

November 27, 2024

Dear Beloveds of Christ,

Come Sunday, we will light our first Advent candle and pray into the promises of God, as we await and anticipate Christ's coming anew. We will prepare to:

“Make ready the way of our God: clear a straight path. Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be leveled. The twisted paths will be made straight, and the rough road smooth-and all humankind will see the salvation of God.” (Luke 3:4-6 Inclusive Bible)

I invite us to begin with the same humble hearts, as that of Mary and Joseph being active in prayer and listening. I invite us to journey this Advent season preparing to make ready the way of our God. I'm praying for the opening of my heart anew and again. The world itself feels heartbroken and weary. When I pray, I hear collective groaning and longing for peace in a world in upheaval with violence and war, hate and oppression, suffering and injustices. In active preparing room in my own heart, I'm trusting the work of the Spirit in our communal/collective movement that Emmanuel, God with us, would gift us to release our anger, grief, fears, disappointments, anxieties, despair, foolishness, all kind of struggles and that we may receive the gift of Christ our Savior.

In many ways, are we not like Mary and Joseph, in need of listening to the words, "Be not afraid" and willing/faithing/trusting ourselves to God? I don't know how the Holy family made that journey thousands of years ago driven to leave their community and into exile, while expecting a newborn child. It was impossible without love –love of God, love of self, love of both neighbors and strangers along the way, and the love of starry nights.

As we continue to journey through Advent with the gift of the faithful to remind us that we do not journey alone, as we prayerfully green our sanctuary (and our hearts), open ourselves to listening to the message for such a time as this through our Las Posadas (shelter for the holy family) service, continue our outreach missions, provide safe and warm housing- a home with and for our veterans, rejoice with our lessons and carols, keep watch for climate justice and welcome children/youth/first time visitors and guests, may we embrace God with us, Emmanuel, along this way. I invite you to participate in Advent worship services as a means of grace to await, anticipate, listen, and prepare towards rejoicing together at our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Let us pray toward embracing the promise that God comes to be with/for us in love, with light that no shadow, not even the shadow of all that has gone terribly wrong in the world can ever separate. The greatest gift of God is love incarnate, Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Savior.

May our Advent journey be blessed with hope, peace, joy, and love as we await the promise of God in Christ Jesus, the Savior of the Cosmos.

Pastor Wongee (she/her)



Advent Events

First Sunday of Advent December 1

Hanging of the Greens

Second Sunday of Advent December 8

*Holy Communion with
Christmas carols*

Third Sunday of Advent December 15

*Las Posadas, Service of
Shelter for the Holy Family*

Saturday, December 21 7PM

Longest Night Service

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 22

*Service of Lessons and
Carols*

Christmas Eve 7:30 PM

*Candlelight Service- Kids,
Cookies, and Candlelight!*