

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday	Dec	17	9:00am	Chapel Prayer
			9:30am	Courtyard Fellowship
			9:45am	Sunday School
			9:45am	Men's Bible Study in the Visioning Center
			11:00am	Worship – Poinsettia Sunday, White Christmas, Blessing of the Angel Gowns
			12:30pm	College Student Lunch at the Parsonage
			1:00pm	Handbell Rehearsal in the Choir Room
			5:00pm	Choir Christmas Cantata
			6:00pm	Trustees in the Conference Room
			7:15pm	Finance in the Visioning Center
Wednesday	Dec	20		No Evening Activities
Sunday	Dec	24	9:00am	Chapel Prayer
			9:30am	Courtyard Fellowship
			9:45am	Sunday School
			9:45am	Men's Bible Study in the Visioning Center
			11:00am	Worship – Lessons and Carols
			6:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Our nursery is staffed from 9:30am – 12:30pm

College Student Lunch Gathering Today after Worship

Our college students are invited to the Parsonage for lunch on Sunday, December 17 at 12:30pm. To help with food preparation, please RSVP to the church office so we will have an approximate head count. We are really looking forward to spending this time with our college students!

Christmas Cantata is Today at 5:00pm

Come celebrate the Christmas Season and hear the story of Jesus' birth as our Chancel Choir performs *On This Shining Night* by Lee Dengler and Susan Naus Dengler on Sunday, December 17. The cantata begins at 5:00pm.

Visit our Website for On-line Giving

We are so proud to inform you that our website is new and improved and full of information! One of the biggest accomplishments is the new GIVE tab which allows for on-line giving. Whether to the General Fund, making a Memorial Fund donation, purchasing a Postcard Present, Special Offering, or other giving area; it can all be done on the website. Divine Street website is www.divinestreet.org. Take a few minutes to look over all the pages, and let us know what you think!

Postcard Presents!

Everyone has that "hard to buy for" person on their Christmas gift list. Why not make a donation to Divine Street UMC to honor someone this Christmas? Gift giving couldn't be easier this year!

Information about this gift-giving idea is available on our website. Just follow this link <http://www.divinestreet.org/postcard-presents.html>. For your convenience, you will also find information, instructions, and postcards on display at the Welcome Center just inside the courtyard entrance.

Upcoming Services in December

December 17	5:00pm	Choir Christmas Cantata
		Celebrate the joy of the season as our amazing choir brings us the Christmas story through scripture, readings and wonderful music.
December 24	11:00am	Lessons and Carols
		Celebrate God's story from creation to the birth of Jesus through the reading of scripture and the singing of carols.
	6:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
		Celebrate with joy the birth of the Christ Child as we sing through our service of Holy Communion and candlelight.

Pastor Beth will be away December 18 – 23. In case of emergency, please contact the church office or Pastor Kristina at 919-332-9335.

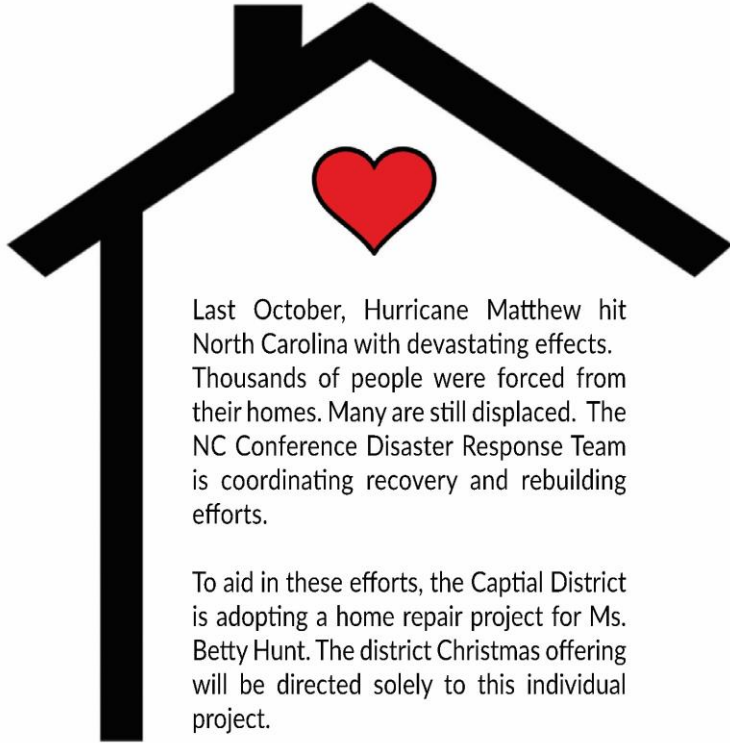
Be sure to include our Divine Street staff on your Christmas card list!

