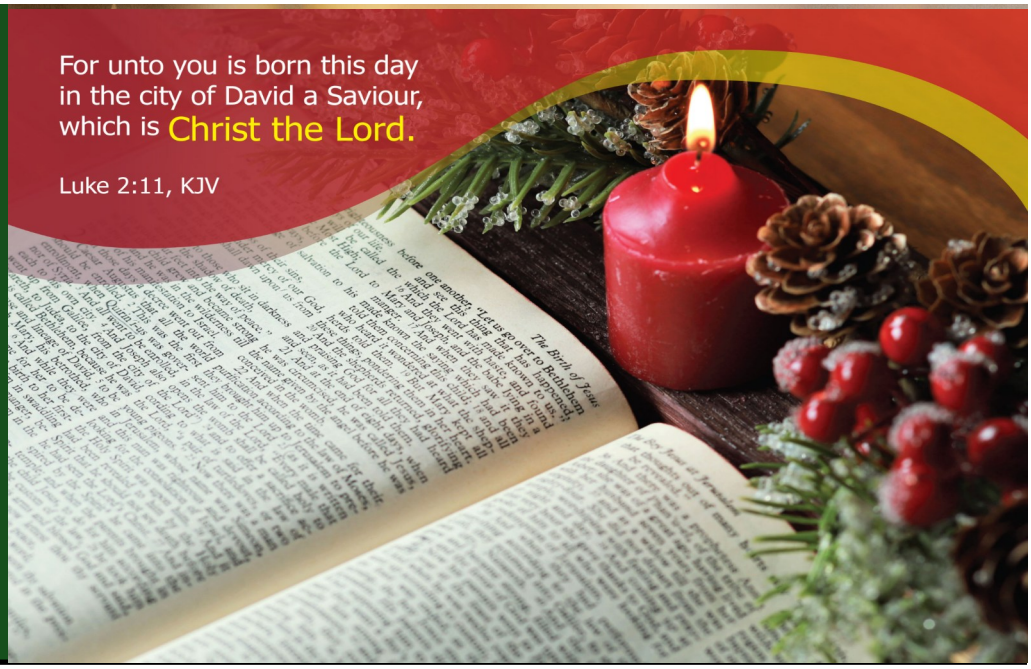
Peace Free Lutheran Church

December 2026 Newsletter





"O COME!"

This is our theme for our Sundays in Advent this year. The word "Advent" means "Come." In the Lutheran church, Advent has always been a time to focus on the "Three Comings of Christ." The First Coming was in Bethlehem. We are looking forward to the Second Coming of Christ at the end of this age. But there is also another "coming" that must take place! That is the coming of Christ into your life! Our messages this Advent will speak to us about all "Three Comings" of Christ. The texts and titles of these messages for our 8:00am and 10:30am Sunday services are as follows:

November 29th	*"O Come, Lord Jesus, Savior, Come!"*	Mark 13:24-37
December 6th	*"The Gospel has Come! O Come, Follow Christ!"*	Mark 1:1-8, 14, 15
December 13th	*"O Come, Redeemer of the Captives!"*	Psalm 126

Youth Sunday School Christmas Program at the 10:30 a.m. service

December 20th	*"O Come, O Christ, in Me!"*	Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday Advent Services

December 2nd, 9th, and 16th at 7:00 pm

During these services, we will light the corresponding Advent Wreath Candles, along with the reading of Scripture and prayers.





Christmas Eve Candlelight Divine Worship Services at 4:00 and 7:00 pm

***"O Come, O Come, to Bethlehem, Come to Christ!"* - Luke 2**



Merry Christmas!

Dear Congregational Family,

We are so thankful for each of you and are blessed to spend Christmas with you! It is hard to believe that this is our fourth Christmas with you! Each one is such a joy, and we love this sacred season! As always, one of our favorite times is our Christmas Eve Worship Services and hearing the Christmas Scriptures read and joyfully singing the beautiful Christmas carols!

One of my favorite Christmas carols is, *"O Little Town of Bethlehem."* Each verse is worth meditating upon, but I especially love the last two verses.

Verse 3:

"How silently, how silently
The wonderous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in."

Verse 4:

"O Holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born in us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel."

