



808 HIGH STREET · WESTWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02090



The Message

December 2025

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

CHURCH OFFICE: 781-461-1730 EMAIL: OFFICE@FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

PASTOR'S STUDY: 781-461-0297 EMAIL: PASTOR@FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

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From The Pastor's Desk

December 2025



Blessed Advent & Merry Christmas!

First Baptist Church Westwood & Friends,

I hope you had a pleasant Thanksgiving holiday. As we *recount* our blessings, we find inspiration to stay hopeful and enter this sacred Advent and Christmas season full of the Lord's joy. This keeps God's Light within glowing strong by gratitude. God's Light is a safe dome of gentle brightness securing us when darkness of the world gets close to distract us.

May you sense God's glorious Presence with you in this very moment...

It's wonderful to be light-hearted and merry right now but others of us Christians (both old and young) who love the Lord and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, are struggling with disappointment. The pain of disappointment can be amplified at Christmastime. This sadness happens to everyone at some point in life during this season and for one reason or another. The pang of disappointment hurts so much during the holidays.

But this is why we turn and focus on *recounting our blessings!* This is how we reframe our thoughts. Yes there's been pain but what precious experiences and people have I known! Disappointment may pop in, but do not tolerate its heaviness for long, nor carry it alone! If you do then sadness, depression, grumpy and hard-heart will end up being your best friends! NO! instead cry out to God in your honest prayer words about why you're disappointed.

Martha did this when in her grief found herself so disappointed in Jesus' timing:

"Martha said to Jesus, *'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'*" Now also consider her next statement where we see she still trusted in God's sovereign power. *"But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him."*

Ask Jesus to help you press through the fog of disappointment until it fades in the light of His precious blessings you have received. God has not left you nor will God forsake you!

Turn disappointment into determination for God's joy! God wants you to be happy!

**Right now, someone is counting *YOU* as a blessing in their life!
"In our prayers for you we always thank God..." Colossians 1:3**

The songs we sing are meant to lift us to enjoy celebrating Jesus and soothe our pain!
The Advent hymn, 'My Soul Proclaims with Wonder', teaches us to focus on God's goodness and have our human spirit restored: *'My soul proclaims with wonder the greatness of the Lord, rejoicing in God's goodness my spirit is restored.'*¹

* * *

Maybe you are disappointed in yourself because of a mistake or weakness... Maybe disappointment is coming up as you grieve the loss of a loved one... Maybe pain of a life plan that didn't work out still stings... Maybe it is the wound of a friendship that didn't live up to expectation... We cannot change those hurtful experiences but do you really want to keep watching the tape over and over and again? Of course not!!

Turn disappointment into determination for God's joy! Let Christmas joy in!
Give your heart permission to smile. Celebrate! Lean on the amazing grace of God!
"From his [Christ's] fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." John 1:16

Disappointment doesn't warm hearts. Just the opposite it tightens the chest and torments us! Disappointment prevents us from breathing in God's grace and exhaling toxic thoughts.

Here's a great carol to on the warmth of God's love: *'Joyful! Joyful! We adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love; hearts unfold like flowers before Thee opening to the sun above.'*²

* * *

**"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" Luke 2:14**

You are favored by God. Live like it by seeing yourself favored rather than disappointed. Be refreshed with God's supernatural joy this December and choose hope every new day!

Wishing you and all who are dear to you a very Merry Christmas and God's peace.

Pastor Catherine...

¹ *My Soul Proclaims with Wonder* (Carl P. Daw)

² *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee* (Henry Van Dyke)

POINSETTIAS ORDERS



Anyone wishing to order one or more poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Sunday (Dec. 21st) and Christmas Eve, 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 Friday morning, December 5th.

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 Friday morning, December 5th.



“Let’s Talk” group discussion and Holy Communion

Hello everyone!

Pastor Catherine hosts an in-person and Zoom Bible discussion twice a month (first & third Thursdays) where she presents a topic for us to reflect upon and there is open discussion for sharing and learning from each other, with the Holy Spirit's guidance.

We 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.

