



A Message from Pastor Becca

I have been thinking a lot about what it means to keep the Christ in Christmas. This is a popular sentiment this time of year; I see it on lawns, bumpers, and social media. More often than not, the intention of this sentiment is that we can easily be drawn into the consumer and commercial aspects of Christmas. Sometimes it's a call to return to church or faith. On more rare occasions, it is about writing Xmas instead of Christmas. (Fun fact: X is the shorthand for Christ in Biblical Greek so we are all good there! Xmas literally means Christ worship, just like Christmas!)

Sometimes, I worry about using this sort of sentiment. It isn't because I disagree with it, I long for a world that sees Jesus as the focus of this season. I would be overjoyed if we could teach the world the beauty of anticipation and waiting during Advent instead of jumping right into the joy of Christmas morning. I worry because despite how well-meaning we are in using it, it often further alienates people from the church and/or a life of faith. I have found the most meaningful conversations I have around faith are the ones that leave room for plenty of grace. It is easier to show Jesus to people in the way we live our lives than it is to convince them with words. We live in a difficult time to be the church. So many have been hurt or pushed away by churches, it feels near impossible to get folks through our doors.

I recently read this short poem:

"Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you." — L.R. Knost

That light that is in you, it is Jesus. It is there burning in you, I know it, I can see it. I hope this Advent and Christmas, you bring that light into all the brokenness in our midst, not just the world, but our state, our community, even right here at our church. If you are brave enough to let that light shine in the world, you will not only keep Christ in Christmas, you just might show someone what it looks like to follow Jesus.

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.*

-Howard Thurman

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Becca



Advent Schedule

December 9 – Second Sunday of Advent

Promises of Peace

- Work on the All Church Art Project
- Bring in your gifts for Urban Promise

December 14

9:30 am – 3s Class Ringing & Singing

December 16 – Third Sunday of Advent

Joy Filled Jubilation

All Church Pop Up Pageant – *People of ALL ages can participate in this no-rehearsal pageant. All you have to do is act out the part you have chosen as the narrator reads.*

- Bring in your Christmas cookie donations
- Last day for poinsettia donations
- Work on the All Church Art Project

December 20 – Longest Night

7:00 pm Longest Night Worship Service – A time of worship for those who grieve or struggle with sadness, fear or any less than joyful emotions during the holidays.

December 23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Longing & Listening for Love

- Work on the All Church Art Project

December 24 – Christmas Eve

7:00 pm – Candlelight Worship Service

December 30

No Sunday School or Nursery Care



for Unto Us
a Child
is Born



*How many Presbyterians does it take to put up some lightbulbs?
About 30! We had a great time with our Advent decorating.*







Urban Promise Christmas

Once again it is time to remember our young friends at Urban Promise. This year, we will be giving gifts for all ages from kindergarten through 8th grade. **Please do not wrap the gifts.** Bring the gifts to church by **Sunday, December 9th** since we will deliver them on the 13th. The Mission Christmas Tree is in the Fellowship Room with ornaments that indicate age and gender. Take an ornament or two and feel free to use the ornament to tag your gift. A list of ideas is under the tree. **Happy Shopping and Thank You from the Mission Committee!**



Deacon's Thanksgiving Turkey Drive What an Amazing Year!

Thanks for your generosity and giving spirit! **The deacons received a whopping \$2,450.** This included incredible donations from the congregation as well as \$215 from Small World and \$150 from A&M Landscaping!

The CCC received 175 Acme gift cards worth \$15 each so that families could purchase a turkey for their Thanksgiving meal.



Poinsettia Donations

It's time to decorate the sanctuary with poinsettias! To make a donation for the flower purchase, please make out a check to Faith with "Christmas Flowers" written in the memo. The poinsettias come in a variety of sizes and colors and cost between \$5 and \$20.

Collection ends on December 16. If you donate, you are welcome to take home the flowers bought with your donation after the Christmas Eve service at 7 pm. See Erin Ford with any questions or contact her at fordelf@msn.com



Christmas Cookie Donations

Calling all bakers! The deacons are asking for **donations of 1 or 2 dozen cookies by December 16**. The

We Care team will create cookie boxes for our members who aren't able to make it to church. Please leave your cookies on the kitchen island on Sunday, December 16 marked "Deacons." If you need to drop them off the Sunday before, you can put them in the freezer but be sure they are labeled "Deacons." Any questions, see Lorraine Kunkle.



Sunday School in December

On December 2, we made Advent wreaths with candles to decorate our homes.

Upcoming lessons:

Dec. 9: "God leads us in surprising ways"

Dec. 16: Pop-up Christmas Pageant

Dec. 23: "God sent his Son, Jesus, to save the world"

Dec. 30: Note – there will be no Sunday school or nursery



Leaf Project! We got together to manage Bill Redheffer's leaves while he's away.





Mat Workshops

Begin Saturday, January 5

Join us every **Saturday from 10:00 to noon during January, February and March** for our annual mat workshops. We'll prepare plastic bags to be made into waterproof sleep mats for the homeless.

This is easy to do and is suitable for all ages and skill levels. We will happily train you!

Please note that at this time, we do not need any bags. We'll let you know if we need to collect them later! See Bonnie Halle with any questions.



Advent Art Project

