



# The Courier

Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2024

## Worship

November 10<sup>th</sup>  
Twenty-fifth Sunday  
after Pentecost

November 17<sup>th</sup>  
Twenty-sixth Sunday  
after Pentecost

November 24<sup>th</sup>  
Twenty-seventh Sun-  
day after Pentecost  
Ingathering Sunday  
Interfaith Service,  
6 P.M., Temple Beth  
Shalom

December 1<sup>st</sup>  
First Sunday of  
Advent

December 8<sup>th</sup>  
Second Sunday of  
Advent  
Hanging of the Greens



Dear Friends,

We head into the time of year when we focus on giving. We plan out what we might give to each other during the Christmas season, and we look forward to the joy that comes with it. Before that we share food with each other at Thanksgiv- ing, celebrating what it means to put on a feast. Along with this we give to our neighbors, trying to make sure that those who are with- out can celebrate in this feast as well. The weather begins to get cold and we are reminded that there are many without shelter who need provisions during our winters in the Northeast! So we give to make this happen as well, whether by sup- porting homeless shelters, or providing winter clothing, scarves, and socks.

I'm reminded of how important this time is to us. We give out of needs that we see in others, but we also give out of our own need to connect and to know that we have made a difference in the lives of others. Deep down we have a need to give. At this time of year, I'm reminded of the early church, which is de- scribed in the Book of Acts as pool- ing their resources "so that there was not a needy person among them". It was so important that the

*continued*

## Worship

December 15<sup>th</sup>  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Music Sunday

December 19<sup>th</sup>  
Blue Christmas  
7:00 P.M. A time of  
solace and comfort for  
anyone looking for a  
respite.

December 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Fourth Sunday of  
Advent  
Christmas Pageant

December 24<sup>th</sup>  
Christmas Eve  
All ages service at  
5:00 P.M. Candlelight,  
lessons and carols

December 29<sup>th</sup>  
First Sunday after  
Christmas



author of Acts described it twice (in chapters 2 and 4). It's deep in the DNA of who we are as Christians that we give to one another when we have need.

I'm humbled to see the ways that our church supports other people. Service and Outreach activities are ramping up this month to provide for others. We provide for the community in a way that outdoes the size of our congregation. I'm seeing the many ways that people have given their time to the Fall Fair, to make this a great event for the community and for our church, and to fund-raise toward our mission. I see the ways the people reach out to each other and support one another when there are tough times in another church member's lives. I'm grateful for these many ways of giving and the care that our members have for others. This is something that I'm grateful for as we celebrate Thanksgiving and it's something that will inspire my giving during the Christmas season. May we all be a part of this giving and care in months ahead.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Chris

## **WARRANT FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

To the Legal Voters of the Melrose Highlands Congregational Church You are hereby notified, in accordance with Article 6, Section 4 of the By-Laws. that the Fall Congregational Meeting of the Melrose Highlands Congregational Church will be held on Sunday, November 24, 2024, AFTER WORSHIP, in FELLOWSHIP HALL .

1. To hear a financial update.
2. To get updates on recent and upcoming fundraisers.
3. To hear updates from various teams as appropriate.
4. To transact any other business that legally must be brought before the meeting

Maggie Sheets  
Clerk

November 5, 2024

## From the Desk of the Moderator

I think it's high time I gave a shout-out to one of MHCC's most enthusiastic champions: **Val Bowden!** Week after week, month after month, year after year, she pours her entire self into whatever she's doing to support our church community. (Just ask the kids!) And no one in my memory has done more to keep the Fall Fair alive and thriving than Val. Every autumn, she devotes countless hours to this, our second biggest fundraiser of the year -- which is no small feat. Think of all those moving parts: Timeless Treasures, Silent Auction, baked goods, raffle baskets, Christmas Room, BEER + BITES ticket sales, lunch!

