

• *The Light of Hope* •
First Sunday in Advent, Nov. 29
Hanging of the Greens



A strong tradition of the church is the annual "Hanging of the Greens" service held on the first Sunday of Advent. With the lighting of the first Advent candle, singing of hymns and carols, hanging of the greens to adorn the Sanctuary, decorating and lighting of the Christmas tree, we will begin the season in worship. Seniors Ava Hoenes and Abigail Reardon will be liturgists, the Darren and Tori Pine family along with the Vicki Johnson family will decorate the chancel with greens and other symbols of the season. Advent devotionals are available at church in Yonker Hall. Ring the Portico door bell from 8-12 or 1-5 weekdays to gain entry and make a selection.

WORSHIP: TWO WAYS

AT-HOME ONLINE: Watch our recorded service on our YouTube channel at "*First Christian Church (Columbia, Missouri)*"

AT-HOME LITURGY: Provided on page 3



the **VISITOR**

November 27, 2020
 Vol. 78, No. 106

OUR MISSION
**To know God and
 follow Jesus Christ.**

Happening Soon

SUNDAY, NOV. 29

- Coffee Hour, 9:30am, Zoom
- Hanging of the Greens Sunday

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 2

- Midweek Connect, 10:30am, Zoom
- Wednesday Bible Study, 12pm, Zoom

FRIDAY, DEC. 4

- Deadline for Poinsettia Orders

SUNDAY, DEC. 6

- Coffee Hour, 9:30am, Zoom
- VAC Project Drop-Off, 10:30-12pm

TUESDAY, DEC. 8

- Deadline for Xmas Cookie Orders

Happy Birthday!

- Dec 1** Charles Koelling (94!)
- Dec. 3** Paula Hoenes, David Read
- Dec. 4** Brenda Martin, Linda Ridgeway
- Dec. 5** Carole Harris Randerson, Mike Randerson



Bit From Brad

When Jesus encounters the woman at the well in Samaria far away from his own country of Judea/Israel, Jesus addresses the matter of worship location, since Samaritans have a different Holy Mountain than the Israelites who worship at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. But Jesus circumvents any conversation about worship being limited to a physical space, your mountain or my mountain, and directs their conversation to the interior life, the life of the soul. He says, *"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:23-24 NRSV)

Indeed! Worship, that place where we express our love to God for God, is a spiritual matter, an interior matter – it occurs in spirit and truth.

How during this global pandemic we have learned what true worship is! As we worship via YouTube, awaiting a time when we can safely return to fellowship with one another, we have an opportunity to delve deeper into our relationship with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. We are learning how to worship God in "spirit and truth" without the advantages of fellowship and communal gathering. For me, it has created a deeper longing for fellowship and gathering with fellow Christians.

As such, the staff is working exceptionally hard to offer a Christmas Season that is as close to traditional celebrations as we can, given the COVID pandemic. While we won't worship onsite or in-person at 101 N. 10th Street, your staff is working as hard and creatively as possible to bring 101 N. 10th Street to you and your family! We will have the Hanging of the Greens, the Blue Service, the Christmas Pageant, and Christmas Eve brought to you via YouTube. Granted - it's not the same as usual, but we believe worship happens through "spirit and truth." We trust that you and your family will enter into that space of "spirit and truth" so that you can experience the hope, peace, joy, and love that is at the heart of the birth of Jesus, the incarnation of Emmanuel – God with us!

So, as we turn our hearts and spirits toward the stable, manger, and the star, may the Holy Spirit fill our souls such that we will worship the Christ-child in "spirit and truth," trusting that not even the darkness of this pandemic can extinguish the light of Christ Jesus, the Savior of the world!

Blessings, **Dr. Brad**



A congregation related to
 The Christian Church
 (Disciples of Christ)
www.disciples.org



Who plans for a DIY Advent?

Last year, a snow storm canceled the annual Pageant and Tasting Party. This year, that is not possible! On December 13 in the mid-afternoon, the annual Christmas Pageant will be broadcast on our YouTube channel. Now, if only I had piece of Lorene Trickey's Christmas Fudge for every time this season I've heard, "It won't be the same!" It is our highest of hopes that the scene and the live characters in masks will remind you of where you sit each year to see the story unfold. The fifth grade shepherds, the newest baby and his parents, senior angels, and lots of carols will make it so. Here is where the "DIY—do it yourself" comes in: the Tasting Party. OH NO! We will miss the tasting party!

