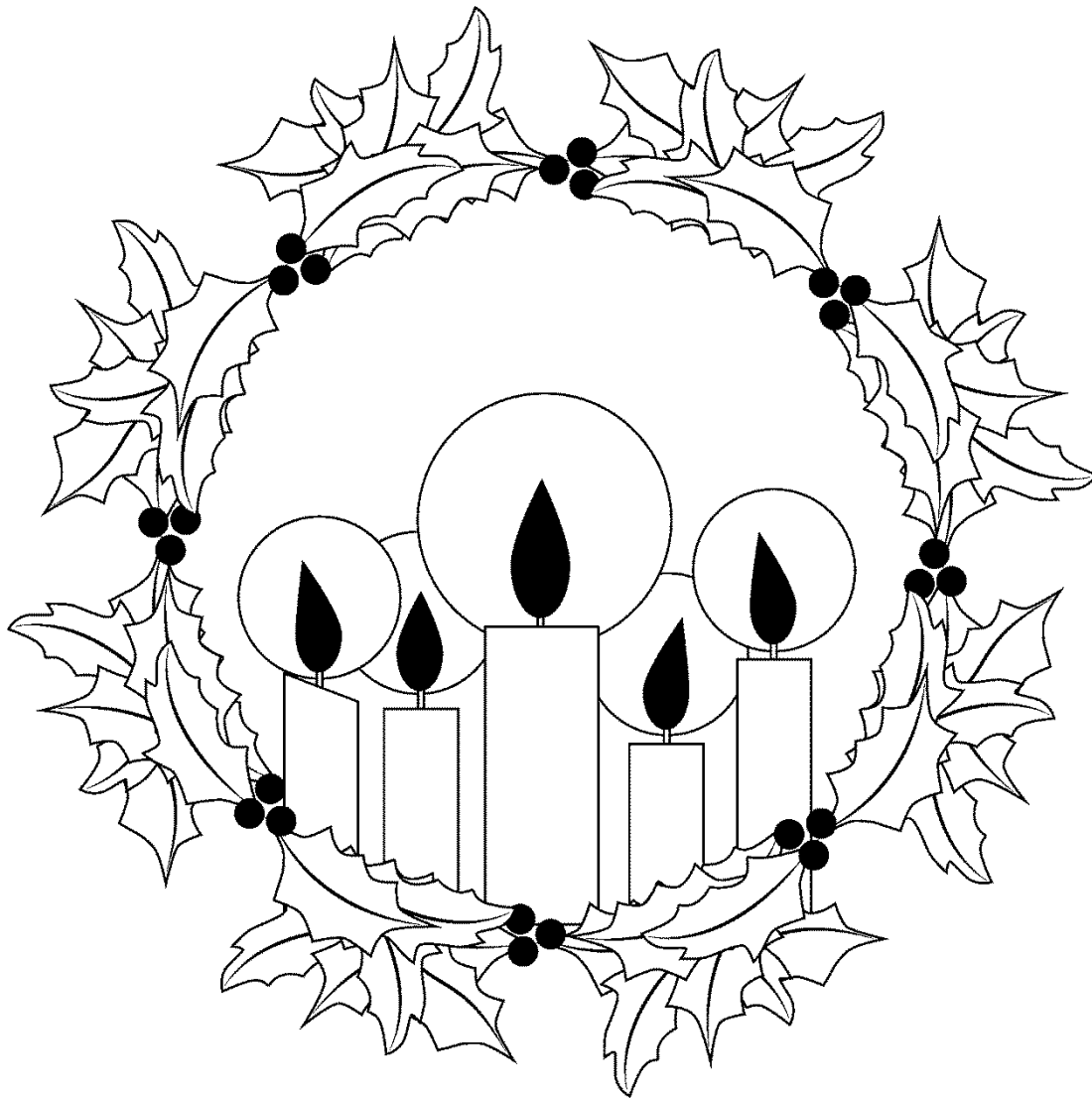


The Messenger

December 2016



**The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey**

The Church: Proudly Proclaiming Christ since A.D. 33

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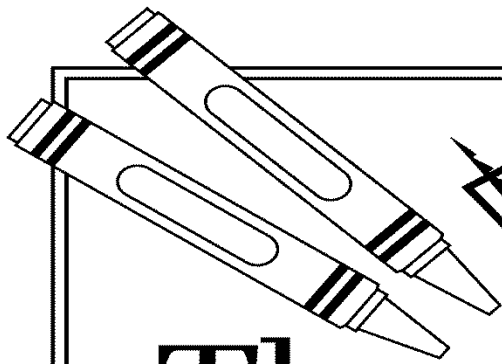
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Pastor: The Rev. Marc A. Stutzel
Director of Music: Argine Safari
Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance
Musician: Fred Messner
Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse

