



The *SPIRIT*

of the season of

Advent and Christmas

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December 2018

“Birthing a Promise”

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” ~ Isaiah 9:6

With these glorious words Isaiah heralds the birth of Jesus, “a son given to us.” Note he says “given to us.” Not “given for us” or “given to be with us” but “given to us.” The only times a son has been “given” to me was when I became a father.

What is Isaiah saying?

Think for a minute about how many ancestors you have. Sure, you know that you have two parents and four grandparents, but as you go back in time the numbers grow quickly: eight great-grandparents, 16 great-great-grandparents, 32 great-great-great-grandparents. Go back 40 generations, or about a thousand years, and each of us has, theoretically, more than a trillion direct ancestors. And since our family trees are not independent, but are inevitably going to overlap and intersect within that period of time, we are all swimming in the same genetic pool. Granted, today our lives, including our congregation, are multi-culturally and multi-ethnically diverse, creating a wonderful mosaic of cultural, generational and ethnic traditions.

So, what is Isaiah saying? I believe he is saying we are family in the most simple and profound way, biologically connected not just metaphorically. During Advent we will be looking at the birth stories of Moses, Samson, John the Baptist and Jesus. More than that, we will also be looking at how these significant births brought promises of hope, new possibilities, grace, and love.

Our theme is “Birthing a Promise” and I hope you will all join us in celebrating the great promises God introduced into the world through these parents and children.

So, as we experience the promises of God, we should be anticipating each of them, but most especially the Christ-child, with the same intimate joy and excitement as we have for the arrival of a new child in our own lives. This Advent, we will explore not only Joseph and Mary’s story, but the stories of a Levite couple, Manoah and his wife, and Zachariah and Elizabeth.

Let us celebrate!!! Blessings and Peace to all from your relative, Pastor John

A Season of Promise

The adult choir, joined by the Crystal Brass and John Morefield, organist, will present **“Christmas Cantata”** by Daniel Pinkham, the **first Sunday of Advent, December 2**, during 9:00 and 11:00 worship.

Pinkham was an organist, harpsichordist, and early music specialist who was also very much a composer of the twentieth century. His music reflects his interest in things both old and new.

The cantata, consisting of three contrasting short movements, captures the spirit of the season via its Latin texts and the variety in color and pace of its music. It is scored for chorus and double brass choir, with an optional organ part.

The first movement, “Quem vidistis” (“What have you seen, shepherds?”) relates how the shepherds learned of the new-born Christ child. The text is drawn from the antiphon verses sung at Christmas Midnight Mass.

The second movement, “O magnum mysterium” (“Oh great mystery”) tells how the animals in the stable observed Christ’s birth, further extolling the mystery of the virgin birth. This text is drawn from one of the responses sung in monasteries at matins, or daybreak, on Christmas day.

The final movement, “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” (“Glory to God in the highest”) a celebratory hymn of praise which the angels sing, is derived in part from a passage in the gospel of Luke. It is sung or recited as part of the Proper of the High Mass. Pinkham’s setting is particularly suitable in its alternation of energetic brass sections with a cappella choral passages.

Please invite your family and friends to join us, as we gather in this season of promise to worship the Advent God of surprises.

Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24
4:00 pm – Family Service
7:30 & 9:30 pm
Candlelight Services

Sunday, December 30th
One Worship Service at
10:00 am





A Star is Born

Have you ever noticed how a baby changes everything? A baby enters a room asleep in a mom's arms, and the world whispers quietly around it. A baby screams bloody murder, and the world awakens. Parents are past the point of tired with an infant, and high-pitched voices reverberate coos.

This season we get the pleasure of looking at four babies who changed our story even today. While Sunday worship begins this focus, the 10 o'clock hour invites us into the folds with these infants, a chance to look at the world through innocence and possibilities. Take an hour for worship to focus your mind and an hour immersing yourself into the lives of these four infants through experiences and fellowship.

We hope you will join us each week and give yourself time to realize the power of these stars in you. *How will these babies change you?*

***You're invited to
celebrate...***
JESUS' BIRTHDAY
 with us!
 When:
December 15, 2018
5:30-8:30 pm
 Where:
**RCLPC
 Fellowship Hall**
 Who:
**Children ages
 6 mos. – 6th grade**
 What:
**Dinner, games,
 crafts and a movie**

*Please bring a package of
 diapers for the Diaper Bank.*

**RSVP to Raechel Sowa
 at rdsowa@yahoo.com
 or sign up in the
 Gathering Place**

Week	Infant	Theme	Activities
Dec. 2	Moses	Hope	Church-wide breakfast, basket weaving, painting canvases, Moses scavenger hunt, boat races
Dec. 9	Samson	New Possibilities	Star cookies, friendship plates, baby pic guessing contest, Samson scavenger hunt
Dec. 16	John the Baptist	Grace	Coffee treats, communicating without speaking, writing Christmas cards, angel ornaments, John the Baptist scavenger hunt
Dec. 23	Jesus	Salvation	Cocoa Bar, luminaries, star craft, Christmas memories, Jesus scavenger hunt



RCLPC's 27th Annual *Cookie Walk* Saturday, December 8th from 9am-Noon



What does the aroma of cookies say to you? Christmas is coming? Friends and relatives will stop in? And it is **COOKIE WALK TIME!** Our annual fundraiser and community outreach event, the Cookie Walk is an all-church activity so please start baking. Breads, candies, cookies – there is a market for all and we need all of you to help create the display that annually receives oohs and aaahs as people walk into Fellowship Hall at 9:00am Saturday, December 8. From delicate butter holiday cookies to chocolate chip and nut breads and fudge, begin baking your favorites and freeze them either at home or at church (mark for Cookie Walk on anything you put in our RCLPC freezer). *Will you decorate or work to keep the displays fresh and beautiful and/or bake or plan a baking party with family or friends?* Sign-up sheets will be posted soon and for questions, call Nancy Blakely 1.815.455.0304; nbbakely@comcast.net.

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



The Giving Tree is Up and Ready to be “Undecorated”!

You can add a SPARKLE to someone's holiday season! Each angel tag has a Christmas wish for someone from a Mission supported by RCLPC. All you do is pick a tag off the tree, purchase the item listed on the back and return the gift as specified to the tree by **December 9th**.

Thank you for making Christmas a happier one for someone!
If you have any questions please feel free to contact Joan Jensema.

How Can I Shop AND Give Money to the Church at the Same Time?

By using SCRIP cards that's how!! By RCLPC people ordering SCRIP cards for their own shopping or for gifts! With all the holiday shopping that is done, order cards for gifts and also for where you spend your money shopping for gifts and supplies! No money out of your pocket, just fill out an order form for cards from stores that you regularly shop at and write a check for the amount ordered and you will receive that same amount in the cards you've chosen that you can use to spend or give away!

RCLPC gets a % from Scrip of that amount....it's THAT easy!! - A WIN-WIN for RCLPC Missions! Please consider making a contribution without making a contribution!! Scrip forms can be found by the bulletin board in the Connecting Link.

Last Day to order to get by Christmas... December 2nd.

If you have any questions, contact Joan Jensema or Nancy Blakely.