The third verse reminds me how amid our busy, loud, and rushing world, God silently gave His greatest gift as Christ was born in the simplicity of the stable in little Bethlehem. How wonderful that God amid "this world of sin," continues to delight to enter into simple, humble souls that are opened to Him to receive the gift of the Savior.

As we celebrate Christmas, the fourth verse reminds us that we could not ascend to God, so he descended to us. Christ was born so that we might be born again in Him. Jesus took our sin from us, and it was cast upon Him at the cross, so that He might forgive us and live in us and abide with us forever. Jesus Christ is our Lord Emmanuel, God with us!

"'Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which translated means, 'God with us.'"
– Matthew 1:23 (quoting Isaiah 7:14)

I pray that we all experience new life in Christ, not just this Christmas, but each day of our life!

Merry Christmas!!!

Pastor & Jen, Ben, Sadie, and Sam



Thanks be unto God
for his unspeakable gift.

2 Corinthians 9:15, KJV

FROM THE COUNCIL



1. Pastor Carlson reported that both the Reformation and All Saints Sunday services were exceptional and that we had 149 in attendance for All Saints, some of whom were family of those being remembered. He has finished "Understanding Islam" in Sunday school. We will be going through the book of Joel next. We have had a number of people express interest in a New Members class so he is hoping to start that soon. Greg, Doug, and Brian will be preaching at the Wednesday night Advent services. Debbie Chotkevys is working on plans for special music for the Advent/Christmas services. Pastor will create a few social media posts for the CW Facebook page. He is now on the Board of the Canal Lifewise Academy ministry.
2. The Parish Life chairperson reported that they are working on the following events: the annual pie social after the Thanksgiving eve service, a soup and sandwich meal for the volunteers who will be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas, the annual church Christmas party and white elephant gift exchange that will be held at 3:00pm on Saturday 12/12, and a cookie and punch reception after the children's Christmas program on 12/13.
3. The Social Concerns chairperson reported that PDHC is in great need of diapers and wipe at the Lancaster Center. Email was sent to the congregations to request donations. We are supporting the CWHS Adopt-a-Family program by helping 4 families. For Foundation Dinners, we have volunteers up through the end of the year.We were able to collect 82 Samaritan's Purse shoe boxes this year. Last year we collected 64 shoe boxes. We collected 8 online this year.
4. The Education chairperson reported that the Sunday School kids are starting to work on a short Christmas program, led by Nikki Hall and Michelle Staffan. It will be held on Sunday December 13th.
5. The Stewardship chairperson reported that they had 1) completed the Quarterly Giving designations, 2) sent $325 to Canal Winchester Food Pantry from Miscellaneous Funds, and 3) sent $600 Interest money to Samaritan's Purse for U.S. Flooding. The committee will review and discuss our Mission %s at their November meeting. They also need to discuss designation of Thanksgiving Eve/Advent/Christmas Eve services donations.
6. The Evangelism chairperson reported that they continue to work hard on the upcoming Living Nativity. Things are moving along nicely. Upcoming rehearsals are Saturday, November 21, Saturday, November 28, and the dress rehearsal on December 1. We have asked for donations of cookies for both nights. We have also experimented the last 2 Sundays with a greeter at the outside door for the 10:30am service. Feedback has been good.
7. The Finance chairperson reported on current income/expense reports. One of the CDs is coming due on November 22. He has suggested we put that money into 2 separate CDs of differing maturity dates.
8. The Property chairperson reported that due to changes in the phone system, the alarm system needs some updates to the equipment. Also, the current monitoring company has been unresponsive, so he is looking at other options for alarm monitoring.

December lectors

December 2

7:00pm—Householder Family

December 6

8:00am—Shane Clark
10:30am—Jim Addonizio

December 9

7:00pm—Mary Pabst/Wyatt Young

December 13

8:00am—Denise Clark
10:30am—Zack Hall

December 16

7:00pm—Hess Family

December 20

8:00am—Lisa Schacht
10:30am—Lisa Schacht

December 24

4:00pm—Lilane Fox
7:00pm—Haverfield Family

December 27

8:00am—Jeff Pluta
10:30am—Nikki Hall



Peace Free Lutheran Church
Financials Through October 2026

General Fund Income: $226,023
General Fund Expenditures: $237,499

You may request a copy of the Council Minutes and Financial reports



Pastor Steven Carlson

Come to Bethlehem!

Experience Christ this Christmas!