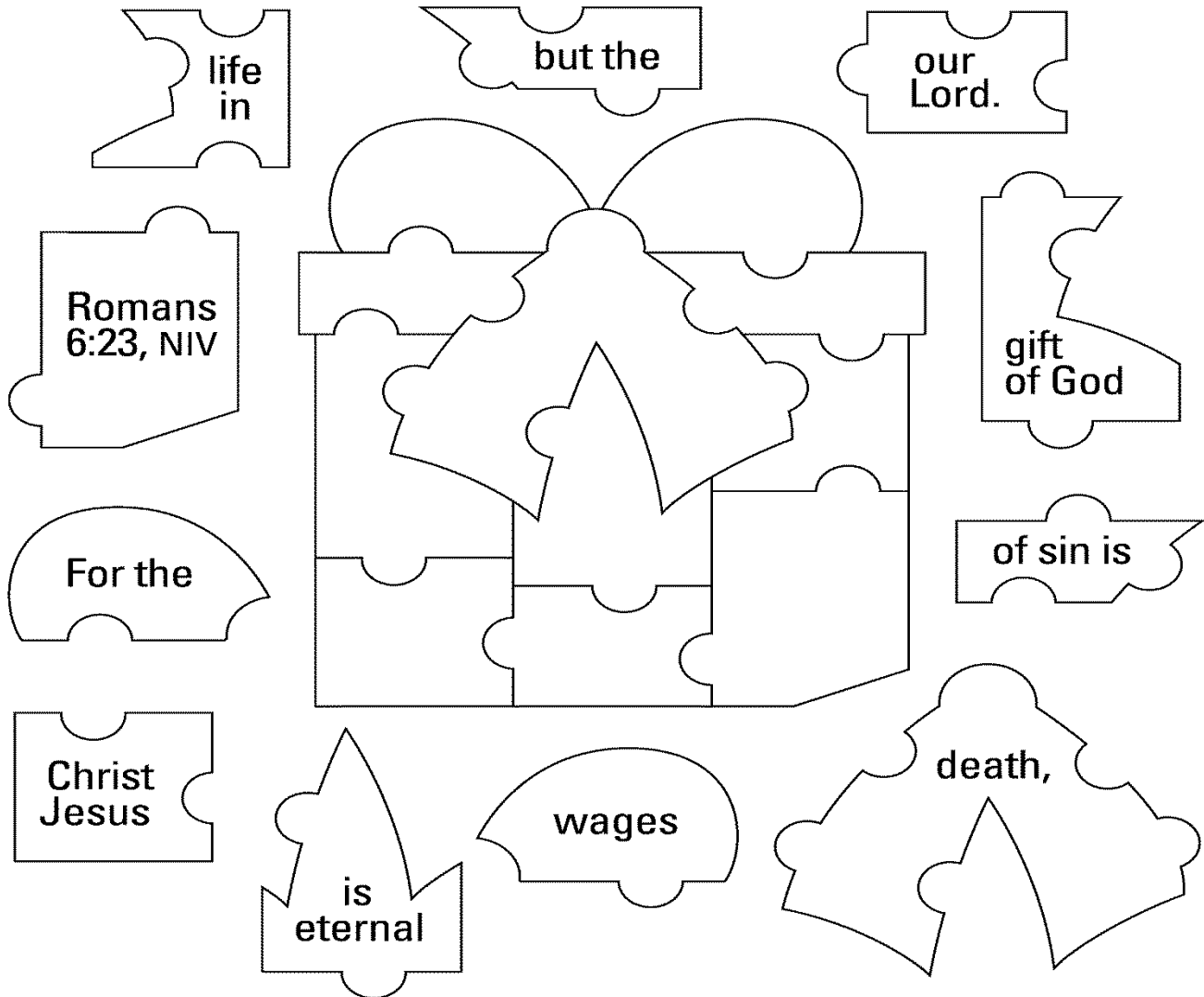


PUZZLE

The greatest gift

Gift-giving is a fun Christmas tradition.
What very special gift has God given to you?

