

The Harvest

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year! First, let me assure you that I am serious in using this greeting, and second, I have not lost my mind – well at least to no greater degree than usual. So, then, you might ask, 'If you are dead serious and you haven't taken leave of your senses, what gives with the new year greeting?' The answer is simple: On the first Sunday of every Advent the Church begins a new liturgical year. Just as a typical calendar has four seasons, twelve months, fifty-two weeks, and 365 days that include holidays, solemn days, commemorative days, and days that are just "ordinary," the liturgical year calendar of the Church uses similar terms and measurements and is also marked by special seasons—Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time with each season being assigned a specific color.

The Liturgical Year begins on the first Sunday of Advent and ends on the feast of Christ the King. However, unlike our secular calendar year, the purpose of the liturgical year calendar is not to mark the passage of time, but to celebrate and understand more fully the entire mystery of Jesus Christ, from his incarnation and birth until the expectation of his return in glory, using a series of appointed Scriptures called the Lectionary. This practice of reading appointed Scriptures on given days or occasions dates back to the time of Moses and began with the annual religious festivals of Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Within Christianity not all of its Branches use the same lectionary, and throughout history, many varying lectionaries have been used in different parts of the Christian world. Most Western Christians used a lectionary that repeated on a one-year basis. This annual lectionary provided readings for Sundays and Feast Days. The Eastern Orthodox Church and many of the Oriental Churches continue to use an annual lectionary. However, after the Second Vatican Council the Roman Catholic Church introduced an arrangement by which the readings on Sundays and on some principal feasts recur in a three-year cycle, with four passages from Scripture (including one from the Psalms) being used in each celebration.



December 2021

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Outreach

2nd Saturday Food Drive

The next food drive will be December 11, 2021, at Christ Church 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Just drive up and we'll take the food out of your car. As the weather cools, we need more hearty hot meals. We especially need protein (canned meat meal or hearty soups, tuna, canned chicken, peanut butter and jelly for school lunches, etc.) and ingredients for the meals we all turn to in the winter.

Giving Tree

There is a giving tree set up in The Cloister. The Outreach committee has received word of a family in great need. The young father has very recently lost his wife to cancer. There is a twelve-year-old boy, and a 4-year-old girl who are very much in need of a happy Christmas. This family has very little.

If you can find it in your heart to fulfill a wish on the tree, some of them are provided by the family, others are added in as the committee thought necessary, then follow the instructions as listed below. Purchase your gift but do not wrap it. Bring it to the church on the Saturday (12/18/21) before Christmas. The Outreach committee will be there to accept your gift. If anyone would like to volunteer to help wrap gifts, we would be more than happy to have you join our team of elves. You have questions contact Theresa McCabe at (716) 523-4996 or Gloria Bryant at (808) 333-7295.

This three-year lectionary became the basis upon which Protestant Churches created a Common Lectionary for use on Sundays and Major Feasts. This Common Lectionary was further revised in a process of collaboration between the North American Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) and the International English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC). The CCT membership included the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as many "liturgically-based" American and Canadian Protestant denominations such as Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and more loosely Methodist and/or Seventh Day Adventist and represented the majority of American and Canadian Christians.

So now that we have a brief introduction to the Liturgical or Church Year and the Common Lectionary how do we use it to draw closer to a path to Jesus.

Our Scriptures provide us a lens through which we can see Jesus' life and ministry. The different readings give us insights into the many and varied aspects of Jesus and his message. Like us, Jesus is a complex individual and yet his life is not duplicitous; in fact, it is just the opposite. Jesus and his message are clear and singular: 'I have come to do the will of the one who sent me.' Jesus reveals that will through his ministry: his miracles and his preaching.

In-order-for Jesus to do this, he needed first to become incarnate and born of a woman; to become human being. We celebrate his birth but only as the prerequisite for that which was to follow. So, we wait, and we watch.

The Jews waited and watched for the coming of the Messiah; and we commemorate that during the season of Advent. We wait and we hope.

Now that the Messiah has come, we now wait to see the point or purpose of his birth, and how that will unfold. The birth of Christ is very important. But the real story is why he came. That story is what we will hear during this liturgical year. So keep watching and listening as Luke tells the story of salvation. Be alert! Keep watchful!! Listen attentively!! You may be surprised.

