

First Sunday of Advent

December 1, 2024

Advent derives from the Latin “adventus”, which means “coming”. The season proclaims the coming of the Christ—whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate. (From The UM Book of Worship #238)

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey
(As the Prelude begins, prayerfully prepare your hearts and minds for worship.)

Greetings, Announcements & Prayer
Birthday Celebration

*Blessing of the Advent Wreath

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may always be ready to welcome him.

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God’s love.

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin.

Come, Lord Jesus.

That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ.

Come, Lord Jesus.

That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus.

Loving God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Lighting of the Advent Candle
Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promises I have made.

To you, O Lord, we lift up our souls: In you, O God, we trust.

The one who is coming will show us the path of steadfast love and faithfulness.

Teach us your ways, O God of our salvation.

We light this candle in the sure hope that God’s promises endure.

[Light the first Advent candle.]

We will live in the light of hope as we await the coming of the Lord.

*Opening Hymn “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” (vs. 1-3) 213

*Psalter Psalm 25:1-10 (Response 1) 756-757

*Affirmation from 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1:15; 3:16 889

*Gloria Patri 70

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

*Canticle of Thanksgiving (Response 1) 74

Passing of the Peace: *Let us greet one another with love and peace.*

“Let the Children Come!”

(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children’s Church.)

Anthem “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Choir

Scripture Lessons 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Page 194 (N.T.)
Luke 21:25-36 Page 83 (N.T.)

Advent Homily Wait Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

*Hymn of Invitation “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” 206

Prayer of Confession Insert
The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey

*Doxology 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

Celebration of the Great Thanksgiving for Advent Insert

*Closing Hymn “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” (vs. 1-3) 626

*Benediction

*Benediction Response “May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You” Choir & Congregation

*Please Stand As You Are Able

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor: Rev. Darlene L. Kelley AV Director: Marie Stiles
Music Director: Christopher A. McCroskey AV Assistant: Chris Derrick
Liturgist: Tom Geddens Time Together: Rhett & Pam Hook

VISITORS ARE WELCOME in the service of worship! Please make use of the visitor’s tags (located in the pew backs) to help us better welcome you as a visitor to Trinity this morning.

Today’s Lovely Flowers are given to the Glory of God.

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS ...

Hilda Edwards	Jimmy Grah	Marilyn Lloyd	Tom Lloyd	Ruth Frady	Libby Strickland
Kathy Aiello	Patsy Shuler	Latson Lewis	English Percy	Ray Frady	Hannah Glanz
Kaye Floyd					

Shut-Ins: Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch; Jean Raynor

Family and Friends: **Sissy Henry** (former member of Trinity), **Sean & Tucker Smith** (cousins of Darlene Kelley); **Sonny Hardee** (brother of Lynn Martin); **Colby Martin** (son of Donna Muszynski); **Sonya & Wayne Dooley** (daughter and son-in-law of Joyce Robinson); **Lynne Powell** (friend of the Ballentines and Branhams); **Bobby Johnson** (friend of Billy Pearson); **Rev. Donna Eidson** (former pastor of Trinity); **Ima Thibodeaux** (friend of Christopher McCroskey); **Keith Jordan** (nephew of John & Kay Jordan); **Deanne Summer** (partner of Martha Cooke); **Kelsey Molotsky** (granddaughter of friend of Bob Strickland); **Malcolm Skipper** (grandfather of Matthew Skipper); **Bryan Collard** (brother-in-law of Mary Sue Lewis); ; **Charlyn McNeill, Michael McNeill** (sister & brother of Mary Sue Lewis); **Bob Bohnstengel** (spouse of Jo Ann Heiting's cousin); **Missy Abrams** (stepdaughter of Lissa Abrams); **Mary Davis** (daughter of Bob & Libby Strickland); **Chuck Hardee** (cousin of Lynn Martin); **Bruce Beatty, Sandra Hornsby, Gloria Erd** (friends of Lynn Martin); **Pearl Geddens** (mother of Tom Geddens); **Ross Deal** (grandson of Mary Kamoroff); **Nancy Wilson** (friend of Jeanette Hornsby); **David Turner** (brother of Pam Turner); **Ernie & Betsey Hendrix, Chip Mixon** (friends of Tommy Gleaton); **Ron & Janet Walker** (friends of Tommy & Chris Gleaton); **Merit Takach** (friend of Joyce and Brent Robinson); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Robert Bradley** (Business Associate of Simon Ross); **Monnie Tiller** (friend of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Haidee Baehr** (friends of Ruth Frady); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (cousins of Gale Frady); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (friends of Gale Frady); **Walt & Janet Beck** (friends of Jo Ann Heiting); **Adam Lavender** (son of Phil Lavender)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com.