Like many pieces of this Advent season, we will have to create some dynamics at home to help us along with our music, YouTube, scripture reading and decorating. All will tell of the holy birth. We just have homework this year doing our part and being creative, at home. You have already been asked to create your own Advent Wreath for the coming weeks of worship. The tasting party will be a similar story — all yours to create! Start now thinking about what treats you will serve up when you watch the Pageant on Dec. 13.

I am like you this year. I didn't plan on having to make my own home version of advent worship and fellowship. But then again, I can do it. You can, too. Back in March, we all created our own Communion Tables. We can do this, too. Get creative, folks, and make sure you don't miss out this year on the pieces that help create the holy experience. A DIY Advent isn't for the faint-hearted. But, if there is one thing we have learned as Jesus' disciples — God gives us the tools, spirit, and faith needed for times as these.

If you need ideas or supplies, please reach out. We have everything at church and I will deliver. Except treats... you are on your own.

Rev. Jimmy Spear

Christmas Cookie Boxes

12 Cookies per box for \$15

COOKIE ORDER FORM

Number of boxes _____ @ \$15 per box = \$ _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Pick Up Time: _____



Please place your order by **Tuesday, December 8.**

Place Order in 2 Ways

MAIL ORDER TO:

First Christian Church,

101 North 10th St., Columbia, MO. 65201

EMAIL ORDER TO: fcc@firstchristian.org

Cookie pickup will be

Sunday, December 13, between 11am and 1pm

Pickup on north side of the Church under the portico, or if worship is held in the Sanctuary in Yonker Fellowship Hall.

QUESTIONS? Call Brenda Mosby at 573-881-8385.

- *Sponsored by The Disciples Women's Fellowship* -

2 Order online at: firstchristian.org/cookies

News of the People

Prayers...

Frances Brown continues at Lenoir's REACH in isolation with symptoms of COVID-19. She is slowly getting better, but had a minor setback of a fall. **Billie Silvey** continues to rehabilitate at Boone Hospital. **Glenda Clark** is rehabilitating at The Neighborhoods following a hospital stay.



MAIL THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE WITH \$8.00 PER POINSETTIA BY FRI., DEC. 4TH.

A listing of donors will be in the *Visitor* in mid-December as they will adorn the Sanctuary for Dec. 13 worship.

They will be available for pick up after Christmas Eve or as announced prior.

Name: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Order online at: firstchristian.org/Poinsettia

Final Weeks: VAC Holiday Project

Sponsor individuals in need this Christmas

UPDATE: 39 of 58 adopted

As the final weeks of the annual outreach project adopting Columbians in need for Christmas presents and a meal comes to a close, there are still 19 people needing adopting. Some church people have opted to donate funds toward those people. If you would like to donate funds so others would shop for you, please do so now. With monetary donations in early, we can make plans for the CYF to shop for you. There is still time for it all! Call Elizabeth Mottaz or Jimmy Spear for assistance in using the sign up method. The 2020 online sign up to adopt is through Sign Up Genius. You can select a person to adopt by using this link:

<https://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0B4FACAB2BA1FE3-vacholiday>

(Additional info. is provided on this website about adopting a person)

If you send in a financial donation to the church office please note "VAC Xmas." When adopting a person, the suggested amount for gift(s) is \$50-75 and an additional \$15 toward a Christmas dinner. Please help support this important mission! Please contact Outreach Mission co-chair, Elizabeth Mottaz, if you have questions. Thank you!

VAC Project Summary

NOW: Go online to sign up for the family or individuals you will sponsor.

LATER: Special drop-off day is **Dec. 6th**, between 10:30am and 12:00pm in Yonker Hall. OR bring it by the church office the week of Dec. 7-11. **Money/gifts must be turned in by Friday, Dec. 11th.**



Advent Wreaths in Every Home

Make an Advent Wreath for Nov. 29

This Advent, all are encouraged to make an Advent Wreath at home for use each of the four Sundays in the season of preparation. Each week, as we light a candle of the Advent Wreath in our online YouTube worship experience, all will be invited to do so at home. Having a wreath especially created for this season will add to the ways we can better prepare to do Advent and Christmas differently. Join us in sharing the lights of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love this season.