December sessions will be on **Thursday, December 4th and 18th.**

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 4, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Dec 18, 2025 07:00 PM

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

Monthly: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcodu-urTwuHdac3InSTEQ_Ezi5BrhXckDa/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrqzosHNeStB6FRpwqGYj4M-7ztmZbgqdcnOzMDRNNRzLJE_hLZ5BtGODT](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83516637472?pwd=EvL6pkHvrpuOfst9PyI3PKEydXfVak.1)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83516637472?pwd=EvL6pkHvrpuOfst9PyI3PKEydXfVak.1>

Meeting ID: 835 1663 7472

Passcode: 618284

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



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 extending the donation period through January 31st. Starting on Sunday, November 30, 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 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

SAT, DEC. 6th
9AM – 2PM

The fair will feature handmade crafts by our crafters, delicious baked goods prepared by church members, an extensive table of gently used jewelry, and the perennially popular attic treasures.



In addition, talented woodworker Doug Crawford, who grew up in Westwood and our church, will again be donating for sale a collection of serving and cutting boards made from interesting and exotic woods. They are beautiful, make useful gifts, and were very popular when he first donated them to the fair two years ago.



Throughout the day, food will be available at the Silver Beaver Café. Named for the Scouts' award for Scouters "who have provided distinguished service within a council," the café was organized by three local Scouters who have all received the Silver Beaver Award as well as the District Award of Merit: Darren Valentine, Chris Gross, and Ron Gauld. They cook primarily for Scouting events of all kinds and have now added a Donut Lodge to their repertoire. Darren expects that Ron, as well as some church members, will be joining him to staff the café during the fair. Ron is their expert donut maker, and they will be cutting, frying, and filling several varieties of donuts that morning along with serving small batch roasted coffee, tea, hot cocoa, and other beverages. The lunch menu is scheduled to include chili, hot dogs, chicken salad, soup, and apple crisp with ice cream for dessert.



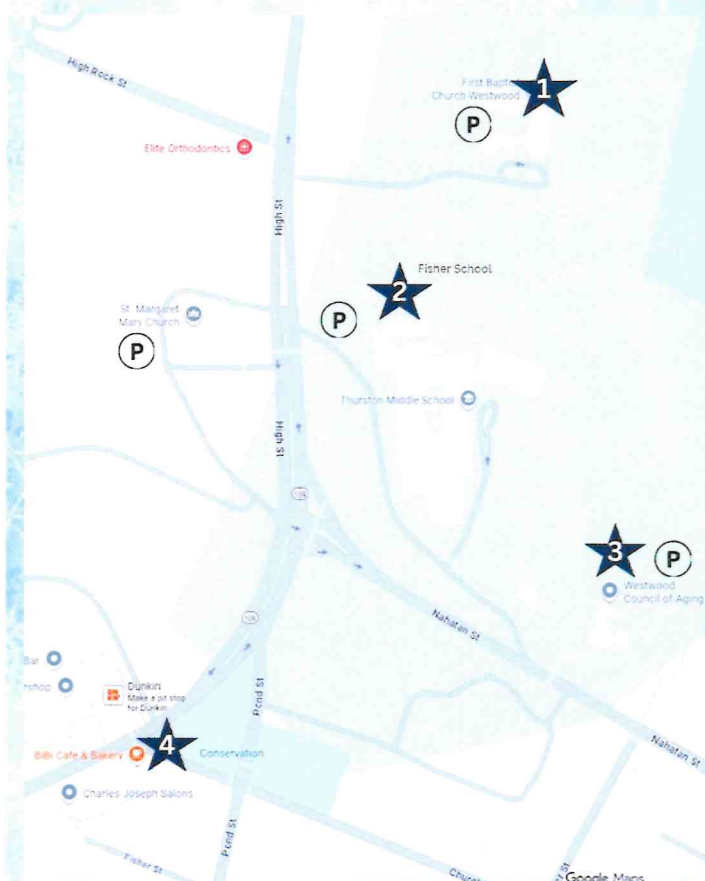
Our church is delighted to be participating in the Third Annual Westwood Holiday Walkabout that day, too.



A few of our crafters making items for this year's Holly Fair.

