

THE ADVENT COURIER

Volume 17, Issue 01

Sharing Christ's Love, We Are A Welcoming, Caring, Serving Community. Come and See.

February 2015



Advent Lutheran Church
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SUNDAY WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Bible Study 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:00 am

Pastor
Rev. Anna Anderson

President
Gerry Fuller

Office Administrator
Nancy Cox Jairrels

Director of Music Ministry
Michael Lewallen

Nursery Attendant
Roxie Jairrels

Newsletter Copy Editor
Marianne Hetzer

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at www.facebook.com/adventarlington

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from FEAST to FAST

As I write this we are in the middle of a "feast" season that began on Christmas Day. It gets progressively more festive as good news goes out via the Star and in stories told in worship of Jesus' mighty deeds. As we hear Gospel stories from Mark, we meet a Jesus who is announced by God as God's beloved Son, who moves from victory to victory: he calls people to follow him and they drop everything, he attracts vast crowds so that people remove roofs to get to him, the authorities tell him only God can forgive sins and he turns and does just that: he's unstoppable! In our secular calendar, the feast season moves from Super Bowl to Valentine's to sales and ski's to climax with Mardi Gras.



Which is where the church and world's calendars meet.

The Church moves from a "feast" season to a "fast" season: Lent. We bury our alleluias and the celebration of God-with-us and turn to contemplation of our relationship with God. To do that you may need to fast from some other activities that take your time: media or social fun, fancy meals or late nights. The time saved is then intentionally used for prayer or worship or devotional reading or service. Advent has opportunities to help you do this. In worship we continue to hear the gos-

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Changing our Constitution

Council submits revisions reflective of current needs

On January 14, Council voted to present the congregation with an updated constitution and bylaws. The new draft is available on our website and will be the subject of a number of open sessions. Members will be asked to formally vote on the new constitution at a congregational meeting on March 1. If approved, the constitution must be confirmed by a two-thirds vote at the annual congregational meeting in June.

The council was motivated by three goals. First, we need to bring our documents into conformity with the current ELCA model constitution. Second, we need the language on governance and procedures to reflect how Advent actually operates. Third, the council wants to adopt a framework that will allow Advent to respond more easily to whatever changes the future may bring.

Fortunately, the task is not as daunting as it might first appear. The ELCA has a model constitution. It consists of 19 chapters, and 14 of those chapters are “required language.” Linda Vilardo has diligently reviewed our current constitution and incorporated all of that required language into the new draft. Thus, a major part of the job has been completed.

The remaining five chapters — the “non-mandatory language” — deal with local church structure. Council has voted to move these chapters from the constitution into the bylaws. This change allows the congregation to define Advent’s governing structure and procedures, but with greater flexibility to modify that structure as changing circumstances may require in the future.



What won't change?

The majority of our constitution. With minor exceptions, the language in the ELCA model dealing with key issues is the same as in our current constitution. The statement of faith, our relationship to the ELCA, property ownership and legal responsibilities are unaffected.

What will change?

Three key areas. The first is the language on governance and structure. The council’s major goal is simply to adopt language that describes how Advent currently operates. The revisions define changes that have already happened. In addition, however, we have moved this language to the bylaws. In this way, Advent will be able to make future changes more easily. By contrast, under our current constitution, most changes to our governing structure not only must be approved at two separate congregational meetings, but they must also be submitted to the Synod for approval.

A second important change is in the approach to associate membership. Advent serves a mobile, transient, diverse population. We pride ourselves on being open and welcoming. A more flexible approach to membership can recognize all who worship regularly with us. It allows us to fully incorporate every-

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Opportunities for worship and ministry



Lent begins February 18

Please note the following dates for our community journey to the Cross

February 15 — Mardi Gras Sunday

Enjoy doughnuts after our worship celebration of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. We will “bury” our “Alleluias” as we prepare to abstain from them during Lent.

February 18 — Ash Wednesday

Worship at 7:30 pm with intentional confession, imposition of ashes, and Holy Communion

February 26 - March 26 — Evening prayer

with Lenten meditation at 7:30 pm. This year’s theme is “The Parables of Lent” and each week we will hear a mediation of a different parable of Jesus. Worship will be pre-

ceded by soup and bread, available from 6:45 on, for those who would like to share a simple supper. (Worship helpers and soup chefs are encouraged to help - please see sign-up sheets or email Pastor Anna with your availability.)

March 29 — Palm Sunday

Worship at 10 am with procession with palms and the St. Mark passion.

