

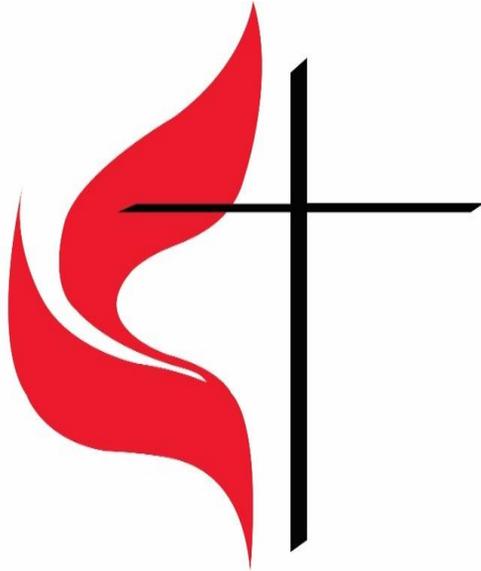


# December 2025

December message from Pastor Zach:

Happy New Year! I know it seems early, but that is where we are on the church calendar with the arrival of Advent. Advent marks the beginning of a new year. And what with what do we start with? Trees and stockings. A baby in a manger. Orante nativity scenes. A star in the sky. Lights and decorations. Angelic hosts. Christmas carols and holiday concerts. Shepherds and flocks. Annual work parties. Wise men and gifts. Shopping list and white elephant. Isaiah readings and Handel's Messiah. The Nutcracker. A jealous king and the execution of Bethlehem's male children, ages two and under.

Wait, what!? That took a turn, didn't it? When we think about the birth of Jesus, it's easy to want to focus in on the scenes of silent and holy nights, with little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay, no crying he makes. It's a comforting thought—Jesus arriving nice and neatly into a quiet and sleeping world. And in recent years, it's something we've needed to hold onto a little more tightly. We need the



United Methodist Church  
of Danielson

The Cross & Flame  
Journal

**Mission Statement:**  
Learning the Three O's - Open  
Hearts, Open Minds, Open  
Doors

**Vision Statement:**  
Repentance, Renewal, Reform

respite a silent night can bring, in a world that just keeps getting noisier and more violent.

Trouble is, that's not the world Jesus entered. It was loud, and often dangerous. Meaning Jesus entered a world in motion. Even if he was a quiet baby, the world that received him, the world upstairs from the stable in which he was born, was not. That special night didn't stop the ordinary morning.

In Matthew's text, Mary and Joseph already live in Bethlehem, and the next day, life would have carried on as it always did. In Luke, the couple is there to take part in a Roman census. Everyone visiting town for that would be trying to get registered as quickly as possible so they could get home and on with life.

And that is what Jesus came to help us do—get on with life. Though not the same ole, same ole, but rather a new life, one that celebrates and lives out a kingdom come near, "on earth, as it is in heaven." Though he entered life in the usual way, Jesus did not come to help us get on with a usual life, but rather to get on with life as it should have been all along; life as God originally intended.

This kingdom life is defined by the covenant relationship between God and Israel, where people love God and their neighbors as themselves. It is where the wisdom of righteousness, justice, mercy, peace, forgiveness, and non-violence reshape a world previously shaped by the exact opposites.

So, it is fitting that Jesus came to us in this in this ordinary way, because without an ordinary birth, life, and death that proclaimed an extraordinary kingdom, where tax collectors and prostitutes were first on the guest list, we could never begin to believe that this kingdom was for anyone other than those on the nice list.

But you don't have to be on the nice list to begin this Advent season, only faithful to God's sovereign power that calls us all from naughty to nice. Meaning, not putting our faith in the "stuff" we can acquire ourselves, but in what Spirit can produce within us: peace instead of war, love instead of hate, mercy instead of malice.

As much fun as trees and carols and gifts are, let us look for the extraordinary kingdom at hand within the ordinary celebration of Jesus' arrival. Let us be participants in kingdom life and

witnesses to kingdom  
transformation, celebrating the  
spirit of Christmas and beyond.  
And, as Buddy the elf insists, let us  
make it loud for all to hear.

See you in church,  
Pastor Zach



**Welcome  
to the  
United Methodist Church  
of Danielson**

**We're glad you found us.**

**Contact Us at ...**

**Church Office:** 860-779-2018

**Church Email:**

[betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org](mailto:betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org)

**Pastor's Cell:** 217-840-1623

**Pastor's Email:**

[pastor.zach@umcdanielson.org](mailto:pastor.zach@umcdanielson.org)

**Media Email:**

[media@umcdanielson.org](mailto:media@umcdanielson.org)

**~ Church Office Hours~**

**Tuesday:** 8:30 a.m.- Noon

**~Pastor's Office Hours~**

**Tuesday:** 9:30 a.m. - Noon

**Wednesday:** 10 a.m. - Noon

**Thursday:** @ Killingly Public Library:  
10-12 p.m., or any other time by  
appointment.

Pastor Zach's Sabbath are Fridays.

