

## **ADVENT & CHRISTMAS @ GROVE CHURCH**

**December 1—1st Sunday in Advent**

Worship at 9:00 & 11:15

**December 8**

9am Traditional Service

11:15 am Rooted with Christmas Cantata

"The Silence and The Sound" By Heather Sorenson

**December 12—**

4:30-6:30 pm Community Dinner

6:45 pm—Christmas Cantata

**December 15 –**

3:00-5:00 pm Christmas Caroling

**December 22—**

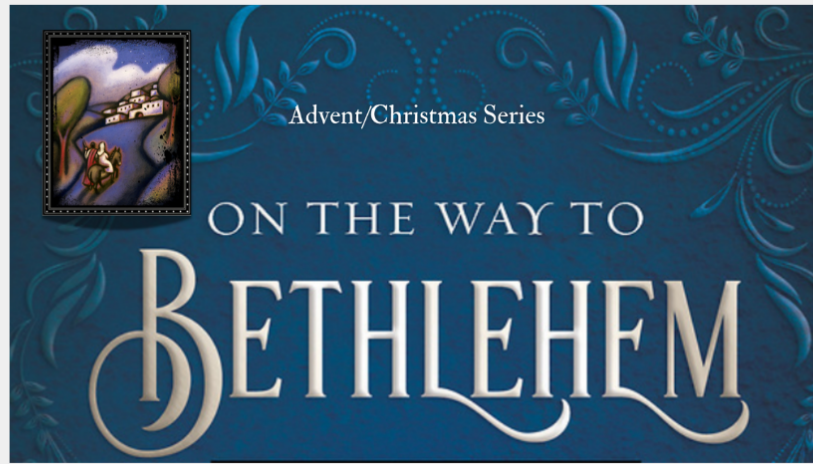
7:00 pm Quiet Christmas Service

### **Christmas Eve Services**

3:00 pm—Celebration Service for All Ages

7:00 pm—Traditional Candlelight Service w/ Communion

9:00 pm—Rooted Contemporary Service



Greetings Friends!

Have you ever been on a journey? Ever traveled somewhere different than where you are from? What was the experience like for you? What did you notice? How was your life impacted?

I have lived in quite a few different homes and traveled to different continents and every one of these places has been filled with people who are all so uniquely different from one another with their own stories and customs and cultures. And yet despite our differences some things always remain the same- we are all longing for purpose and community. Every place I have visited or lived has transformed me in some way if I allowed myself to pay attention and soak it all in.

This Advent Season we will embark on a journey together. As we make our way to Bethlehem to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we will make some important stops along the way. By focusing on the places that shaped the path of Jesus' birth narrative, we learn more about why his life, ministry, and death became one of the most significant narratives of human history. Rome's occupation shaped the context of the lives of those whom Jesus championed and to whom he gave hope. Jerusalem's religious practices shaped an alternative vision of the new Jerusalem—a kin-dom of peace—that Jesus would teach. Nazareth's simple and interdependent nature shaped his relationships and the joy of community. And Bethlehem's history connects the spirit of generosity in ways that underscore the gospel of love we have inherited. And so, we are going to go on an Advent journey to these places "on the way to Bethlehem." Each week takes us to a place and a significant event that leads us ultimately to a stable and a manger.

I really hope you will join us for this journey and share about your own unique experiences along the way.

Looking Forward to Journeying With You,

Pastor Stacy



**On Sunday, December 15th from 3:00-5:00 pm,  
Grove will be spreading Christmas Cheer by caroling.**



**Would you like to come along?  
Please use the QR code to sign up.**

**See Mike or Jen Hardie or email  
youth@grovechurch.org for more information.**



**Do you have family and/or friends that would enjoy  
hearing a couple familiar Christmas songs at their  
homes this year? We are hoping to have a few groups  
go out and spread Christmas cheer on Sunday  
afternoon 12/15!**

**Let Mike or Jen Hardie know if  
you have anyone in mind.  
email youth@grovechurch.org**

## **CHRISTMAS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE**

### **Salvation Army Bell Ringing**

Start off the Christmas season by ringing bells for the Salvation Army on Saturday, December 7. We have 2 sites in Exton this year. Boscov's and Hobby Lobby are available for 2 hour shifts starting with 10am-12noon and ending with 6pm-8pm. Share a shift with a friend or family member and celebrate the season in this meaningful way.

For more information or to sign up, contact Sue Thomas at [missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org](mailto:missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org) or contact the church office.