This is the theme of our Living Nativity which we will be presenting during "Christmas in the Village" in Canal Winchester this Friday and Saturday! So many in our congregation have been working diligently and praying fervently for this Christmas outreach to our community. It is truly a miracle of the Lord to see all the details coming together to make this happen. Thank you, Shane, for directing it! A stable has been built, there will be characters in costume, and live animals. In the PCC there will be crafts for the children, cookies, coffee, hot chocolate, Christmas carols, and joyful fellowship! We need you to come and be a part of this! Come and serve cookies, visit, and welcome all who come!

A verse that has guided our prayers is from ***Matthew 2:11a – "After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him."***

Our prayer is that the Lord will be mightily at work and that souls would be born anew as they experience Christ this Christmas because of coming to our Bethlehem to see the Living Nativity!

Wednesday Advent Worship Services

On December 2nd, 9th, and 16th we will be having our Wednesday evening Advent Worship Services at 7:00pm. Each Wednesday we will light the corresponding Advent Wreath Candles, along with Scripture and prayer. Thank you, Greg, for organizing these services! Greg, Doug, and Brian will be giving these messages.

Our offerings from these services will be given to the new LifeWise ministry that has just started in Canal Winchester. LifeWise is also ministering in Pickerington, Groveport, Bloom Carroll, and Lancaster as well as other surrounding school districts. This ministry offers Bible lessons to public school students once per week.

Merry Christmas!
Pastor Carlson



Join us on Sunday, December 20th for a Youth Christmas party full of fun and food! Youth of all ages are welcome. We will meet at the PCC at 3:00 p.m. and then carpool to Get Air in Pickerington for an hour of jump, followed by dinner and games at the PCC until 6:30 p.m.! Please contact the church office by Friday, December 18th to RSVP.



The Stewardship Committee would like to update their list of giving envelope packets. To that end, please let us know if: 1) You are getting the donation envelopes but no longer want them (some people now use the online option) or 2) You do not have the donation envelopes, but would like to receive them. Please call or email the office to let us by December 13th.

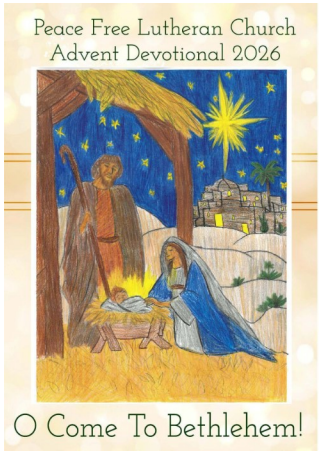


The shoeboxes are on their way!

We had a total of 82 shoeboxes donated for Samaritan's Purse this year! These shoeboxes will go all over the world to children of families who may never have heard the Good News of the coming of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Thank you so much to all who participated in this ministry!







2026 Advent Devotionals are here!

This year our congregational Advent Devotional focuses on Bethlehem, in conjunction with our Living Nativity and invitation to people to ***"Come to Bethlehem! Experience Christ this Christmas!"*** As we trace the occurrences of the town of Bethlehem through the Bible we find that this little town had experienced deep wounds, despair, dysfunction, and death; and yet, God was powerfully at work in bringing forth a Savior for the world who would bring healing, hope, and life itself! Members of our congregation have done an excellent job in reading, studying, writing, and praying for you as they prepared these Advent devotions for you. The devotions are from December 1st to December 25th. They will be emailed to you each day, but you can also pick up a printed copy at church. They will be available on Sunday, November 29th. (No devotions are included for Sundays.) Thank you, to all of our writers and to Laurie Haverfield for the front cover artwork!!

A note from Feed My Sheep - December Food Bags



With Christmas approaching, I ask you to remember us here in the Dominican Republic. We support 40 families throughout the year with food bags twice a month. However, during the holiday season we also help five other pastors and their congregations with a larger food bag for Christmas. We have been giving 125 family-size bags for Christmas. Your dollars go a long way ($50 provides food for 2 families!). If you are able to help, just mark your donation "December Food Bags," and we will use it just for that purpose. Thank you! Mary Pabst

December Acolyte Schedule

First Service (8:00 a.m.)

December 6 Will Voigt

December 13 Mary Voigt

December 20 Fred Voigt

December 27 Makenna Cassidy

Second service (10:30 a.m.)

