

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF  
LAC DU FLAMBEAU  
DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME XXII                      ISSUE XII

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*Our Mission Statement:*

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*As people of God and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, we believe our Mission to be the building of a strong fellowship, ministering to the Spiritual and physical needs of the church, the community, and the world fulfilling our Lord's command to "Love our neighbors."*

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*Even in the North Woods  
Our Hearts are Restless Until they Rest in God*

*"The Christmas Light Comes into Our World"*

The Rev. Chips C. Paulson

This time of year, when we are pulling out the decorations for Christmas and getting ready to drape our homes and trees with tinsel and strings of lights, I am constantly faced with that deep existential set of questions: Will the lights light? Will there be one little villain in the string sabotaging the whole line-up? That may be the worry of many of us as we prepare to decorate our trees this year, but it is not part of the wonder of Christmas. Jesus is the light of the world. That light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. It matters not if it is the darkness of personal tragedy or the dark night of human sin; nothing can quell that light. We may be going through a tragic loss, dealing with a genuinely frightening diagnosis, or grappling with an addiction; we may be overwhelmed by the politics of the day, the plight of our planet's future, and a genuine sense of dread leaving us feeling overwhelmed with depression, despondency, and despair. Our struggles, pains, fears, and doubts may seem like a black hole to us, but it is then we remember that His star first shined on a world of tragedy and human sinfulness, and it drew people beyond their grief, despair, and captivity to that Manger where faith was born anew. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can cut us off from that light of life, which "came upon the midnight ... clear!" Amidst darkness at midnight, the true light that enlightens all came into the world so that you and I can "... repeat the sounding joy" of those who proclaim this incredibly magnificent news at Christmas: "Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let Earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing!"

Have a blessed Advent Season, and may your heart be illuminated by the light of Christ.

*Chips*



## **So, what is Advent?**

Advent, which comes from the Latin word “adventus,” means “coming” or “arrival.” It’s a season that typically lasts four weeks before Christmas, preparing us for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

In one sense, it’s like a spiritual countdown to the big day. But, it’s not just about ticking off days on a calendar. The advent season is filled with significance and meaning. It’s a chance for us to reflect, hope, and grow in our faith.

Advent is a poignant reminder that life is full of waiting through painful seasons. Just as the world once waited for the promised Messiah, we, too, find ourselves in periods of anticipation, longing, and uncertainty.

In these challenging times, Advent teaches us (just as it has for thousands of believers before us) the value of patience, hope, and faith. It’s a season that encourages us to hold on to our faith in Christ Jesus that, even in the darkest of moments, we have the victory over the troubles of this world in Him. Advent prepares us to celebrate His birth.

By learning from the experiences of Mary and Joseph, we gain the strength to face our own challenges, and keep going. Their stories inspire us to keep moving forward in difficult times. Advent comforts us in the waiting that redemption and celebration are not far away. All we have to do is see how the arrival of Christ brought hope and salvation to the world and remember that he is coming again!

## **Now, why do we Christians celebrate Advent?**

Well, Advent serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it harkens back to the anticipation of the Messiah of the Old Testament. Throughout history, people waited for God’s promised savior. Advent helps us step into their shoes and experience that longing and hope firsthand.

Secondly, Advent directs our focus away from the commercial frenzy that often surrounds Christmas. It’s easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of buying presents and attending parties.

Advent encourages us to pause, and reflect on the true reason for the season – the birth of Jesus Christ

It’s a time to remember the ultimate gift God gave humanity. It’s the season for us to re-center our lives around Him and His example of love, compassion, and humility.

## **How do we make the most of the Advent season Spiritually?**

Here are some practical tips to keep it real and meaningful:

1. Reflect on the Nativity Story: Read the Nativity Story from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (See [Matthew 1:18-2:23](#) and [Luke 2:1-20](#)). Mull over the events surrounding Jesus’ birth and the people God used - Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the magi, etc. Let their stories inspire you. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you as He spoke to them... Words of hope, comfort, and joy.
2. Advent Wreath: consider setting up an [Advent Wreath](#) at home period. It’s a circle of greenery with four candles (Three purple and one pink), each representing different aspects of the season. Light a candle each week and take a moment to meditate on themes like hope, love, joy, and peace. It’s a great way to focus on Jesus amidst the holiday chaos.