HOW TO MAKE AN ADVENT WREATH:

There is not one way to create an Advent Wreath. You can get supplies at the craft and hobby stores OR just use what you have at home. You will need:

- A "wreath" of some sort is helpful. Get creative! Perhaps, a festive or antique plate or platter. Maybe there is a circular something in the garage. Perhaps you have an old wreath that needed a new purpose. Use paint, put some green garland together, cut some greens from the bushes in your yard — make sure to keep the flames away from the greens!
- **5 candles** — four blue or purple, one white (or substitute/use what you have). Votives will work, tea lights can, too, but might need replacing as you go. Maybe tall tapers are the way you will go. You can even use the battery-powered version of any candle! The first two weeks' candles will have to burn for a total of three hours.
- **Set up your "wreath" and candles:** Create a space for them to be used as you watch worship online or use your Visitor Home Liturgy. Light them with us on Sundays each week adding a candle. The white candle goes in the center of the wreath and is lit on Christmas Eve.
- You will be invited to go long into the two weeks after Christmas to keep all the lights lit.
- Please **send pictures of your wreaths** to Jimmy Spear via text or email and they will be featured in the newsletter and on social media throughout the season.



Heifer Int'l Gifts

Give a cow this Christmas

The Mission Outreach Department encourages church friends, despite COVID keeping us from the Narthex sign-up, to make a contribution to Heifer International in the name of, and as a gift to a loved one.

Giving a cow to your mother-in-law means a family in Honduras receives a cow (\$500) to create a sustained food source and income potential. The same would go for a flock of ducks (\$20) to your brother or a goat (\$120) to your kid sister. What about a flock of chicks (\$20) to each of your grown children — because they don't need a thing! Alpacas are in vogue these days, surely there is someone on your list who would be most impressed with a gift of Alpaca (\$150) this year — no wrapping or sending required. You could also give a gift card and let your cousin pick their own animal!

It is a different year. Perhaps our gifts will reflect our embrace of the needs of the world differently.

Give a gift that changes poverty and hunger in a far away place.

Want to know more? Go to: www.heifer.org to purchase and create an online card to let your family and friends know the impact of your gift. You can also make a donation via check to the church office, noting "HEIFER" on your check.

Pictured Advent Wreaths sent in this week are by Kim Rogers (top) and Janelle Patterson (right).

Advent & Christmas

A season of light — Hope, Peace, Joy and Love proclaimed in the message of prophets and Jesus' family. Join us as we anticipate the coming of Immanuel – God with us.

HOPE November 29

Hanging of Greens

A strong traditions of the church is the annual "Hanging of the Greens" service held on the first Sunday of Advent. With the lighting of the first Advent candle, singing of hymns and carols, hanging of the greens to adorn the Sanctuary, decorating and lighting of the Chrismon tree, we will begin the season in worship.

PEACE December 6

Isaiah 40:1-11

Hymns will include: *Awake and Greet the New Morn* and *Blessed Be the God of Israel*

A BLUE Christmas Service Wed., December 9

A contemplative service of hope and healing

Hymns will include: *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* and *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*; along with the music of *Lo, How a Rose Er Blooming* and *In the Bleak Midwinter*

JOY December 13

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Hymns will include: *Angels We Have Heard on High* and *Once In Royal David's City*. *Poinsettias* will adorn the sanctuary chancel!

The 87th CHRISTMAS PAGEANT December 13

Hymns will include: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, *Away in a Manger*, *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*, *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*, *We Three Kings*

LOVE December 20

Luke 1:26-38

Hymns will include: *Joy to the World* and *What Child Is This*. Featuring brass quartet.

CHRISTMAS EVE

A Service of Lessons & Carols, Communion & Candlelight

Hymns will include: *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, *Away in a Manger*, and *Silent Night*. Special music will be offered.

After Christmas:

First Sunday - December 27

Hymns will include: *The First Noel* and *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

Second Sunday after Christmas/Epiphany - January 3

Hymns will include: *As With Gladness* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

Advent Online:

All listed worship and events will be broadcast on the "First Christian Church, Columbia Missouri" YouTube Channel

Advent Printed:

Liturgy for each Sunday in the weekly Visitor newsletter

Holiday Zooms:

Watch the Visitor for various groups having holiday zoom gatherings.

The Wednesday *Midweek Connect Zoom* group will have three weeks of festive stories, carols, bright sweaters, and shared goodness. All are invited.

Carol Singing:

Caroling will be encouraged by household/small group. A list of folks who might need distanced Christmas carol cheer is available from Jimmy Spear.



Home Worship for November 29

On the Sundays we are not together, we offer this at-home worship experience. (Different from the YouTube version.)

Find a place — space to sit. Pick a view, be comfortable. Light a candle nearby. Gather a Bible, maybe a hymnal. Get your tablet/internet device/tape player/CD and prime a hymn-worship song for listening. Get communion—grape juice, wine, any beverage and cracker will do! Be in the spirit of the Holy!

