

inspire!

A monthly magazine of
Wayzata Community Church

DECEMBER 2017

Volume 39, Number 11

inspire the world with the inclusive love of Jesus

Wait, Watch and Wake

By Rev. Danielle Jones

Advent is a season that is filled with hope and expectation. It has been said that misplaced expectations can steal joy. Expecting these Advent weeks to go a certain way or produce a certain kind of joy is a surefire way to short circuit what God has in store for you.

The true call that lies at the heart of Advent is to wait, watch, and wake.

We wait for Jesus to come to us again. Jesus desires to meet us right where we are in the midst of the joy and in the midst of the sorrow that bubbles up this time of year too.

We watch to see how God is working in the world around us. So often the work of God is hidden and takes a long time to grow— like a baby being born or a child growing into adulthood.

We wake up to the ways God is calling out to us so we can join God in his work of bringing hope to the world.

This Advent, you are invited to release your expectations of what Christmas “should” be and to embrace the gifts that God has in store for you as you wait, watch and wake to the Good News.

Daily Devotions for Advent

Make the most of your Advent season! [Sign up on our website](#) to receive these inspiring devotions in your email each day throughout Advent, written by Rev. Danielle Jones. Or, if you prefer, you may pick up a printed copy weekly at the Reception Desk.



A

Special Offering for Christmas

Our Christmas Offering will be donated to complete financing for the Community Center for Kimberly Meadows. Read more on page 3.

B

Churchwide Advent Study

Rustin Comer and Ron Troxel will lead a churchwide Advent Study, “Sent from God, Swaddled in a Manger” beginning November 29. Read more on page 4.

C

Sharing Christmas Spirit

How can we share the Christmas Spirit with our neighbors of other faiths? It’s really no different than sharing with anyone else! Read Kristen Jeide’s reflection on page 9.

Mary: A Long and Holy Night

By Lindsay Hardin Freeman



The angel. I didn't understand the angel, at least at first. He said his name was Gabriel, but who was paying attention to names at that point? I was fourteen. How does a girl-woman of fourteen wrap her mind around the idea that she is to bear the Son of God?

I think back to the day I first heard the news. I am old now, and my days are mostly made from memories. Thank God I am not alone, for John, Jesus' favorite disciple, has made me his mother.

But my heart still has a hole in it that has remained jagged since my son died. I desperately miss Jesus, my first-born. I long to reach out and take his warm cheeks in my cool hands. I want to see his long and beautiful hands. I would give anything to hear his voice.

That day, so long ago, changed everything I knew. My family, like a number of others in Galilee, lived in a two story house. We stepped down to go into the house; half of the first floor was below street level. That's where we stayed cool.

That's where I was that morning, sweeping the dirt floor, like normal people do.

But normal people do not see angels. Large angels. Room-filling angels. And Gabriel did fill the room. His large shimmering-white energy body had to kind of stoop. You would have thought that God might have ordered a smaller angel, one that would fit the room, but that wasn't the case.

"Speak, angel."

"You have found favor with the Lord!"

Favor with the Lord?

At that moment I didn't want favor with the Lord.

"You will conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

I knew one thing. Conceiving was not possible without a man. I knew that. No husband. No baby. No chance. Gabriel could go away now.

"How can this be, since I have no husband?"

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

I would have a baby? God's son?

Chaos washed over me like a river swallows all in its path.

"Do not worry, Mary. Do not be afraid. Your cousin, Elizabeth, is also with child. She is six months along now. With God, nothing is impossible."

Elizabeth? My cousin? She was about 800 years old the last time I checked.

Could it be true? How overjoyed she and Zechariah would be. They had wanted children forever, but had given up long ago.

"Do not worry, Mary. Do not be afraid."

Again the words came to me. For that one holy and divine moment, all was right and good, holy and trustworthy. This was no divine writ, no takeover of my body. It would be my decision. Gabriel waited.

"I am the Lord's servant," I said. "Let it be to me according to your word."



Excerpted from *The Scarlet Cord: Conversations with God's Chosen Women*. Written by Lindsay Hardin Freeman and illustrated by Karen N. Canton. Available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). For more information on *The Scarlet Cord* or to learn about other books by Rev. Freeman, an Orono resident, see [lindsayhardinfreeman.com](https://www.lindsayhardinfreeman.com).



for the moment

Rev. Dr. John F. Ross, Senior Minister

A Moment in Time

Taking a quick break before the busy-ness of the holidays, Sheila and I recently spent a fun weekend away in Madison, Wisconsin. Returning home on Monday in time for a noon meeting meant we had to leave the Madison Concourse Hotel by 7:30 a.m.—otherwise we would have still been sipping coffee at the Starbucks in the lobby.