April 2 — Maundy (Holy) Thursday

Worship at 7:30 pm ends Lent

April 3 — Good Friday

7:30 pm meditation on the Passion according to St. John.

Growing together in God’s Spirit

We have identified four avenues for our spiritual growth together. In January, worshippers had an opportunity to commit to those goals for this year. As of January 11, the following numbers of people had signed commitment cards:

Bible Reading Challenge - 2
Prayer and Labyrinth - 3

Maintaining Connections - 7
Re-Building and Social Ministry - 4

Cards are still available, and anyone is welcome to join the activities each of these ministries sponsors.

New constitution will allow greater flexibility

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one's talents into church activities and leadership. This more flexible approach is in concert with a broader ELCA-wide review of this issue.

The third large change — at least in size — is in the chapter on “The Pastor.” Here the ELCA model constitution better reflects current social and legal attitudes towards employer and employee rights and responsibilities. In practical terms, the new language is not a significant change for Advent.

Taken together, revising our constitution and bylaws may seem overwhelming. But it needs to be done, and we've already made important progress. As you have time and interest, please join us in the project by participating in the discussions.

- Council President Gerry Fuller

Now is time to contemplate our relationship with God

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pel story from Mark of how things begin to go downhill for Jesus too. The crowds turn away, his disciples squabble and miss the message, and even the miracles don't come off well. And we get to see ourselves in those disciples. It's a time to fast from our joy in Jesus as we remember what a disappointment we are as disciples.

Fortunately in our feast time we have embraced enthusiastically our discipleship by tackling the huge call to revise our constitution. Advent's leaders have been amazing in this task. It is ready for you to “feast” on. But there is still a task ahead. The next step will be to codify in by-laws the governing structures that we use to get the day-to-day tasks of the institution of the church done so that the mission of Jesus in the world happens here through us. Please pray for your leaders and all who fast from the “fun” of church to do this work.

Love, Pastor Anna



January

3rd	Rosalie Juhl
6th	Warren Hageman Debbie Lewis
7th	Nicole Creighton
10th	Iris Jessimy
13th	Colleen Zellmer
15th	Kathryn Juhl
20th	Ingrid Palmquist

February

2nd	Walter Pfannmuller Ruben Herrera
13th	Peter Juhl
14th	Esther Day
17th	Steven Hetzer
18th	Rensford Lovell
20th	Sam Matzner
25th	Desiree Jessimy



A Sad Farewell

We will be saying goodbye to the old oak tree that has been so welcoming at the entrance to our labyrinth. It has been diagnosed with anthracnose and hypoxylon canker, both fungal diseases present in most trees. It is a fatal disease which affects only stressed trees, not healthy ones, and our tree has been stressed by the building of the labyrinth and prior improper pruning. Since 2007, following the advice of an arborist, the tree has been fertilized and trimmed every year, but despite our efforts it has reached the point where it must be taken down.

We are grateful to have been able to enjoy its spreading branches for so long, and hopeful that a new tree will be able to take root and thrive in its spot.

- Ingrid Berdahl, Landscape Minister

Gifts you gave brought hope to needy

The Advent community again participated in Gifts of Hope, purchasing \$2450 worth of gifts during the Advent season. Items purchased include: mattresses, blankets and shoes for immigrant and needy children and families; medical and dental care for homeless women who are victims of abuse and for low-income elderly or disabled individuals; service by Lutheran Volunteer Corps volun-

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Young Adults heading to the Holy Land

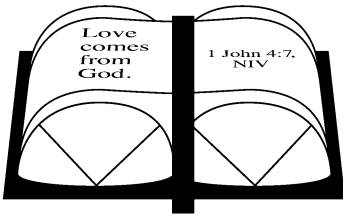
Have you ever wanted to visit the land of the Bible and walked where Jesus walked?

Here is a list of upcoming young adult-led trips for young adults to the Holy Land. Cost range for each trip, not including airfare, is \$1000-\$1450. Friends welcome! You can be from anywhere. Contact the office for the email address of organizers if you are interested.

- * Rocky Mountain Synod: May 13-25
- * Indiana-Kentucky Synod: May 15-25
- * Region 7 (Northeast USA): May 20-31
- * Metro Chicago Synod: May 29-June 9
- * North West Michigan Synod and Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod: June 2015
- * Minneapolis Area Synod: July 17-27
- * Northeastern Minnesota Synod: August 8-22

GOD'S SWEET WORD

Share this Bible treat — and God's love — with a special valentine.