Directions: Write the words from each puzzle piece on the matching blank piece of the gift-shaped puzzle.



Answer: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23, NIV



“Help it happen!”

It's hard to believe that the Advent season is upon us. I feel like we just finished our wonderful God's Work, Our Hands Project (October 16th). Where has the time gone?

Please make sure you read the entire *Messenger* and the bulletins every Sunday to hear what is being planned, when they will happen and how you can help.

Our Stewardship drive is winding down . . . if you have made your 2017 pledge, I thank you. If you haven't done it yet, there is still time. We use our pledges as the basis for our annual budget just as you would at your own home. The more information we have, the more accurate the budget becomes. Every bit helps!

Now is also a great time to ensure that your 2016 pledge is up to date and think about some additional year-end giving. We have many good things happening here; we welcome additional support to make sure we balance our budget. We are currently behind our budget, so could use the extra help. Now is the time for us all to consider how we can help continue to do God's work (and still pay our expenses).

Just a bit about our Church's budget process: All 2017 committee budgets are due to Finance Committee by December 1st. Finance will then build and propose a budget and bring it to Council. Once approved, we will bring it to the congregation for a vote at our Annual Meeting. Stay tuned!

Last but not least, in late October Pat Daub and I were pleased to attend a meeting with our NJ ELCA Bishop, Tracie Bartholomew, and other northern NJ Church Council officers. It was the second one I had ever attended (and been invited to). The Bishop was interested in talking to us about the ever-changing church landscape and how we can adapt our ministries to reach the younger generations and busy people who aren't currently attending a church regularly. It was also helpful in introducing us to our counterparts in other churches. I am sharing the research with Council so we can adapt and better serve our families and the surrounding communities.

Thank you again for your participation and support this past year. I'm looking forward to an inspiring Advent season, led by Pastor Marc and our wonderful musicians and singers.

Yours in Christ, Carla Hoenigmann, President
carlah716@cs.com, 201-391-7843

Great News from CLCW

Christ Lutheran Church Women thanks you for the Christmas presents . . .

A special thank you to those who have picked a name of one of the needy kids from DYFS or the Mentoring Moms program. By now, they have all been selected and you are finishing up your shopping. Once again, we have brought the names of 65 kids from the Bergen Volunteer Center to the congregation and you have responded generously. For the kids from DYFS you may be providing their only gifts.

The Mentoring Moms gifts (\$25 max value gift) were due by November 27, and the gifts for the kids from DYFS (\$50-60 value) are all due no later than December 4.

Please remember:

Wrap your gifts,

Tag them with the recipient's name and Family #

Bring them back to the Narthex.

If you still want to donate cash or Target gift cards, please contact Christine Badame (201-505-1909). The Volunteer Center uses them to buy gifts for people who were not matched with donors. A final report will be available in the January issue of *The Messenger*.

Save the Date! The CLCW Annual Meeting

The meeting will be on Sunday, January 15th, 2017 starting right after the second service. We invite all confirmed female members of the church to come and enjoy lunch and fellowship. Once again, a delicious buffet of soups and desserts will be our lunch. Come join us as we review Trash & Treasure 2016, the recipients of our donations and discuss plans for 2017!

Christine Badame



I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS



Thank you for your giving hearts!

Did you know?

For over 27 years June and Don Rudie, Faye Rekosik and others in our Care group have made and delivered candy and fruit baskets for the holidays to our own CLC members who were sick or shut-ins. I didn't know until I was recipient of several of them. Thank you Care Committee and Prayer Chain. – Ene Endresen

Lutheran World Relief

On God's Work, Our Hands Sunday six people were able to assemble 50 school kits which will be sent to areas in the U.S. or any other areas that have suffered natural or man-made disasters. It's important to have children return to a "normal" schedule. Thank you for giving them a bright spot in their distress.