Third Annual Westwood Holiday Walkabout

Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025



1 *First Baptist Church Holly Fair*

808 High Street, 9AM - 2PM

Holiday crafts, baked goods, attic treasures,
and jewelry.

Donuts and hot lunch at the Silver Beaver Cafe.
Girl Scout cookies for sale by local troop.

2 *Westwood Artists' Market*

Historic Fisher School

830 High Street, 9AM - 2PM

Local artisans selling hand-crafted jewelry,
photography, paintings, pottery, and knits.

3 *Winter Photos with Santa & Elsa*

Westwood Young Women's Club

Gazebo @ Westwood Council on Aging

60 Nahatan Street, 9:30AM - 12:30PM

Meet Santa & Elsa and get a fun,
holiday craft to make at home!

4 *BiBi Cafe & Bakery*

1 Church Street, 8AM - 4 PM

Write a letter to Santa and mail it in
the special Mailbox to ensure
delivery.

The Mass Appeal Boston a capella singers will be back performing!

Morning Worship Service

November 16th



The Chancel Choir practicing "As the Deer"
for morning worship.

Journey Worship gathering

Sunday, November 16th



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF WESTWOOD

808 HIGH STREET • WESTWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02090



SUNDAY AFTERNOON
JOURNEY WORSHIP
12:30 PM
NOVEMBER 16, 2025

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR
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EMAIL: PASTOR@FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

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Welcome to FBC's new afternoon gathering! We are prayerfully excited about the Lord's vision unfolding here. May you sense the love and peace of God. May the Holy Spirit give you ease of heart and mind as we worship together in song, prayer, and reflection.

TODAY'S FOCUS: Keeping our eyes open for those we can thank, whether friend, family or stranger!

(Thank you, God! Appreciation to Murry Merrill, Director of Music; Jan Randlett, Pianist; and FBC's Journey Worship team.)

THE REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

Opening Prayer

Counting our Blessings

Time of Devotion:

Worship Medley (insert): *He Has Made Me Glad;*
This Is The Day

Blessed Be The Name of The Lord # 427

Thankful that God does not change!

Readings: Number 23:19, Psalm 33:11, Psalm 102:27,
Hebrews 6:17, James 1:17

Sharing Thoughts

Prayer Requests

Closing Worship: Through It All #452



2025 Blessing Baskets

This was our 2nd year working with the Kouri Team (Keller Williams Real Estate) and Neroli Mercato restaurant in Westwood to provide Thanksgiving meals for local families by contributing Blessing Baskets.

Our goal this year was to fill 15 baskets. Missions offered to donate an additional 5, making it a total of 20 baskets!

Thank you to all who donated items; to Jan R., Stacey, and Violet for assembling all the donations into baskets; and to Rev. Shelton for delivering them.





Pastoral Care Meetings (in-person or virtual meetings):

For meetings with the Pastor
please

email: pastor@fbcwestwood.org
or call (781) 461-0297.

Pastoral Care meetings are held
on Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday between 1:30 - 4:00 pm.

The Pastor will try to
accommodate other times on
these days.

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

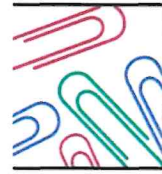


**The Pastor
Will Be Off**

Pastor Catherine will be off the
following days in December:

Mon., Dec. 1st;

Mon, Dec. 8th - Wed., Dec. 10th



CHURCH OFFICE

Monday - Friday

8:00 am - 1:30 pm

Donna can be reached

by calling

781-461-1730 or

by emailing

office@fbcwestwood.org



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

Mon., Dec. 1st - Wed., Dec. 3rd;

Mon., Dec. 8th, Tues., Dec. 9th & Fri.,
Dec. 12th;

Mon., Dec. 15th;

Mon., Dec. 22nd & Fri., Dec. 26th



Choir Rehearsal

You are invited
to join the
Chancel Choir
rehearsals on Monday nights at 6:30
p.m. in the Music room.



In preparation for the Advent season, the brass cross and candlesticks on the communion table have recently been polished.

A special thank you to the member who polished these for us.