Eli Hess and Becky Mosher-Wheeler will alternate





The 2026 Altar Flower sign up sheet is available on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary. In addition to dedication information, if you would like a specific flower color, please also write that in. As a reminder, the Flower Boutique will now bill the church instead of sending bills directly to those who are signed up each week. If you have flowers for the week, just send your payment of $49.98 to the church, or place it in the offering plate with a note that it is for altar flowers. Please call the church office if you have any questions.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath



December 2
7:00pm—Householder Family

December 9
7:00pm—Mary Pabst/Wyatt Young

December 16
7:00pm—Hess Family

December 24
4:00pm—Boczek Family
7:00pm—Haverfield Family

Early Registration is OPEN for the FLY Conference 2027!

FLY 2027 OVERCOME JOHN 16:33

If you are interested in registering your teen for the FLY conference, please visit https://www.flyconvention.org/registration/. Fill out the registration form and choose 'Check by Mail' for the Payment Method. The church will be sending the appropriate deposit amount for our group by the early registration deadline. We are asking families to contribute $75 per attendee to the church . The attached website contains more information about the conference and registration. If/when you complete your registration, please let us know so we can start planning all our travel details! Feel free to reach out to Emily Haverfield (haverfieldt@hotmail.com) or Sarah Hess (siboone@hotmail.com) if you have any questions. We would like to have final numbers by December 20th.

Flyers and postcards for upcoming events in December are now available



Invitation postcards (shown below) with details about the Living Nativity are ready and will be sent out to homes in the surrounding area. Thank you Brian Fox for designing and facilitating this mailing!



Flyers with details about our December Advent/Christmas services (shown on the left) are now available on the tables in the back of the Sanctuary. Please feel free to pass them out to family and friends, and invite them to come!



Our Hat, Mitten & Adopt-a-Family Tree is located in the back of the Sanctuary and is ready to be filled with love and generosity this Christmas season! We are excited to share that we have adopted four children this year! You will find special Adopt-a-Family tags hanging on the tree with gift wishes to help make their Christmas a little brighter. Please bring all Adopt-a-Family gifts **unwrapped, with the original tags attached**, and place them under the tree by **Sunday, December 13th**.



We are also collecting new hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves to help keep those in need in our community warm this winter. These donations may be placed on the tree through Christmas.Thank you for sharing God's love through your kindness and generosity. Together, we can make a difference and bring joy and warmth to others this Christmas season!



The Church Christmas Party and White Elephant gift exchange will be on Saturday, December 12th at 3:00 p.m. The meal will be a potluck. If your last name starts with the letters A-D, please bring a main dish, Last names starting with E-Q should bring a side dish, and those starting with R-Z bring a dessert. If you would like to participate in the White Elephant gift exchange, just bring a White Elephant gift (nothing fancy) and join the fun. There will be door prizes as well!





Christmas Cards! If you would like to participate in the Peace Christmas card exchange this year, there is a box in the back of the sanctuary where you can drop off your cards. The last day for drop-off is Sunday, December 13th, but please try to get them in as early as you can. Cards will be placed in manila envelopes with the names of the recipients on the front. You can collect your cards following the services on December 20th. NOTE: If sending cards to those no longer attending church, please drop them off at the Post Office.

"Come to Bethlehem" and experience the Christ of Christmas!



Visitors will step back in time to the little town of Bethlehem where they will find soldiers, townspeople, live animals, and a newborn baby with his parents in a little stable. Guided by the innkeeper and his wife, they will discover the true meaning of this miraculous night when a Savior was born!

This is what you will find when you come out to the Peace Free Lutheran Church "Living Nativity" during Canal Winchester's *"Christmas in the Village"* on December 4th & 5th. Presentations will be held outside in front of the PCC every half hour (6pm, 6:30pm, 7pm, and 7:30pm) on both nights. During this time, we will also have crafts, cookies, hot chocolate, and music in inside the PCC. Bring your family and friends to experience this event!

And speaking of cookies……

We are asking for donations of Christmas cookies for both nights.You may bring your goodies to the kitchen in the PCC up until December 4th. Please contact the church office or Leslie Hall to let us know if you are able to help out with some treats.





Thank you Sean!

Sean Moneypenny gifted the church with a special picture that he made using a photograph and additional graphics. It is now hanging in the library. Stop by the next time you are in the PCC and take a look!