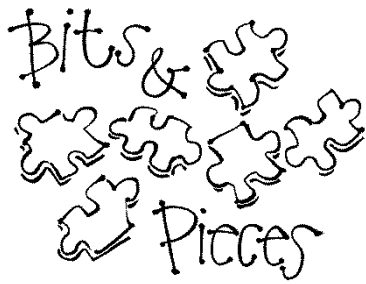
Navajo Mission Arizona

You'll help to keep them warm with two boxes recently mailed with 166 hats, scarves, gloves and mittens (32 handmade by Knit 1 Crochet Too). Also, there were over 92 various children's items. You'll make many moms and children happy with the baby bottles, stuffed animals, books and handmade blankets. Keep cutting out the Box Tops for Education. They add up. A sandwich bag full of them was included in this shipping.

St. Timothy's of Wayne – Blessing Bags

Forty handmade hats (Knit 1 Crochet Too) and nine bags of small toiletry items, which you collected on your travels, were delivered in November. The good people there are hoping to assemble over 650 Blessing Bags which will be handed out in December to the homeless in several towns in our area.

*Jesus said, "When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples.
This brings great glory to my Father." – John 15:8*



Luther 101 –

We all know Martin Luther wrote “A *Mighty Fortress*” but how many other hymns did he write, and can you name at least two others? The answer is on the bulletin board in the Sonshine Room.

Thanks for sharing

We all enjoyed looking at our military family display on Veteran’s Sunday. Please pick up your photos. They are in a box on the table that holds our bulletins.

Relax. Renew. Reconnect.

On January 27-29, 2017 our annual Congregational Retreat to Camp Koinonia is happening. Twelve rooms in the Conference Center have been reserved. We'll spend time in the hills of New York, connecting with God's creation and with each other. Experience Christ's community in a new place while exploring how God is working in our lives. We'll have time devoted to Bible study, snow tubing, cross country skiing (snow please), fellowship and more. A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex (entrance) of the church.

A \$50.00 deposit is requested when you sign up. Any questions? Ask Pastor Marc or Kim and Tom Kearns.

Christmas shopping is coming and Amazon gives

Do you know that your regular shopping could help support Christ Lutheran Church? The Amazon Smile program is a simple way you can help support the ministries here at CLC beyond your pledging and weekly (or monthly) giving. Through your regular shopping, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your order to CLC. Simply visit smile.amazon.com and select Christ Lutheran Church Woodcliff Lake, NJ as your charity to support. Note there are many Christ Lutheran Churches using this program, and you might have to scroll to the 4th or 5th page to find Woodcliff Lake. Once you select us, everything is done. Every time you shop on Amazon start by typing smile.amazon.com, and you'll help CLC be Christ's body in the world.

Sign up on the altar flower chart beginning December 4th to purchase altar flowers during 2017. For those who sign up, further information will be mailed to you. The flowers are \$45. per Sunday.





The *Love Tree* will be in the narthex on November 27th for your Christmas greetings to our congregation. Look for the red cut-out hearts waiting for your greeting and place your heart on the ***Love Tree***. Donations received will enable Care Committee to continue its mission to help needy families in our congregation and the surrounding communities.

***“From Heaven Above”*—new Advent devotional booklet:** The hymn of the same title was written by Martin Luther and in this surrounding time of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation this booklet uses his theme of hope, love, peace and life for daily devotions. The booklets are in the Narthex, and you are invited to take a copy home in time for the 1st Sunday in Advent, November 27th.

Gift shopping? Looking for a Christmas gift for a child or grandchild? Instead of a book featuring cartoon characters telling a “Christmas” story, how about a beautifully illustrated picture book telling the story of Jesus’ birth. Suggestions are on display by the card catalog in the library.

You may order poinsettias November 27th to mid-December for decorating the altar @\$8.00 each—just complete an envelope from the Narthex table. Help will be needed to deliver remaining poinsettias to our sick or shut-in members. Call the church office to volunteer to help.

Hanging of the greens—Help decorate our sanctuary Sunday, December 11th, after 10:30 am worship. Decorate and enjoy a light lunch provided by Worship Committee.

Come and sing with Chancel Choir—If you are interested in singing but can’t commit to every week, you are invited to sing with the choir for the 11:00 pm Christmas Eve worship. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at 8:00 pm. Consider joining us. See Argine Safari for more information.

Handchime Choir rehearsals for Christmas Eve begin Sunday, December 4th following 10:30 service. New members are welcome. See our Music Director, Argine.

