

December Fourth Teller

Rediscovering Christmas

*"Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."
-Refrain, O Come, O Come Emmanuel, United Methodist Hymnal #211*



Dear Fourth Avenue UMC Friends,

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Do we ever need Christmas this year! The year 2020 has been one disorienting experience after another. Has there ever been a year filled with so much anxiety and uncertainty? A global pandemic has struck fear into our hearts and kept us isolated from each other. Economic stress and the slowing down of business and employment. In person instruction in schools and worship in churches have been off and on. A contentious election season we've endured, yet hasn't reached a clear conclusion as credible rumors of corruption and fraud swirl around us. Racial tensions, record wildfires, extra-powerful hurricanes, and flooding round out the ominous headlines. Did I miss anything? You say, a spike in positive tests for Covid-19?

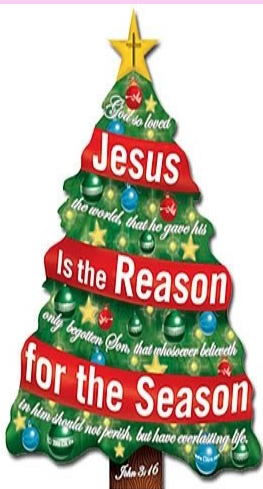
Do we ever need Christmas this year! We desperately need to rediscover the power of Christ coming among us and what his arrival means for our world. The season of Advent, the calendar's pause to prepare our hearts to welcome our Lord, commences this Sunday, November 29. Advent is not just an extension of Christmas, but it's a season that links together the past, present, and future. It initiates us into the ancient longing for the coming of the promised Messiah, invites us to contemplate its fulfillment in Christ's birth, and invigorates our looking forward in hopeful, eager anticipation of his coming again to restore a broken creation and inaugurate the Messianic banquet of eternal feasting. With all we've endured and all we continue to face, do we ever need Christmas and to rediscover its power!

We need good news for these troubling times. Our Savior Jesus Christ brings hope, peace, joy, and love to our weary world. With all of life's uncertainties, we can find hope in God's faithfulness to keep his promises. Jesus Christ is our Emmanuel (which means "God with us.") Our God will be with us and will see us through. Whatever life hurls in our direction, the hope of God's Spirit remains within us, carrying, strengthening and emboldening us to take the next steps by faith. *Christmas's hopeful proclamation for our troubling times is coming at just the right time!*

And so, let's open our hearts anew to rediscover Christmas in all its splendor and glory. We will explore each of these powerful themes in our web-based worship programs. One by one, we will unwrap the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. And like the starry-eyed child on Christmas morning, we will marvel at the beauty and wonder of each gift from the Heaven-sent Giver and receive it afresh. You'll find an outline of our worship themes on p. 2 of this edition of the *Fourth Teller*. Let's approach this upcoming Advent season with eager longing and hopeful anticipation.

For new beginnings promised in Advent and rediscovering the power of Christmas, I am sincerely yours,

Pastor Greg





Prayer Chain

If you need prayer for any reason, there is an active group in our congregation committed to praying for you.

Contact **Carole Evans** at 507-210-6971 or e-mail her at caroleannjean@gmail.com

You are welcome to join the prayer chain. Just call Carole.

Advent
Devotional
Available

REDISCOVER CHRISTMAS

GOOD NEWS IN TROUBLING TIMES

Rediscover Christmas *Good News in Troubling Times*

First Sunday in Advent, November 29
Finding Hope in our Uncertainties
Luke 2:22-40

Second Sunday in Advent, December 6
Finding Peace in Our Struggles
Luke 2:8-20

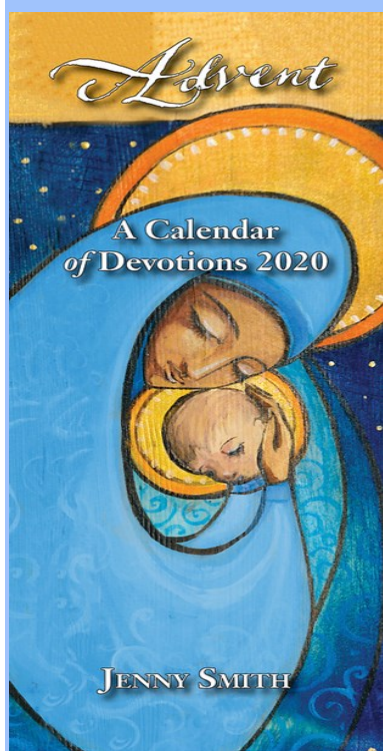
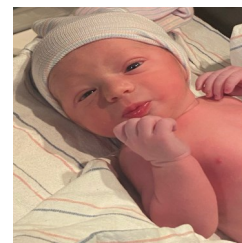
Third Sunday in Advent, December 13
Finding Joy in Our Discouragements
Luke 1:39-55

Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 20
Finding Love in Our Differences
1 John 4:7-16

Christmas Eve, December 24
Finding Christ in our World
Luke 2:1-20

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the spike in cases in Minnesota, the Task Force on Reopening and the Church Council have suspended in person worship celebrations until future notice. Our Sunday worship celebrations are recorded from our Sanctuary and are available on the church's YouTube Channel. You may go to the church's website at www.fourthaveumc.org and click on the Video tab on the upper right hand corner. A link for the worship celebrations are sent by out email. If you are not receiving the email, call Sue at the church office (334-4308) and make sure that we have an accurate email address for you.

Congratulations to **Dale and Karen Hauptli** who have been blessed with their first grandchild. Welcome **Finn Albert Hauptli**.



December Memory Verse—Luke 2:10-11 NRSV

*But the angel said to them,
“Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you
good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”
Luke 2:10-11*

Worship, Committees, and Events

December Events

November 29—Charge Conference via Zoom at 10:25 am

December 1—SPRC 6:30 via Zoom

December 3—Trustees; 6:30 PM via Zoom

Community Christmas Dinner Re-envisioned

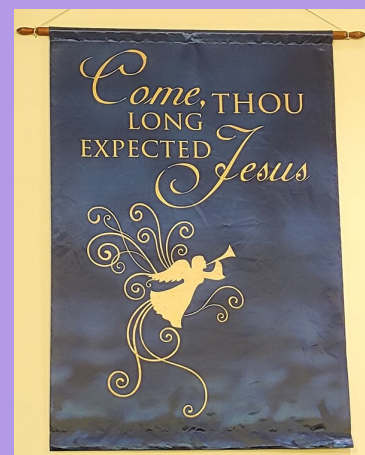
One of the casualties of Covid-19 is our church's annual Community Christmas Dinner. Yet, these unfortunate circumstances have sparked some great creativity among us. In lieu of the Christmas Dinner, the Church is equipping our church family to extend the spirit of Christmas to our community in a fresh way. The Church will be providing gift cards from four area restaurants along with Christmas cards for you to write a personal note. Not only will we be blessing the recipients of the cards but also lifting up area restaurants who are threatened by reduced patronage during the shutdown.

Start praying for God to show you persons you can bless. Some ideas you might consider....

- A person/family that has been hit hard by the pandemic or struggles to make ends meet
- A neighbor/co-worker that seems lonely or needs a lift.
- A person who needs to know the true meaning of Christmas
- A person with whom you've had a conflict or someone you've missed seeing during the pandemic.
- A person who you greatly admire for their hard work, strong character, or heart for others. Be sure to tell them what you see in them in your note.

Beginning **December 9**, come by or call Sue at the church office (Tues and Thurs, 9 am – 12 noon, 507- 334-4308) to pick up gift cards and greeting cards. If you're unable to get to the church office, call the office and we will arrange to get the cards to you.

Since God gave so generously at Christmas, so do we. And with all that's befallen our world, it seems right to be extra generous in our giving.

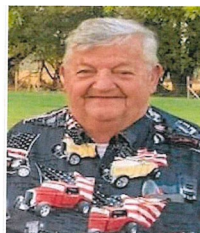


Worship services online!

- www.fourthaveumc.org
- click on the "VIDEO" menu—
- OR on HOME page
- Scroll down right side - see options for the worship service.

OR go to

YouTube and search for 4th Avenue UMC to find several videos—choir, special music, and entire worship services.



Our sympathy to Barbara & James Swanson and family on the death of her brother, Gerald Thomas Kitzman. Gerald was born September 25, 1940 and passed away on November 11, 2020 in Faribault, MN at the age of 80. He had been employed at Genova and Crown Cork and Seal. He enjoyed golfing and loved spending time with all of his family.



