

FIRST  BAPTIST
CHURCH OF WESTWOOD

808 HIGH STREET · WESTWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02090



The Message
December 2024

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

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From The
Pastor's Desk

December 2024



**First Baptist Church Westwood
& Friends**

The True Light Sent From God - John 1:9

written by: Rev. Catherine M. Miller

May you allow the Light's gentle Presence to relieve wounds
of regret; loneliness, failure; and festering pain.

May you turn to the Light to revive your faith
if ever it becomes stale or mundane.

And when voice of enemies, Denial and Doubt, convince you that the
Light is foolishness and fantasy —

May Christmas remind you that The Light is the Truth!

The Gift sent from God to enable all people to *clearly* see.

The Light secures our peace, of this Christians are persuaded.

For sure the Light's Supreme authority can never be debated!

“Simeon took the child in His arms and praised God saying,
...my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all
peoples, a light for revelation to the gentiles and
for glory to your people Israel.” **Luke 2:28-32**

The Light of the World Is Jesus

verses 1 & 2 of hymn composed by Philip P. Bliss

The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,
The Light of the world is Jesus!
Like sunshine at noonday, His glory shone in;
The Light of the world is Jesus!

Refrain: Come to the light, 'tis shining for thee;
Sweetly the light has dawned upon me;
Once I was blind, but now I can see:
The Light of the world is Jesus!

No darkness have we who in Jesus abide;
The Light of the world is Jesus!
We walk in the light when we follow our Guide!
The Light of the world is Jesus!



**Wishing you an overflow of Christmas Light!
May the grace of our Lord quiet any fear with the
reassurance of *Immanuel - God with Us!***

**Merry Christmas!
*Pastor Catherine***



“Let’s Talk” group discussion and Holy Communion

Hello everyone!

Pastor Catherine hosts an in-person and Zoom Bible discussion monthly where she will present a topic for us to reflect upon and there will be open discussion for sharing and learning from each other, with the Holy Spirit's guidance.

We'll close with The Lord's Supper, so bring your bread and juice!
The sessions are held in the Reception room and on Zoom at 7:00 p.m.
We meet on the first Thursday of each month.

Hope you can join us!

For those attending by Zoom, Rev. Catherine M. Miller is inviting you to the scheduled event.

Topic: Let's Talk: Bible Study & Holy Communion w/ Pastor Catherine

Time: Dec 5, 2024 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Every month on the First Thu, until Jul 3, 2025, 11 occurrence(s)

Dec 5, 2024 07:00 PM

Not meeting in January 2025

Feb 6, 2025 07:00 PM

Mar 6, 2025 07:00 PM

Apr 3, 2025 07:00 PM

May 1, 2025 07:00 PM

Jun 5, 2025 07:00 PM

Jul 3, 2025 07:00 PM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcodu-](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcodu-urTwuHdac3InSTEQ_Ezi5BrhXckDa/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrqzosHNeStB6FRpwqGYj4M-7ztmZbgqdcn0zMDRNNrZLJE_hLZ5BtGODT)

[urTwuHdac3InSTEQ_Ezi5BrhXckDa/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrqzosHNeStB6FRpwqGYj4M-7ztmZbgqdcn0zMDRNNrZLJE_hLZ5BtGODT](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcodu-urTwuHdac3InSTEQ_Ezi5BrhXckDa/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrqzosHNeStB6FRpwqGYj4M-7ztmZbgqdcn0zMDRNNrZLJE_hLZ5BtGODT)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83516637472?pwd=EvL6pkHvrpuOfst9Pyl3PKEyeDxFVak.1>

Meeting ID: 835 1663 7472

Passcode: 618284

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/k1OBxoEcM>

POINSETTIAS ORDERS

Anyone wishing to order one or more poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve and Christmas Sunday (Dec. 22nd), please fill out the form below. The cost this year is \$7.00 per plant. The poinsettias will be in a 6" pot.

Please be specific as to how you would like the wording to appear in the Christmas Sunday Bulletin.

The deadline for ordering is Wednesday morning, December 4th.