By the time we reached the highway, it was late enough that the landscape on both sides of I-90/94 was well lit below a mostly-cloudy sky. And for a few rare moments in time, it was early enough that the sun hadn't managed to melt the fragile layer of frost that turned the world around us from the multicolored kaleidoscope landscape we witnessed two days earlier, into a black and white world of wonder we'd never seen.

It was truly breathtaking to see the rolling hills, trees, and fields COMPLETELY white, but not buried in snow as they become in winter. The high-definition of branches and leaves, bushels and barns, and every other morsel of God's creation was perfectly preserved... but newly-hued to pure white. The water in ponds and creeks stood so still against a silver sky that they appeared as flawless mirrors. As far as the eye could see, it was an Ansel Adams photograph.

As much as we wanted to, we couldn't stop, look, and linger. We were on a highway and on a schedule. There wasn't even time for the obligatory selfie for Facebook. It was an incendiary moment in time, never to be repeated and never to be forgotten. It occurred to me that this experience is a microcosm of what Advent has become for many of us.

Jesus' birth comes and goes in a moment as brief and incendiary as fragile frost melting from still-green leaves—a moment never to be repeated and never to be forgotten. Yet, in spite of the miracle about to take place, we are people on a highway and on a schedule. We've made it difficult, if not impossible, to pull off to the side of the road to stop, look, and linger.

Advent is the early morning hours when God is up to something. These shortening, darkening days of December transform the world around us and have the potential to transform the world within us. Our worship of God provides moments when we can stop, look, and linger—to allow the transformation that awaits, and the miracle to happen.

For the moment, I wish for you and yours moments in time to stop, look, and linger.

Advent Blessings,

John

“Our worship of God provides moments when we can stop, look, and linger—to allow the transformation that awaits, and the miracle to happen.”

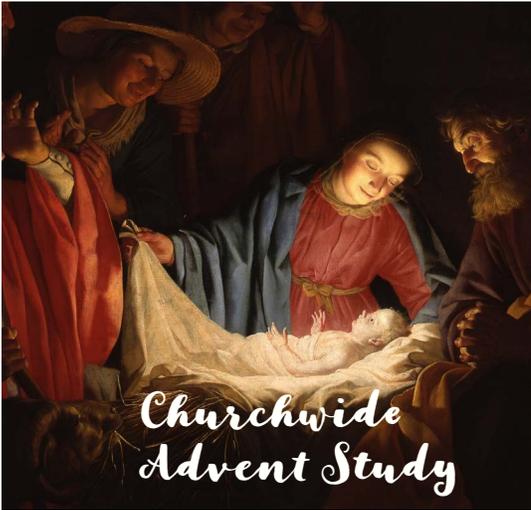


Special Offering for Christmas

Our Christmas Offering will be donated to complete financing and begin construction of a 600 sq. ft. Community Center for children and adults at Kimberly Meadows Apartments. We are blessed to have a match of \$30,000 towards our \$60,000 goal.

A larger Community Room will enable more residents and their children to attend programs right on Kimberly Meadows' grounds. The "Neighborhood Program" through Interfaith Outreach includes monthly dinners and activities for residents, as well as programs for youth that help young learners build academic and social/emotional skills. WCC has had a relationship with Kimberly Meadows residents for over six years, and this Community Room will provide even greater opportunities for community building. The apartments are located at CR101 and CR6 in Plymouth, very close to WCC.

Contributions to this Special Christmas Offering may be made by making your check payable to Wayzata Community Church, noting "Neighborhood Program" on the memo line.



Sent from God, Swaddled in a Manger

November 29 - December 13
**Taught by Rev. Rustin Comer
and Ron Troxel**
10 a.m. and 7:15 p.m., Colonnade

Each Advent we hear stories about an angel's announcement to Mary that she will bear a son, about the child born in a manger, and shepherds startled by an angelic host. But a star that travels ahead of the Magi until it stands over the family's dwelling conflicts with what we know of astronomy, and the report that the Magi find the family in a "house" seems a different scene than a manger in a stable. And although we hear that this birth is news of God come to dwell among us, in what sense is this child God's presence? Whom or what do we receive at Christmas?

November 29 - Together we will take a look at the differences in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth. How have these become conflated in our celebration of Advent and Christmas? Join us as we look at why stories matter and what makes them "true".