Make no mistake, a successful Fair can only happen if a strong TEAM of hardworking, well-caffeinated folks pull together and get it done. And kudos to everyone who pitches in. But over the years, Val's infectious enthusiasm for the event has (in my mind, at least) resulted in her earning the title of Fair Ambassador\*. And I propose that we show her our gratitude by jumping in and doing what it takes to make this the best Fair ever!

How?

First, SAVE THE DATE! If you haven't already done so, please mark your calendars for November 16th (9 a.m. - 2 p.m.) and tell all of your friends and neighbors. And if you're free on the 13th, 14th, or 15th, come down to the church and help with setup!

Second, think about what items you could donate for the Silent Auction and/or the Raffle. (There are Raffle baskets that need finishing, so you don't have to create an entire one yourself!) Are you a great cook? You could offer a dinner for 4 (or 2 or 6) as a Silent Auction item. Do you have some beautiful, unused gifts that "just aren't you"? Donate them for the Silent Auction! Could you donate one event from your season tickets to the Bruins? Celtics? Patriots (big ask, I know)? Did you somehow end up with too much wine? Donate a couple of bottles along with some cheese, crackers, and nuts for a great Raffle basket.

Third, head down to your basement (or up to your attic), dig out your Timeless Treasures, and bring them to the church. TT is always a key element of the Fair and a huge source of revenue. (Note that TT donations need to be in very-good-to-excellent condition.)

Find your calling! Reach out to one of the team members and find out what you can do to help out.

I guarantee you won't be bored. And if Val's involved, I guarantee it'll be fun.

Big thanks to Val, and to everyone who supports the Fair!

Warmly,  
John Swanson

\*Val being Val, she would argue that Brad H. is actually the Fair Ambassador, and she would want me to thank each individual who is helping out. Time and space preclude me from doing that, but needless to say, THANK YOU ALL!

## Service and Outreach



### Bread of Life Dinner

The next date for our church to provide dinner for the Bread of Life Feeding Ministry in Malden is Wednesday, December 18. The Senior and Junior High Youth Groups will be preparing this dinner. Watch the MHCC enews for information on any help they might need with advance preparations.

### Thank You! to our Bread of Life Dinner Sponsors

Since April of this year, we have had multiple donors helping to keep our Bread of Life (BOL) dinner program going. We are very grateful to John Egan, Anne Carlson Moore, Heather McSween, Val Bowden, Ray Delano, and Devon Winey.

If you would like to support our BOL dinners, please donate by check to MHCC (be sure to mark the memo line on your check "Bread of Life") or through the MHCC website, here:

<https://app.easytithe.com/App/Giving/melr355300>

If you have any questions about the Bread of Life meal program, please contact Anne Gilbert at 781-367-9508 or [annegilbert45@comcast.net](mailto:annegilbert45@comcast.net).

MHCC Service and Outreach Team

### The Christmas Fund Collection



The Christmas Fund provides financial aid to retired and active ministers and their surviving spouses who face overwhelming financial demands. This year we will be collecting for the Christmas Fund at the Christmas Eve Service.

If you would like to contribute on line, you can do so via MHCC's website (click on "Donate/Pledge Payments to MHCC") or use the QR code. Be sure to choose the "Christmas Fund Collection" option. You can also send a check to the church with a note in the memo section that the donation is for Christmas Fund.



SCAN ME

## Service and Outreach Continued

### Savers FUNdrive

In conjunction with our Fall Fair, we are also running a Savers FUNdrive, to collect clothing and household textiles. We will deliver these to Savers along with any Timeless Treasures that do not sell at the Fair. Please ask your family, friends, and neighbors to donate, too!

For the FUNdrive, we Are collecting :

**Clothes** (men's, women's, & children's clothes, coats, shoes, scarves, handbags, wallets, fashion accessories, belts, backpacks, etc.)

**Household Textiles** (bedding, comforters, blankets, sheets, towels, linen, tablecloths, curtains, pillows, etc.)

Please use 13 gallon or 30/33 gallon bags for clothes and textiles. If you use the larger bags, please don't make them too heavy. All items must be clean and in sellable condition.

