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January 3, 2024

Dear Friends of Second Church,

I don't care what the ball in Times Square says.

For me, the new year doesn't officially begin until I finally run out of fruitcake.

Or maybe it's when there isn't any more cheese.

It's one of those two events.

We go through the egg nog early in our house — it's one of the first signs of the season, when everyone is humming "It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas," and every SUV you pass seems to have a tree tied to the roof. Liz shows up with egg nog, and everyone else each gets their thimble of it to enjoy while I get the funnel from the basement to prepare my draught.

Much as we enjoy it, though, we usually only get it once—quickly and resolutely marching on to the other stuff on the grand list of Seasonal Delights.

That's us in December, and it's not so much a calendar thing as a state of mind that comes for a season, offering one good thing after another.

And so it continues, until the morning when you decide to sneak a piece of fruitcake for breakfast, only to discover that there's only just a bit left...and you realize that, come to think of it, the house seems both unusually quiet and oddly reconstituted: someone has placed the throw pillows back on the couch...the dining room smells vaguely of Pledge...nobody seems to be sneak-charging some device of theirs in what everyone knows is **your** charger.

For a moment as you wander around downstairs, you wonder if perhaps it was the Rapture. And then suddenly it dawns on you: *It's 2024. Everyone else is at school.*

The Season of Delights has ended.

We are back to our regular programming.

Don't get me wrong: I am mostly enthusiastic about the regular programming.

New Years are always full of hope and purpose, with all their visions of arrivals yet to come after journeys yet to be undertaken. How all that will fit (or not) into the lives we've built for ourselves—that regular programming—is a question for another day. Today it is enough just to get started.

I love that, too.

But it's hard to close the parenthesis of Christmas, just the same. To put the ornaments back in the box and get all the trimmings back down to the basement.

Each year, it teaches us all over again to enjoy the good things of life, most especially one another, and to find joy, peace, and an anchor for ourselves in learning to give and receive.

It lets us tell the story of God's great love for us in ways the heart seems to recognize instantly.

I have to believe that our regular programming will be all the better for it. I know mine always is.

See you in church,

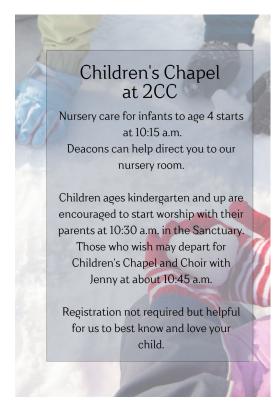


Sermons are always available online:

2CCSermons

If you can't make it in person, join us via **Livestream for our 10:30 a.m.** Sunday service.

Click here to learn more about our 2024 Stewardship Campaign





Click here to register for Children's Chapel

Email Jenny for more information

Mark your calendars...

Mindful Monday Winter Yoga with Jill Ernst

Second Congregational Church BYOM (Bring Your Own Mat)



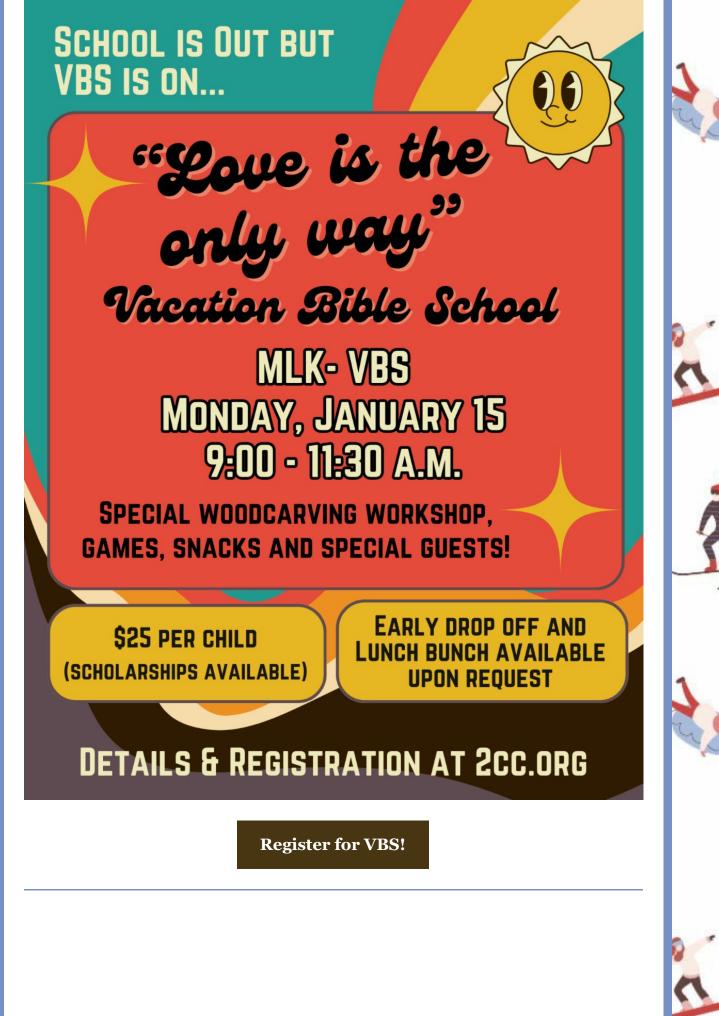
6 weeks for \$60 or drop in fee of \$20 per class Scholarships available and childcare upon request

Email Jenny@2cc.org for more information











Coffee and Connection Speaker Series resumes in 2024...

Saturday, January 27 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Join chaplains Kate Noonan and Jenny Byxbee for women of all ages and stages to connect and for some self care. During our time together we will learn centering techniques, meditate, be inspired by scripture and leave behind what doesn't serve our higher selves



Email Jenny for more

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful **Christmas Eve!**







































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