What is Helping Hands?

HELPING HANDS

We are a committee within the church that is available to help people in our church who are shut-ins or those going through a recent surgery and in need of assistance with things like meals or picking up medication. Our mission is to help those who may be going through a difficult time. We also supply funeral luncheons for those in our church who have lost a loved one. For more information on what kind of assistance we offer, please contact the church office.



Pumpkin Nut Cups

From the kitchen of Marilou Poling

½ cup unsalted butter, softened

1 pack (3 oz.) cream cheese, softened

1 cup flour

½ cup brown sugar, packed

¼ cup canned pumpkin

1 egg yolk

1 tablespoon Half and Half, light cream or milk

4 teaspoons unsalted butter, melted

¼ teaspoon rum flavoring

1 teaspoon vanilla

⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon

⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg

½ cup pecans, coarsely chopped

¼ cup brown sugar, packed

Directions:

1. In a medium mixing bowl, beat the ½ cup butter and the cream cheese with an electric mixer until well blended.
2. Stir in flour, then chill the dough.
3. Divide dough into 24 balls, 1" in diameter, and press the dough evenly into the bottom and up the sides of 24 cup, 1¾" muffin tins. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes.
4. Combine the ½ cup brown sugar, pumpkin, egg yolk, cream or milk, the 4 teaspoons of butter, rum flavoring, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg.
5. Spoon into warm pre-baked cups.
6. Stir together pecans, ¼ cup brown sugar, and 1 tablespoon of butter
7. Sprinkle over pumpkin mixture.
8. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes. Loosen and remove cups from tins. Serve warm or cool. Makes 24.



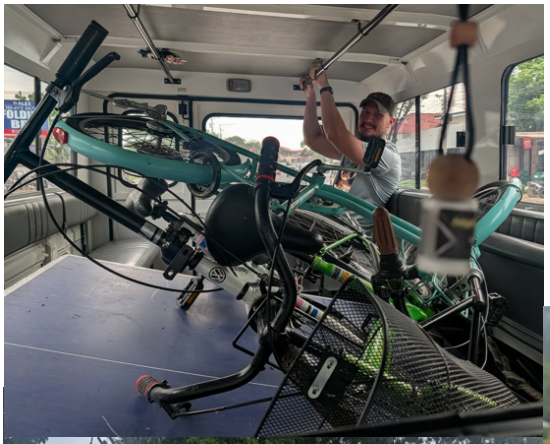
Enjoy!

December "Bible In One Year" Reading Schedule

12/01/26	2 Chron. 25-27	
12/02/26	2 Chron. 28-29	
12/03/26	2 Chron. 30-31	Luke 10
12/04/26	2 Chron. 32-33	Luke 11
12/05/26	2 Chron. 34-36	
12/06/26	Esther 1-2	Luke 12
12/07/26	Esther 3-5	
12/08/26	Esther 6-8	
12/09/26	Esther 9-10	Luke 13
12/10/26	Haggai 1-2	Luke 14
12/11/26	Joshua 1-3	
12/12/26	Joshua 4-6	Luke 15
12/13/26	Joshua 7-9	
12/14/26	Joshua 10-12	Luke 16
12/15/26	Joshua 13-15	
12/16/26	Joshua 16-18	Luke 17
12/17/26	Joshua 19-21	
12/18/26	Joshua 22-24	Luke 18
12/19/26	Nehemiah 1-3	
12/20/26	Nehemiah 4-6	Luke 19
12/21/26	Nehemiah 7-9	
12/22/26	Nehemiah 10-11	Luke 20
12/23/26	Nehemiah 12-13	Luke 21
12/24/26	Micah 1-3	
12/25/26	Micah 4-5	Luke 22
12/26/26	Micah 6-7	
12/27/26	Zechariah 1-4	
12/28/26	Zechariah 5-8	
12/29/26	Zechariah 9-12	Luke 23
12/30/26	Zechariah 13-14	Luke 24
12/31/26	Malachi 1-4	

Your Lent Donations at work!

This past Lenten season, our Wednesday night Lent service donations went to Compassionate Hope Philippines Children's Rescue. Compassionate Hope is a global charitable organization focused on providing help to victims and potential victims of human trafficking and religious persecution in Southeast Asia. They provide homes in which "at risk" children's needs are met: physical, emotional, educational, vocational, social, and spiritual. They also receive education and training through university, Bible college, or vocational training to help end the cycle of poverty in families that often leads to human trafficking. These are photos of some of the playgrounds, courts, and bicycles your dollars were able to provide for these children!