### **Christmas Food Appeal**

Grove has a long history of providing food for our neighbors in need at Christmas. Through the generous donations from our congregation each year, we are able to provide \$50 grocery gift cards to about 80 families through CYWA, Chester County Children, Youth and Family Services as well as families in our community who contact Grove for help. If you'd like to be part of this ministry, you can send a check to the office or put it in the offering plate on Sunday now through December 8. Please put Christmas Food Appeal in the memo line. You can also give through the giving link on Grove's website. Choose one, select "other" then put "Christmas Food Appeal" in the "fund desired" box. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Thomas at [missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org](mailto:missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org) or call the church office. Please help us continue this great tradition!

### **Christmas Gift Appeal**

If you would like to bring the joy of Christmas to a child in need, please consider donating to this ministry. With the funds collected, we purchase store and VISA gift cards, allowing parents to purchase gifts for their family. These families are identified through CYWA, Chester County Children, Youth and Family Services as well as some families in our community who have reached out to Grove for assistance. We will be accepting donations now through December 8. You can send a check to the office or put it in the offering plate on Sunday. Please put "Christmas Gift Appeal" in the memo line. You can also give through the giving link on Grove's website. Choose "other" and then put "Christmas Gift Appeal" in the "fund desired" box. We have another opportunity in November through the Prison Ministry of Chester County to provide gifts in the amount of \$50-\$75.

If you are interested in this program or have any questions, please contact Richard and Joanna Nichols at [missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org](mailto:missionandoutreach@grovechurch.org) or call the church office.

# Christmas Cantata

"THE SILENCE AND THE SOUND"  
BY HEATHER SORENSON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH AT  
11:15 AM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11TH AT  
6:45 PM

GROVE CHURCH.ORG  
490 W. BOOT RD., WEST CHESTER, PA



churchtrac



Visit Churchtrac to see all the activities at Grove and much more.  
Register to see your giving, update your address, phone number and more!

# COMMUNITY DINNER

Thursday, December 12th

4:30-6:30 pm

We will be serving

Meatloaf and all the goodies!

Then enjoy Grove's Cantata at 6:45



Join us on  
Dec. 29th  
at 9:00 for  
Brunch and  
10:00 for  
Worship.

Scan the QR code to register.



## Nurture Happenings

During December the Nurture Team will be visiting and delivering small Christmas gift bags to our homebound members. These were assembled in early November and contain a cute homemade item as well as a few sweet treats. In addition, the Christmas cards signed back in early November will be mailed shortly as well as cards to our college students at their home addresses. In addition, cards carrying our Christmas greetings will be distributed to the 22 members of our Preschool staff.

The next meeting of the Nurture Team will be Sunday, January 12 at 12:45 in Fellowship Hall. We have some exciting initiatives to discuss and invite anyone interested to join us.

### We've noticed....

Groves filled all the slots on Election Day to serve coffee and snacks to voters who came to our building. Thank you to all of you who put a face to Grove Church and offered hospitality that day! Thanks to Betty Traver for organizing, and helpers Phil and Alison Ray, Bob and Carol Moore, Nicole Paul, Jennifer Geyer, Syd Raihall, Mary Jane West, Linda Seybold, Penny Arndt, Marshall Mattie, Richard and Joanna Nichols, Lilian Rubin, Becky Aaker, Denise Shelton, Chris Yarnall, Nancy Peterka, Susan Parno and Kathy Parker.

**We need your help!** Our online worshippers are seeing an empty sanctuary on Sunday mornings. When you get to the sanctuary for the 9am service, if you notice that the first few rows are empty, would you consider moving up to the front? This would offer a more accurate picture of our congregation during the 9:00 worship service AND our online worshippers might recognize you and enjoy seeing you!



**JANUARY 17-19**

**JOIN US FOR...**

**FUN FOR  
ALL  
AGES!**

**GROVE  
POCONO  
WINTER  
RETREAT**

**FAMILIES  
AND  
SINGLES  
WELCOME!**



**ACTIVITIES**

**FELLOWSHIP, GAMES, SLEDDING, HIKING, AND  
MORE!**

**REGISTER USING THE LINK**

**QUESTIONS? PLEASE SEE GLEN LEWIS  
[POCONO@GROVECHURCH.ORG](mailto:POCONO@GROVECHURCH.ORG)**

Registration is now open for the Pocono Winter Retreat! This event is perfect for singles, couples, and families with children of all ages. Attendees will enjoy delicious meals, snacks, fellowship, games, sledding, hiking, and much more! Most of the weekend is unstructured, but there will be a variety of optional scheduled activities. We had 35 people last year; our goal for this year is 60. Please help us get there!

Don't miss out on this wonderful weekend! Here are some highlights from last year's attendees.

"Sledding!"

"Playing in the snow"

"Getting to know my church friends better"

"Beautiful walks in the snowy woods"

"Playing card and board games"

"Relaxing in the peacefulness of this remote place"



Scan the QR code to sign up. See Glen Lewis if you have any questions.