December 6 - The Christmas story for a Jewish audience: Matthew - A look at how Matthew is following the story line of Moses, including the quandary over Mary's pregnancy, etc. Is the Christmas story Christian?

December 13 - The Christmas story for a Gentile Audience: A dive into how the Christmas story speaks truth to power. Luke's way of telling the story to make it fit a Roman context, particularly in his attempt to show the legitimacy of the gospel message for Roman ears, including his use of the *Magnificat* and the theme of poverty.

Worship



MUSIC SUNDAY: HEAVEN AND NATURE SING Sunday, December 17

9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. worship, Sanctuary
Join us as our WCC Music Ministry brings the joyful music of Christmas alive through story & song!

This unique celebration of Jesus' birth will feature all 9 of our Choirs leading familiar carols, new favorites, and even a few surprises. We'll also welcome our friends from CREO Arts & Dance as we journey to Bethlehem together. A festive morning for all ages.



DWELT: A REFLECTIVE WORSHIP SERVICE* Wednesday, December 20, 6:15 p.m., Chapel

Dwelt is a worship experience for the whole family. There will be a kids corner, lively music, spoken word, candles and gathered community. This year's Dwelt theme is "Coming Home." We recognize that Advent and Christmas are a busy time. Yet, in the

midst of all of this busyness Jesus is at work building a home within you. Advent is a time when we intentionally focus on making this home with Jesus. We invite you to Come Home this holiday season and rest for a while in the home that Christ has built.



THE LONGEST NIGHT* Thursday, December 21, 12 noon and 7:00 p.m., Chapel

The celebrations of this holy season have a way of shining light on our griefs, fears, and longings, so that we feel them more deeply. We invite you into the simple warmth and beauty of this Advent Candlelight

Worship. Through scripture, prayers, music and message, we offer you the gift of a time to reflect on the comfort and hope of this season – for you, for those you love, for the wider world. This special service will be led by our Pastoral Care clergy and Tapestry musicians.



ROCK THE MANGER, CHRISTMAS EVE EVE* Saturday, December 23, 6:15 p.m., Sanctuary

If you are going to be out of town on Christmas Eve, or you are just ready to celebrate Jesus' birth in a festive way, join us in the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve Eve! This very special time of worship will feature music by our amazing friends from Power Tap, an

inspiring Christmas message, closing with candle lighting and singing of *Silent Night*. All are welcome!

ONE WORD SUNDAY Sunday, December 31 • 9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. worship

Resolutions seldom work because they are based on the type of person we're tired of being rather than who God wants us to become. Plus, resolutions can be "broken," leaving no room for the process of growth. What if our hopes for the year ahead centered instead on who God wants us to become, and the transformation process needed to get there? ONE Word replaces broken resolutions with a vision for real change. When you choose a single word, you have clarity and focus, moving toward the future rather than swearing off the past. Join us and claim your word for 2018!

* Childcare available for ages Birth-PreK in the Dandelion and Garden Rooms.



Kyle Roberts, Ph.D.

A Complicated Pregnancy: Whether Mary was a Virgin and Why it Matters

December 11 • 6:30 p.m., Chapel

The virgin birth is a much-loved story in the Christian tradition. It is the standard “origin story” of Jesus, marking the incarnation of the Son of God. Today, however, many theologians dispute the tradition of the virginal conception on both historical and scientific grounds.

As a progressive Protestant theologian—and a husband and a father—Kyle Roberts was growing unsure of his belief in Mary’s virginity. It contradicted modern science, and it seemed to undermine her feminine power. So he set out to investigate the virgin birth from every angle: the Bible, history, science, and philosophy.

A Complicated Pregnancy records his journey through the evidence and the myth. Did the Holy Spirit form Jesus as a zygote in Mary’s womb? If so, where did Jesus get his male genome? Was Jesus’s birth really bloodless, as the early church believed, and is Mary a “perpetual virgin”?

Roberts’ quest is a fascinating journey through history, Biblical interpretation, and church politics. His conclusion surprised him, and it will surprise you, too.

Kyle Roberts (Ph.D.) is Schilling Professor of Public Theology and the Church and Economic Life at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. Roberts has published essays on Kierkegaard and modern theology, including several essays in the series *Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources* (Ashgate / University of Copenhagen) and other collected volumes on various topics, including Pietism, Karl Barth, eschatology, and Christian spirituality. Roberts published *Emerging Prophet: Kierkegaard and the Postmodern People of God* (Cascade, 2013) and has recently completed a co-authored commentary on the Gospel of Matthew (Eerdmans) and a book about the virgin birth (Fortress).