Please Print.

IN MEMORY OF /HONOR OF /THANKS FOR (please circle one):

GIVEN BY:



IN MEMORY OF /HONOR OF /THANKS FOR (please circle one):

GIVEN BY:



IN MEMORY OF /HONOR OF /THANKS FOR (please circle one):

GIVEN BY:

_____ Total number of poinsettias @ \$7.00 per plant = \$_____ enclosed

___ I would like to donate my plant(s) to a shut-in

___ I will take my plant

Please have your request to the church office by Wednesday morning, December 4th.

Collecting White Socks for the Homeless and Veterans



Once again this year, we will be collecting new white crew socks during the Advent season and we are extending it through the end of January. Starting on Sunday, December 1, bins for dropping off socks will be available in both the narthex and the reception room.

In February, half of the socks will be donated to the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program which provides services to the homeless in hospitals, shelters, and on the streets throughout the city. The homeless are always in need of new socks – for warmth, for comfort, and for good health. One of the reasons that white socks are requested is that they are more likely than darker colored socks to indicate when someone is having foot problems and infections that need to be treated.

The other half of the socks collected will again be donated to the West Roxbury VA Hospital for our veterans who are hospitalized or in outpatient treatment.

Please spread the word and help us make things a bit better for some who are less fortunate than we are.



Holly Fair



Saturday, December 7th
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Come and enjoy shopping at our traditional tables - **home-baked goodies**, **handmade items**, **gently-worn jewelry**, **outside vendors**, and the **popular attic treasures** that is always a good source for bargains.



Additional baked goods are always welcome. You may contact Sunny O'Malley to volunteer your delicious morsels at 781-326-7799. Please plan to drop off your baked goods on Friday, Dec. 6th in Fellowship Hall between 9am & 5pm.