WORD & PRAISE

WELCOME GOD & PRAYER.

The light of Hope is before us.

With its light, the offering of hope and healing to a darkened world is a work of a mighty God.

As we worship today, I am confident in God's presence with me. There is a new season starting and I will participate in all its parts.

As I wait and prepare, God offers words and visions of what is to come. I am ready.

Light a candle for the hope of God given in the promise of Messiah. And speak the words, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel."

Almighty God, as we begin this season of Advent remind us again that in the midst of our darkness you are bringing us a message to calm our anxious spirits and hectic lives. Turn our hearts again toward you. Make us ready to receive your Son our Savior. Slow our pace, and give us the blessing of feeling your hope in our spirits. Amen.

READ SCRIPTURE. Isaiah 64:1-9

MEDITATION. *Prophecy for Restoration*

The start of the season of Advent is never focused on a pretty baby in a manger with lullabies in the air. With four weeks to set the stage for

the news of God's mighty act coming among humanity in the birth of a son, we must wait. In our waiting we hear the story of preparation. The people of God must understand why God would come, why God would want to do something new in the world, and why God would forever be changed in the experience the faithful.

The text from Isaiah 64 is one hint to the story of preparation. The prophet speaks to the already awesome deeds of God and the sin of humanity. The combination of God's deeds and the people's sin is cause for anger and avoidance. It is also cause for turning again to each other. But first, the people are reminded that they must yearn for God. They are reminded that if they want God to be the potter and mold them into something great again, there must be a position and posture of waiting.

We are the ones who wait on God. We are the clay that needs to be readied for molding. We are the ones who must look beyond the inequity of this world and see that God can create something new with us and despite us. For these weeks — amidst the isolation and virus, the usual Christmas fury and the snow flurry — we are called to be still and expect something to change with our turn toward God. What a season it can be if we wait and yet expect, turn and be still. The politics and virus all around us can not match this season, if we have hope in God remembering us again.

It has been a year since we started over and returned to the basic understanding of a mighty God doing a mighty thing for a people who were not the best. Yet, God comes. We begin this Advent ready for some good news. May we ready our hearts, bring our confessions of need, and prepare to be the work of God's hand. Amen.

(-js)

PRAYER & GREAT THANKSGIVING

BE IN PRAYER. Offer prayer to God in thanks, in confession. Express your needs, share the needs of others. Just say what is in your heart. Amen!

GIVE AN OFFERING. What is it that you can give today? To God, to another, to yourself. Either pause worship and go do it, or make the commitment of giving that will happen today!

COMMUNION. (Words of Institution & Lord's Prayer) The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." Speak and partake of the elements. Then pray, *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

BENEDICTION. As you have been blessed, go be a blessing to others—bringing the healing and love of God. Amen.

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

*Come, O long-expected Jesus,
born to set your people free.
From our fears and sins release us;
Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
You, our strength and consolation,
come salvation to impart;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of many a longing heart.*

*Born your people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
born your gracious realm to bring.
By your own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by your all-sufficient merit
raise us to your glorious throne.*

By Charles Wesley Tune: HYFRYDOL Chalice Hymnal # 125



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First Christian Church

*Our Mission: To know God
And follow Jesus Christ.*

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laura@firstchristian.org
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Sunday Coffee Hour

Zoom or Phone at 9:30am

The four Sundays of Advent will feature a new fellowship opportunity: *virtual coffee hour*. Join us on ZOOM for a time of fellowship in the 9:30 hour. Bring your coffee, get your toast ready, and jump online to visit with other folks. **Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27**

Join Zoom Meetings: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87436739020>
ZOOM ID: **874 3673 9020**

Dial by phone 312.626.6799 and enter meeting ID: 874 3673 9020

Remember - if you are unfamiliar with Zoom, but would like to try we have church people who can help! You can also call in by phone and spend time with others. The numbers for all of it are above. So, if you can watch worship on YouTube before or after coffee hour – just like we used to do so long ago. See you Sunday



Sunday School

The Christian Edu. Dept. has delivered Sunday School supplies for Advent lessons to all who participate. The Sunday Youth Class continues to gather with GroupMe texts at 10:30am on Sundays.

YOUTH GROUPS

As COVID conditions change our plans, parents will get an email prior to any youth gatherings.

The CYF will receive news and plans via their GroupMe text.



DOC

COLLEGE GROUP

Tuesdays, 7:30pm
(location in GroupME)