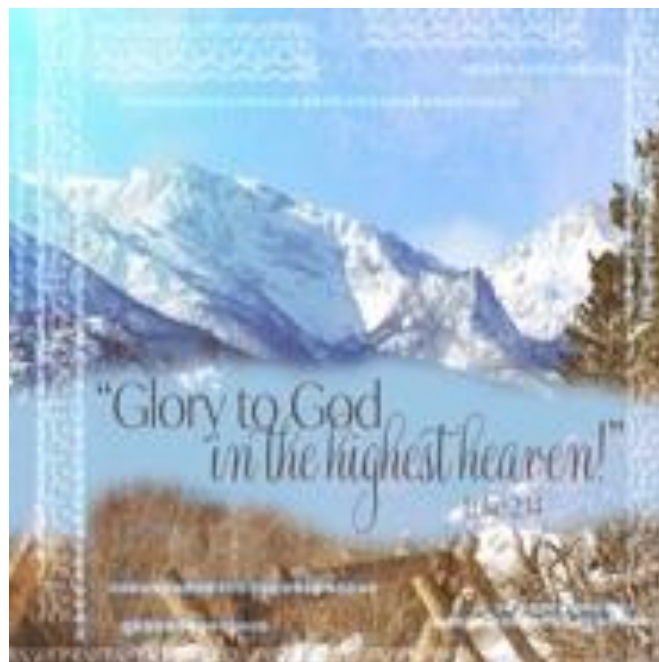


3. Read advent devotionals. Spend a few minutes each day reading and reflecting on the significance of the incarnation of Christ.
4. Prayer and Meditation: take time to pray and meditate during advent It doesn't have to be complicated or formal - just speak to God from your heart and listen for His guidance. Meditating on the gift of Jesus can help you find peace and clarity amidst the holiday chaos.
5. Acts of Kindness: advent is not just about introspection but also about reaching out to others. Use this season to perform random acts of kindness - whether it's donating to a charity, volunteering at a shelter, or simply offering a listening ear to someone in need. Spread the love and joy that the Christmas season is all about.
6. Christmas Music with A Twist: Sure, you can enjoy all the Jingle Bells and catchy tunes, try but try incorporating some reflective and spiritually uplifting Christmas music into your playlist. Listen to hymns or songs that remind you of the deeper meaning of Christmas.
7. Advent Calendar with Scriptures: Swap out the typical chocolate advent calendar for one with daily Bible verses or messages. It's a fun way to keep the spiritual aspect of advent at the forefront of your mind each day.
8. If you're in a season of grief or waiting attend a blue Christmas service. These services focus on waiting on Jesus through bereavement and longing.

Remember, advent is not about perfection or doing everything perfectly it is about opening your heart to God's presence and letting his love shine through you. Embrace the season with anticipation, and you will find that advent will draw you close to Jesus and enrich your walk with him.

Take it one step at a time and enjoy the journey toward Christmas with a sense of wonder and gratitude. May this advent season bring you closer to God and fill your heart with peace and love!

This article was taken from [faithgateway.com](http://faithgateway.com)





### **SPECIAL DAYS FOR DECEMBER 2024**

First Sunday of Advent	December 1, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent	December 8, 2024
Third Sunday of Advent	December 15, 2024
First Day of Winter	December 22, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Advent	December 22, 2024
Christmas Eve	December 24, 2024
Christmas Day	December 25, 2024
New Year's Eve/Watch Night	December 31, 2024



#### **Birthdays**

Janeen Clarke	Dec. 1
Judy Loertscher	Dec. 3
Tonna Applegren	Dec. 12
Greg Stiles	Dec. 26

#### **ANNIVERSARIES**

Paul and Jan Hoppe	Dec. 11
Bill and Barb Streng	Dec. 16



### **Scripture readings for December 2024**

#### **Dec. 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Jer. 33:14-16 and Ps.25:1-10; 1 Thess. 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-26