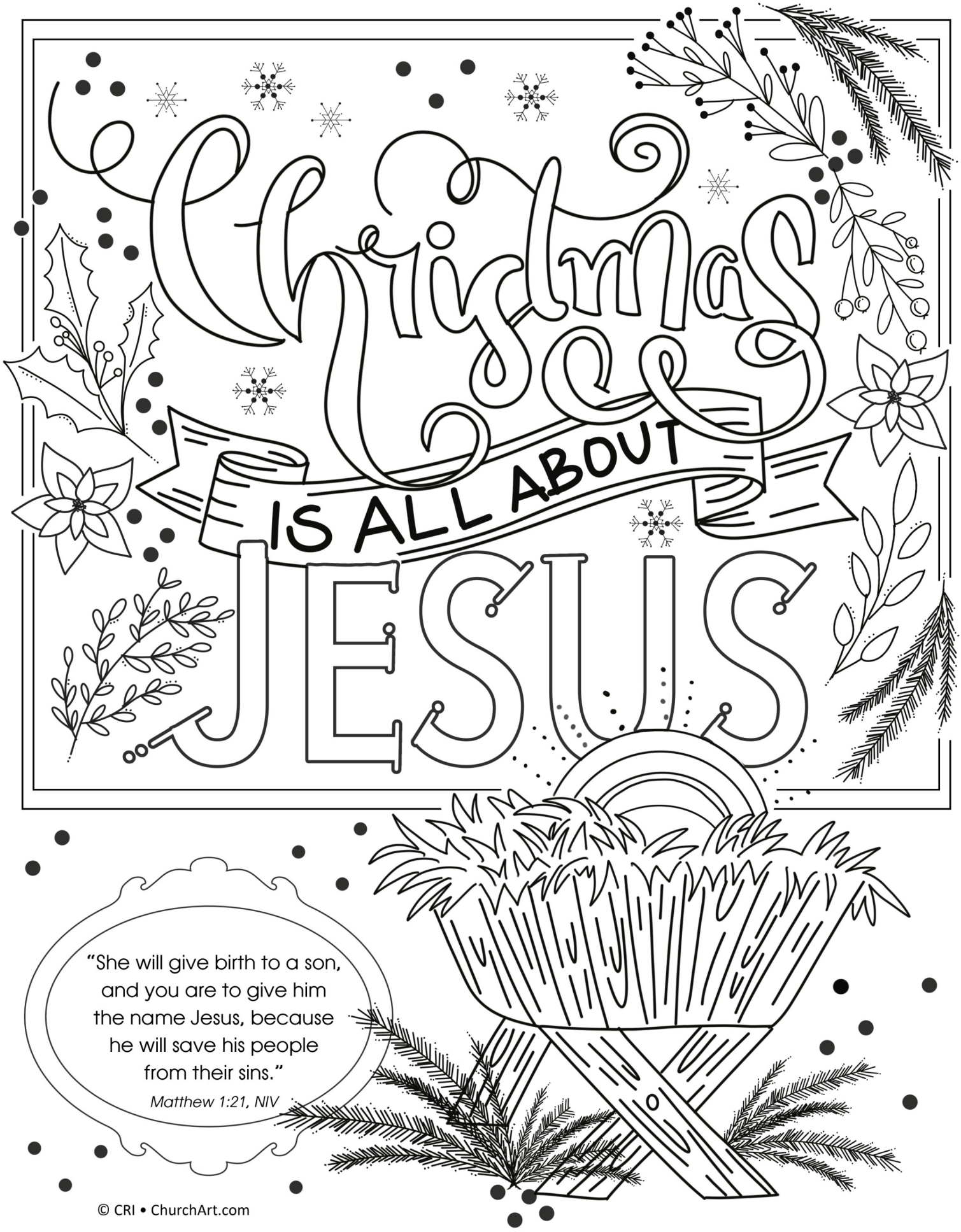


Children's Christmas Program

Our children's Christmas program will be held on Sunday, December 13th during the 10:30am worship service. Please come and enjoy the telling (and singing) of the story of Jesus' birth through scripture and song as only they can do it! There is a cookie reception in the PCC following the service.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	1 Women's Daytime Bible Stdy - Lunch at Senior Center-***11:30am*** Bible Study in PCC-***1:00pm*** Living Nativity Rehearsal ***6pm***	**2** Advent Service ***7pm***	**3**	**4** Living Nativity ***6pm***	**5** Living Nativity ***6pm***
6 Worship Svcs ***8am&10:30am;*** Sunday School ***9:15am*** Parish Life Mtg ***11:45am***	**7** Leitch Home Bible Study ***7pm***	**8** Women's Daytime Bible Stdy - Lunch at Senior Center-***11:30am*** Bible Study in PCC-***1:00pm*** Women's Evening Bible Stdy ***6:30pm***	**9** Advent Service ***7pm***	**10**	**11**	**12** Men's Breakfast and Bible Study ***8am*** Deacons Meeting ***10am*** Christmas Party ***3pm***
13 Worship Svc ***8am;***Christmas Program ***10:30am*** Sunday School ***9:15am;*** Haverfield Home Bible Study ***6:00pm*** Jauert Home Bible Study ***6:30pm***	**14** Newsletter Submissions Due	**15** Women's Daytime Bible Stdy - Lunch at Senior Center-***11:30am*** Bible Study in PCC-***1:00pm*** Council Meeting ***7pm***	**16** Advent Service ***7pm***	**17** Stewardship Meeting ***2pm***	**18**	**19**
20 Worship Svcs ***8am&10:30am;*** Sunday School ***9:15am***	**21**	**22** Women's Daytime Bible Stdy - Lunch at Senior Center-***11:30am*** Bible Study in PCC-***1:00pm***	**23** Prayer Meeting ***7pm***	**24** Christmas Eve Candlelight Services ***4pm and 7pm***	**25** **Office Closed** **Merry Christmas!** 	**26** Men's Breakfast and Bible Study ***8am***
27 Worship Svcs ***8am&10:30am;*** Sunday School ***9:15am***	**28**	**29** Women's Daytime Bible Stdy - Lunch at Senior Center-***11:30am*** Bible Study in PCC-***1:00pm***	**30** Prayer Meeting ***7pm***	**31** **Office Closed**	**1** **Office Closed** **Happy New Year!** 	