**Things to put on your calendar:**



Angel Tree gift wrapping December  
13<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon

Christmas Pageant December 20 -  
meal prior to pageant - time to be  
announced



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## Advent Wreath Lighting



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11/30 Cyndi Perkins and Jayden Sorel

12/7 Rach Wright and Colton, Ben,  
Addison and Dawson

12/14 Bob Boswell and Emily and  
Zachary

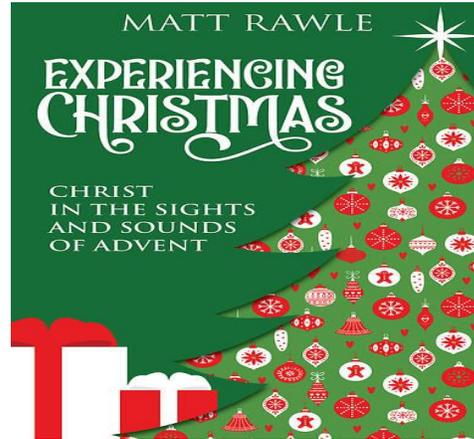
12/21 Cassi and Chad Miles and  
Arianna and Elly

12/24 Zach and Jess LeCrone and  
Emilie and Joie



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## Advent Study starts November 30



### Church Happenings:

#### Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship - In Person and  
Zoom (See link below)

2 p.m. Davis Place - every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday

2 - 3 p.m. Al Anon in fellowship hall

#### Tuesday:

1 p.m. K.B.I.C. every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday

#### Wednesday:

12p.m. Community Kitchens

#### Friday:

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Diaper Bank,  
last Friday of the month

6:30 - 8pm: NA in fellowship hall

#### Saturday:

9 - 10 am: Bible Study in Christian Ed  
Room and ZOOM (See link below)

10:15: Grief Group (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays) in Christian Ed Room and ZOOM (See link below)

**ZOOM Info:** Sunday Service:

**Meeting ID:** 899 8668 2568

Adult Sunday School: **Meeting**

**ID:** 862 3566 5633

Bible study and Grief Group: **Meeting**

**ID:** 707 166 7519

**Liturgist schedule:**

December 7 - Betsy and Ron Kneeland

December 14 - Mark Hoyt

December 21 - Ariana Miles

December 28 - Chrissy Pagano

**Children's Moments:**

December 7 - Pastor Zach

December 14 - Cassi Miles

December 21 - Chrissy Pagano

December 28 - Sue Martin



Please sign up for Coffee Time and greeters. Please see Sandy Andrews with questions or to sign the sign-up sheets.

There is also a sign-up sheet for flowers on the back table. If you

want to give flowers in honor or in memory of a loved one, friend, pet, special occasion, etc. please sign up!



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12/1 Jayden Sorel

12/8 Cassi Miles

12/24 Bev Fedorowicz

12/26 Addie Hoyt

*Happy Anniversary!*

12/4 Fred and Sue Keehner

12/5 Wendy Forbes and Chrissy Pagano

12/7 Ray and Cheryl Bowen

**Mystery person:**

I played varsity soccer and ice hockey in high school.



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The mystery person for November was Barbara Schreier.

## Getting to Know...

### Gail Bigelow

How and why did you come to this church?

Gail was baptized in 1954, was confirmed and became a member in this church.

How long have you been coming to UMCD?

Gail has been coming to this church for most of her life.

What is or was your profession?

Gail was in HR and Adult Education for her career. She is now retired.

What are your hobbies/interests?

Quilting, golf, and a movie fan.

A few words to describe yourself...

Easy going, has many friends that Gail likes to spend time with and family that means everything.

**Leadership group:**

**Lay Leader:** Cyndi Perkins

**Office Manager:** Betsy Kneeland

**Reverend:** Zach LeCrone

**IT/Media Director:** Cori Sharrow

Please feel free to share any of your special events: joys & celebrations,

anniversaries, birthdays, special awards/honors, trips, etc. The deadline for news items is the 10th of each month. Send info to [betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org](mailto:betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org)

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The church's email has changed.

Please use

[betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org](mailto:betsy.kneeland@umcdanielson.org) going forward.



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