#### **Dec. 8 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Mal. 3:1-4 and Luke 1:68-79; Phi. 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

#### **Dec. 15 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Zeph. 3:14-20 and Isa. 12:2-6; Phil.4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

**Dec. 22 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Micah 5:2-5a and Luke 1:46b-55 or Ps. 80:1-7; Heb. 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

**Dec. 29 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

1 Sam. 2:18-20, 26 and Ps. 148; Col. 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52



**Saint Nicholas – A Faithful Witness**

Throughout history, many legends about Saint Nicholas have circulated around the world, bringing us the character we know today as Santa Claus. But who was the man behind the fictional character of Santa Claus?

Nicholas was born in the 3rd century in the Roman Empire's province of Lycia in Türkiye modern (Turkey). According to tradition, he was a man full of generosity and conviction. He was born to wealthy parents who left him their fortune when they died. Instead of squandering his inheritance on himself, he used it to help those in need. He even exposed a corrupt government official who hoarded grain to push its price higher.

While many have preserved stories of Nicholas' righteous acts, few know of his sufferings for Christ.

Sometime after the Roman emperor Diocletian took power in AD 284, he instigated a horrific persecution of Christians. Nicholas was imprisoned for refusing to deny Jesus as God. According to Eusebius' *church history*, an edict ordered all church leaders arrested. Prisons were so full of Christians that there was no room for actual criminals. Diocletian destroyed churches and burned scriptures, and the killing of Christians became a form of entertainment for the Romans. destroyed churches and burdened scriptures comma and the killing of christians became a form of entertainment for the romans.

Dedication aimed to finish off the church for good, but the courage of the believers murdered for their witness had caused many others to place their faith in Christ. Having failed, Diocletian abdicated the throne in AD 305. According to one source, he returned home to be a cabbage farmer.

Nicholas was released from prison and is believed to have died around AD 343, on December 6, a date that is celebrated today as "Saint Nicholas Day" in nations, such as Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

**Taken from an email from VOM**





**Article Regarding the Lakeland Pantry Interfaith Outreach program**  
**Contributed by Jill Consie (our Representative in this program)**  
**The collections for this program will continue until Dec. 31, 2024**

Community Presbyterian Church is a member of the Lakeland Pantry Interfaith Outreach program. The group meets by-monthly to discuss ways the area churches can support the food pantry. Not only do people with food insecurities receive food from the food pantry, but there are many outreach programs that support families in need including Hope in a backpack, non-perishable boxes for churches, police and fire stations, and the group is working on placing food boxes at campgrounds, trailer parks, and the Women's shelter, Headstart and Yahweh Warrior Lodge in our community. They also supply food to some school programs. They are a wide-reaching organization, and our church is doing our part to support them.

For the months of November and December, the Food Pantry is asking for donations of:

Clothing – Winter Coats and Jackets (all sizes including children's) / purses and shoes (all sizes) / only clothing that is 2X and up for men and women

Non-Clothing – quilts / comforters (all sizes) / sheets (all sizes) / blankets (all sizes) / towels and washcloths

Personal Care – toothpaste and toothbrushes / dental floss/ non-alcoholic mouthwash.

These items can be brought to church on Sunday and placed in the box provided. Looking ahead to the holidays, we can help the pantry with monetary donations for ham and turkeys that are given to families in need for their holiday dinners. Please designate on your check that is written out to the Lakeland food pantry, that the money should go to buy meat as they are greatly in need of this kind of support for the holidays.

The Lakeland Pantry and its clients thank you for your support of this quarterly program. It will be a success because of you!

