

The Good News of...

December 2020

Brandon Christian Church



Though Advent appears at the end of the secular calendar year, it is the beginning of the Christian year. The deep darkness of the natural world around us (in the northern hemisphere) is an echo of the nurturing darkness of the dawning creation. It is in this holy space we begin retelling our Sacred Stories.

The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming” or “arrival”—but you already knew that! Advent prepares us—and leads us—to Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem. Churches are often decorated in blue during Advent—a color that honors Mary the mother of Jesus. The blue is an outward sign of our hope and expectation as we await—with her—the coming of Christ. Sometime royal purple is used in Advent as well (BCC uses purple). Advent is a season of waiting, wondering, and faithfully living in the in-between time—the time between remembering that God has already walked as one of us and God’s full in-breaking again.

The four Sundays in Advent invite us on a journey. As the days grow shorter each week—we are invited to draw closer and closer to the light of Christ. We are invited to open our hearts a little wider each week to God With Us. In her book “Learning to walk in the Dark,” Episcopal priest Barbara Brown Taylor writes: “...new life starts in the dark. Whether it is a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark.” Advent is an invitation for rest and growth before a new beginning. What will you discover as you are nurtured in the darkness this year?

Luke 1:46-55—the Magnificat—reads: And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The tradition of the Advent wreath dates back to the Middle Ages. The four candles of the wreath symbolize the four weeks of Advent and our growing hope as we near the day of Christ’s birth. There are many ways to create an Advent wreath using what you already have at home—and I encourage you to make one for your family’s use in this year of Covid 19. It can be as simple as four candles on a plate. Some use a fifth candle in the middle of the wreath, representing the light of Christ. If you have birthday candles, tea lights, or electric candles use those. If you feel inspired to decorate it further—you might gather greens, pinecones, or sticks from outside—or use other items that remind you of waiting, hope, and the dawning of a new year.

Each Sunday of Advent, light a candle on the wreath: first one, then two, then three, and finally four. Hold silence. Name a hope. Offer a prayer. Even if you don’t create a wreath—you might honor silence and a time of prayer each Sunday. The fifth candle is lit on Christmas Eve—welcoming and celebrating the light of Christ.

May God-with-us be mightily present among us this season of Advent as we wait and hope and look to the beginning of a new year. Let us pray: God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. Prepare our hearts for his coming again; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (from The Book of Common Worship)

God IS with us! **Rev Day**



Church Staff

Senior Minister— - Rev. Day Broers-Case

Director of Music— - Rick Barclay

Admin. Asst.— - Jamie Butterweck

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813-689-4021

Office Hours: Monday—Thursday

9:-00 am—1:00 pm

brandonchristianchurch@gmail.com



Christmas Eve at
 Brandon Christian Church
 O COME
 LET US
 Adore
 HIM
 December 24—6:00 pm

A CHRISTMAS BLESSING

During this Christmas season, may you be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is
peace
 the gladness of the season, which is
hope
 and the heart of the season, which is
love.

Welcome to the blessed Advent season. This is the time of year when we reflect on all that has gone on during the year. This year it has been difficult to find the "good times". And yet those times have been here, just a little harder to find. We have been blessed by technology! We were able to start a live streaming of our worship service, we were able to continue Faith Groups, board meetings, Elders meetings, Finance Committee meetings, SWIFT meetings, Book Club, and Bible studies by Zoom. We have also been blessed by the faithful servants who have worked countless hours to make sure the technology works! Meals on Wheels has continued to bless those we serve! We have faithful members in our church family who have continued to give generously to help us continue the ministries of our church! We have a wonderful staff who has found ways to continue to serve BCC during these unusual times! It is time for us to think of ways to show our staff how much they are appreciated and loved! Every year we collect a "Love" offering for the staff. You can give your love offering on Give Plus, put it in the offering plate, or send a check to BCC. Please make sure your cash or checks show that it is for the Staff Love offering. Serving God beside you, your Elders.