# December 2024 Faith Formation

## For Families

### *Where Have We Seen God?*

God is all around us but sometimes we don't notice the ways God is showing up for us. This family activity will keep us on the lookout. Noting in the small journals provided, where you have seen God during the day as you gather for a meal, story time, or bedtime This is a different way of marking time during Advent. Pastor Eva will have the journals on hand for you to take home to begin your journey.

## For Adults

You can join the book study of our Advent theme for 2024. Discussion groups will meet on Sunday morning at 10:10 AM in the Youth Lounge on the second floor beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>. The second group will meet by Zoom on Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM. Send your email to [pastoreva@grovechurch.org](mailto:pastoreva@grovechurch.org) to get the link. Books are available on the welcome desk in the Church Lobby and cost \$10.00. Scholarships are available.

## For Children

Children ages 5 -12 can explore *On the Way to Bethlehem* on Sunday mornings at 10:10AM in Room 206. A variety of mediums are available for children to express the bible verses each week.



## The Giving Tree

This annual project serves the needs of children in our area. Find this tree under the monitor in the hallway. Everyone is invited to bring hats, scarves, gloves and mittens, or pajamas in children's sizes from infant to age 12. The items gathered will go to The Friend's Association and Coatesville Youth and Women's Alliance. Give what you can to bless a child this winter.

## Christmas Card Exchange

Once again, we will offer a way to share Christmas Greetings with the church family through our Christmas Card Box. It will be set up just inside the Lobby double doors. Leave your cards in the large basket and they will be sorted alphabetically by last name. Consider donating the postage money you will save to Mission and Outreach. Mark the memo on your check or online giving as Mission. Thank you!



**This year's Rise Against Hunger event is scheduled at Grove on April 6, 2025.**

So just what is this Rise Against Hunger event? This is an event at Grove in which everyone can participate and we need all your hands on deck. So, add it to your calendar now!

For all ages from 6 to 600, there are jobs for everyone, standing or seated. For those under 6, we will have babysitting services available.

If you have not joined us before, here's what you can expect. In Asbury Hall there are multiple stations. The first is the funnels where groups of volunteers pour veggies, protein, a vitamin pack, and rice through a funnel into a bag held by another volunteer. They put the bag into a box, collecting 5-6 bags, and call for a runner (our youth are perfect for this job) to carry the open bags to the weighing table. The weighers make sure each bag is within a certain weight range and add or remove rice as needed. The runners are called again to carry the bags to the sealers with their hot machines to seal the bags. Runners then carry the sealed bags to the boxers who pack 36 bags per box, seal the boxes, load them on a pallet, then back onto the truck. They are then taken to the RAH warehouse where they are joined with other meals and sent overseas to those in need. Last year RAH distributed 4.3 total meals .

During Grove's 2024 RAH event, we packaged 22,000 meals that were sent to hungry communities around the world as part of the global movement to end hunger. Funding for this event comes from our Oreo sale in January, the Grove budget, and donations from members of our congregation. With your participation and support, we hope to reach our 2025 goal to package 22,000 meals.

Any questions, please email [riseagainsthunger@grovechurch.org](mailto:riseagainsthunger@grovechurch.org).

# Parents Night Out Fun



# Youth Group and Kid Connection Groups





**DECEMBER**

## Grove Youth Choir & Ministry Schedule

### Sunday, December 1st

12:45-2:30 pm Youth Choir rehearsal  
2:30-4:00 pm Youth Group

### Sunday, December 8th

Cantata presentation at 11:15 am  
12:45-2:15 pm Youth Choir rehearsal  
2:15-3:30 pm Youth Group

### Thursday, December 12th

Cantata Presentation at 6:45 pm

### Sunday, December 15th

12:45-2:00 pm Youth Choir  
2:00-3:00 Fellowship  
3:00-5:00 pm Caroling  
5:00-7:00 pm Christmas Party

### Sunday, December 22nd

Youth Choir present 3 Advent songs  
at the 11:15 am service  
15 min Youth Choir rehearsal after service



## Kids Connection Choir & Crew

This ministry is for first through fifth graders!  
Kids Connection Choir and Crew will meet twice a month for rehearsal, fellowship, & games. One of those weeks this group will connect with our youth group as they join together for games. All are welcome to attend choir or a crew meeting or both!



### Schedule

#### Sunday, December 1st

2:00-3:00 pm Kid Connection Choir rehearsal  
3:00-4:00 pm Kid Connection Crew meets

#### Sunday, December 15th

2:15-3:00 pm Kid Connection Choir rehearsal  
3:00-5:00 pm Kid Connection and parents are invited to join us in caroling in our community and at family and friend homes

# **Christmas Eve Services**

**3:00 pm—Celebration Service  
for All Ages**

**7:00 pm—Traditional Candelight  
Service w/ Communion**

**9:00 pm—Rooted  
Contemporary Service**