th

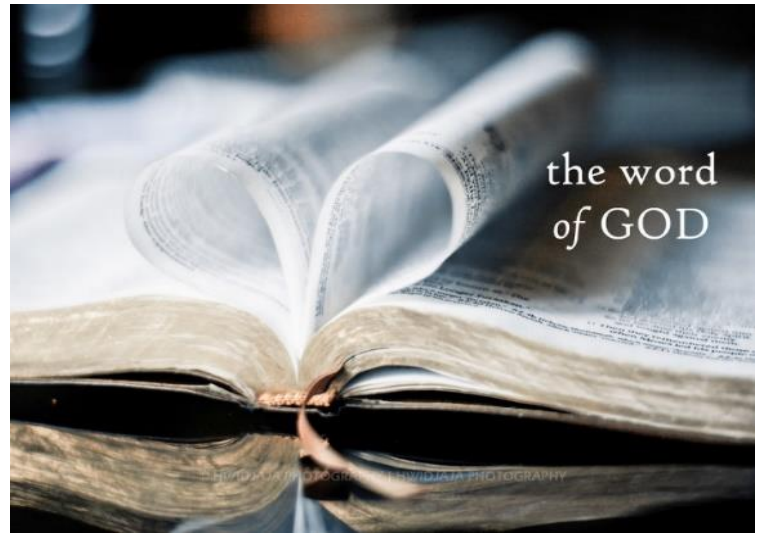
We are blessed to be able to take much for granted. One particular need for Philadelphia's homeless population is new underwear. During Epiphany all sizes and sorts of underwear are requested at Philadelphia's homeless shelters. All donations will be delivered to Arch Street United Methodist Church's clothing bank.

Please bring children's, women's, and men's underwear of any size to church during Epiphanytide (Epiphany, January 6th to Transfiguration, March 2nd). We'll ask God's blessing on them at our Sunday morning service on March 2nd.



DHUMC Together In The Word

Please join us each Sunday before services for another edition of Together in the Word - 9:15 am in the Prayer Chapel.



Tuesday Morning Faith Bible Study



Why don't you join us every Tuesday Morning for Bible Class? We are a group who gather to read and talk about Bible themes. We meet in person in the Church Office as well as online via ZOOM. You are very welcome to give it a try and, if you like what you see, please attend. **Important:** you'll need a Bible. We'll begin at 9:30am and finish a little before 11am. The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81458981321?pwd=SmFRQOpLS21kUmdhZHNRRnJmbnFyUT09>

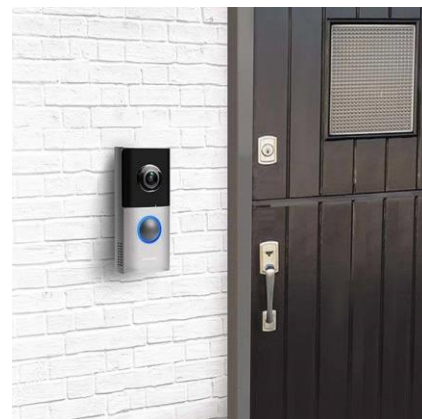
2025 Church Directory

The month of January is a good time to make sure that the church office has up to date contact information on you and your family. Please fill out the tear off sheets in the church bulletin or call the church office with any additions or changes, as in new cell phone numbers, if you would like to have them included in an updated directory. The plan is to print an updated Church Directory in February.
Jane Todd, Membership Committee



New Doorbell at Church Office

A new RING doorbell has been installed outside of the church office door. A chime rings in the office when the button is pushed. An app makes it possible to see who is at the door, which is an added security feature. It is probably a good idea to ring a second time if there isn't a timely answer- someone may be inside but momentarily away from the office. Thanks to Kevin Ryan for all his expertise in setting up the new doorbell!



Happy Birthdays in January!



Here are a few birthdays to celebrate in the month of January! Please consider getting in touch with the following church members by regular mail or email to help them celebrate their special days. Let us know if your birthday is missing from our list by calling the church office or emailing Jane Todd at janedt@verizon.net.

1/1- Linda Tripolitis
7573 Laureate Blvd, Unit 1306
Orlando, FL 32827
lindatripolitis@gmail.com

1/7- Russell Atkinson
3212 School Lane
Drexel Hill, PA 19026
pastor@dhum.org

1/31- Gardia Daniels
102 Lafayette Ave
Darby, PA 19023
danielscurtis910@yahoo.com



Are you new to our church and/or looking for an opportunity to serve, meet people and make DHUMC a better place? There are many ways to participate. If you are crafty, maybe you could decorate a bulletin board or work on door wreaths or holiday altar decorations. You could help with the after-church coffee social. Delivering flowers to a member can brighten someone's day. Maybe we could add you to our communion guild. You could be a substitute for the counting team. If you would like to plan or work on a social event, that would be much appreciated by all. You could send cards to shut-ins. How about filling in as an usher? If you see yourself helping in other ways, don't hesitate to ask. **See the list of opportunities below...**

Get Involved!

Worship is a blessing. Our Drexel Hill United Methodist Church is so much more! Are you looking for a way to serve through our congregation? Here is a list you might consider:

Activity:

Delivering altar flowers
Ushering
Singing in the choir
Community Outreach
Addressing Gun Violence

Maintenance of the building
Gardening
Media/digital/newsletter
Membership Committee

Contact:

Sally Mullin	sallyannemullin@gmail.com
Charles Webb	chuckster242@comcast.net
Dan Matarazzo	dmatarazzo90@gmail.com
Helen Campbell	giveemhelen@aol.com
Keith Chase &	keithmchase@gmail.com
Dave O'Connell	docnea@verizon.net
Alex Mullin	acmullinv@gmail.com
Barb O'Connell	<u>texmomoc@verizon.net</u>
Diane Volpe	office@dhum.org
Jane Todd	janedt@verizon.net

Please contact Pastor Atkinson at 610.259.2104 and he will get you in touch with a leader in your area of interest.