Blessings,

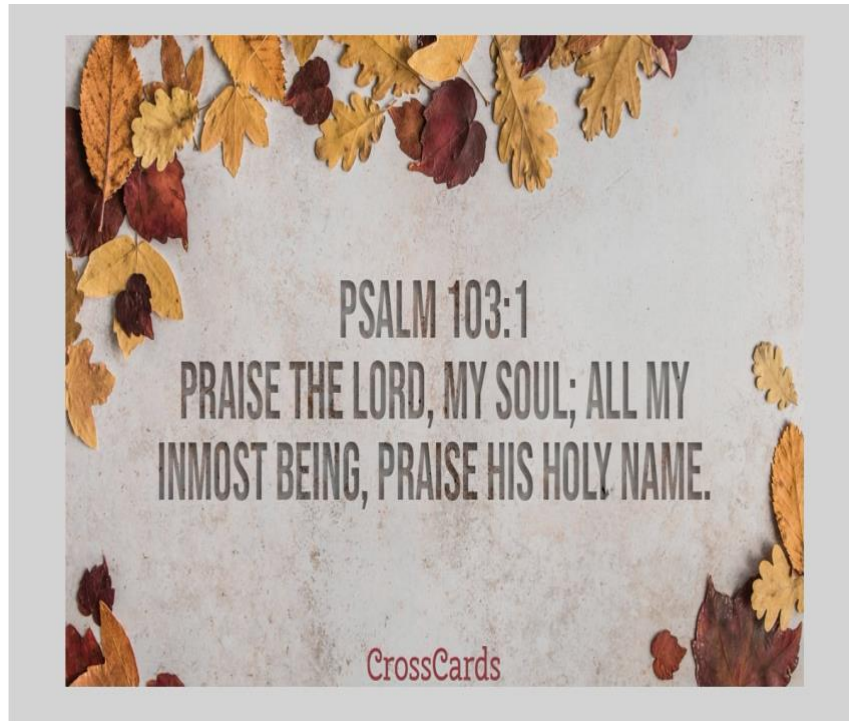
Jill Consie

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**If you have an IRA or 401 K and are looking for a tax deduction by the end of the year, you might want to consider a donation sent by your IRA provider or 401K provider. The check needs to be written by the provider, or it will not be considered a tax deduction. Please consider this thoughtfully. Thank you.**

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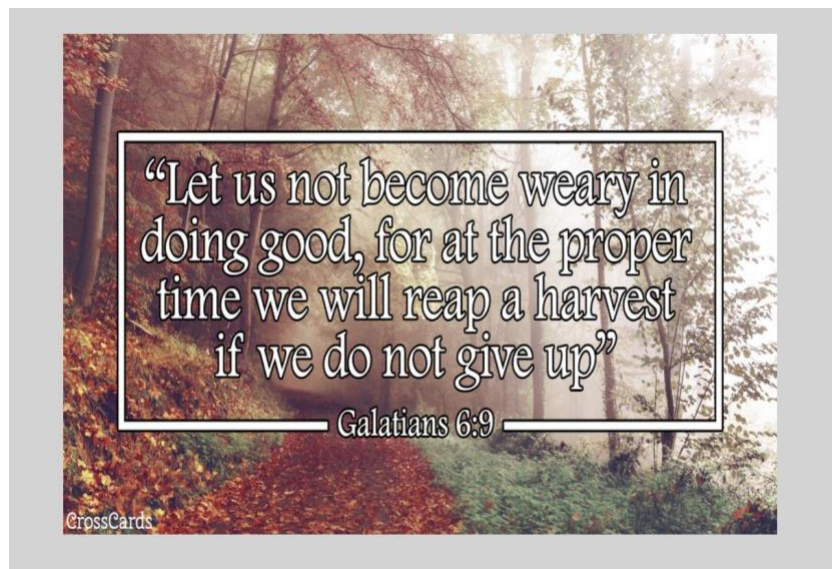
WE ARE IN NEED OF PEOPLE TO SIGN UP FOR:

GREETER

USHERS

LITURGISTS

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS





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Articles are to be submitted by the last Sunday of the month.

If you are online, the following web addresses will provide you with news and information about the General Assembly, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and the Presbytery of Northern Waters  
[www.pcusa.org/crisis](http://www.pcusa.org/crisis); outreach/evangelism; [www.stopinfindout.org](http://www.stopinfindout.org); northernwaters.net. We also have the Newsletter on our website: [www.lidfchurch.com](http://www.lidfchurch.com).

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THE PRESENT, AND YET TO BE

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