

December 2021

Volume 29 / Issue 12

Sharing Mission/Ministry/Life in Christ

# Christ ALIVE!

## Happy New Year: Advent Comes Again!

One of the blessings of the church calendar is that it keeps coming around and around: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Ordinary Time . . . and Advent once again!

Advent, the beginning of a new church year, is an opportunity to begin new spiritual practices. This year, I'm taking my spiritual advice from Elizabeth Manneh, who suggests that we mark this season with attention and patience:

**Read to feed your soul.** This year, I will set aside my usual daily reading to savor these books: "A Surprising God: Devotions for an Uncertain Time," by Thomas Long and Donyelle McCray; "Advent in Plain Sight" by Jill Duffield; and "Waiting in Joyful Hope" by Catherine Upchurch.

**Pray daily.** This year, our PATHWAYS Center for Spiritual Renewal will make "Heaven and Nature Sing: Devotions for Advent and Christmas" available for each of us free of charge. I invite you to join me in the daily discipline of praying through the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

**Reach out to others.** Advent reminds us of the coming of Christ in three different spheres: at his incarnation in Bethlehem; as he comes to us daily through our neighbor; as he returns at the end of time. This year, I will especially focus on Christ's daily coming through my neighbor. I will ask, "What is Christ, my neighbor, calling me to do in this time?"



**Plan and wait with intention.** The endless tasks on our holiday to-do list can end up consuming our time and attention, making it all but impossible to focus on our spiritual life. With a little intention, we can learn to focus on God as we do these necessary tasks: pray for the recipients of each gift we wrap; contemplate something we've read as we stir the cookie batter; or, make a mental list of the things we're grateful for while standing in a long line.

I wish each of you a Happy New Year and an intentional Advent.

*Pastor Twila Schock*

## Christmas Worship

Mark your calendars for these worship times and join us as we celebrate Christ's coming:

**Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24**

4:00 and 6:00 p.m.

**First Sunday of Christmas, December 26**

9:30 a.m. *Service of Lessons and Carols*

**Second Sunday of Christmas, January 2**

9:30 a.m.

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A Season  
of Waiting  
and Watching

# Advent Worship

A worship experience to quiet our minds and fill our hearts, that we may abide in love and trust. Christ, our light, illumines and guides us.

One worship experience offered at three times in person, and once online\* (Vespers for the Longest Night):

**Wednesday, December 1: 12:15 p.m.**

**Wednesday, December 8: 5:30 p.m.**

**Saturday, December 18: 8:30 a.m.**

**\*Tuesday, December 21: 7:00 p.m.** (delivered via email)



Christ Lutheran  
425 Riverside Rd / Belvidere, IL 61008

A PATHWAYS event  
Visit [seekthepath.org](http://seekthepath.org)  
to learn more about our  
center for renewal.

Hope Love Joy Peace

## PATHWAYS Center Advent Offerings

### ADVENT: A SEASON OF LISTENING AND WAITING

A series of Prayer Services (one experience) offered at multiple times in person, and once online delivered via email (a Service Observing the Longest Night). See dates and times on the attached poster (*inset left*).

## Spiritual Retreat Recap

Last month's (Nov. 13) Spiritual Guidance retreat, hosted by PATHWAYS, offered participants insight and direction in "panning for gold" in their path to personal growth. Thank you to all participants.



## Christ in Literature

### December 6

*The Other Einstein*  
by Marie Benedict

### January 3

"Movie Afternoon" (in place of book discussion this month); details to follow

*Christ in Literature meets the first Monday of the month at 3:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend.*

## 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 2022! 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](http://makingchristknown.org) and following the "Give" tab.

thank you

### December 5, 2021

Malachi 3:1-4  
Luke 1:68-79  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### December 12, 2021

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
Isaiah 12:2-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

### December 19, 2021

Micah 5:2-5a  
Luke 1:46b-55  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

### December 24, 2021

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

### December 26, 2021

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
Psalm 148  
Colossians 3:12-17  
Luke 2:41-52



## Growth & Fellowship Opportunities

**"Animate" Returns:** A new adult forum series begins Sunday, November 28. The Animate series has been well-received at CLC in the past. This time we study "Animate: Practices." Four important Christian practices will be lifted up: Prayer, Worship, Sacraments, and Sharing. Join us!

**Advent Breakfast!** Join us between worship services on December 5 for our annual Advent Breakfast! This delicious meal will include French toast, eggs, sausages, and other tasty food. The free-will offering collected will support youth programming at CLC. Breakfast will be served from 9:15-10:15 a.m. We will also offer to-go containers for those who may not feel comfortable eating inside with groups but would still like to support our youth. All are welcome!



**Adult Catechism Class:** Are you new to Lutheranism? Curious about what makes Lutherans Lutheran? Want to refresh your memory from your confirmation days? Join us after the new year for an Adult Catechism Class. If you are interested in participating or have further questions, please connect with Deacon Laura.

**Young Adults:** CLC's Young Adult Group is planning their next gathering after the New Year and seeks your input. To help with planning, please fill out a very brief survey by December 15 to let us know which dates and activities work best for you. Visit [surveymonkey.com/r/BFJ3SFM](https://surveymonkey.com/r/BFJ3SFM) to complete the survey. Please direct questions to Allie Carlson (815-997-6895).



## HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

### Hope for the Holidays

Thank you for your generosity! To date, we have raised over \$300 toward pies for Rockford Rescue Mission's Thanksgiving meal, and over \$500 for Thanksgiving Meal-in-a-Bag in support of Empower Boone (formerly Boone County Food Pantry).

It's not too late to donate to LSSI's Adopt-an-Angel or MOSAIC's Adopt-a-Home. Give online or use the form in the gathering space.

## In the CLC Family

Congratulations to the following who made their marriage vows recently at CLC!

Kathy Ross and Don Skadow  
Karen Boeger and Pr. Mark Hagen



For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be  
on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
*Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.*

Of the greatness of his  
government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.

*Isaiah 9:6-7*



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[www.makingChristknown.org](http://www.makingChristknown.org)

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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# God With Us!

## *An Advent Cantata*

### December 19

Join us on the fourth Sunday of Advent,  
December 19, for our annual Spirit  
Singers cantata, "God With Us!"  
Offered at both 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.,  
this is a wonderful opportunity to  
invite a friend!

EMMANUEL