What you need:

- Black card stock or construction paper (2" x 1.5")
- Double-sided tape
- 2 wrapped Hershey's Nuggets candy bars (silver or gold)
- Pen or marker
- White paper (2.75" x 1")
- Thin sliver of red paper or ribbon
- Scissors

What you do:

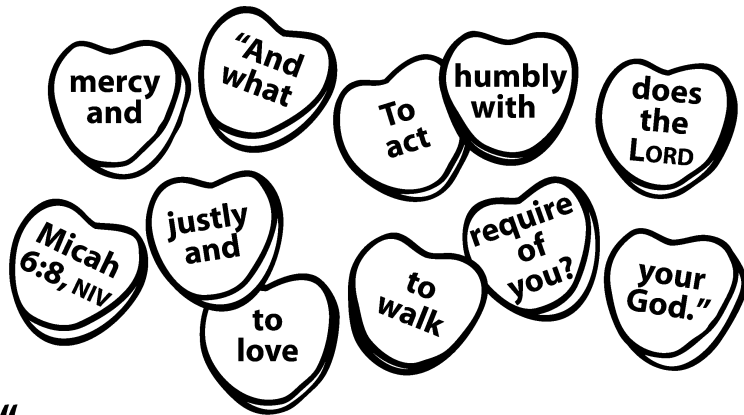
1. In the center of the black paper, tape down the candy bars side by side.
2. On the white paper, write a short Bible verse about love. Then wrap it around the candy bars horizontally and tape it down.
3. Place the red paper or ribbon between the two candy bars, and tape the top of this "bookmark" to the Bible.
4. Give away this fun, sweet message of God's love!



Conversation hearts

The world encourages people to look out for themselves and seek success, but in Micah 6:8, God tells us to live differently.

Directions: Put the conversation hearts in the correct order by writing the words on the lines below. Hint: Capitalization and quotation marks are included.



"

_____ ? _____

_____ " _____ 6:8 _____

Answer: "And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8, NIV

Loves me not?

A girl asked a boy if he loved her, and he replied, "Yes, of course."

"Would you die for me?" the girl wondered.

After a brief pause, the honest lad said, "No, mine is an undying love."

Thanks for the many Christmas blessings

Your generous Christmas donations made a number of children happy. We received the following note from APAH.

Dear Pastor Anna,

We are grateful for Advent Lutheran's support in giving to our holiday program for APAH children and families. Thanks to your generosity the children enjoyed festive holiday parties, with presents, food, crafts, games, and activities supported by our donors and partners.

The holiday season can be a challenging time for families who have limited income and resources. All those who partnered with us to bring joy to our residents made a wonderful positive impact.

I thank you on behalf of the families we serve and wish you a wonderful New Year.

Sincerely,

Nina Janopaul, President/CEO

Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing

Dear Advent Family. Thank you so much for your kind and generous Christmas gift. I appreciate everyone's support and encouragement. This is a wonderful community, and I feel blessed to be a part of it.

- Michael Lewallen

Thanks for the blessing of your Christmas gift. I am so blessed to part of this wonderful congregation.

- Nancy Jairrels

Thank you for the many greetings, gifts and joy you shared with me for Christmas! You are the best gift any pastor could have.

- Pastor Anna Anderson



Advent's elves. Our Christmas gifts made for a wonderful holiday for low-income families served by APAH.

You don't have to wait until Christmas to gift hope

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teers to address social injustices through advocacy, direct service, and organizational support; support for pastors serving impoverished and marginalized communities in El Salvador and retired pas-



tors in Namibia; books for the library at Paulinum Seminary in Namibia; chaplaincy services for individuals at Fellowship Square Foundation residences for low-income elderly and disabled individuals; tools needed to obtain and keep a job; transportation assistance such as gas money, bus tokens, and metro cards for homeless and low-income individuals; humanitarian assistance to deported migrants; child enrichment programs, educational games, school clothing and healthy snacks for low-income or

homeless children and youth; groceries for a needy family for a day and nutritious meals for homeless, disabled, and low-income elderly individuals in the DC metro area; equipment for Caroline Furnace Bible Camp; and special plants and flowers for two new memory gardens at The Village at Rockville, a Lutheran retirement community.

Gifts of Hope is an alternative gift-giving program that serves as an intermediary between donors and organizations that serve individuals and families in need locally and internationally. Although gifts are available year-round, the program's primary focus is during the holidays, including the liturgical season of Advent. To purchase a Gift of Hope in lieu of a gift for a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion, just go to the website: <http://www.giftsofhopedc.org>

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