

# Skipwith Pilot



## The Four Gifts of Advent

After Thanksgiving, the Advent season begins. Advent marks the beginning of a new year in the liturgical calendar. The tradition of using four candles for Christmas comes from the Advent wreath, a long-standing Christian custom that originated in 19th-century Germany, especially among Lutheran families. A Lutheran pastor, Johann Hinrich Wichern, first used it in 1839. He created a large wooden ring with 24 small red candles (one for each day of Advent) and four large white candles (for each Sunday). Over time, the custom evolved into the simpler form we know today, with four candles—one for each Sunday of Advent—along with the Christ candle.

Each candle represents both a week of Advent and a spiritual theme that prepares Christians for Christmas. Traditionally, the candles are three purple (or blue) and one pink (or rose). The four promises of God in Advent are traditionally understood as **Hope, Peace, Joy (pink), and Love**. Interestingly, each of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—reveals one of these promises in its own way.

### 1. The First Candle: The Prophet's Candle (Hope)

The first candle, lit on the first Sunday of Advent, is called the "Prophet's Candle." It reminds us of the prophets who awaited the coming Messiah. Matthew describes Jesus as the Messiah who brought hope to a world in the darkness of sin and death. Jesus is the One promised through David and Abraham (Matthew 1:1). He is the King who would save people from all nations (Matthew 2:1–12). More than 60 times, Matthew shows that Jesus fulfilled God's promises spoken through the Old Testament prophets—including Isaiah's prophecy of Immanuel (Matthew 1:22–23) and the great light shining on those in the land of the shadow of death (Matthew 4:12–16).



#### Inside this issue:

Christmas Eve Service	3
Staff Love Offering	3
Betty Crane Circle	3
Meadowbrook House Christmas	4
Angel Giving Tree	4
Operation Christmas Child	4
Harvest Table	4
December/January Birthdays	5
Christmas Card Box	5
Finance Report	5
December Calendar	6
January Calendar	7

(Continued from page 1)

## 2. The Second Candle: The Bethlehem Candle (Peace)

The second candle, lit on the second Sunday of Advent, is called the “Bethlehem Candle” because it reminds us of the peace Christ brings. The Gospel of Mark presents Jesus as the Servant of God, who brings peace through His suffering and sacrifice. Mark 10:45 expresses the heart of the Gospel:

*“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,  
and to give His life as a ransom for many.”*

“The Son of Man” is Jesus’ favorite title for Himself, rooted in Daniel 7:13–14. This heavenly figure is given authority over all nations, but Jesus redefines that authority—not through domination, but through sacrificial service. Through His humble offering of Himself as a ransom on the cross, Jesus fulfills God’s promise of peace: reconciliation between God and humanity. To highlight Jesus’ dynamic ministry as a hardworking servant, Mark frequently uses urgent expressions such as “immediately,” “at once,” “without delay,” and “as soon as”—terms that appear about 40 times.

## 3. The Third Candle: The Shepherd’s Candle (Joy)

The third candle, lit on the third Sunday of Advent, is called the “Shepherd’s Candle.” It symbolizes the good news of *great joy for all people* which was conveyed to the shepherds (Luke 2:10). Luke emphasizes this joy of salvation through the experience of the crowds (Lk 13:17) and those who have been marginalized in society, such as tax collectors, women, and Gentiles—Mary’s Magnificat: “My spirit *rejoices* in God my Savior” (Luke 1:47), and Zechariah’s response (Lk 19:6).

## 4. The Fourth Candle: The Angel’s Candle (Love)

The fourth candle, lit on the fourth Sunday of Advent, is called the “Angel’s Candle.” It reminds us of God’s love revealed through the gift of His Son—the Word made flesh, the very embodiment of divine love.

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son...”* (Jn 3:16)

Finally, we light the Christ Candle, we remember that all these gifts—Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love—are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. May His light shine in our hearts this Christmas, and may we share that light with the world continuously in the New Year 2026.

Grace and Peace  
Rev. Dr. Bright Lee



*Candlelight Christmas Eve  
Service with Communion  
December 24 4 PM*

*A special offering will be  
Received for United  
Methodist Family Services*



As Christmas approaches, we can show our appreciation to the church staff. Checks or cash offerings are greatly appreciated. Checks may be written to Skipwith UMC for our staff and placed in the special envelopes available from the church office or by the entrance to the sanctuary. Envelopes may be given to Tom Crane or placed in the offering plate. Your kind gift will be distributed as you designate on the envelope. Please send/give your check to Tom Crane by December 14. As always, your gifts are confidential. Thank you for your generosity.

Staff Pastor/Parish Relations Committee

## Christmas Luncheon and Gift Exchange

Please plan to join us immediately following the morning worship service on Sunday, December 14th, for a Christmas luncheon and White Elephant Gift Exchange. Plan to bring your favorite holiday main dish, side or desert to share (beverages and bread will be provided). If you would like to participate in the White Elephant exchange, please bring a wrapped gift (valuing \$15 or below) to swap. We look forward to celebrating with you.



