

# Opus Christi Works of Christ

**St. James United Methodist Church**  
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**Building Christian Community Within and Beyond the Church**

BLESS US  
in this new year, Lord.



My future is in  
**YOUR  
HANDS.**  
PSALM 31:15, NLT



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## Pastor's Message

“Pray, then, in this way:  
Our Father in heaven,  
may your name be revered as holy.  
May your kingdom come.  
May your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And do not bring us to the time of trial,  
but rescue us from the evil one.”

Matthew 6:9-13

A few weeks ago, our administrative assistant/Sunday School director/all around amazing human, Robin House, noticed that during Communion the children did not really know The Lord's Prayer as we were praying it in worship. She decided in the new year that it would be a good thing to teach our children, so she found a beautiful children's book on The Lord's Prayer written by Rev. Adam Hamilton (a UMC pastor and author). When Robin told me this story, I thought “what a perfect opportunity for ALL of us to learn the Lord's Prayer!” So we found a worship series and book study for adults also written by Rev. Adam Hamilton that we will follow along with up until the season of Lent.

Now you may be saying to yourself, “but Pastor Annie, I already know the Lord's Prayer by heart!” To which I would respond, “of course you do! BUT do you really KNOW what you are praying when you recite the words from memory? Do you FEEL the prayer in your heart every time as you lift it up to God?” Answering for myself, I would say “not always.” When things like prayers become such an ingrained part of our faith and religious rituals, they often lose meaning for us because we don't actually process what we are saying anymore.

I would invite you in this new year, to make a new commitment to The Lord's Prayer as we engage with it over a 6-week worship series and book study. Bring a child-like wonder to the prayer along with our children who will also be learning it. Try praying it daily (if you don't already), but don't just say the words to say them; spend time with this prayer and really mean it and know it and feel it. The New Year is a great time to reassess our practices and habits, faith included! So join us for worship on Sundays this season to unpack The Lord's Prayer, and learn even more through our weekly virtual book study on Wednesday nights at 7pm on Zoom. Books are available in the church office for purchase (\$17; or talk with Pastor Annie if you need help with funding). May this new year fill you with the daily bread you need. Amen.

Pastor Annie

## WORSHIP

### Thank You from Pastor Annie



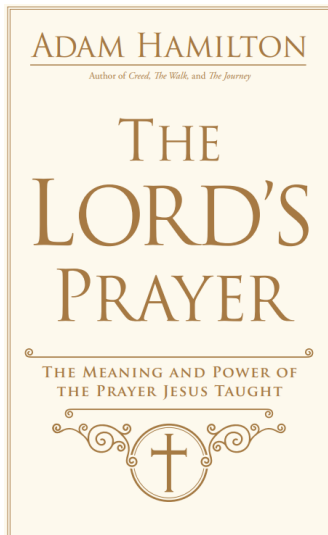
I would like to thank the St. James congregation for your generosity of my Christmas gift. Our family truly appreciates the love and we are so grateful to be here in Merrimack with you all.

Pastor Annie

### Pastor's Vacation

Pastor Annie will be on vacation from December 25 to January 6. Call Rev. Gary Ponder-Williams at 816-896-4992 for pastoral emergencies from December 25 – December 31 and Rev. John Whitley at 603-673-7861 between January 1 and January 6. December 31 worship will be led by ministry candidate Jeffrey Hipp.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



### Book Study: *The Lord's Prayer* by Adam Hamilton

Wednesdays January 10, 17, 24, 31, and February 7

In *The Lord's Prayer: The Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught*, pastor and bestselling author Adam Hamilton guides us to really know—and really pray—the Lord's Prayer. He explores each of its rich lines and their meaning in the Bible, illuminating what we ask of God and what we ask of ourselves through its words. And he teaches us how to use it as a pattern for our own prayer life. Books are available in the church office for \$17. Contact the church office or sign up on the bulletin board in the office hallway so we can send you the Zoom invitation for the discussion.

### Sunday School News

Submitted by Robin House

The St. James Sunday School will also be focusing on the Lord's Prayer starting in January. The adult book study mentioned above includes a Children's Leader Guide with session plans for children including games, activities, and craft ideas to help them learn and understand the Lord's Prayer as the prayer Jesus taught us to pray.

### ?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

In the book of Judges, the warrior Barak would go to battle only if a certain female leader went with him. Who was she?

- A. Rebekah
- B. Jael
- C. Michal
- D. Deborah



Answer: D (See Judges 4:1-10.)