At United, Roberts teaches Public Theology, Christian Ethics, Historical Theology (modern period), Senior Capstone Seminar, and various electives—including Evil, Death, and Alienation and Eschatology and Hope.

Advent Events

SANTA BREAKFAST

Saturday, December 2, 8:30 a.m.

WCC Nursery School and Early Childhood Ministry will host a Santa Breakfast from 8:30-11:30 a.m. in Mithun Hall. Invite your friends and family and enjoy a pancake breakfast and pictures with Santa! We will have raffle baskets and a bake sale. Presale tickets are \$5 for children and \$10 for adults. All proceeds from this event go directly to WCCNS. [Register online.](#)



ADVENT WORKSHOP

Sunday, December 3

2:30 p.m. & 3:00 p.m.

Ring in the Advent season with your family and faith friends at this annual Craft Extravaganza in the Great Hall (Gym). This event is best for children ages 3+ and adults. At 2:30 p.m. we will host Parables families, and from 3:00-5:30 p.m. all other families.

We will make and take ornaments, gifts and decorations for you to hang on your tree or give as gifts. Ornament themes include nativity, candles, wreaths and trees, and angels. We will also have 3 kinds of fresh greenery to make your own swag, centerpiece, or wreath. Enjoy Christmas cookies and Christmas music while you craft. The cost is \$10 per crafter, with a maximum of \$30 per family. Register online to attend at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/adventworkshop.



SOUL SISTERS:

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Monday, December 18

(Please register by December 11)

6:30-8:30 p.m. at Connie Hines' Home (in Wayzata)

Let your light shine this season and join the Soul Sisters for fun and fellowship! Donations are encouraged

to benefit Home Free, a Domestic Women’s Shelter. They are in need of deodorant, toothbrushes, and hair conditioner... and to help their Light Shine, they would appreciate cosmetics and lipsticks, sugar/salt scrub, nail polish, and yummy lotions (no travel sizes, please). Register online at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/education/soul-sisters



Join Rev. Lindy Purdy for Soup, Salad & Song on Wednesday, December 13 at 12 noon in Mithun Hall for delicious homemade soups, salads, bread and dessert! Anyone "55 or Better" is invited to share in this! The lunch is free, and made possible by the committee and by those who wish to share their culinary skills with the group. Each lunch is a unique and wonderful experience of great food and fun.

3 ADVENT 1
Rev. Dr. John F. Ross preaching
 8 a.m. Chapel Communion, Chapel
 9:00 a.m. Celebrations Worship, Sanctuary
 10:30 a.m. Parables Worship, Chapel
 10:45 a.m. Traditions Worship, Sanctuary
 Meridian Manor Worship, 1 p.m.
 Advent Workshop, 2:30 p.m. & 3 p.m.
 The Singers Concert, 3 p.m.

4
 Archives, 9:30 a.m.
 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
 Rummage Committee, 4 p.m.
 Wizard of Oz Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.
 Middle School CE Board, 7 p.m.
 Al Anon, 7:30 p.m.

5
 Planning Committee, 6 p.m.
 High School Board, 6:30 p.m.
 Art and Design Committee, 7 p.m.
 Board of Deacons, 7 p.m.
 Children's CE Board, 7 p.m.
 WCCNS Board, 7 p.m.
 OA, 7 p.m.

10 ADVENT 2
Rev. Dr. John F. Ross preaching
 8 a.m. Chapel Communion, Chapel
 9:00 a.m. Celebrations Worship, Sanctuary
 10:30 a.m. Parables Worship, Chapel
 10:45 a.m. Traditions Worship, Sanctuary
 Meridian Manor Worship, 1 p.m.
 Nominating Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
 Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra, 3 p.m.
 Interfaith Service for Prayers & Peace, 4 p.m. (offsite)

11
 Archives, 9:30 a.m.
 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
 Author Event, 6 p.m.
 Wizard of Oz Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.
 Camp/Retreat Board, 6:30 p.m.
 I Am That Girl, 7 p.m.
 I Am That Girl Moms, 7 p.m.
 Al Anon, 7:30 p.m.

12
 Thimble Bees, 9 a.m.
 Executive Team, 5:30 p.m.
 Building & Grounds Board, 7 p.m.
 Personnel Committee, 7 p.m.
 Greater Twin Cities Youth Concert, 7 p.m.
 OA, 7 p.m.

