



December Worship Schedule

1/5 10:00am Communion Service
1/12, 1/19, 1/26,
8:45am Contemporary Service
1/12, 1/19, 1/26,
11:00am Traditional Service



Church COVID Policy

Masks are optional. Social distancing is still recommended.
Masks, COVID test kits, and hand sanitizer are available.

January 2025

Mission Statement
The mission of Sandy Mount UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World. (Matthew 22:37-39; 28:19-20)

Church Staff
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robert E. Walker, Jr.
Organist: Connie Clarke
Praise Team Leader: Tapiwa Chakanaka
Office Administrator: Rebecca Earle
Custodian: Kathy Branson

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January 2025



THE VINE

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The Vine January 2025

Message from the Pastor



THE MEANING OF THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

The 12 days of Christmas in Christian tradition signifies the time between the birth of Christ and the arrival of the [three wise men](#), also known as the Magi. It starts on December 25, which is celebrated as [Christmas Day](#), and lasts until January 6, which is the [Epiphany](#), also referred to as [Three Kings' Day](#).

The Twelve Days of Christmas 2024 will begin on Wednesday, December 25, and end on Sunday, January 5, 2025.

What Is the Meaning of 'The 12 Days of Christmas'?

The Twelve Days of Christmas, also known as Twelve tide, is a festive Christian season celebrating the Birth of Jesus. In 567, the Council of Tours "proclaimed the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany as a sacred and festive season, and established the duty of Advent fasting in preparation for the feast." Christopher Hill and William J. Federer state that this was done to solve the "administrative problem for the Roman Empire as it tried to coordinate the solar Julian calendar with the lunar calendars of its provinces in the east."

Why were these 12 days important?

These dozen days were tied to more than just the teaching of the Catholic Church. A host of other denominations also celebrated the 12 days of Christmas. Some denominations celebrated Christmas in January and began to count the 12 days then. But when they began, counting the days became an important facet of each holiday season. Even in the Dark Ages, in some Eastern European churches, the 12 days of Christmas meant attending daily church services. For Christians who lived during this extremely difficult age, the 12 days were a time of rededication and renewal. It was also a period when children were given small, simple, and usually symbolic gifts of faith. Thus, the twelve days were considered a holy period in both coded poems and public worship.

'12 Days of Christmas' - Carol History and Origin

"The Twelve Days of Christmas" is an English Christmas carol that lists a group of increasingly superb gifts given on each of the 12 days of Christmas (the 12 days that make up the Christmas season, starting with Christmas Day). The song, published in England in 1780 without music as a chant or rhyme, is thought to be French in origin. The melodies of collected versions of the carol vary throughout history. The standard tune now associated with it is derived from a 1909 arrangement of a traditional folk melody by English composer Frederic Austin, who introduced the familiar prolongation of the verse "five gold rings" (now usually called "five golden rings").

Though a host of modern internet sites and some magazine articles have tried to reduce "The Twelve Days of Christmas" to a little more than a silly Christmas carol, most scholars of the Catholic Church deem it a very important surviving example of a time when that denomination used codes to disguise their teachings. Originally a poem written by Catholic clerics, this song was transformed into a carol at a time when celebrating the 12 days of Christmas was one of the most important holiday customs. By understanding the meaning of why the clerics chose the 12 days as wrapping for their poem, the full impact of the tradition of the 12 days of Christmas can be understood.

Meaning of Each Gift in the '12 Days of Christmas'

Discover the meaning of the gift for each of the 12 days of Christmas that relate to the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

1. A Partridge in a Pear Tree

The partridge in a pear tree represents Jesus, the Son of God, whose birthday we celebrate on the first day of Christmas. Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge, the only bird that will die to protect its young.

2. Two Turtledoves

These twin birds represent the Old and New Testaments. So, in this gift, the singer finds the complete story of the Christian faith and God's plan for the world. The doves are the biblical roadmap that is available to everyone.

3. Three French Hens

These birds represent faith, hope, and love. This gift hearkens back to [1 Corinthians 13](#), the love chapter written by the Apostle Paul. It also represents the [Holy Trinity](#): The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

4. Four Calling Birds

One of the easiest facets of the song's code to figure out these fowl are the four Gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Continue on Page 3 & 4