## NEWS FROM COMMITTEES AND TEAMS



### **Church Work Day**

**Saturday, January 6 from 9 am to noon.**

Submitted by Dick Wallace

Church work days are a great way to give a helping hand and enjoy spending time with your friends from church. We will be doing general cleaning and some painting. No experience or special skills needed.

### **Church Council News**

The church council is the group of committee chairpersons and ministry team leaders that meets once per month to report on what each committee and team is working on and to vote on decisions that need to be made.

Bob Hurle is stepping down as Church Council chairperson. We would like to thank Bob for his many years of dedicated service to the church in this position and various other ways he has served St. James over the years. We would also like to thank Sam Doolan who is stepping down from his Member at Large position on Church Council and, like Bob, has served the church for many years in various ways.

We look forward to having Gwen Murray as our next Church Council chairperson. Our next meeting is January 9, 2024, and will continue to meet on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 pm.

### **Your Donations Made a Difference in 2023**

Submitted by Lesley Fallu

Your special donations made a difference at St. James. Take a look at the great things that were done:

- St. James sponsored two campers for Wanakee from special donations to the Youth Ministry Fund along with money from the Barbara Jenkins Memorial Fund and an anonymous donation.
- We replaced the pastor's computer with money from the Barbara Jenkins Memorial Fund.
- The new railing in the middle of the stairs in the office wing was partially funded by the Beth Cox Memorial Fund.
- Donations from 8 members allowed us to replace the flooring in the office wing hallway.
- The fence around the playground was replaced with donations and a nice discount from On the Fence, LLC, whose owner was baptized here at St. James.

Thank you to everyone for these designated donations, above and beyond what we can fund with our budget!

## OUTREACH



### Holiday Closures for Food Pantry and Clothes Closet

The Merrimack Community Food Pantry and Clothes Closet will be closed January 2 in observance of New Year's Day.

### Outreach Team News

Submitted by Team Leader Chris Kiss

The Outreach Team would like to thank everyone for their donations of hats and mittens. The local schools that received them were very appreciative.

We also thank everyone who donated gift cards to our giving tree. The cards were distributed to food pantry clients along with toys and gift items in the Food Pantry "Holiday Shoppe" on December 19.



In celebration of Valentine's Day, a time of year when much of the holiday food pantry donations have been depleted, the Outreach Team is providing you the opportunity to honor loved ones by making a monetary donation to the food pantry. Your name and that of your loved ones will be included in the bulletin on a special insert on Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>.

Place your donation with this form in the offering plate during Sunday worship or mail it to St. James UMC, P.O. Box 895, Merrimack, NH 03054 no later than 2/4/24. Make your check payable to Merrimack Community Food Pantry with "Valentine FP gift" in the notation section. Please include the following information with your donation:

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





## Thank you from Operation Care for Troops

Submitted by Louise Yeaton

Dear friends of OCT,

Many thanks for your efforts to send special handiwork to our troops this 2023 Holiday season. The scarves, helmets, and ear warmers you created are great to look at and also to keep them warm and comfortable. The shipment was to 1500 troops this fall.

Blessings to all,  
Louise Yeaton

## FELLOWSHIP



### Monthly Breakfast

The St. James United Methodist Men (UMM) would love to have you join them for breakfast on the first Saturday of every month. RSVP to George Fisher at [fishergf@comcast.net](mailto:fishergf@comcast.net) so he knows how many people to expect.

Date: Saturday, January 6

Time: 8:00 am

Place: Mary Ann's Diner, 1 Craftsman Lane, Amherst



### Heaven Sent Meals Fundraiser

Submitted by Linda Wilson

Heaven Sent Meals is a great way to stock your freezers for those nights when you don't feel like cooking. Sign up to purchase meals after church on January 7, 14 and 21. They will be available to purchase for \$12 each.

If you have signed up to make meals, pans are available in the church office. Meals should serve 2-3 people. Please bring them to church on or before January 28, which is pick-up day.

## Santa Was Here!

Santa Claus made two appearances at St. James Church in December - Carols, Cookies and Claus on December 10 and Breakfast with Santa on December 16. Children young and old had a wonderful time at both events. Thank you to Pastor Annie and the Nurture Team for organizing the Carols and Cookies free event and to Brenda DuLong for organizing the Breakfast with Santa fundraiser.



Breakfast photos by Brenda DuLong



Carols Cookies & Claus photos by Kyle Sanborn



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



St. James will host a blood drive on  
Wednesday, January 17, 2024 from 12:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [RedcrossBlood.org](https://RedcrossBlood.org) and enter: SAINTJAMES to schedule an appointment. Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

Maximize your blood donation. Help more patients. If you are an eligible type O, B- or A- donor, consider making a Power Red donation. Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component.