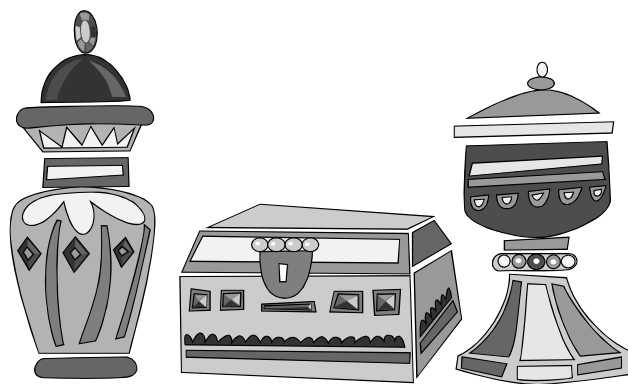
Make a year-end gift

During the season of Advent, we are reminded that the greatest gift that we have received is the gift of new life in Christ. In our baptism, we are claimed as part of Christ's body in the world. Our hands and our hearts are linked to what God is doing in the here and now. One of the amazing things about God isn't that God is being active in the world. God is amazing because God chooses to do God's work through imperfect people like us. We have gifts, and we are called to be a gift too.

We are grateful for your generosity through pledges and gifts throughout the year. You are a gift. Each year, many of you send your final pledge payments or other year-end gifts during the month of December. As you are contemplating year-end giving, please consider an additional gift out of your financial resources. Your end of the year gift doesn't just affect your tax bill from the US Government (all 2016 gifts need to be in the office or postmarked no later than December 31, 2016). Your gift helps Christ Lutheran be a gift to Northern Bergen County through our work feeding our neighbors and being faithful Christians in our world.

We also invite you to consider making a year-end gift to support the amazing Christ-centered work the following organizations do:

- * Camp Koinonia - Building faith through outdoor ministry - www.koinonianany.org
- * Lutheran World Relief - Fighting poverty, violence and suffering around the world - www.lwr.org
- * Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service - Providing support for immigrants and refugees since 1939 - www.lirs.org
- * Lutheran Disaster Response-Bringing healing and hope wherever disaster strikes - <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/>



WHAT SHALL WE GIVE HIM?

How we make a difference

We don't always know how much a difference we make as a community. Once we drop off food donations at The Center for Food Action or sent our check to help build housing for teachers in West Virginia, we rarely hear how that box of Mac & Cheese helped a student pass their math test or that house helped a teacher inspire a new generation of leaders. On October 3, however, we heard how we made a difference. The Rev. Maristela Feiberg, Assistant to the Bishop in New Jersey, shared this story during her sermon that day.

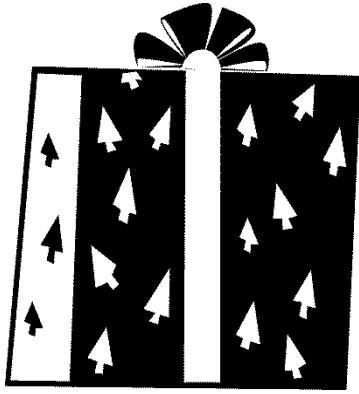
In 1999, my husband Pastor Moacir Weirich and I were serving a new start of the NJ Synod called Grace Community Lutheran Church. Grace Community was developing a new ministry out of a storefront on Adams St., Newark. Our monthly rent was \$1,200.00 and we realized that all that we had in our bank account was \$1,000.00. We called our Mission Director explaining the dare situation that were in. In the meantime we decided to pray about it until we would figure out a way to move forward.

It didn't take long to receive a call from Christ Lutheran Church, Woodcliff Lake, offering a gift of \$12,000.00 to a new ministry as a way to thank God for their 40th anniversary and in recognition of the way they had received a generous gift back at the beginning of their journey as a new church. It couldn't have been at a better time for Grace Community to receive that gift that allowed another year of ministry in that storefront.

Now in 2009 when Christ Lutheran celebrated their 50th anniversary, Grace Community was organized as a new congregation of the NJ Synod as St. Stephan's Grace Community.

It is amazing to realize how God is always at work and sometimes we are so blessed to be amid miracles in the happening. Thank you God! Thank you for your generosity dear brothers and sisters Christ Lutheran Church, Woodcliff Lake!

