



THE CRUSADER

Web Site: christchurchhome.com

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DECEMBER, 2020

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Advent:

If you have been around the church long enough, you will have heard a word mentioned during the weeks prior to Christmas. This word is **Advent**.

What is Advent? Why do we celebrate it?

Advent comes from the latin word adventus meaning, **“coming or arrival.”** So we are awaiting an arrival, but whose and for what reason?

Waiting is an important theme of the narrative of Scripture.

Hear these words from the Psalmist:

**“I wait for the LORD my soul waits,
and in HIS word I hope;**

**My soul waits for the LORD more than
those who watch for the morning.**

**More than those who watch for the
morning.” (Psalm 130: 5-6)**

And David says these words earlier in the Psalms:

**“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let
your heart take courage;**

wait for the Lord!” (Psalm 27:14)

But what are they awaiting and why are they teaching the people to wait?

They are ultimately awaiting the arrival of God’s salvation.

This salvation was a call for the Messiah, **“The Anointed One”** to save Israel, God’s people, from those that enslaved them.

As we move from the Psalmists we hear these words from one of Israel’s most famous prophets:

“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

because the Lord has anointed me;

**he has sent me to bring good news to the
oppressed,**

to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives,

and release to the prisoners;

to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor,

**and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn.” (Isaiah
61:1-2)**

This anointed person is the one in whom Israel has been waiting for.

The people are tired and worn out from their enslavement and oppression. They are tired of hearing the promises of the LORD and never actually seeing these promises fulfilled.

God’s anointed one is about to take center stage. But the people are not expecting what they are given. They want someone who will wipe out their Roman oppressors and establish perfect justice throughout the land.

But what did God give HIS people?

A baby. A baby not born of powerful or even recognizable parents. This baby’s parents are a woman who may have been 18 years old and a man who is a carpenter. Although Joseph, His father, is of the kingly lineage. The lineage of the most famous king of Israel—David.

For many years earlier, God promised David something very important:

“Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.” (II Samuel 7:16)

God has promised David that the Kingdom will have one of David’s children on the throne forever. So Joseph, this baby’s father, was in David’s lineage—his family.

So Israel was awaiting someone from the lineage of David to take the throne of their father.

So the news of a baby arrives and all of Israel is wondering if this could be the child. Whom will be born in Bethlehem, **“the city of King David,”** born of the line of David and born to save His people.

Who is this child in whom His people awaited His coming...His Advent.

This child is none other than **Jesus Himself.** The one who proclaims the salvation, goodness, joy, love and hope of the God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

During this time of Advent, we are awaiting Jesus’ coming. We are praying that Emmanuel, **“God with us,”** will be with us during these times of hardships and joys.

This is the reason why we celebrate the season of Advent. We light candles and praise God with songs of hope, excitement and expectation because we yearn to see the Son of God come.

So are you ready to prepare your hearts, minds and spirits for Jesus’ coming?

Are you yearning for His presence in you life?

As the Church, we cry out in hope, **“Come, Jesus, come!”**

In the name of the Father, Son—whose presence we are awaiting, and the Holy Spirit.

AMEN.

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Dear Decatur Christ family,

I thank y'all for the blessing that you have been to Michelle, Luke and I. We are constantly praying for this family. We are dreaming and following Christ in the present and the future. God is pouring out His Holy Spirit upon this family; He is calling us to deeper love to Him.

Michelle, Luke and I thank you for the many gifts. The Candy and beautiful story, the box of gift cards and letters of love and thankfulness. Lastly, you gave us the Fingerprint of God which is hanging up in my office. We love you and thank y'all for the encouragement you have lavished upon us. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Michelle, Luke and Braden

Pastor

Appreciation

Month

October

2020



A recent article in the Herald & Review about our Parish Pantry motivated a friend of Mike Carr to donate 120 cans of fruit and vegetables for the pantry.

The pantry has been used extensively since 2017 but especially during the pandemic of 2020. Thanks, Joe!

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Even though 2020 has had several low points with sheltering at home, cancelling worship services and traditional activities due to the climbing percentages of Covid 19 positive tests and cases, and deaths of beloved members of our immediate families and church family, we have **pressed on** to reach out to our community through food donations as well as coat donations. During November, our church was featured on two days with photos of Bonnie Matthews and Mike Carr . Accompanying news articles in the Herald & Review promoted our food pantry and coat collection as we partnered with Millikin University to donate coats to the Oasis Center. Rev. Parks is a wonderful advocate in our community and has the ability to reach out to organizations to work together to help others. Both of the activities helped everyone to focus on the needs of our community and put our longing for traditional activities on hold. Thanks to God for giving us the opportunity to help others and to look to the future, KR

I would like to thank everyone that helped share or contribute to the coat drive. The coats were all donated to the Oasis Day Center to give the gift of warmth this holiday season to individuals in need. In addition to the coats we collected, there were many more coats that were donated through our Millikin partnership. It makes me so happy to see the community come together to help each other even in the midst of challenging times. If you missed the coat drive and still have coats you would like to donate, please let us know. We would love to be able to help more coats get to individuals that would otherwise struggle with being cold this winter. **Michelle Parks**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS	
7	MURRAY PRESTON
9	DAKOTA DENTON
11	MARY FERGASON
17	MICHELLE PARKS
19	BAILEE DENTON
20	RUTH RANDOL

ANNIVERSARIES	
16	SCOTT AND BONNIE MATTHEWS

Prayers for the family of **Marilyn Haynes** who passed away on November 12 and the family of **Leroy Willmirth** who passed away on November 20.

Prayers for all members of our church!