SWIFT

SWIFT will meet on Sunday, December 20 at 1pm on Zoom. While Zoom is not as enjoyable as getting together in person to share a meal and fellowship, it is something we can do to enrich the limited socializing most of us are currently experiencing. The time spent together for our November Zoom gathering was greatly enjoyed by all who participated. If anyone has questions about how to participate, please contact Betty Dawson at bdawson@dawsoncrew.com or 813-404-9393.

FINANCE MEETING—THURS, DEC. 10
 7:00PM, **ZOOM**

ELDERS MEETING—SUN, DECEMBER 13
 5PM, **ZOOM**

BOARD MEETING—SUN, DECEMBER 20
 5PM—**ZOOM**

Things to Know for December

1—World AIDS Day

13—Christmas Special Offering 1

20—Board, 5:00 pm—Zoom

2—Bible Study, 2:00 pm—Zoom

13—Book Discussion, 2:00 pm—Zoom

23—Bible Study, 2:00 pm—Zoom

6—Peace Sunday

13—Elders, 5:00 pm—Zoom

24—Christmas Eve—Office Closed

9—Bible Study, 2:00 pm—Zoom

16—Bible Study, 2:00 pm—Zoom

25—Christmas Day

10—Finance, 7:00 pm—Zoom

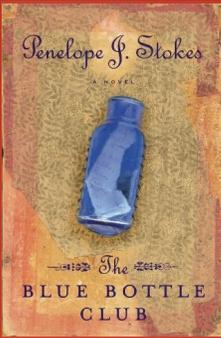
20—Christmas Special Offering 2

26—Kwanza Begins

11—International Mountain Day

20—SWIFT, 1:00 pm—Zoom

31—New Year's Eve



Christian Book Discussion

The Christian Book Discussion group is scheduled to gather on Zoom, December 13, 2020 at 2:00 pm to discuss the book “The Blue Bottle Club” by Penelope J Stokes.

If anyone has questions, contact Betty Dawson at bdawson@dawsoncrew.com or 813-404-9393. Zoom login information will be provided in the This Week at BCC email for that week, and is also on this page, just below.

Four friends gathered in a cold, dusty attic on Christmas day to make a solemn pact.

“Our dreams for the future,” they whispered, placing tiny pieces of paper into a shimmering blue bottle.

But that event happened in 1929, and it is decades later when local news reporter Brenna Delaney stumbles upon that bottle . . . and into the most meaningful story of her career.

Life has taken those four girls’ dreams of love, fame, and faith on a path fraught with seduction, betrayal, and loss. Little has turned out as expected—and yet every choice, every tear has led each of them to a special place.

Brenna’s search will uncover the secrets of that Blue Bottle Club . . . and her own life will never be the same.

“A beautiful novel about friendship and the power of faith to renew our dreams.”

—Angela Hunt, author of Magdalene

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83282942096?pwd=U09mdms2NEE3WHpubWlwc2lwblUvQT09>

Meeting ID: 832 8294 2096

Passcode: 472709



December Zoom Meeting Codes

Here are the codes for this month’s Zoom meetings:

BCC Sunday School: Sunday's at 9:00 am

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/821838128?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/821838128?pwd=WVJYVFtaTBYZFluclFFZ1RXeEY3QT09)

[pwd=WVJYVFtaTBYZFluclFFZ1RXeEY3QT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/821838128?pwd=WVJYVFtaTBYZFluclFFZ1RXeEY3QT09)

Meeting ID: 821 838 128

Password: 520491

BCC Sunday Fellowship—Sunday’s at 12:15 pm

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86816983044?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86816983044?pwd=Z2EwUjVjZGZ6UxoZkdYbZjMUVjZz09)

[pwd=Z2EwUjVjZGZ6UxoZkdYbZjMUVjZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86816983044?pwd=Z2EwUjVjZGZ6UxoZkdYbZjMUVjZz09)