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 (Office Closed)	2 4:00-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm- Praise Team Rehearsal	3	4
5 10:00—Communion Service	6	7 7:00pm- Finance Committee Meeting	8 7:00pm- Wednesday Nights at the Church	9 4:00-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm- Praise Team Rehearsal	10	11
12 8:45- Praise Service 10:00-Children's Sunday School 10:00- In Between Café 11:00- Traditional Service	13	14 7:00pm—Administrative Counsel Meeting	15 7:00pm- Trustees Meeting 7:00pm- Wednesday Nights at the Church	16 5:00pm-Food Giveaway 7:00pm- Praise Team Rehearsal	17	18
19 8:45- Praise Service 10:00-Children's Sunday School 10:00- In Between Café 11:00- Traditional Service	20	21	22 12:00pm- Book Club 7:00pm- Wednesday Nights at the Church	23 9:30—Community Table 4:00-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm- Praise Team Rehearsal	24	25
26 8:45- Praise Service 10:00-Children's Sunday School 10:00- In Between Café 11:00- Traditional Service	27 6:30pm-Music and Worship Meeting	28	29 7:00pm- Wednesday Nights at the Church	30 4:00-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm- Praise Team Rehearsal	31	

Articles due for February VINE

Thanking SMUMC

Dear Sandy Mount,

I cannot begin to thank you enough for the gift card to the Outback. It was a lovely Christmas surprise. I am more than happy to create the worship slides and honestly the greatest reward is when I have someone come up and tell me how much they appreciate them – how they make it easier to follow the service. I love our church, and I love being able to do something that helps. Thank you again.

Kara



Dear Sandymount,

We want to thank you all for the lovely basket of goodies for our Christmas. We certainly will enjoy each and everything in there. We appreciate you thinking of us. God Bless you all and Happy Holidays.

Cap and Jan

January Birthdays

3	14	23
Stephanie Geordt	Dana Mangano	Adam White
4	18	Thomas Poe
Mumford	Dan Davis	26
5	21	Lottie Tiaht
Allison Tesch	Alex Von Gunten	28
11	Mabel Wachter	Ginny Schrider
Malcolm Gerrard	Scott Gill	Isabella Centofanti
13	22	Amber Scobie
Katie McDonough	Jill Centonfanti	21 Riley Morsenberger



Message from the Pastor Continued...

5. Five Gold Rings

The gift of the rings represents the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the [Pentateuch](#).

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers

Deuteronomy

6. Six Geese a-Laying

These lyrics can be traced back to the first story found in the Bible. Each egg is a day in creation when God "hatched" or formed the world.

1. God created the heavens and the earth.
2. God created the sky and seas.
3. God created the land and plants.
4. God created the sun, moon, and stars.
5. God created fish and birds.

God created land animals and man

7. Seven Swans a-Swimming

It would take someone quite familiar with the Bible to identify this gift. Hidden in the code are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit:

1. Prophecy
2. Ministry
3. Teaching
4. Exhortation
5. Giving
6. Leading

Compassion

As swans are one of the most beautiful and graceful creatures on earth, they would seem to be a perfect symbol for spiritual gifts.

8. Eight Maids-a-Milking

As Christ came to save even the lowest of the low, this gift represents the ones who would receive his word and accept his grace. Being a milkmaid was about the worst job one could have in England during this period; this code conveyed that Jesus cared as much about servants as he did those of royal blood. The Eight Maids represent the 8 Beatitudes, from [Matthew 5:3-10](#):

Blessed are...

1. the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Those who mourn for they shall be comforted.
3. The meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.
5. The merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
6. The pure in heart: for they shall see God.
7. The peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God.

They which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

9. Nine Ladies Dancing

These nine dancers were really the gifts known as the fruit of the Spirit. The [Fruits of the Spirit](#) include:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-control

Message from the Pastor Continued...

10. Ten Lords a-leaping

This is the easiest gift to understand. As lords were judges and in charge of the law, this code for the [Ten Com- mandments](#) was fairly straightforward to Christians.

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet

11. Eleven Pipers Piping

This is a trick question, as most think of the disciples in terms of the dozen. But when Judas betrayed Jesus and committed suicide, only eleven men conducted the gospel message. Therefore, the Eleven Pipers Piping signify the 11 Faithful [Disciples](#):

1. Simon (whom He named Peter)
2. Andrew
3. James
4. John
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Matthew
8. Thomas
9. James, son of Alphaeus
10. Simon, who was called the Zealot.
11. Judas, son of James

Judas Iscariot was later replaced with faithful Matthias.

12. Twelve Drummers Drumming

The final gift is tied directly to the Catholic Church. The drummers are the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed.

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
3. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
5. He descended into hell. On the third day, He rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and life everlasting.

Twelve Days of Christmas Carol with Lyrics

Sources

The Twelve Days of Christmas - True Meaning Behind the Lyrics | [Crosswalk.com](#)

Twelve Days of Christmas | [Wikipedia.org](#)

Christmas Potluck & Sing-Along Continued...