Blessings,
Fr. Thomas+

Waves

“IN PERSON”

This Advent-tide finds many of us in a much different place than Advent last year. Some of us are able to attend church “in person” for Sunday services. We are looking forward to spending time “in person” with our friends and families for Christmas. We are anticipating the season in a much more hopeful way than last year, while acknowledging that we must still remain cautious, as we’re not “out of the woods” yet.

Let’s look at this phrase that has become so dominant in our lives, “*in person*”, as it relates to Advent and what we profess to believe. Incarnation is defined as “embodied in human form”. In the Nicene Creed we recite “...by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate...” In other words, God’s presence was “in person” – in Jesus even before birth. Jesus was aware of God’s presence within his own human form. That awareness gave Jesus everything he needed to go out and build relationships, preach, and honor humanity and creation through his words and actions. Jesus recognized God’s presence not only in himself and his family and friends, but in everyone he met, especially in the people overlooked and dishonored by society because they were “different” in their ethnicity, financial status, religious beliefs, or physical and mental abilities. Jesus recognized God’s presence in the brokenness of individuals and humankind as a whole. He also recognized God’s faithfulness to all of humanity and creation, including the birds in the air and the flowers in the field.

How about us? Do we recognize God’s presence in our own embodied humanity? Do we recognize God’s presence in one another, in those who are “different” from us in any way, and in all of God’s creation?

Might this be our Advent “reflection”...to look within ourselves and beyond ourselves for the presence of God and how we may honor and act upon that presence? Then as we celebrate Christmas “*in person*” with our family and friends, let us be aware of God’s presence within and among all of us and in all of creation. **Emmanuel! God is with us!**

Advent blessings,
Robin Kozlowski
Aspirant for Ordination to the Diaconate



December Birthdays

- 2 Johnny Bisher
- 2 Loraine Ott
- 3 Brian Monaco
- 4 Jack Taylor
- 6 Fay Mrowczynski
- 7 John Urtel
- 9 Betty Stevenson
- 12 Tom Lupo
- 14 Carol Ackerman
- 14 Diane Nelson
- 15 Gretchen Lang
- 15 Joan Winter21
- 20 Kim Miller
- 20 Coutmey Taylor
- 26 The Rev. Joseph Kozlowski
- 29 Bonnie Bundrock-Witt
- 30 Bill Muscato

December Anniversaries

- 1 Todd & Paula Sheers
- 27 Tom & Maggie Lupo

GIFTS THAT CHANGE LIVES

We have all heard the news many times by now...expect shortages in sought-after Christmas gifts and expect shipping delays. There's a way to avoid both of those challenges. Please consider giving the gifts that will change the lives of people most in need. Christ Church supports both Episcopal Relief and Development and Food for the Poor. These organizations provide many choices for Christmas gifts. Speaking from experience, my family and friends who received cards letting them know a goat, fruit tree, school supplies, clean water and care for newborns were given in their names last Christmas were genuinely excited and grateful!

Surprise someone you love with a gift that changes lives!

Here are the websites for each organization, where you will find their Christmas catalogs. Also included are their phone numbers if you would like to have a hard copy of the Christmas Gift Catalog sent to your home.

Episcopal Relief and Development:
episcopalrelief.org/gifts
(855) 312-4325

Food for the Poor
FoodForThePoor.org/gift
(800) 487-1158

Happy Shopping!

Blessings,
Robin Kozlowski
ERD Congregational Ministry Partner



This Year's Giving Tree



Peanut Butter & Jelly Drive

Thank You for your
Donations. We
appreciate all that
you do for our
community



Our Ladies hard at work!



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Lockport, NY 14094

(716) 433-9229

office@ChristLockport.info

<https://www.christlockport.org/>

www.facebook.com/CECLockportNY

Would you like to give a memorial Christmas gift? Or perhaps you like to give thanks for a blessing. Forms are located next to the Sunday Bulletin in the back and front of the Church. Please return to the Office or with your weekly offering by Sunday, December 18th.

2021 Finance Summary



October

Total Income:
\$26,461.95
Total Expenses:
\$14,523.17

Year to Date

Total Income:
\$193,253.14,
Total Expenses:
\$132,645.50

Notes:

- Other income is mostly investments and is reinvested