Everyone who gives blood between January 1-31 will automatically be entered for a chance to win a trip for you and a guest to Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas. Includes travel, hotel, \$1,000 gift card, pre-game activities and more.



### **Bridges 9th Annual Love is in the Air Gala & Auction**

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

**Sky meadow Country Club, 6 Mountain Laurels Dr. Nashua, NH**

Love is in the Air is a fabulous fundraising event with live and silent auctions, dinner, dancing, and revelry that combine for a can't miss night out. The theme of the event is meant to celebrate healthy relationships and the joy and freedom to live without abuse.

#### **Purchase your Tickets, Tables, & Balloons:**

General Admission \$150 per person. You can also show your support by purchasing balloons or a golden ticket for the chance to win fabulous prizes such as your choice of live auction items, sports memorabilia, and jewelry valued over \$4,500. To learn more and to purchase tickets, visit [tinyurl.com/LoveisintheAir2024](https://tinyurl.com/LoveisintheAir2024).





Join us each month for an informational/conversational event for older adults in the Greater Nashua area. Presenters include agencies that support older adults and organizations that offer opportunities where volunteers can make a difference in their communities.

**Next Coffee & Causes:**

## Getting Back Into Exercise

Elrikur Holt, Director of Healthy Living at the YMCA of Greater Nashua, will discuss ways older adults can live healthier lives through exercise and getting involved, and how to get started if it's been a while since fitness was a part of your life. Learn how senior-focused group exercise classes benefit older adults, as well as evidenced-based programming for chronic health conditions such as Diabetes Prevention, Parkinson's, Arthritis, and Osteoporosis can make a difference. With a focus on mental health, the Y's Wellbeing Center offers meditation classes and various support groups. In addition to the mind and body, learn how social events offered at the Y can help everyone be more connected to their community. Come and learn how exercise can help you live your best life in 2024!

The Hannaford Dietician will also be on hand to share information about the free in-store dietary counseling they offer. In addition to one-on-one counseling, Hannaford offers free workshops, and many other services that can help you achieve all your health goals.



**Friday, January 5, 2024**

**Nashua YMCA / 24 Stadium Dr. / 10:30am-12noon**

Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/Jan-Coffee>

For more information contact United Way at [info@unitedwaynashua.org](mailto:info@unitedwaynashua.org) or call (603) 882-4011





January 2024



**New England Conference**  
The United Methodist Church

Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at [www.neumc.org](http://www.neumc.org).

## Online training for SPRCs

Join Bishop Peggy A. Johnson and District Superintendents Rev. Jill Colley Robinson and Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan for an online training for members of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) from 7-8:30 pm Jan. 17, 2024.

Some topics will include:

- Roles/duties of the SPRC
- Keys for effective and healthy SPRC ministry
- Creating a monthly SPRC ministry calendar
- Resources for staff-parish relations

We'll talk about all this and more. You will be able to submit your questions and possible topics in advance of the training when you register.

This training is part of the annual series offered by the NEAC for local church leaders. The session will be recorded.

Register at [www.neumc.org/events](http://www.neumc.org/events)



## Bishop's 2024 Days on the Districts



Bishop Peggy A. Johnson and members of the General/Jurisdictional Conference Delegations will visit each district to share information as we begin this important year in the life of the New England Conference and The UMC.

Lay and clergy are urged to attend one of these events to learn about proposed plans for the New England Conference and for the denomination. The General/Jurisdictional Conference delegation will offer its report.

You are invited to attend any event that is convenient. Each Saturday event will begin at 1 pm and be followed by a light reception.

At 11 am at each location Bishop Johnson will be available to speak to those interested in lay or clergy ministry.

### Schedule

**Feb. 3** – Green Mountain – Shelburne UMC

**Feb. 10** – Seacoast – Hazardville UMC

**Feb. 17** – Commonwealth West – St. Matthew's UMC Acton, MA

**Feb. 24** – Commonwealth East – Holy Trinity UMC, Danvers, MA

**March 2** – Granite – First UMC, Gilford, NH

**March 9** – Katahdin – Columbia Falls UMC

**March 16** – Many Waters – Brunswick UMC

All events will be in person, but there will be virtual options. In case of inclement weather, the event will be held exclusively online via Zoom. Information about such plans will be disseminated closer to the time.



GET DETAILS AND MUCH MORE ON OUR WEBSITE  
[www.neumc.org](http://www.neumc.org)



## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

# Join Bishop for webinar Jan. 25

Join Bishop Peggy A. Johnson and members of the NEAC Committee on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships to pray for Christian Unity during a webinar beginning at 7 pm on Thursday, Jan. 25.