Meeting ID: 868 1698 3044

Password: 913383

Men’s Study—Wednesday’s at 7:00 am

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/477335768?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/477335768?pwd=YTFzU2k1V0hTtV01dkpFODI4ZGkzUT09)

[pwd=YTFzU2k1V0hTtV01dkpFODI4ZGkzUT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/477335768?pwd=YTFzU2k1V0hTtV01dkpFODI4ZGkzUT09)

Meeting ID: 477 335 768

Password: 541484

Bible Study—Wednesday’s at 2:00 pm

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83634005420?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83634005420?pwd=WmhkeWtJNXNWTjRLTjhsUWxHWC8zZz09)

[pwd=WmhkeWtJNXNWTjRLTjhsUWxHWC8zZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83634005420?pwd=WmhkeWtJNXNWTjRLTjhsUWxHWC8zZz09)

Meeting ID: 836 3400 5420

Passcode: 123414

Book Discussion Group—December 13th at 2:00 pm

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83282942096?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83282942096?pwd=U09mdms2NEE3WHpubWlwc2lwblUvQT09)

[pwd=U09mdms2NEE3WHpubWlwc2lwblUvQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83282942096?pwd=U09mdms2NEE3WHpubWlwc2lwblUvQT09)

Meeting ID: 832 8294 2096

Passcode: 472709

SWIFT—December 20th—1:00 pm

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87676245219?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87676245219?pwd=S3RUbGpoY0tyWnBtRWwhVGx1NHVGdz09)

[pwd=S3RUbGpoY0tyWnBtRWwhVGx1NHVGdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87676245219?pwd=S3RUbGpoY0tyWnBtRWwhVGx1NHVGdz09)

Meeting ID: 876 7624 5219

Passcode: 005683

Birthdays and Anniversaries!!

Birthdays!

December 2—Tom Giberson

December 5—Karen Whitfield

December 8—Dave Case

December 9—Steve Bentiez

December 9—Anthony Leung

December 9—Linda Sherman

December 13—Tim Smith

December 16—June Kreger

December 16—Shirley Skasko

December 17—Elizabeth Velez

December 30—Dylan Booth

December 30—Morgan Denton

Anniversaries!

December 18—Scott and Amy Witherow

December 25—Dave Case and Rev. Day Broers-Case

In essentials, unity.

In non-essentials, liberty.

In all things, love!

Bible Study with Reverend Day will be taking place on Wednesday’s at 2:00 pm on Zoom.

If you still need a book the office has a couple from the church library to loan out. Please contact the office if you wish to pick one of these books up.

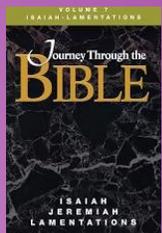
Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83634005420?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83634005420?pwd=WmhkeWtJNXNWTjRLTjhsUWxHWC8zZz09)

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Meeting ID: 836 3400 5420

Passcode: 123414



Thank You December Servers!!

Liturgists:

12/6 Lisa Peterson

12/13 Betty Powell

12/20 Brett Powell

12/24

12/27 Dave Whitfield

Elders:

Britt F. & Jo H.

Cammie D. & Betty D.

Jo H. & Don S

Diane G. & Britt F.

Don S. & Cammie D.

Worship & Wonder:

Linda S. & Betty P.

Don S. & Laura F.

Britt F. & Amy W.

Diane G. & Karen W.

Thank you Advent Readers!!

12/6—Diane Garthwaite

12/13—Scott Winkler

12/20—Jo Henkel

12/27—Brian Sears

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST IDENTITY STATEMENT



Food for Thought will be taking a hiatus for the foreseeable future, with the hopes of being able to meet in person once again. This will be updated in the Flock Talk should there be any changes.

2020 Christmas Offering
REJOICE
A special day offering of
Disciples Mission Fund



When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

Matthew 2:10

Our finest gifts supporting the Ministries of our Region – Received December 13th & 20th in most Congregations