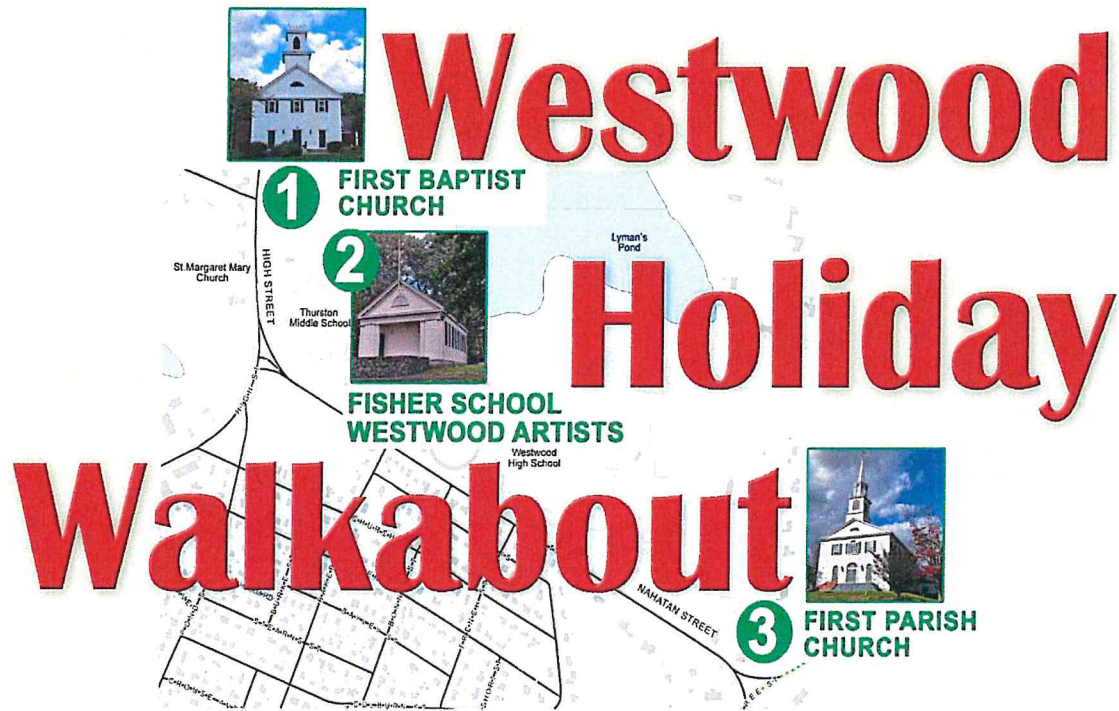


Holly Fair Café - will open at 9:00 a.m. serving fresh-made apple cider donuts and coffee (until 11:00 a.m.). Lunch will be served from 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. featuring hot dogs, chili dogs, chicken salad, chili, and soups. **For dessert, we will be serving apple crisp with ice cream.**

The Holly Fair will provide an opportunity to do a bit of Christmas shopping, discover some bargains, have something to eat, and share a little holiday spirit.



Second Annual



Saturday, December 7

- 1 First Baptist Church Holly Fair**
808 High Street, 9 AM – 2 PM
 - Local vendors, attic treasures, baked goods, jewelry, and crafts.
 - Hot lunch will be available.
- 2 Westwood Artists' December Marketplace
Historical Society Fisher School**
830 High Street, 10 AM – 3 PM
 - Local artisans in a unique 1-room school house setting.
 - Hand-crafted jewelry, photography, painting, watercolor, pastels, pottery, ceramics, felt, collage, baby knits.
- 3 First Parish Church Christmas Fair**
252 Nahatan Street, 9 AM – 1 PM
 - Local vendors, holiday wreaths, silent auction.
 - Hot soup and chowder, take-out from the kitchen.

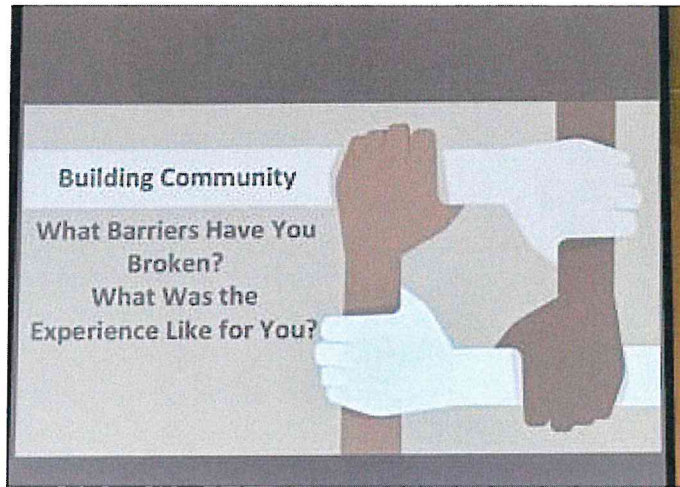
And the Mass Appeal Boston a capella singers will be back performing at each site!

MissionWorks Conference – October 26, 2024 Calvary Baptist Church, Lowell MA

HIGHLIGHTS

A Transformative Day of Boundary-Crossing Faith and Fellowship

This year's MissionWorks conference, themed "Crossing Boundaries: Intercultural Ministries in the Mission of God," was a powerful gathering focused on building bridges across cultural, social, and spiritual divides. Held at the beautiful Calvary Baptist Church in Lowell, the day was a blend of inspiring messages, interactive workshops, and vibrant discussions—all centered on equipping us to embrace diversity as we live out the Gospel.



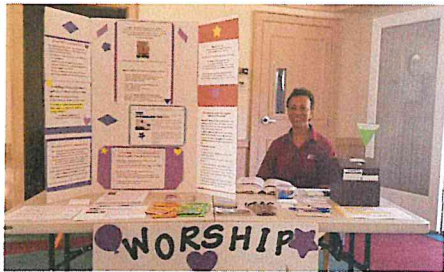
Pastors and guest speaker



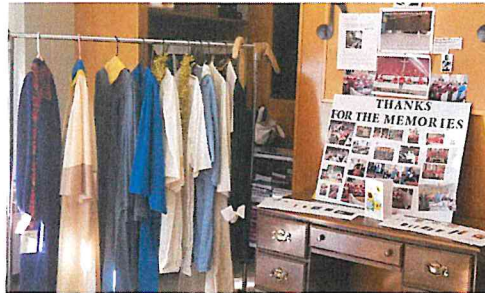
photo of the panel, including Pastor Catherine