If you happen to have some books (NO encyclopedias or textbooks, please) that don't fit in your neighborhood Little Free Library, you can donate those to our Savers FUNdrive, too. Books should be donated in boxes with lids (i.e., no open boxes, please).

Collection dates:

Sunday, November 10 and Sunday, November 17, 9:30 am – 10 am and 11:15 am – 12 pm

If you need an pick-up or have questions, please contact Anne Gilbert, 781-367-9508, [annegilbert45@comcast.net](mailto:annegilbert45@comcast.net). Thank you for your participation!

## Service and Outreach Continued



HELP STOCK THE SHELVES!!! For our Gathering Service on November 24th, please consider bringing items from the list below. A Servant's Heart Food Pantry is helping the community of Melrose by distributing a bag of groceries each week to 70+ individuals and families. The items below will help keep their shelves stocked as we approach the winter months. Please join the Service and Outreach team in this very important effort!

**(All Items – standard sizes are preferred, no extra-large or mini sizes, please)**

- Cooking oil
- Jelly
- Spaghetti sauce—jar or can
- Mayo
- Canned chicken
- Cookies
- Crackers Townhouse/Ritz
- Snack pack pudding
- Snack pack fruit cups
- Spam
- Instant hot cereal
- Popcorn
- Peanuts in jars
- Cereal—Special K, Wheat or Rich Chex, Life, Cheerios
- Knorr rice or pasta sides

### **Non-Edible Items**

- Dish detergent
- Laundry detergent
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Shampoo
- Hand soap



## Service and Outreach Continued

### The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree program provides gifts to local underprivileged children and teens for Christmas, as well as gift cards for the family.

If you choose to buy a gift, we ask that you bring the **unwrapped** gift(s) to church on **Sunday, December 8th**, marked with the gift number. If possible, please provide a gift bag or wrapping paper for your gift.

There are many ways that you can support The Giving Tree:

1. On Sunday, November 17th, The Giving Tree will be up in Fellowship Hall after worship. Stop by to choose an ornament to provide a gift for a child or teen, or a gift card for a family in need.
2. Beginning November 17th, you can access the list of gift requests online through SignUpGenius. Watch the eNews for details.
3. Donate to the **“Gift Cards–Giving Tree”** option on the church website (hover over “Serve the Church” then click on “Donate/Pledge Payments to MHCC” in the dropdown) or use the QR code below.
4. Donate to the **“Teens in Need”** option on the church website. All donations to this fund will go to buying gifts for local teens. See #3 for how to locate the donation page or use the same QR code below.



Note: For options #3 and #4, you can send a check to the church (or drop it in the offering plate) with a note on the memo line, instead of donating online. Use “Giving Tree” for gift card donations; use “Teens in Need” for donations to teen gifts.

If you have any questions about the Giving Tree, please contact Kate Fazio at 617-734-8167 or [k.fazio@yahoo.com](mailto:k.fazio@yahoo.com).

**Thank you for helping to make the holidays a little brighter for those in need this holiday season!**

## Mark Your Calendars!



Our 12 Days of Christmas Raffle Calendar returns! Calendars are \$10 for 12 chances to win 12 days of drawings valued at \$900 in local and national gift card prizes!

They will be sold starting on 11/16 at the Fall Fair, then during Fellowship, and online through 12/15. Our "Be the light of the world" theme and cover design by our church kids makes for a great gift option to show you care - to the person who already has everything, service professionals etc.

Please contact Michelle Tallman if you have any questions at [michelle-tallman@hotmail.com](mailto:michelle-tallman@hotmail.com) or 781 864-7551.



## Lunch Bunch

Please join us for lunch on Wednesday, November 20th at 12:30 at Mexico Lindo, 449 Main St., Melrose. RSVP to Diane Bucknill at 339-927-5493. All are welcome





### ***“...If You Cheese” a Contest Sponsored by Val Bowden***

We are a church who LOVES our Wisconsin Cheddar available each year at the Highlands Fall Fair. Brad Hutchinson has been doing business with the cheese man since as far back as 1975 (great year – but I’m biased!). And for many years – this product has been a staple at our event. You have to get to the Fair early though – b/c it will sell out. And once it is gone – it is gone.