17 ADVENT 3 • MUSIC SUNDAY
Rev. Dr. John F. Ross preaching
 8 a.m. Chapel Communion, Chapel
 9:00 a.m. Celebrations Worship, Sanctuary
 10:30 a.m. Parables Worship, Chapel
 10:45 a.m. Traditions Worship, Sanctuary
 Meridian Manor Worship, 1 p.m.
 Parables Christmas Party, 11:15 a.m.
 Light of Hope Trip Commissioning, 12 noon

18
 Archives, 9:30 a.m.
 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
 Heritage Council, 4 p.m.
 Soul Sisters Christmas Event, 6:30 p.m. (offsite)
 Soul Sisters Steering Committee, 6 p.m.
 Al Anon, 7:30 p.m.

19
 Mission & Outreach Board, 6:30 p.m.
 Church Council, 7 p.m.
 Unique Family Ministry Meeting, 7 p.m.
 OA, 7 p.m.

24 ADVENT 4
 8 a.m. Chapel Communion, Chapel
 9:00 a.m. Build Your Own Nativity, Sanctuary
 10:45 a.m. Traditions in the Chapel
 Meridian Manor Worship, 1 p.m.
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
 1:30 p.m., 3 p.m. & 5 p.m., Chapel Services
 1:30 p.m., 3 p.m. & 5 p.m., Sanctuary Services
 9 p.m., Sanctuary Service
 11 p.m., Christmas Service, Sanctuary

25 CHRISTMAS DAY
 Christmas Worship, 10 a.m., Chapel

26
 Generosity Committee, 7 p.m.
 OA, 7 p.m.

31 ONE WORD SUNDAY
Rev. Rustin Comer preaching
 8 a.m. Chapel Communion, Chapel
 9:00 a.m. Celebrations Worship, Sanctuary
 10:30 a.m. Parables Worship, Chapel
 10:45 a.m. Traditions Worship, Sanctuary
 Meridian Manor Worship, 1 p.m.



Save the Date for WCCNS Celebration Sunday!
 We will celebrate our nursery school on Sunday, January 7, 2018. Watch for more information in the *inspire!* Weekly.

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



1 High School Retreat (offsite)
IOCP Client Christmas Party, 5 p.m.
WEST METRO LEAGUE Kids Night Out, 5:30 p.m.

2 Saturday Seekers, 8 a.m.
Old Timer's Basketball, 8:30 a.m.
Santa Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.
AA, 10 a.m.

6 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Advent Faith Formation Class, 10 a.m.
Soul Sisters Lunch, 11:30 a.m. (offsite)
Children's/Youth Choirs /Classes, 4:30 p.m.
Suppers, etc., 5:15 p.m.
Worship on Wednesday, 6:15 p.m.
High School Holiday Gift Mission, 6:30 p.m.
Advent Faith Formation Class, 7:15 p.m.
Children's and Youth Classes, 7:15 p.m.
Adult Choirs, 7:15 p.m.
Middle School Crossroads, 7:15 p.m.
High School Primetime, 7:15 p.m.
Al Anon, 7:45 p.m.

7 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
CPR / AED Training, 6:30 p.m.

8 Parables Respite/ Friendship Group, 5 p.m.

9 Saturday Seekers, 8 a.m.
Old Timer's Basketball, 8:30 a.m.
AA, 10 a.m.

13 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Advent Faith Formation Class, 10 a.m.
Soup, Salad & Song Lunch, 12 noon
Children's/Youth Choirs /Classes, 4:30 p.m.
Suppers, etc., 5:15 p.m.
Worship on Wednesday, 6:15 p.m.
Advent Faith Formation Class, 7:15 p.m.
Children's and Youth Classes, 7:15 p.m.
Adult Choirs, 7:15 p.m.
Middle School Crossroads, 7:15 p.m.
High School Primetime, 7:15 p.m.
Al Anon, 7:45 p.m.

14 Finance Committee, 6:45 a.m.
Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Bible Study with Lindy Purdy, 11 a.m., Folkestone
Library Committee, 2 p.m.
Baptism Milestone, 6 p.m.

15 Kids' Night Out, 6 p.m.

16 Saturday Seekers, 8 a.m.
Old Timer's Basketball, 8:30 a.m.
Children's & Youth Music Sunday Dress Rehearsal, 10 a.m.
AA, 10 a.m.
The Sleep Out, 3 p.m.

20 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Parables, 5 p.m.
DWELT Service, 6:15 p.m. (Chapel)
Al Anon, 7:45 p.m.