200th Anniversary Celebration photos

Open House – Nov. 2nd



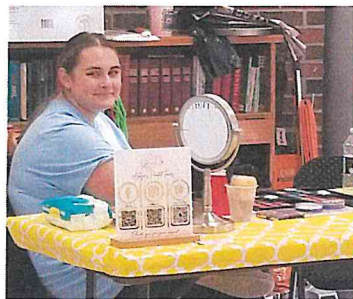
Worship table



Music displays



Boy & Cub Scout table



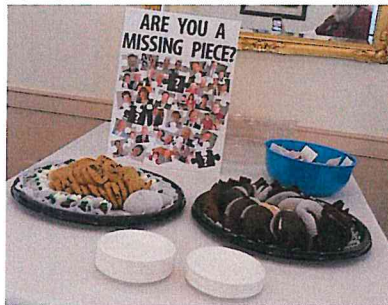
Face painting with Ashlyn



Acapella group



Painting rocks – kids' table



Goodies



and more goodies

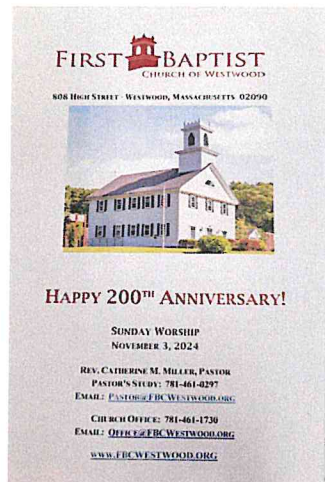


The kids enjoyed the pony rides



Pastor Catherine with the ponies

Nov. 3rd – Celebrating our 200th during worship



***Pastors that were able to join us for the celebration were:
Rev. Sheldon and Eileen Keller, Rev. Liz Clinkscales, and
Rev. Christine Schrade-Keddy***

***We received letters of congratulations from: Rev. Don Ashmall,
Rev. Dr. Larry Whitlock and Linn, Rev. Dr. Stephanie Salinas and
Ned, Rev. Dr. George H. Sinclair Jr, Rev. Jim Leavitt,
Rev. Dr. Esther Pearson of Beth Eden Baptist Church in Waltham
(a TABCOM church), and long-time member Susan Pendleton.***

Our luncheon



Pastor Catherine, Bob W & selectperson Joe P. & his wife



The clean-up crew



Donation requests from The Westwood Food Pantry

1. Please do not travel to the stores just to pick up donated items- instead we suggest that you purchase a few donation items during your regular shopping trip, especially if they are on sale.
2. You can bring your items to worship on Sunday.

Suggested items:

- Canned Soups -especially Progresso (Vegetable types, Clam Chowder, etc)
- Canned Vegetables (Peas, Corn, etc.)
- Canned Baked Beans
- Canned Fruit (Pineapple, Fruit Cocktail, Peaches, Pears, Mandarin Oranges, etc.)
- Canned Beef Stew, Hash, Chili with Meat
- Spaghetti Sauce (small 24 -25-ounce jars)

Other "Always Needed" Popular Items

- Health & Beauty Aids (shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste etc.)
- Diapers
- L or XL Depends
- Cleaning Products (dish detergent, laundry detergent, etc.)
- Cake mixes and frosting
- Canned *White* Albacore Tuna in water
- Canned Chicken (5-ounce cans or small pouches)

Volunteers:

At this time they have all the volunteers they can use, but their needs may change at any time. If you or your high school or college-aged student is interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please email westwoodfoodpantry@gmail.com.

(Sorry, but they are unable to accept volunteers younger than 9th grade.)

How to Apply:

The Westwood Food Pantry is available to all residents of Westwood who are experiencing temporary or long-term food insecurity.

