

The SPIRIT

of the season of

Advent and Christmas

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As We Prepare and Seek Answers...

Let Us Welcome the New Thing God is Doing in Our Lives

As we enter the season of Advent we prepare to welcome the coming Son of God. For us it is a story that we have heard over and over again. There are no surprises, no twists of plot, no re-casting of characters from one Advent to another.

But there was a time when all this was new. The radical idea that God might come as a baby and live among us was completely foreign to Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah. For them welcoming the birth of Jesus challenged everything that they had ever learned about God and humanity. There was no precedent; no-one with knowledge to guide them; no rule book or road map to show them the way; no traditions to tell them how to act. God came to them unbidden. It was up to them to open their hearts and minds to God doing a radical new thing and to welcome this intrusion into their lives.

In our Advent worship we will meet the people who encountered God's radical breaking-in to their lives. We will see how they welcomed the Christ child; and we will be challenged to do the same. Each week we will add more visual reminders to the story until on the 17th of December, Cantata Sunday, we will gather in Bethlehem to celebrate the arrival of Mary and Joseph with music and drama. Finally, on December 24th, we will be the ones called to open our minds and hearts to the new thing that God is doing in our lives. We will be the ones who are bid to welcome our intrusive and loving God.

Christmas Eve Services

Sunday, December 24
10:00 am – Family Service
7:30 & 9:30 pm
Candlelight Services

New Year's Eve Service

Sunday, December 31
10:00 am

Will You Accept God's Invitation?

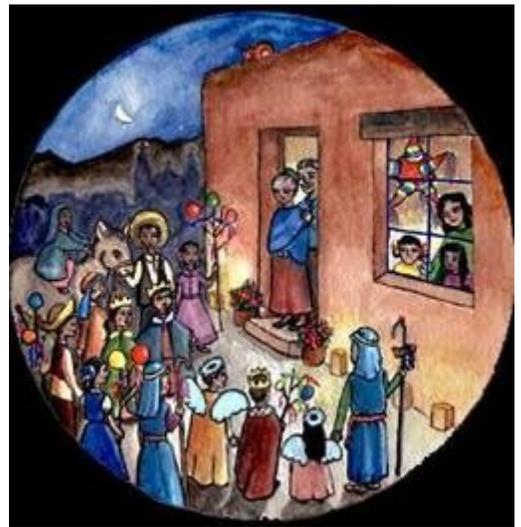
God has invited you to prepare for the coming of the Christ child this Advent season. He assured us, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart." Jeremiah 29:13

So, why aren't we seeking? If you are like me, you say to yourself, "This year I will focus during Advent. I will read my daily devotions and prepare the way for Christ. My heart will be open, and I won't overextend myself." Then the hustle and bustle rushes in, and your invitation and seeking is erratic at best. You want to seek God, but you didn't give it your heart, and there are so many lovely distractions.

This year can be different, will be different. You are no longer a passive witness to Advent. You are a part of the preparation, a part of the worship, a part of the 10 o'clock hour, and we want this experience to be one you will never forget, as you seek and find God with all of your heart.

How will you let God in? Will you open the door and cross the threshold?

While Sunday worship begins this focus, the 10 o'clock intergenerational hour will give you the chance to experience intimately Advent and the characters we think we know. Take an hour for worship to focus your mind and an hour in Bethlehem immersing yourself in the story through experiences and fellowship.



How Will We Prepare and Interact with each Character?

Advent 1—December 3

Character: Joseph

- ◆ Register for the census.
- ◆ Make an Advent wreath.
- ◆ Help Joseph with carpentry.
- ◆ Decorate the Christmas tree.
- ◆ Enjoy Brewed Awakenings!

Advent 2—December 10

Characters: Mary & Elizabeth

- ◆ Prepare drums for Christmas Eve worship.
- ◆ Help Mary and Elizabeth with baking and preparations.
- ◆ Give Jesus a bed of kindness to lay upon.

Advent 3—December 17

Character: Innkeeper

- ◆ Enjoy the Posada and learn about how other cultures invite Jesus in.
- ◆ We will have an unforgettable fiesta!

Our Advent Mission
RCLPC's
26th Annual
Cookie Walk
Saturday, December 9th
from 9am-Noon



RCLPC is hosting its 26th Annual Cookie Walk on Saturday, December 9th. Over 400 dozen delicious and homemade cookies and candies of all types are needed and thanks to our wonderful congregation of volunteer bakers we accomplish this every year! This year we ask that you please mark your cookies/candies with the name and/or if it is nut free, gluten free or sugar free. We will label each platter or box with that information for our buyers. Although bakers are very important we also need many more volunteers to make this mission a success! Please sign up at church to help and be a part of a wonderful mission at RCLPC.

Proceeds benefit...

Our Church Budget, RCLPC Youth Mission Trip, PADs Lunches, and the Diaper Bank.

Begin the Journey of Advent by Meeting Joseph and Making Your Own Advent Wreath

Please join us on Sunday, December 3rd, as we begin the journey of Advent. We will gather in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 AM and seek God's message with other fellow journeyers. We will meet Joseph who is also seeking answers. We will create Advent wreaths to help us begin our time of Advent and seeking God.

What will you need for this journey?

Please bring a small wreath or creative container to make your own personal Advent wreath to take home and enjoy during the season. Need some ideas? How about four mason jars, or an interesting box or basket, perhaps a glass container or pan. Be creative and have fun with your ideas.

There will be some wreath forms available for your use, if your creativity is running low plus other interesting container ideas. We will provide the trimming supplies! **Please come be a seeker with us on December 3rd.**





“*La Fiesta de la Posada*”

by
Dave and Iola Brubeck
Sunday,
December 17
during
9:00 and 11:00 worship

The Adult Choir and Jubilation Youth Choir will present “*La Fiesta de la Posada*” by Dave and Iola Brubeck, Sunday, December 17, during 9:00 and 11:00 worship.

The Posada, is a Latin American custom depicting Joseph and Mary’s search for lodging on the eve of Jesus’s birth. The reenactment involves the entire village as they make their way through the streets, knocking on various doors along the route. Each time they are turned away with the words, “there is no room,” until the procession arrives at the appointed home or church. The doors are flung wide in celebration. All gather round for the retelling of the Christmas story in song, dance, music and mime. The finale of the celebration is the introduction of the piñata.



Recalling the inspiration for the work, Brubeck says, “I was born in a California town founded by the Spanish, raised on a cattle ranch that had been a Mexican land grant, and have absorbed and observed Mexican folk music all my life. I have toured Mexico six times and always enjoyed listening to the folk music of the various regions. The ethnic music reflects those qualities I most admire in a people... dignity in moments of tragedy, infectious high spirits in moments of joy, and an unshakable religious faith made evident in a strong sense of one’s own worth and deep respect for the shared values of one’s own group—family, church, village. These qualities, I think, are universal to people with a strong communal sense—an increasingly rare attribute in urban culture. It is this sense of sharing in an event which I have tried to capture in the simple retelling of the Christmas story.”

Please join us as we share Dave and Iola Brubeck’s music with you.