21 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Longest Night Service, 12 noon
Longest Night Service, 7 p.m.

22

23 Saturday Seekers, 8 a.m.
Old Timer's Basketball, 8:30 a.m.
AA, 10 a.m.
Rock the Manger Christmas Eve Service, 6:15 p.m.

27 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Al Anon, 7:45 p.m.

28 Women's AA, 10 a.m.
Bridge, 12 noon

29

30 Saturday Seekers, 8 a.m.
Old Timer's Basketball, 8:30 a.m.
AA, 10 a.m.



Coming Up in January

- **New Adult CORE Classes begin Wednesday, January 10**
- **Coffeehouse Concerts begin Friday, January 12 at 7 p.m.!**
- **Summer Camp Sunday: January 28**



CORE

CORE: rethinking faith and life

Adult Faith Formation Classes for the New Year!

Five-week classes beginning January 10 & 11, 2018

Orthopraxy: A Deep Dive into Current Moral Issues

Teachers: Rev. Rustin Comer and Maggie Pierson

Wednesdays at 10 a.m., 4 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

\$20 class fee.

Register online at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/januaryCORE

Do you wonder how to have constructive conversations about the things that matter most deeply in life? Then this is the class for you. Take a dive into the world of Christian ethics. We will explore Ethics and its relationship to the Bible and Christian communities; thinking on such important personal and social issues as sexual behavior, human reproduction, racial and ethnic relations, the taking of human life, poverty and economic issues, and the environment.

The Gift of Being Yourself

Teacher: Rev. Danielle Jones

Wednesdays at 4 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

\$20 class fee.

Register online at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/januaryCORE

Much is said in Christian circles about knowing God. But there cannot be deep knowledge of God without deep knowledge of one's self. Genuine self-understanding revitalizes our spiritual life and leads to the fulfillment of our God-given destiny and vocation. Join Danielle Jones for a study on David Benner's book, *The Gift of Being Yourself*.

Does the Spirit Still Speak through the Hebrew Scriptures? (Part 1)

Teacher: Ron Troxel

Thursdays at 6:15 p.m.

\$20 class fee.

Register online at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/januaryCORE

Many of us grew up hearing the inspiring story of David and Goliath, God's promise of a child to Abraham and Sarah, the suspenseful Exodus from Egypt, and the exploits of prophets like Elijah and Elisha. We may have been provoked by the prophets' critique of those who ran roughshod over the poor, but simultaneously alienated by bizarre visions reported by the likes of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. And even those stories sometimes come off as jumbled or pointless, especially for faith today. What are these strange stories and words that are part of our Bible? In what sense can we confess that we "hear what the Spirit is saying to the church" through these scriptures?



1. Hanukkah, or Festival of Lights commemorates the victory of the Jewish people in Jerusalem over the mighty Greek army and the reclaiming of the second temple. There was enough oil left in the lamp for one night, but it burned for eight days. So on the first night of Hanukkah one candle on the menorah is lit and each night for eight nights an additional one is kindled. Read more at www.chabad.org/holidays



2. Join us for the December Adopt-a-Neighborhood event on December 19 at Interfaith Outreach for our neighbors who live at the Kimberly Meadows townhomes in Plymouth. Volunteers are needed to help bring food, set up and serve dinner and to help with the family activities after dinner. Please contact Vicki Thompson at peterthompson9@comcast.net or 952-542-9152.

3. Kids' Night Out is December 15! We meet from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in the Gym. All children ages 3 through 5th grade are invited to join their church family for games, crafts, dinner and a movie once a month at church! This is a great way to build relationships with others and to experience church in a different way. Registration is required. Register online at www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org/kidsnightout



4. We will host our Families Moving Forward guests from December 10-17. WCC provides shelter and hospitality in our building to families with children who are currently without a home. A team of 80 volunteers a week are needed to set up rooms for each family, welcome guests, prepare and serve meals, wash laundry, help with evening activities for children, and overnight hosting. If you can volunteer, please contact Peter Thompson at peterthompson9@comcast.net



5. Salvation Army Bellringing
For the past 21 years Wayzata Community Church has been ringing bells for our mission partner, Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center of Minneapolis. Harbor Light is one of the midwest's oldest and largest homeless shelters, and continues to serve as a beacon of hope for so many in need in our metro community. Please consider participating in our 2017 Bell Campaign as a Day Captain and help us fill an afternoon or evening. Sign up in Founders Hall on Sundays. Email any questions to Dana Morrison (Kettle Campaign Co-chair) at danalmorrison@mac.com. Wishing you a very happy and healthy Christmas season!