OUR PRESENCE ...

Attendance 11/24 SS: 12 Worship: 41

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 11/24 \$ 3,945.50

OUR SERVICE...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

TODAY Birthday Celebration

Advent Bible Study following Worship

12/04 Choir, 6 p.m.

T.a.G., 7 p.m.

12/06 Office Closed



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Jesus Christ

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Website: www.trinityumcwc.org



Starting today and continuing for the Sundays of Advent, we'll join together right after church for 45 minutes to an hour and light lunch will be provided. The focus will be a back to the basics discussion of the spirituals with an emphasis on prayer, meditation and service. Please sign the sign-up sheet if you'd like to attend the sessions.



Grieving with God
Tuesday, December 9

All who are on the journey of grief are invited to join us on Tuesday, December 9, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room. For many, the holidays can be especially difficult, and our hope is that you will find this group helpful. Retired Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplain from Richland Hospital, Jerry Fonte, will facilitate the discussion.



Sunday, December 15

The choir will present their Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 15. Plan now to be here for this wonderful musical celebration of Christmas performed by the Trinity Choir.



For the past five Sundays we have heard, during our Stewardship Moments, from speakers on the importance of our presence, witness, service, prayers and gifts. On Sunday, December 15, as you enter the church, pledge cards will be given out for the 2025 year. You will have the opportunity to place your card on the altar during or after the service. If you cannot attend on December 15, we can mail a card to you.



Monday, December 16

The group will meet at WECO on Monday, December 16, at 7 p.m. If you have any questions, please see Slone Taylor or Patsy Boggs. If you are interested in attending and would like email or text message updates, please email Slone Taylor at Slonetaylor21@yahoo.com or text her your cell phone number to (803) 397-7294 and she will add you to her list.



ELVES & ANGELS NEEDED
Wednesday, December 18
6 p.m.

We have a great opportunity to love our neighbors in need and spread some holiday joy with a visit to The Pines of Columbia Assisted Living on McSwain Drive. Jean Raynor is a resident there. We will be singing Christmas Carols and we are hoping to hand out gifts to the residents. They have approximately 40 women and 20 men.

The following are some of the items the residents can use: blankets, scarves, gloves, hats, socks, bedroom shoes for men and women, toiletries, Crossword puzzle books, puzzle books, lotions, deodorant, chapsticks, Dove or Olay soaps, Large Print Bibles. There will be a box in the Gathering Area where you can place the gifts.



Instead of purchasing poinsettias this year, we ask that you give an honorarium or memorial for a loved one. All money given in lieu of poinsettias will go to UMCOR, Advance # 901670, to help with ongoing recovery efforts for those impacted by the hurricane. We would like to have all donations in by December 16. A special insert listing memorials and honorariums will be in the bulletin on December 22.

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In Memory of _____ By _____

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Total Donation Attached \$ _____ **Please make checks out to Trinity and write UMCOR on the memo line.**

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Additional forms will be available in the Church Office.

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Trinity UMC
December 1, 2024
Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

Wait

Years ago I read a commentary on this morning's Scripture lesson, that said, once you read "People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the 'Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory"... don't expect the next line to read: *the rest of the country will be sunny with mild temperatures*. I'd like to give credit for that one, but I confess I couldn't find that commentary again anywhere.

Advent is here, and Scripture sings out: From the prophet Isaiah:

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint (Isaiah 40:31).

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and late rains. —James 5:7

Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord. —Psalm 27:14

I did not wait to shop this year. I confess I've been a last minute shopper many times in the past, but I'm not sure this year was better. Indeed, I did something I vow to never do again—I went shopping on Black Friday. It was insane. And it was Christmas everywhere. The retail world was a wonderland of candy canes and huge discounts, red and green tinsel, Santa and Christmas carols trilling in the background. Culturally, Christmas seems to arrive sooner every year. If my father were still living—he'd be very annoyed.

My father loved Christmas, and though he struggled throughout the year, he rallied at the end of it to preserve the holidays with all their rituals and traditions. He baked a ham with pineapple rings, cloves and maraschino cherries. He bought a box of Clementines, a box of chocolates and a jar of Planter's mixed nuts. He dusted off the staple gun to secure a string of colored lights around the porch and left milk and cookies out, and on a good year, maybe even some carrots for Santa's reindeer. And he waited. My father waited every year. He didn't trim the tree—not one silver icicle- until Christmas Eve. In my father's world, Christmas started on December 24th and not a day sooner. Certainly he planned and shopped, but he was quiet about it until those reindeer were hitched to the sleigh.