To request assistance from the Westwood Food Pantry or to set up a client visit, please email them at westwoodfoodpantry@gmail.com or call them at 781-269-2008.



(for in-person, calls , or Zoom)

Tuesdays:

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Wednesdays & Thursdays:

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

For an appointment call:

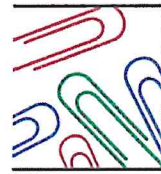
781-461-0297 or 781-461-1730

ext. 12

or email:

pastor@fbcwestwood.org

*(if you call when she isn't there,
you can leave a message)*



CHURCH OFFICE

Monday - Friday

8:00 am - 1:30 pm

Besides visiting Donna in the church office, she can be reached by phone at 781-461-1730 or by emailing her at

office@fbcwestwood.org

Face masks are required in the church office.



Donna will be out of the office on the following dates:

Thurs., Dec. 12th (1/2 day);

Fridays, Dec. 13th, 20th & 27th;

Mon., Dec. 30th



The Pastor Will Be Off

Pastor Catherine will be off the following days during December:

Sun., Dec. 1st - Tues., Dec. 3rd;

Tues., Dec. 17th - Thurs., Dec. 19th;

Thurs., Dec. 26th;

Mon., Dec. 30th & Tues., Dec. 31st

The Pastor will be attending the Gordon Conwell's Women's Council Advent Service & luncheon on Wed., Dec. 4th.



Sunday Worship Services

Please check out our website, www.fbcwestwood.org. We post Livestream links and videos of our worship services there, plus other news and devotional materials.

Informal reception to honor Russ Downes' life

Russell Downes' family invites you to
celebrate "Coach's" life:

*Saturday, November 30, 2024
10:00 a.m. - noon*

Fellowship Hall at FBC Westwood

The event is an informal reception, casual clothing including baseball hats welcomed and encouraged. Guests will have the opportunity to share brief stories/memories of Coach Downes. Coffee and pastries will be served.

The family has requested no cards or flowers, please.



Digital version of the Sunday Bulletin

We produce a digital version of the weekly Sunday bulletin that is

formatted so that it can be easily read on a cell phone, tablet, or computer. This is being emailed to people a day or two ahead of the service. It can be helpful when watching the worship service online or simply to find out what's happening at FBC that week. If you wish to be added to the email list to receive the digital bulletin, please contact Donna Metcalf via email at office@fbcwestwood.org.



Guest Preacher

The Rev. Dr. Ron Bouthillette will be our guest preacher on Sunday, December 1st.

Rev. Bouthillette is focused on working with our associations in "search and call," and providing resources around church renewal.

He is a native New Englander and a graduate of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, where he serves as an Adjunct Professor in Practical Theology. Rev. Bouthillette teaches courses in pastoral ministry, leadership and church revitalization. He specializes in Church Leadership and Revitalization, and has a passion for churches in New England, especially American Baptist Churches. Rev. Bouthillette also has a passion for mentoring new pastors, many of whom are throughout New England and some as far as California. He has also been involved in training pastors in southern India.

Rev. Bouthillette has pastored churches large and small for over 40 years. He brings this experience to all of his ministries – especially within the areas of church revitalization, churches in transition, leadership and in his mentoring ministry. He is also involved in church consulting with American Baptist Churches throughout the US. Rev. Bouthillette is the Associate Executive Minister in Leadership in the American Baptist Churches of Vermont and New Hampshire.

He is married to Cathy Bouthillette. They have two grown children and six grandchildren.

Rev. Bouthillette's bio is from <https://tabcom.org/meet-the-staff/>.

***Joyful Song & Prayer at
The Ellis Senior Residence -
(monthly starting December 8th)***

Starting this month, Pastor Catherine and Jan will host service and times of musical fun for residents at The Ellis, every 2nd Sunday.

They kicked off the fellowship there on Sun. 11/17 to celebrate Thanksgiving. Twenty residents plus staff joined in singing hymns, Oldies but Goodies, & participated in prayer. The Ellis community is happy about this new monthly gathering.



Thank you to Carol Ahearn for the fall decorations at our sanctuary front doors.