Christmas Potluck & Sing-Along



ELECTRONIC SIGN DONATIONS

There were not sufficient funds collected to cover the cost of purchasing and installing an electric sign at Sandy Mount UMC.

The church council has made the decision that an electronic sign is NOT a good financial Return on Investment, at this time, for the use of church funds. We, as a church, are currently in a fiscal crisis and have suspended paying our apportionments to the Baltimore Washington Conference.

The council has recommended the following options for our electronic sign fund donors:

- (1) Donors may request the return of their monies donated to the sign fund.
- (2) Donors may designate their funds for other specific church uses.
- (3) Donors may donate their funds to regular church expenses.

Please complete the form below and return it to the finance committee.

The council thanks all of our church attendees for their continued financial support of the many ministries provided by SMUMC.

God Bless,
SMUMC Council members

Name _____

Amount \$ _____

Check one below:

- 1. Return funds to me. ()
- 2. Use my donation for _____. ()
- 3. Use my donation for church expenses. ()

Signature _____

Service Opportunities

Food Pantry



Please know that we are in **NEED** of donation's for our food pantry. It is important that we keep the food pantry stocked to help those in need in our community. We accept non perishable foods. The drop off area is in the closet across from the church office, or donations can be put directly in the food pantry. You can also make a monetary donation that can be placed in our offering. If you have any questions, please contact the Office Ad-

Country Acres Outreach

We serve the residents by leading craft activities, organizing bingo games, and offering a monthly worship service with singing and a message. Our ministry dates are noted on the calendar in this newsletter.

If you have any questions, contact Audrey Boyle at 240-593-6462.

Please mark your calendar and invite your friends and neighbors!

Clothing & Shoes Donations

If you have any shoes or clothing items to donate, please drop them in the large bin located in our church parking lot. The bin is emptied monthly by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Because of our effort to help their program, they donate \$50 each month to SMUMC.



Many of you have asked for this recipe. Here it is.

Grape Salad

Wash and stem 2 lbs each of green and red seedless grapes. Drain well.

Mix 8 oz sour cream, 8 oz softened cream cheese, 1/2 cup sugar, 1 tsp vanilla.

Top with 1 cup brown sugar mixed with 1 cup chopped nuts.

Let chill before serving. Best if made the night before.

This will fill a 13x9 dish.

Scarlett Fisher





2024 Holiday Bazaar Update

Our numbers are finalized. We grossed a little over \$15,000. After expenses our profit was \$12,856.86. Our tithe of \$1,285.69 has gone to Cat's Closet to help provide clothing for children in need. Thank you all so much for your help with making 2024 another success. Time to start planning for 2025.



FOOD GIVEAWAY



Finksburg

What:

We will be providing meat, dry and canned goods, and more!

When:

3rd Thursday each month from 5-6pm.

Where:

Sandy Mount United Methodist Church:
2101 Old Westminster Pike, Finksburg.

Note:

Distribution is run in a client choice format. Please park in the parking lot, line up for check in. You will then walk through to select foods.

Volunteers will be present to assist loading items into your vehicles. Please bring reusable shopping bags if you have them. Bags will also be provided on site.

In case of inclement weather, we will resume a drive-thru format.



For more information call or text 443.547.8055 or email Mcrull@westminsterrescuemission.org.



Altar Flowers \$50 for 2 vases

Payment Policy: Please put your check along with a note stating the date you are dedicating flowers for the altar. This will clarify where the money is to be credited for the counters.

Flower Dedication: Please let Rebecca know the Monday before the flowers are given. Please leave the dedication form in the Secretary mailbox, email or call.

January 20th is the last day to sign up for February Dedication.

<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>
5 th - Meekins	2 nd –Still Need
12 th –Still Need	9 th –Steve Boyle
19 th - Still Need	16 th –Still Need
26 th - Ginny Schider	23 rd – Still Need

When taking your flowers please leave the sleeves for the next week and use a plastic bag to transfer your flowers home. Care should be taken so that the altar cloths do not get drip marks on them. Please remove the sleeves and carry them to the back of the sanctuary before placing the flowers in your bag. Empty the water in the vases on the parking lot then return the sleeves to the vases on the altar. TIP: Large zip-lock bags work really well. Thank you.



Book Club


Please Join us here at SMUMC for Book Club! We are always looking for new members. We meet the 4th Wednesday of each month at noon. Feel free to bring your lunch and chat about the book.

Upcoming Meetings

January 22
"The Moonflowers"

&

February 26
"The Nurse's Secret"





- January 8, 2025 7:00pm
Jesus Revolution
- January 15, 2025 7:00pm
Apostle of Christ
- January 22, 2025 7:00pm
Pizza and Comedy
- January 29, 2025 7:00pm
A Box of Faith