Sharing Christmas Spirit

By Rev. Kristen Rouner Jeide

How can we share the Christmas spirit with our neighbors of other faiths? When asked this question, I immediately think of the meaningful ways my friends of other faiths have reached out to me. There was the Christmas Day I received a text from my Muslim friend, saying, "Merry Christmas, Kristen!" There was the invitation from my Jewish friend to share Passover at her family table. There was the honor of being asked by a friend to volunteer to help with a wonderful Eid celebration. There have been invitations to Iftar dinners with Muslim neighbors and celebrations of Sukkoth with Jewish neighbors. There have been emails of care, support and prayer. There have been conversations of learning about each others' traditions, spiritual practices and holy days.



In many ways, sharing the Christmas spirit with neighbors of other faiths is no different than sharing it with anyone else. We do it by extending ourselves to others in love, authenticity, and humility in a way that honors God and one another, building trust and understanding. Yet, one of the gifts of

Show up. Be present. Be humble. Be you. Build friendships. It may be the best gift you give to God and to the world this Christmas. And it just may become God's gift to you this Christmas, too.

sharing across faith traditions is that it asks us to go deeper into the heart of the faith we claim. The Christmas spirit is the spirit of Jesus—born to make accessible God's reconciling love for all people. Sharing the Christmas spirit begins with letting the spirit of Jesus dwell in us—transforming our own hearts and lives.

There are a thousand simple ways to share the Christmas spirit with neighbors of other faiths. And in these days when so many people are unsure, or even afraid, of how they will be perceived or received as they go about their daily lives, do not underestimate the power of a smile. It is a way to behold one another—to let others know they are seen, honored, welcomed. Invite someone of another faith to your home for a meal and learn about one another's holy days and spiritual practices... acknowledge the holy days of others... invite others into your celebrations and traditions... give a gift that would be meaningful to a friend or community of another faith. (If you don't know what would be meaningful, ask!) Say "yes" to invitations to visit communities of other faiths. Show up. Be present. Be humble. Be you. Build friendships. It may be the best gift you give to God and to the world this Christmas. And it just may become God's gift to you this Christmas, too.



AN EVENING OF INTERFAITH PRAYERS FOR PEACE AND UNITY

Sunday, December 10, 4:00 p.m.

St. Edward the Confessor Episcopal Church

The Communities of Adath Jeshurun Congregation, Bet Shalom Congregation, Northwest Islamic Community Center, St. Edward the Confessor Episcopal Church and Wayzata Community Church invite you to An Evening of Interfaith Prayers for Peace and Unity at St. Edward the Confessor Episcopal Church. All are welcome. Please carpool to ensure parking for all.



Homelessness During the Christmas Season

By James Baxley, *Huffpost*

You're fast asleep in your warm bed when you hear a noise. Your children burst into the room and try to convince you—successfully—to start the day. They drag you out of bed and down the stairs before you can even wipe the sleep from your eyes. The lights on the tree are blinking in syncopation with each other and the ornaments are basking in the glow. The kids are so full of energy that you wonder where they got it... even the dogs are excited!

But not everybody has a warm bed on Christmas (or any other day for that matter). Someone will be crawling out from under a cardboard box in an alleyway, somebody will be sleeping under a bridge or an overpass, and somebody will be sleeping in a homeless shelter (he's the lucky one). A warm bed is something we take for granted on a daily basis.

A good night's sleep is very hard to pull off when you're homeless. You're never completely asleep when you are living on the streets, every little noise wakes you, and if you live in a city like Atlanta, it never sleeps... it just takes a nap. You sleep with one-eye open because you never know what is going to happen. I know people who have been attacked at night by kids who had nothing better to do. I know people who were beaten and robbed at night in their sleep. The night is the most vulnerable time for the homeless, but it isn't just a warm bed they miss.

As for the homeless, unless there is a church or a mission or a nonprofit feeding the poor and the homeless, then a hot meal is nothing but a dream. Rum-

maging through dumpsters looking for discarded food or a half-eaten sandwich will be a treat for some. A handout from a restaurant is a blessing. If I was lucky, I would have enough money to order a meal at the Waffle House and spend the night reading the newspaper and drinking coffee.

Those who have lived on the streets long enough know the ins and outs of survival and getting a hot meal is a trick that is still hard to accomplish.