The developing community at Grace Community focused on building community and faith among the immigrant communities in Newark. Our gift of \$12,000 provided almost a year of rent for them. Without the worry of knowing where their next rent payment would come from, this community could innovate and spread the gospel in intentional and meaningful ways. When we make a difference, we do more than solve an immediate problem or need. We lay the groundwork for a future of grace, growth and love.



Reverse Advent Calendar ***Give Back One Day at a Time***

For the month of December, our Sunday School families are invited to put together a reverse Advent Calendar. You're invited to participate as well! Countdown the days to Christmas by giving rather than taking away.

- Step One: Find a box or two. Wine boxes with cardboard dividers for bottles are good to use.
- Step Two: Decorate the box in a festive way.
- Step Three: Choose a theme. Support a Food Pantry, collect hygiene products for homeless men or women or a support a family with a newborn. Write your theme on your box.
- Step Four: Starting December 1, place one item in the box that matches your theme. For example, place a can of soup, a mini-bottle of shampoo or a pack of newborn diapers.
- Step Five: Each day, place a new item into the box. By the end, you'll have 24 items.
- Step Six: Bring your box to church on December 24. We'll give thanks for the blessings God gives us and how we are called to bless others.





Come and Rejoice!



Saturday~~Tuesday~~, December 24th
Candlelight and Music

Worship for Families and Kids!
Holy Communion and Christmas Music
5:00 p.m.

Worship with Holy Communion,
A Choral Event!
11:00 p.m.



Sunday~~Tuesday~~, December 25th
Worship with Holy Communion
10:30 a.m.





Are Christmas movies on repeat at your house yet? 'Tis the season at my house to have *Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Elf*, *Christmas at Pee Wee's Playhouse*, and a *Muppet's Christmas Carol* on 24/7. We sing along to the songs while we do our chores and take breaks from our busy lives to pass by and watch a moment or two. There's something soothing about watching Buddy the Elf discover New York City for the first time, watching Jack Skeleton learn that Santa Claus doesn't actually have claws, and seeing Reba the Mail Lady accidentally deliver Grace Jones to Pee Wee's playhouse instead of the White House. Watching these (and other) movies some of my favorite Christmas traditions.

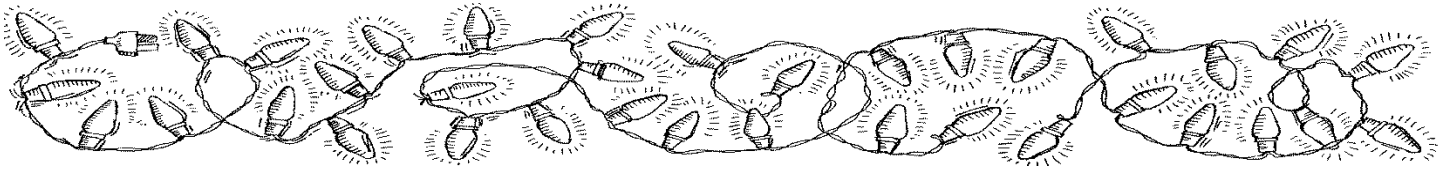
Another movie that is a family favorite is *Christmas Eve on Sesame Street*. The movie begins with the Sesame Street gang ice skating. Oscar the Grouch tells Big Bird that there will be no Christmas presents because Santa Claus cannot go down narrow chimneys and the air vents in apartment buildings. Through music, song and running around, the Sesame Street team discover Christmas' spirit. Then, in classic Sesame Street style, everything is summed up in a song about keeping that spirit all year long.

But what is the Christmas spirit and how can we keep that all year long? In some ways, this question is at the center of the Advent season. For 4 Sundays, starting on November 27, we will take a journey. We'll meet John the Baptist, listen to Paul as he introduces himself to the Roman community, and we'll ask why God is coming into our broken world. We'll sit at the foot of the feed-basket that serves as Jesus' cradle, and we'll wonder why the creator of the Universe chooses to be a defenseless babe who needs parents, support and love. The Christmas spirit is always an unexpected spirit, and Advent is the time to expect the unexpected. The love God shows is complete, total and unexpected. The life Jesus lives upends the way we think God works. And it's through Christmas we see how much God loves us and how God's love will even undo what happens on a cross.

This Advent and Christmas season, look for God doing unexpected things and share God's love in life-giving, sacrificing and humble ways.