For a long time I wondered why my father followed his Christmas rule so passionately, and when I was a teenager, I certainly gave him a hard time about it. But now I understand; my father was honoring Advent.

Baptized in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1915, earning his Sunday school pin every year, all the years of his youth, my father—without being able to articulate it—was holding fast to the church's season—Advent. The traditions of the Methodist Church guided his decision, and he remained loyal to the lessons he'd been taught, and he'd been taught that Advent is a season of waiting.

Advent from the Latin “adventus” meaning “coming”. Our own United Methodist website explains: *The time leading up to Christmas is known as “Advent”. It might jar some to learn that Advent only kind of partially has anything to do with Christmas.*

It is a time of heavy anticipation. It focuses on waiting for a big occurrence. But the anticipated occurrence or event is not actually fully realized on Christmas.

During Advent we’re anticipating the full realization of something that began at the first Christmas but isn’t yet fully realized. Technically Christmas begins on December 25. Everything leading up to that date is Advent. And it’s important to note that distinction so we can be fully mindful of the hope that faith speaks into our human experience.

In an online article titled, “What Is Advent?” Ryan Dunn goes on to explain: *During its earliest observances, Advent was 40 days of repentance, fasting and prayer as new believers prepared for their baptisms. Oftentimes, these baptisms took place on the day of Epiphany--which is a day remembering the Magi’s visit to baby Jesus; it was a celebration of Jesus’ incarnation on Earth.*

Later Christians began tying Advent not just to Christ’s incarnation, but to an anticipated second coming of Christ. Advent became a period for renewing the anticipation and longing for Jesus’ return.

Today, Advent is a period of preparation for both “advents”--or arrivals--of Jesus. Lester Ruth, a professor at Duke Divinity School and a historian of Christian worship, offered this distinction for Advent: “The simplest way I have to distinguish between Advent and Christmas is that advent uses the word “come” as a longing petition, expressed in anticipation, whereas Christmas is a commemorative reflection on how the Lord has come in Christ’s birth and thus the trigger for a new redemptive order has begun.”

In our culture, the close ties to Christmas seemingly outweigh the anticipation of another “advent” of Jesus. We conflate the Christmas commemoration and the anticipation of Advent. Ignoring this “second coming” removes some of the urgency of our Christian call to enact God’s love and justice on Earth.

Most Christian creeds of faith contain some derivation of the following statement: “Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead.” This morning’s Scripture lessons foretells Christ’s second coming.

In The United Methodist Church, we affirm that Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead as prelude to the revealing of the new creation. So when Christ returns a renewed creation comes, too.

This new creation is marked by the unity of Creator and created alluded to in the book of Genesis. In the New Testament, this renewed creation is aligned with freedom from death, sin and decay. So the renewed creation takes the shape of a world without the bounds of death and liberated from the systems and actions through which humans tear themselves apart from one another and from God.

There’s a lot of hope inspired by believing that such a world is possible. Advent is a season for reflecting on and renewing that hope. ¹

¹ Ryan Dunn, “What Is Advent About”, umc.org.

Advent is a season of waiting, a season of “reflecting”—which requires thinking and may ultimately lead to confession—and we often like to get to the renewing part before the waiting and reflecting part. We are an instant gratification culture. We don’t wait around; we move pretty fast. And there’s something *still* about waiting. We are an attention deficit disorder culture to our detriment. Maybe my father had the right idea. Maybe we need to recognize Advent before we charge ahead with Christmas. Take some time to sit, to pray, to reflect. Think about the passing year—the pain and the joy. Hold onto things a bit longer, so we can learn a bit more from them, and don’t be afraid of the feelings. Try to slow down long enough to remember these words: *Be still and know that I am God* (Psalm 46:10). Advent is a time of waiting.

In his beautiful book, “The Way of the Heart”, Henri Nouwen writes:

Out of the eternal silence God spoke the Word, and through this Word created and recreated the world. In the beginning God spoke the land, the sea and the sky. God spoke the sun, the moon, and the stars. God spoke plants, birds, fish, animals wild and tame. Finally, God spoke man and woman. Then, in the fullness of time, God’s Word, through whom all had been created, became flesh and gave power to all who believe to become the children of God. In all this the Word of God does not break the silence of God, but rather unfolds the immeasurable richness of that silence.

This Advent—try to stop for a moment and listen to the silence of God.

Will you pray with me?

God of Eternal Life,

Help us to slow down long enough to hear your Word. Help us, O God, to wait for the coming of the babe in the manger, the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace, and help us, O God, to learn while we’re waiting. Amen.