Salem Radio Boston



Christian Radio Station

Tune in to AM 590 WEZE -

"The Word" channel on Saturdays @

5:15pm and enjoy our Pastor's

prayer/inspiration program,

Be Still, a family-oriented radio

outreach sponsored by

FBC Westwood!

Livestream & podcasts at

<http://wezeradio.com/radioshow/be-still>.



**Coffee
Hour**

Coffee Hour is a great time to enjoy catching up with others and having some goodies, too, following morning worship.

Join us for Coffee Hour each Sunday following worship in the Reception Room.

We are looking for additional helpers to host a Sunday. Wouldn't you like to host one? Sign-up sheets for December and January are posted on the bulletin board in the Reception room.

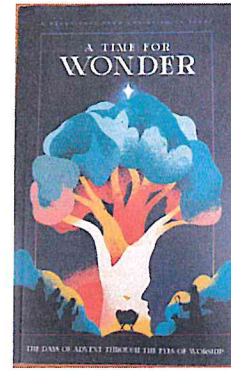
If you have any questions, please contact Karen Thompson at kleethompson65@gmail.com or the Church office at office@fbcwestwood.org or call 781-461-1730.



Blessing Baskets 2024

A huge thank you! from Pastor Catherine and Paul & Lee Kouri to our members and friends who were able to donate to the Thanksgiving Blessing Basket project. We donated 10 baskets of holiday dinner 'fixins' and desserts for a full holiday meal and gift cards to purchase their turkeys. Jan R. and the Pastor enjoyed putting the baskets together. In appreciation, the Kouri Team entered participants into their raffle. *Congratulations to our very own Marie Chase for winning the raffle prize of a throw blanket that was donated by Eric Douglas from New American Funding.*

FBC Westwood's donators were: Violet, David S., Darren, Donna F., Donna M., Bev L, Bonnie, Marie, Pastor Catherine, Shelton, Ann, Jan R, Sunny, Michelle, & Neil



Advent Daily Devotional

"A Time For Wonder"

Copies will be available in the Narthex and Reception room beginning on Sunday, December 1st. Or, you may contact the church office at office@fbcwestwood.org (or call 781-461-1730) and leave a message.



Traditional service of "Lessons and Carols"

**Sunday, December 15th
4:00 p.m.**

In our Sanctuary

Mark your calendars.

Bring your family and friends!

**Feature presentations by our
Chancel Choir and
Westwood Ringers;
join in congregational carol
singing, and hear selected
readings related to the Christmas
story.**



**Church Council
and Staff meeting**
hybrid (Zoom & Reception Room)

December 17th
7:00pm

News  letter
DEADLINE

Material for January's "Message" is
due to the church office by:
Wednesday, December 18th

Information can be emailed to:
office@fbcwestwood.org



You are invited to join the Chancel
Choir rehearsals on Sunday
mornings at 9:20 a.m.



You are invited to join our Prayer
Chain. This is a small group of FBC folk
who email one another with prayer
concerns of the larger church
community and then include those
concerns in their prayers. This is
beyond the all-church prayers shared
by the Pastor. If you would like to join
The Prayer Chain, please contact
Sunny O'Malley.



*Join us as we celebrate the birth of
Christ at our
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

*Tuesday, December 24th
6:30 p.m.
In the Sanctuary*



If you would like 2025 offering
envelopes and haven't already
requested them, please either
contact Wendy Lewis, the Financial
Secretary, or the church office at
781-461-1730.



If it's easier for you, we accept PayPal payments on our website for offering or other donations. Just click on the "donate" button on www.fbcwestwood.org.

Our newest donation method is through using Venmo. We introduced it at our Holly Fair with great success and received requests to provide this option for offerings and other donations. Here is our QR code that you can scan.



Annual Church Meeting



Sunday, Feb. 2, 2025

Church Council, Committee, and Organization Annual Reports are due in the church office by Wednesday, **January 8, 2025.**

If possible, please submit Annual Reports by e-mail (as an attachment) or on a flash drive to the church office. Thank you.