Guest speaker will be our very own Clare J. Chapman, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services.



cerns. An attorney, she was also the Deputy General Secretary and General Counsel for the National Council of Churches.

**Bishop urges NEAC to take part in Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** — This event will come at the conclusion of the 2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25). [www.geil.org](http://www.geil.org)

Bishop Johnson encourages all NEAC clergy and laity to take this time to be in prayer and solidarity with other Christians from around the world. This year's theme is from Luke 10:27: "You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself."

Clare has served as Associate General Secretary for the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Con-

No registration required.  
Get the webinar link at [neumc.org/events](http://neumc.org/events)

## Special Sunday

### Human Relations Day is Jan. 14

The Human Relations Day offering supports social justice and outreach ministries that empower all God's children to realize their full potential as human beings in relationship with one another.

This fund helps encourage that potential through ministries like the Community Developers Program, multiethnic ministries, and countless other projects across the United Methodist connection. These funds are administered by Global Ministries in collaboration with the General Board of Church & Society. Learn more at [www.resourceumc.org](http://www.resourceumc.org)



### cross currents



cross currents  
quarterly  
helping  
ideas and resources  
flow across the NEAC

Produced by the Conference Communications Team

### Check out cross currents

#### December 2023: How does that work?

This issue of the online magazine produced by the NEAC Communications Team answers the question "how does that work?" for topics from calculating Mission Shares to General Conference.

[neumc.org/crosscurrents](http://neumc.org/crosscurrents)

### Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at [communicate@neumc.org](mailto:communicate@neumc.org) or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150



Geodes look plain on the outside but contain beautiful crystals. Create these "rocks" to show how God makes us new on the inside.

### What you need:

- Clean cardboard egg carton
- Scissors (and adult help)
- Epsom salt
- Plastic zippered bags (one per color of dye)
- Food coloring
- Glue
- Paintbrush



### What you do:

1. Cut out the tops and bottoms of all the egg compartments so you can make 6 ball shapes.
2. In each bag, put 3 tablespoons of Epsom salt and a drop or two of food coloring. Seal and shake to mix.
3. With the paintbrush, spread glue inside two egg-carton halves. Sprinkle a spoonful of Epsom salt into those halves. Then close and shake.
4. Open your homemade geode and shake out excess salt.
5. Optional: Preserve the crystals with a coat of clear-drying glue.



# HAPPY NEW YOU!

Changing the calendar each January is a reminder that God makes all things new.

*Directions: Use the clues and the calendar code to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV.*

## JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
	God	night	word	in	love	Jesus
7	glory	therefore	speak	give	light	Christ
14	saw	beginning	anyone	waters	help	is
21	he	again	through	earth	made	while
28	new	if	and	creation		

The second Monday \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

The last Monday \_ \_

The 16th \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

One day before the 20th \_ \_

The day before the first Friday \_ \_

The last weekday of the second week \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

The day after the 20th \_ \_

The day after 18th \_ \_

The first day of the second weekend \_

The last Sunday \_ \_ \_

The last day of the month \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Answers: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.





# JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> Pastor Vacation 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	<b>1</b> Pastor Vacation	<b>2</b> Pastor Vacation 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet closed for holiday 9:30am Food Pantry closed for holiday 7:00pm Finance Committee Meeting	<b>3</b> Pastor Vacation	<b>4</b> Pastor Vacation 8:00am Fit & Strong	<b>5</b> Pastor Vacation 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>6</b> Pastor Vacation 8:00am Monthly Breakfast 9:00am Church Work Day
<b>7</b> 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 6:30pm Church Council Meeting	<b>10</b> 7:00pm Lord's Prayer book study	<b>11</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong	<b>12</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 7:00pm SPRC Meeting	<b>17</b> 12:00pm Red Cross Blood Drive 7:00pm Lord's Prayer book study	<b>18</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 1:00pm Dress sewing group	<b>19</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:30am Worship 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry 6:30pm Trustees Meeting	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Lord's Prayer book study	<b>25</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 7:00pm Christian Unity Webinar <a href="http://neumc.org/events">neumc.org/events</a>	<b>26</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:30am Worship 10:30am Pick up Heaven Sent Meals 5:30pm NH Table Tennis Club	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong 9:00am Clothes Closet 9:30am Food Pantry	<b>31</b> 7:00pm Lord's Prayer book study	<b>1</b> 8:00am Fit & Strong	<b>2</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>3</b> 8:00am Monthly Breakfast