

New Questions for a New Year

On November 27, when we enter the season of Advent, we also enter a new church year. This season of waiting and watching also gives us an opportunity to take inventory — to ask questions of ourselves. How have we grown spiritually in the past church year? And, how are we being called to grow further in the coming year? Following are some questions I will ask myself as I take stock of my spiritual journey. I invite you, too, to take inventory. Perhaps you may wish to use these questions. Perhaps you might like to prepare your own.

Taking inventory on the past year:

What am I thankful for?

What area of serving has brought me the most joy?

What wisdom has God given to me?

When have I avoided praying? And, about what?

Where have I felt pain and loneliness in this past year?

When have I been afraid?

Looking ahead to the coming year:

What would I like for God to refine in me?

How is God calling me to love my neighbor?

Who is God calling me to forgive?

What area of my life will I ask God's help with?

How will I express my gratitude to God?

What spiritual discipline will I commit/recommit myself to?

Please join me in praying:

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Wishing you a most blessed Advent and a year filled with growth and gratitude,

Pr. *Jasica*



Holiday Worship Schedule

This year, because both the Christmas and New Years holiday fall on weekends, we will observe the following holiday worship schedule.

Christmas Eve — (Saturday) December 24	5:00 pm
Christmas Day — (Sunday) December 25	9:30 am
New Year's Day — (Sunday) January 1	9:30 am

To celebrate the seasons, you are invited to purchase **poinsettia plants** for display during Advent and Christmas. Cost is \$12 per plant with orders due by December 11; order forms can be found in the gathering space. Plants may be picked up following worship on Sunday, January 1. You may also donate your plant to one of our homebound members.





centering prayer

first Thursday of the month @ 10 am

Stewardship Gratitude Thanks to the generosity of each of you, your stewardship is making it possible for Christ Lutheran and the PATHWAYS Center to continue its robust ministries in 2023! If you have not yet pledged and wish to do so, you may pledge by picking up a pledge card at the counter in the CLC gathering space or by pledging online at makingchristknown.org and following the "Give" tab.

PATHWAYS

Centering Prayer

A full calendar of PATHWAYS offerings is planned for 2023 — watch for details soon. As a preview of the enriching programs to come, a new Centering Prayer service begins on December 1 at 10:00 am. A time of pause and prayer, this service will be an ongoing program held the first Thursday of each month. Please join us.

Make Advent a Time of Prayer

This year, our PATHWAYS Center is making Prophets and Promises: Devotions for Advent & Christmas available for each of us to use free of charge. You are invited to the daily discipline of praying your way through the Advent and Christmas seasons. Pick up your copy in the gathering space.



Adult Forum

During the season of Advent, we will explore Andy Stanley's *Who Needs Christmas?* series, which explores the improbability of the Christmas story. It is its improbability that makes it so believable. Join us for a great discussion!

All are welcome to participate — join us Sundays at 9:30 am.

Library Pick of the Month

The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis is known for his Narnia series of novels. In another novel, *The Great Divorce*, Lewis explores the idea of Heaven and Hell. From the back cover: "The writer, in a dream, boards a bus on a drizzly afternoon and embarks on an incredible voyage through Heaven and Hell. He meets a host of supernatural beings far removed from his expectations and comes to significant realizations about the ultimate consequences of everyday behavior. This is the starting point for a profound meditation upon good and evil."

Check it out from the PATHWAYS library today!

December 4, 2022

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

December 11, 2022

Isaiah 35:1-10
Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

December 18, 2022

Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

December 25, 2022

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)
John 1:1-14

Men of Christ Christmas Party

Break out the festive holiday attire and mark your calendars now for the annual Men of Christ Christmas Party on Saturday, December 10. Plan to join us at 6:00 pm at the American Legion, 900 Chrysler Drive in Belvidere.

The main course and beverages will be provided. If you wish to bring an appetizer or dessert to share, you are welcome to do so.

Look for the sign-up sheet in the gathering space for this joyous event to celebrate the season with friends, food, and good cheer. All are invited!



Young Adults

To all young adults aged 21-40: you are invited to join us for our next Brunch & Bible Study on December 18. We'll continue our study of the prophets. See Allie Carlson with questions.

CLC Young Adults group at the Cherry Bowl last month.



Service and Outreach

Thank you to all who contributed toward pies for Rockford Rescue Mission's Thanksgiving banquet and Empower Boone's Meal-in-a-Bag program! Grand totals will be shared in next month's newsletter.

You can help continue to provide hope to those in our community this holiday season. Pick up a gift tag in the gathering space and provide a gift for a foster child through the Adopt-an-Angel program, or for a Mosaic client through the Adopt-a-Home program. All wrapped gifts are due to CLC by Sunday, December 4. See Deacon Laura with questions.

Christ in Literature

Our December 5th gathering will focus on Stephen Mitchell's *The First Christmas: A Story of New Beginnings*. This book is a new version of the well-known Christmas story through the eyes of the ox and donkey, shepherds and wisemen, and Joseph and Mary.

Christ in Literature meets the first Monday of most months at 3:00 pm in the Conference Room. All are welcome!

AmazonSmile

With the holiday shopping season firmly upon us, did you know that you can support Christ Lutheran at no additional cost with each Amazon purchase you make? Please visit smile.amazon.com/ch/36-3025736 and designate CLC as your charitable partner. Happy shopping!





Christ Lutheran

425 Riverside Road
Belvidere, IL 61008
Phone: 815-885-2522
www.makingChristknown.org

facebook.com/Christ.Belvidere

Also on Facebook, search:
Pathways: A Center for Spiritual Renewal

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Council

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Diane Peters	Treasurer
Sue Hunter	Secretary
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Ken Erboe	Council Member
Tari Flack	Council Member
Jim Hanson	Council Member
Syd Nolan	Council Member
Denise Rindels	Council Member
David Swanson	Council Member
Shari Warmoth	Council Member

Our Staff

Pastor Twila Schock	Senior Minister
Deacon Laura Gorton	Associate Minister
Deacon Jennifer Fox	Minister for Worship & Music
Katie Belinson	Dir. of Outreach & Communications
Dagny Brandt	Church Musician
Craig Carlson	Church Musician
Michelle Nelson	Finance & Office Administrator
Chris Parkinson	Church Musician

COME, Lord Jesus A Cantata for Advent



December 18

Join us on the fourth Sunday of Advent as our Spirit Singers present *Come, Lord Jesus*, a celebration through reflections and song.

One of the oldest prayers of the Christian community is “Come, Lord Jesus.” In Aramaic, the language that Jesus spoke, one word – Maranatha – said two things. It was a prayer for help in time of need: Come Lord, save us. It was also used as a joyous and confident welcome to the risen Christ: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

Offered at both 8:00 and 10:30 am, this is a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend!

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