Our sympathy to Pastor Sharon & Robert Nelson and family on the death of her brother, Dr. Ronald Lynn Franklin. Our sympathy is also extended to Jean Franklin of Hamilton, Missouri (Mother of Ronald and Pastor Sharon). Ronald was born November 30, 1945 and passed away on November 20, 2020 in Sullivan, Missouri after a long term battle with leukemia at the age of 74. He was a graduate of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine. He was respected by his entire community for his exceptional knowledge, kindness and easy-going nature. He was a talented woodworking craftsman building numerous pieces of furniture for his family. He enjoyed attending events involving his children and grandchildren. He was an integral member of the Sullivan Christian Church and his strong faith in the Lord was his foundation. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and community. Please see www.eatonfuneralhome.com for the complete obituary.



The Church is open! The mission of the Church continues. At a Breakthrough Brainstorming session, opportunities for outreach were identified. On Saturday, November 14, members of Fourth Avenue UMC were involved in packing food for people in need in our community.



Those pictured are Chris, Julie, Miles, and Annabel Schiffer, Kim Bossmann, Joe Purfeerst, and Pastor Greg Ciesluk. The project was administered by the newly formed Community Action Commission of Faribault.

Dear Fourth Avenue UMC Friends,

This coming Sunday, November 29 at 10:30 am we will have a congregational meeting over Zoom. The meeting will address two issues that we care for every year around this time. We will be addressing a recommendation from our church's Staff Parish Relations Committee on pastoral compensation for 2021. It falls to the Charge Conference (the body of all church members) to affirm or amend this recommendation. The SPRC is recommending that the salary and housing allowance remain the same as it was for 2020. We will also need to approve annual the Appurtenance Allowance. This is something we do every year to allow the pastor to receive full tax benefits that are afforded to clergy.

The meeting should last no more than thirty minutes, but it is important that all church members attend if at all possible. Click below the link around 10:25 am this Sunday to attend.

Here's the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88224579286?pwd=bDhPN29CeGhJYThsSGlsRjYrTnAwdz09>

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Pastor Greg

joy to
the
world

Upper Room
November/
December



The Upper Room devotional booklet includes daily reading of the scriptures & a brief life story. Stop by the Annex or church office to pick one up.

Donation - \$1.00.

December Birthdays

David Eiler	01
David Brown	01
Cheryl Tilseth	02
Pam Kucera	03
Victor Sonpon	05
Charles Morgan	06
Wyatt Osmundson	07
Charlotte Glarner	08
Marge Morris	12
Marcia Speiker	12
Kinsley Steinberg	18
James Heyer	22
Grant Lammin	24
Dale Doehling	30
Randy Michel	30
Audrey Quiggle	31

December Anniversaries

Ian & Debra Jindra-Pope	21
Brad & Elizabeth Prange	18
Thomas & Liz Hartman	28
Nathan & Mary Ebert	30



A special thank you to our members who have contributed to the cleanup of the kitchen, the outside work and the beautification of our Sanctuary.



Fourth Avenue United
Methodist Church
219 4th Ave NW
Faribault, MN
55021



“RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED”

♦ Sunday Worship on YouTube 9:00 AM

Website:

www.fourthaveumc.org

Like us on Facebook

Join us at 2:42 PM daily as we pray our church's Breakthrough Prayer.

December 2020 Fourth Teller

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Rice County Habitat for Humanity-Join them as they prepare for their Faith Build in 2021. They are building a quad (four units attached) in Northfield. Sign up on their website at <https://habitatricecounty.org> for a day to intentionally pray for their ministry and mission to keep God at the center.
- The Family Service Center of Rochester (this is their main office location) is currently looking for volunteers to help seniors in Faribault with snow shoveling this winter. This agency serves seniors located all over SE Minnesota. This would be a great opportunity for families looking for a safe volunteer opportunity as it is done outside with minimal to zero contact with the homeowner. This winter help an older neighbor stay safe and secure in their home. Lend them a hand with snow shoveling. To find a neighbor who needs a hand contact Family Service of Rochester at 507-287-2010 or volunteers@familyservicerochester.org.
- State Bank of Faribault Giving Tree-Trees are up at both Faribault locations. Please consider taking a tag and purchasing that item for someone in our community that needs some help this year. Gifts need to be returned to the bank by Tuesday, December 15th. You may email the bank if you prefer not to come in to select a tag and someone will reach out to you and help you select a tag. Email address is info@tsbf.com. The bank also has elves available to do the shopping if a cash donation is dropped off. Thank you for your generosity.

Pastor Greg Ciesluk

Phone: 218-310-8813

Pastorgreg.fourthaveumc@gmail.com

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Tuesday and Thursday

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Kim Luedke

Custodian:
Ken Harren

Administrative Assistant:
Sue Allen