See you in church!

Pastor Marc



Sunday School in December

December 4

Class 9:45 am

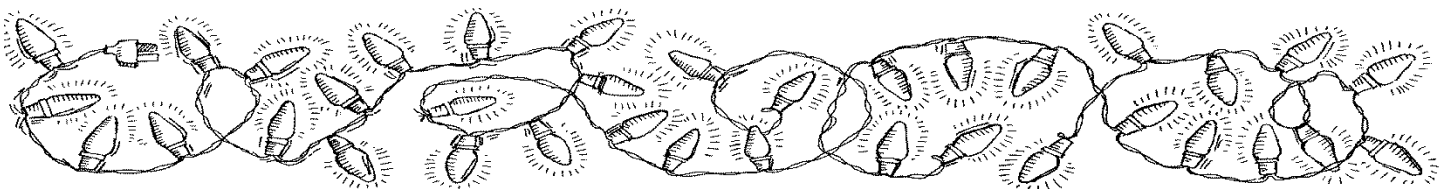
December 18

Sharing the Christmas Story

9:45 am

Christmas Caroling & Pizza

4pm



FAITH OUT LOUD: READING THE BIBLE IN 2016

DECEMBER SCHEDULE

BIBLE STUDIES:

WEDNESDAYS AT 11:30 AM &




THURSDAYS AT 7:00 PM

December 1: 1 Corinthians 9-11	Dec 17: Titus & Philemon
Dec 2: 1 Cor 12-14	Dec 18: Hebrews 1-6
Dec 3: 1 Cor 15-16	Dec 19: Heb 7-10
Dec 4: 2 Corinthians 1-4	Dec 20: Heb 11-13
Dec 5: 2 Cor 5-9	Dec 21: James
Dec 6: 2 Cor 10-13	Dec 22: 1 Peter
Dec 7: Galatians 1-3	Dec 23: 2 Peter
Dec 8: Gal 4-6	Dec 24: 1 John
Dec 9: Ephesians 1-3	Dec 25: 2 John, 3 John, Jude
Dec 10: Eph 4-6	Dec 26: Revelation 1-3
Dec 11: Philippians	Dec 27: Rev 4-8
Dec 12: Colossians	Dec 28: Rev 9-12
Dec 13: 1 Thessalonians	Dec 29: Rev 13-16
Dec 14: 2 Thessalonians	Dec 30: Rev 17-19
Dec 15: 1 Timothy	Dec 31: Rev 20-22
Dec 16: 2 Timothy	

CHECK THE WEBSITE WWW.CLC4U.COM TO VIEW COMPLETE
SCHEDULE (WILL MEET MOST WEEKS)

2016!

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			Year With Bible 11:30 am  Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	1 Year With Bible 7:00 pm	2	3
4 2 ADVENT Holy Communion Contemporary 9:00 am Traditional 10:30 am Sunday Church School, 9:40 am Handchime Choir 11:30 am	5 Mary Circle meets 7:00 pm Property Work Night 7:30 pm	6 Worship Committee 8:00 pm	7 Year With Bible 11:30 am Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	8 Year With Bible 7:00 pm		10 January 2017 <i>Messenger</i> Deadline
11 3 ADVENT Holy Communion Contemporary 9:00 am Traditional 10:30 am Handchime Choir 11:30 am Decorating/Lunch 12:00 Noon Youth Ministry 5:00 pm Confirmation Cl. 6:30 pm	12 Finance Committee 8:00 pm	13 Care Committee 9:30 am	14 Year With Bible 11:30 am Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	15 Year With Bible 7:00 pm Council Meeting 8:00 pm	16	17
18 4 ADVENT Holy Communion Contemporary 9:00 am Traditional 10:30 am Sunday Church School, 9:40 am Handchime Choir 11:30 am Confirmation Cl. 6:30 pm	19 Property Work Night 7:30 pm	20 Knit 1, Crochet Too 10:00 am	21 Year With Bible 11:30 am Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	22 Year With Bible 7:00 pm	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Worship 5:00 and 11.00 pm 
25 CHRISTMAS DAY Worship Holy Communion 10:30 am	26 (Church Office closed)	27	28 Year With Bible 11:30 am Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	29 Year With Bible 7:00 pm	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE  Welcome 2017!