Pastor	Rev. Beth Gaines
Director of Christian Education	Rev. Kristina Yeatts
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Susan Smith
Custodian	Mr. Kevin Snipes
Director of Music Ministries	Mrs. Amy Stovall
Organist/Pianist	Mrs. Anna Bunn
Director of Preschool	Mrs. Patti Quiapo
Preschool Teacher	Mrs. Elizabeth Emory
Preschool Teacher	Mrs. Cindy Haney
Preschool Teacher	Mrs. Cindy Jernigan
Preschool Teacher	Mrs. Gayle Newman
Preschool Teacher	Mrs. Carol Strickland
Nursery Caregiver	Mrs. Juanita Simmons
Bookkeeper	Mrs. Barbara Sizemore

Please send cards to:
Divine Street United Methodist Church
400 West Divine Street
Dunn, NC 28334

Your year-end contributions must be: received in the church office OR post marked by the US Postal Service NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2017. If received later than that, your contribution will not be included on your 2017 statement. Please remember, the church office will be CLOSED: Friday, December 22 – Tuesday, December 26. The church office will be OPEN: Wednesday, December 27 – Friday, December 29.

Capital District Christmas Offering



Last October, Hurricane Matthew hit North Carolina with devastating effects. Thousands of people were forced from their homes. Many are still displaced. The NC Conference Disaster Response Team is coordinating recovery and rebuilding efforts.

To aid in these efforts, the Capital District is adopting a home repair project for Ms. Betty Hunt. The district Christmas offering will be directed solely to this individual project.

Make checks payable to your local church and include "S00262 - Capital - Christmas Offering" on the memo line. Your church will send one check for the Christmas offerings received.

Donations may be made online: nccumc.org/disaster
or divinestreet.org/online-giving

BLESSING OF INFANT GOWNS

Advent means "arrival" or "coming." In this Advent season, we know the arrival of a child is one of life's greatest expectations. All too often, though, that excited anticipation turns to grief when the coming of the child is darkened by the loss of that new life.

As the Church, our role is to respond to God's love in all that we do. One of the ways Divine Street truly reaches out to others in a way that glorifies God is to provide infant burial gowns for those families whose new child has been lost. Our infant gowns are created and hand-smocked by members of this church, and this morning we pray God's blessing for each child who will wear this gift and each family member who suffers the loss of that child.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

One: Almighty God, loving Parent of all your children, we are saddened that our babies are sometimes taken from us so soon. At times the burdens of life almost overwhelm us, but still we put our full trust in you. We know that through your Son Jesus Christ you are with us always.

All: **We pray for the comfort of your loving arms to surround all those who suffer the loss of a child.**

One: Bless these gifts of infant gowns that those families who receive one may feel the love with which they are created and given.

All: **Bless the giver and the receiver, and may each one sense your tender mercy. May these beautiful gowns help to ease some small part of the pain.**

One: Soothe the hearts of those who grieve. Give them strength to go forward and trust that your love never ends.

All: **We thank you for the hope that you give us through your Son Jesus Christ. When all else fails, you still are God. Keep true in us the love with which we hold one another, and may our efforts here bring glory to your name. Amen.**

ADVENT AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all.

We believe in Jesus the Christ - God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn - who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of despair. Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.

We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire. For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray: Come, Lord Jesus, Come!