This year – I want to see us here at MHCC show off just how we use our “church cheese.” Send me your photos, your recipes, etc. I will review the submissions and award our winners on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. There may be more than one winner based upon submissions. This contest is open to ALL ages.

Please send your submissions no later than **December 14<sup>th</sup>** to: [office@mhcc-ucc.org](mailto:office@mhcc-ucc.org) with CHEESE in the subject line.

Did I mention – there will be prizes?

Thank you,

Val Bowden  
Fall Fair Co-Chair 2024  
Interim Sunday School Coordinator  
Cheese Lover



***Please join us in praying for God's comfort and guidance in their lives and this world, as well as for all those whom you know need God's love and caring.***

*Please call or email the church office to add a name to our prayer list.*

Nancy Chappel  
Christyne Cheney Daley  
Mary Edwards  
Mary Steele Hartung  
Laurie Lowman  
Lois Mackey  
Jack MacLeod  
Marcia McCarthy  
Jill Steeper  
Rachel Steeper  
Carol Trout  
Ana & Andy Wescott  
The Andrews Family

Our Sunshine List: *Please send cards, visit and hold in your prayers.*

Barbara Kenworthy, The Fitch Home, 75 Lake St., Melrose, MA 02176  
Charlotte Swan, Greenwood Nursing & Rehab Center, 90 Greenwood St.,  
Wakefield, MA 01880  
Beverly and Michael Harrison, Steele House, One Nason Ave., Apt. 514  
Melrose, MA 02176  
Judy McSween, 57 Nowell Rd., Melrose, MA 02176



**Share the season of joy at 10 a.m. in person at MHCC on Sundays or via livestream at [www.mhcc-ucc.org](http://www.mhcc-ucc.org)**

- 11/24 **Ingathering Thanksgiving Service**  
We collect food for A Servant's Heart Food Pantry.
- Interfaith Service 6 p.m., Temple Beth Shalom,**  
21 East Foster St., Pastor Chris preaching
- 12/1 **First Sunday of Advent - Holy Communion**
- 12/8 **Second Sunday of Advent - Hanging of the Greens**  
We all help decorate the Sanctuary during service and assemble hygiene kits for the Church World Service.
- 12/15 **Third Sunday of Advent - Music Sunday**  
Choirs share joyful music of the season.
- 12/19 **Blue Christmas 7:00 p.m.**  
A time of solace and comfort for anyone looking for a respite.
- 12/22 **Fourth Sunday of Advent - Christmas Pageant**  
No scripts! No rehearsal! Everyone invited to join the fun!
- 12/24 **Christmas Eve Family Service 5:00 p.m.**  
Candlelight, lessons and carols!
- 12/29 **First Sunday after Christmas**

# November, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				7pm Choir		2pm SYG Kitchen
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10am Worship		12 noon Bible Study	Fair Set Up	Fair Set Up	Fair Set Up	Fair Fair! 9 am – 2 pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10am Worship		12 noon Bible Study	7 pm Finance Team			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10 am Worship Ingathering 6pm Interfaith Service, Temple Beth Shalom		12 noon Bible Study				

# December, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10am Worship First Sunday of Advent	7pm EC Meeting	12 noon Bible Study		7 pm Choir	5:30 pm Pack 615 meeting	9am Home for the Holidays
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10 am Worship Second Sunday of Advent, Hang- ing of the Greens		12 noon Bible Study				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10am Worship Third Sunday of Advent, Music Sunday		12 noon Bible Study	3:30 pm SYG, BOL  7pm Finance Team	7pm Blue Christmas	6pm SYG Movie Night	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10 am Worship Fourth Sunday of Advent, Christ- mas Pageant	7:30 pm Service & Outreach	12 noon Bible Study  5pm Christmas Eve Family Ser- vice				
29						
10 am Worship						