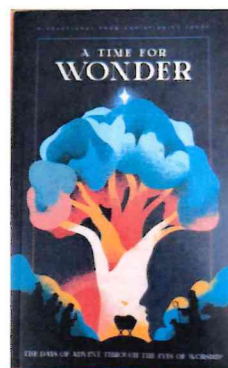
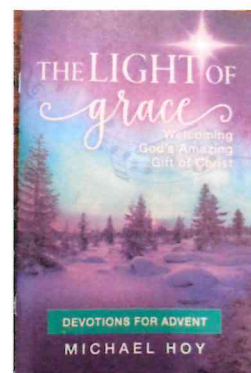
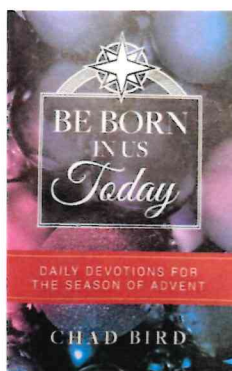
*Please remember to wear gloves or use a cloth to handle them whenever they are moved.



Crafters' Group

The December meetings will be on Wednesdays, December 3rd and 17th. They meet in room 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at office@fbcwestwood.org.



Advent Daily Devotionals

This Advent, we have a variety of daily devotionals available to choose from. They were from past Advent seasons:

- *"Be Born in Us Today. Daily devotions for the season of Advent."* by Chad Bird.
- *"The Light of Grace. Welcoming God's Amazing Gift of Christ"* by Michael Hoy.
- *"A Time For Wonder."*
- *"Hope-Full Living"*

Copies will be available in the Narthex and Reception room beginning on Sunday, November 30th. Or, you may contact the church office at office@fbcwestwood.org (or call 781-461-1730) and leave a message indicating which devotional you would like to receive.



Additional bakers are needed, please contact Sunny O'Malley to volunteer your delicious morsels at 781-326-7799 or sunnyomalley75@gmail.

We are accepting Attic Treasures items until this Sunday (Nov. 30th). Donations can be left on the stage in Fellowship hall. If you need help please contact Vickie DeVoy.

Please remember, we cannot accept T.V.'s, computer equipment, dehumidifiers, typewriters or air conditioners.

Flyers for the Holly Fair are available in the Narthex and Reception room for church family to distribute in local stores, share at club meetings or hand out to friends and neighbors.

*Vickie DeVoy,
Holly Fair Chairperson*



Sign-up sheets for December and January are posted on the Reception room bulletin board. This is your opportunity to volunteer.

Joyful Song & Prayer at The Ellis Senior Residence

Pastor Catherine and Jan Randlett host service and times of musical fun for residents at The Ellis Rehab & Nursing Center, every 2nd Sunday, starting at 2:00 p.m. located at 135 Ellis Ave in Norwood, MA.

The residents and staff join in singing hymns, Oldies but Goodies, & participate in prayer.

*Come join us at the Ellis for our next monthly gathering on Sunday,
December 14th.*



"Home For The Holidays"

**Sunday, December 14th
4:00 p.m.**

**First Baptist Church,
Westwood**

**Featuring the Westwood Ringers
performing many of your
favorite carols and Christmas
songs.**

**- with special guest artist and
former ringer,
Kat Craven, flautist.**

**- Free and open to the public
Bring your family and friends!**



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.

Journey Worship gathering

We will not be meeting in December
but be sure to join us in January.



If you would like
2026 offering
envelopes and
haven't already

requested them, please either
contact Wendy Lewis, the Financial
Secretary, or the church office at
781-461-1730.



**Church Council
and Staff meeting**
Reception Room

December 16th
7:00pm

Newsletter DEADLINE

Material for January's "Message" is
due to the church office by:

Wednesday, December 17th

Information can be emailed to:
office@fbcwestwood.org



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.



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.



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.

Another option we offer is through using Venmo. Below is our QR code that you can scan.



Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour is a great time to enjoy catching up with others and having some goodies, too, following morning 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 the Church office at office@fbcwestwood.org or call 781-461-1730.



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

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



Reports Due Date

Church Council members and Committee Chairs' Annual Reports are due in the church office by Friday, **January 9, 2026.**

Please submit reports by email (as a *Microsoft Word* attachment) to www.office@fbcwestwood.org. or on a flash drive to the office. Thank you.

