

# THE OPEN DOORS

Newsletter of the Ashby Congregational Church  
December 2025



From the Pastor

As we prepare to enjoy the holiday of Thanksgiving, let us be sure to keep in mind all those who may not have as much to be thankful for as we do. We are blessed to live in a community where we are somewhat insulated from the desperate needs that are found not that far from us in cities and communities that have far more poverty than we witness here in Ashby. There are many charities that are asking for help, and it is not always possible to give to all. Please take the time to pray and decide to help in whatever way you can.

I would like to let everyone know that the Veterans Memorial project has been completed. Thanks to the organizations and individuals who generously donated money, all those Veterans whose graves did not have a stone marker now have one. As far as we know, we have found them all. If anyone is aware of some that we missed, please let me know and we will see that it is done. All those who served our nation deserve to be remembered.

We are halfway done with our Bible Study; "The Message of Jesus." It is a study of what Jesus said, not what He did. It brings light to the meaning of Jesus' words and how to apply them in today's world.

On November 30, we will begin the season of Advent, the time to prepare ourselves for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This Holy Season is meant to be one of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Let us gather together and ready ourselves during this time and always keep in mind those who are hurting.

May God's Blessing be on all during this Holiday Season.

Blessings,  
Pastor Ken

Sunday Morning Worship Service: 10:00 am





## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD Samaritan's Purse Project



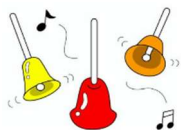
Each year our church's participation in Operation Christmas Child has grown. This year was no exception. There were 64 shoeboxes received, which is an increase over last year's total all due to the generosity of those who supported this effort. These were blessed by Pastor Ken, the children and the congregation.

Your shoeboxes packed with toys, games, school and art supplies and personal items will be sent to needy children around the world along with the message of the Gospel.

If you used the tracking label on your box, please let us know where it was sent. We will be posting the destinations on a world map in the fellowship hall.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

The children continue to learn about different places in the Bible and the event that occurred there as well as the significance of that event. Check the bulletin board to see their travels.



They also are preparing for the Tree Lighting on the Common where they will be playing the hand bells.

The Children's Christmas Pageant will be Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:00am during the worship service. They will be telling the story entitled "The Night Before Christmas".



## COAT DRIVE

The **Jordan's Furniture Coats for Kids & Families Drive** is underway and will continue until January 2026. During this period, you can drop off gently used coats at church and leave them in the foyer on the side table, or on the back table in the Fellowship Hall. A member of the Missions Committee will bring the coats to Jordan's Furniture to be cleaned by Anton's Cleaners and go out for distribution to those in need.

## MISSION'S NEWS

**MISSIONS**

*God at Work,  
Faith in Action*

The Missions committee made a \$500 donation to Operation Smile.  
Our dollars at work once again! Praise be to God!

Your Missions Committee,  
Linda Mikkola, chairperson, Jessica Johnson, Peggy Mosher

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH – FOOD COLLECTION



**Saturday November 22<sup>nd</sup>. 9am – 12 noon**

We are collecting food donations for Thanksgiving baskets which will be distributed to our neighbors who are having a difficult time. Items needed include canned vegetables, pie crust, pie filling, stuffing, etc.

Please, no perishables or expired food.

You can drop off your donation at the church

## THE GIVING TREE

The Christmas tree in the foyer is set to receive your donations of gloves, mittens, hats, and scarfs for the Christmas gifts. This year you will find tags on the tree with the sex and ages of the children we are collecting for.



Please have your donation in by Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.



**FIRE AND POLICE TOY DRIVE**  
**Friday, November 28<sup>th</sup> 9am–12 noon**



The Fire and Police departments are having a “Fill a Vehicle” toy drive.  
You can drop off your donation at the Public Safety.

## **CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING ON THE COMMON**

**November 30<sup>th</sup> - 4 pm**

Join us for some carols and our Sunday School children playing the bells at the lighting of the Ashby Christmas tree on the Common Bandstand.



Refreshments will follow in the First Parish Church.