## Betty Crane Circle of the United Women of Faith



The United Women in Faith Christmas luncheon will be held on **Tuesday, December 2**. The luncheon will be held at Kitchen 33 at 11:30. An offering will be taken to support Safe Harbor, a Richmond nonprofit that fights human trafficking in our area, in place of a gift exchange.

Martha Worsham, UWF leader



## MEADOWBROOK HOUSE CHRISTMAS

Once again, this Christmas, we will sponsor the residents at the Heart Havens Meadowbrook House. \$500 is the requested amount to provide Colin, Jason, Michael and Cesar with gifts that are purchased by the staff. We have also provided a small gift of appreciation for the staff that is dedicated to the care of the residents. Please make donations by December 7. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## ANGEL GIVING TREE

The Angel Giving Tree is up! This year's family consists of a Grandad and two boys: one in 2nd grade and the other in 5th. Please grab an ornament or two to provide support to this family that was recently displaced from their home. Let's be generous and love on them! Please provide a "gift receipt" if possible. Return gifts by December 14. If you are unable to shop, a donation toward the purchase of items is appreciated.



## Operation Christmas Child Boxes



Thank you to all that contributed to the Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box project! We filled 20 boxes! That's 20 children that will receive a gift that lets them know they are loved.

## Harvest Table

Guess how many pounds of food was donated for the Harvest Table on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>? Through the generosity of the congregation, 200 pounds of food was donated to the Lambs Basket Food Pantry! The clients who depend on Lambs Basket receive a turkey and fixings for Thanksgiving. The addition of fresh produce is truly a blessing for them. Thank you for your participation!



## December

December 5—Nick Christ  
 December 14—Tim Crane  
 December 15—Aneeta Amanat  
 December 17—Tommy Burruss  
 December 19—Ann VanDyke  
 December 19—Kevin Crane  
 December 22—Ginger Kelly  
 December 22—Stephen Bouton  
 December 23—Jenny Hicks  
 December 24—Allyson Vinik  
 December 29—Wayne Parker



## January

January 2—Nancy Jenkins  
 January 5—Sandy Parker  
 January 11—Becky Birchfield Tsarnas



December is a time when many people are pre-occupied with what to give and what we might receive in gifts. At The Laurels we will be focusing on Jesus: the greatest Gift of all. Please consider lifting The Laurels residents up in your daily prayers. So many know Christ as Savior and Lord but there are some who don't know Him at all. Thank you! (Vicki Keith 804-217-8133) .



The Christmas card mailbox is located in the upstairs hallway and will be open for business on Sunday, December 7. This is a great way to share holiday wishes with your Skipwith family. Check it often.

## Finance Report

Reported figures as of October 31, 2025

Funds collected to date for FY 2025-2026:  
\$46,511

Funds expended to date for FY 2025-2026:  
\$76,254

Funds still required to meet current obligations: \$29,743  
 (negative is favorable)

# December 2025

Sun

Mon


Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1	2 11:30 AM Betty Crane Circle Luncheon at Kitchen 33 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6:30 PM Skipwith Green Townhouse Asso	3	4 9 AM-Noon Lamb's Basket 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	5 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	6 10 AM OA
7 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	8	9 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	10 10:30 AM—Advent Study	11 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	12 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	13 10 AM OA
14 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 12:15 PM Christmas Luncheon 3:30 PM AA	15	16 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	17	18 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	19 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	20 10 AM OA
21 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	22	23 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	24 4 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service	25 	26 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	27 10 AM OA
			Office Closed			
28 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	29	30 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	31			
		Office Closed				

# January 2026

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1  <div>Office Closed</div>	2 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	3 10 AM OA
4 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	5	6 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	7	8 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	9 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	10 10 AM OA
11 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 12:15 PM Leadership Council 3:30 PM AA	12	13 10 AM Betty Crane Circle 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	14	15 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	16 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	17 10 AM OA
18 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	19	20 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	21 10:30 AM Bible Study & Prayer	22 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	23 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	24 10 AM OA
25 10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 3:30 PM AA	26	27 12 Noon AA 5:30 PM Self Defense Art Class 6 PM AA	28 10:30 AM Bible Study & Prayer	29 10 AM Dance 2 PM The Laurel's	30 10 AM Self Defense Class 12 Noon AA 6 PM NA	31 10 AM OA



**SKIPWITH UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH DECEMBER 2025/**

2211 Skipwith Road  
PO Box 32104  
Henrico, VA 23294

Phone: 804-270-6560  
Email: [skipwithumc@verizon.net](mailto:skipwithumc@verizon.net)  
Website: [www.skipwithumc.org](http://www.skipwithumc.org)



*Love God  
Follow Jesus  
Serve Others*

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Richmond, VA  
Permit No. 2039