Christmas
IS ALL ABOUT
JESUS
"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21, NIV
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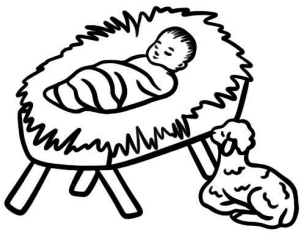
MAKE ROOM: Advent Bible Reading Plan for Families



As you get ready for Christmas, use these brief family devotions to make room in your home and hearts for Jesus. Each day has a Bible passage to read, a topic to discuss, and a simple action to do as a family. Read the verses from a children's Bible or storybook and use a Nativity scene or Advent wreath as visual aids.

WEEK 1: GET READY

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Luke 2:1-7	Psalm 139:23-24	Mark 4:3-8, 18-19	Luke 10:38-42

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Matthew 6:31-33	Revelation 3:20	Isaiah 40:3

WEEK 2: SHARE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Matthew 6:19-21	Luke 3:11	Luke 12:15	Philippians 4:11-13

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Matthew 6:26-29	Matthew 11:28-30	Mark 6:7-8

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WEEK 3: OBEY

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Luke 1:26-38	Matthew 1:18-24	John 14:15	Philippians 2:5-7

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1 Samuel 3:8-10	Matthew 2:1, 11	John 3:30

WEEK 4: CELEBRATE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Psalm 150	Psalm 46:10	Luke 2:8-15	Matthew 1:23

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Luke 2:16-19	Isaiah 9:6	John 3:16



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DECEMBER Birthdays

2nd Liza Hall
5th Clete Mills
6th Tom Ramsay
10th Tommy Fox
11th Jim Addonizio
13th Elijah Young
14th Rose McKinley
14th Eli Hess
15th Jan Dowler
18th Marsha Windbigler
20th Calvin Poling
22nd Christina Kaiser
23rd Aliyah Muller
29th Denise Clark
30th Micah Haverfield

DECEMBER Anniversaries

7th Jerry and Jan Seabaugh