## **CHRISTMAS CONCERT by THE ASHBY BAND**

**Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> 4pm Ashby Congregational Church**

The Ashby Band will perform a Christmas concert.

A free-will offering meal will follow in the fellowship hall.



## **BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

**Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> 7:30pm**

The Blue Christmas or Longest Night service will be on December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30pm in the church sanctuary. This service is for those who find Christmas not to be the joyous occasion that others enjoy. It is a time of quiet reflection, music and prayer.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES**

**December 24<sup>th</sup> 8pm & 11pm**

There will be two Christmas Eve services

Hope to see you there!



## Prayer is Powerful



**1 Chronicles 16:11** – “Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.”

**Matthew 7:7** – “Ask, and it will be given unto you; seek and you will find; knock; and it will be open to you.”

There are no guarantees in life. We will be faced with many moments of affliction and pain that requires us to seek the Lord as our refuge and strength.

An integral part of our church is the prayer chain. We lift up the needs of not only the people in our church family, but also the needs of others. Through prayer, we often ask for Gods healing touch and divine intervention for individuals and their families.

We are thankful for those who take the time to pray. This act of love and compassion is a powerful expression of faith and hope.

### RECIPE – Savory Cracker Snack Mix

Ingredients (makes 4-1/2 cups)

- 1-1/2 cups potato sticks
- 1-1/2 cups cheddar-flavored snack crackers
- 1-1/2 cups sourdough pretzel nuggets
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1-1/2 teaspoons sesame seeds
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried minced garlic
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried minced onion
- 1-1/2 teaspoons poppy seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

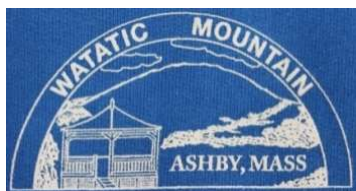


Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine potato sticks, crackers and pretzels. In a small saucepan, melt butter; stir in remaining ingredients. Drizzle over cracker mixture and toss to coat.

Spread in a greased 15x10x1-inch backing pan. Bake until crisp and lightly browned, 10-15 minutes, stirring every 4 minutes.

Cool completely in pan on wire rack. Store in airtight container.





## **SWEATSHIRT&TEE-SHIRT SALE -** **ASHBYCONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**



\$24 - Crew Neck Sweatshirt  
\$30 – Hooded no-zip Sweatshirt  
\$38 – Hooded full-zip Sweatshirt

\$12 – Short sleeve Tee Shirt  
\$18 – Long sleeve Tee Shirt

*Youth & Adult  
Sizes Available*

(Extra charge for 2X and above)

There are many colors available

To Preorder Call Cathy at: 978-386-5502



## **RADA Cutlery**

### **GROUP: ASHBY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

Shop online [www.RadaFundraising.com](http://www.RadaFundraising.com) and search for our group name

or

Save on shipping costs – pick up a catalog at church or view online. Complete the order sheet and submit with payment to me at church or call me to arrange a drop off of payment.

It's not just cutlery! There are Seasonings, Marinades, Gourmet Popcorn, Cheeseballs, Party Dips (you may have sampled a couple at coffee hour), No Bake Cheesecake Mixes, Sweet Dips, Soups and Sauces, Kitchen Tools, Grilling tools and various cookbooks.

Any questions, call Cathy at 978-386-5502

## **CALENDAR of EVENTS**

### **NOVEMBER**

#### **Thanksgiving Baskets – Food Collection**

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> - 9-11am

#### **Fire and Police Toy Drive**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> - 9am-Noon

#### **Tree Lighting on the Common**

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> - 4pm

#### **First Sunday of Advent**

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>

### **DECEMBER**

#### **Christmas Band Concert**

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> – 4pm (A free-will offering meal to follow in the Fellowship Hall)

#### **Blue Christmas Service**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> - 7:30pm

#### **Children's Christmas Pageant**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> – 10:00am during the worship service

#### **Christmas Eve Services (there will be two)**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> – 8pm and 11pm

#### **The Open Doors**

Ashby Congregational Church

New Ipswich Rd - Beside the Common

P. O. Box 126, Ashby, MA 01431