People live on the streets for many reasons, but very, very few live on the streets willingly. Many people are homeless because of drugs and alcohol, but this is a small minority of people. Many make the streets their home because they have a disability, a mental condition, or are a veteran with a war-related disability. Unemployment and under employment isn't the main cause of being homeless.

“ A huge majority of homeless people do work. Most have a job, so that cashier at McDonald's or the bag boy at the local grocery store or even the college student may just be someone who is living on the street or in their car. ”

A huge majority of homeless people do work. Most people who are homeless have a job, so that cashier at the McDonald's or the bag boy at the local grocery store or even the college student may just be someone who is living on the street or in their car. Affordable housing, according to the National Alliance to End

Homelessness claims that lack of affordable housing is the major reason for homelessness. Everybody should have a roof over their head and a place to sleep.

Christmas is not so special when you are homeless, it is just another day, another day of survival. So, if you see somebody who is homeless this Christmas (or any time of the year), don't turn the other way. Say hello. Talk to them for a moment. Make them feel like a person.



Music at Wayzata

THE SINGERS: WHAT SWEETER MUSIC* Sunday, December 3 • 3:00 p.m.

A Twin Cities favorite each December, The Singers' annual Christmas concert is a meaningful mix of traditional carols (often in new arrangements), contemplative music of the season, and festive works from the Renaissance to today. This season, the choir presents Eric Whitacre's *Lux Aurumque*, Bob Chilcott's *What Sweeter Music*, and carols from around the world. *Purchase tickets at <http://www.singersmca.org>.

Wizards of Winter with the Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra Sunday, December 10 • 3:00 p.m.

The wizarding world of Harry Potter, a night on a cold mountain, a winter dream, and an Appalachian carol... it all happens in one concert. "Wizards of Winter" explores multiple wizards of composition, as they magically set winter in various forms. From the warmth of our concert venue, journey through "Wizards of Winter" with the Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Sean Vogt. The concert is free. Witches and wizards of all ages welcome to attend – costumes encouraged!



Generosity Campaign

Every week, our church's diverse ministries create new stories for members of all ages. From a honeymoon mission trip to Kenya to our growing Parables worship service, we are helping people to grow on their faith journey. These ministries are made possible because of your generous support.

If you've already made your pledge for 2018 – THANK YOU! Your commitment will provide the resources that allow these ministries to grow. If you haven't made your pledge yet, please take a few minutes this week to go online at wccpledge.org or complete your pledge card and mail it or bring it to church. We are hoping to hear from everyone by December 15. If you submit your pledge by December 15, we will include your name in the January issue of *inspire!* Magazine.

For over 135 years, Wayzata Community Church has been creating a mosaic of faith stories that have changed the lives of our members and our community. But the story is not complete until you are in it.



CARES

If we can be helpful before or during your hospital stay, please call our Pastoral staff at the church, 952-473-8877.

RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED

Jim Smith
Amanda Escen

CONDOLENCES

- Georgia Thompson on the death of her sister, Kay Kuehnhackl, on October 28, 2017.
- Slavko Billy and family and friends on the death of Oksana Billy, on October 30, 2017.
- Friends and family on the death of Tanya Foster, on October 31, 2017.
- Ann Perry on the death of her mother, Nancy Perry, on November 10, 2017.

inspire! Magazine is published by Wayzata Community Church, A United Church of Christ Congregation. Assigned articles, or story ideas, may be emailed to Cami Farley at cfarley@wayzatacommunitychurch.org. Please call Katie Kraus at 952-473-8877, ext. 228 with address changes or if you would like to be removed from the *inspire!* Magazine mailing list. Upcoming deadlines: 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 5 for the January 2018 issue.

©2017 Wayzata Community Church. All rights reserved.

- Editor: Cami Farley, 952-473-8877, ext. 225; cfarley@wayzatacommunitychurch.org
- Design: Marnie Baehr, 952-473-8877, ext. 238; mbaehr@wayzatacommunitychurch.org



WAYZATA COMMUNITY CHURCH
inspire the world
A United Church of Christ Congregation
125 Wayzata Boulevard East
Wayzata, MN 55391
(952) 473-8877 • Fax: (952) 473-2695
www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org
www.ucc.org

Inspire! (USPS 472-430) is published monthly, June-July combined,
by Wayzata Community Church, 125 Wayzata Boulevard East, Wayzata, MN 55391.
Periodical postage paid at Wayzata, MN.
Postmaster: send address changes to Inspire! 125 Wayzata Blvd. E., Wayzata, MN 55391
PERIODICAL
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Christmas Worship

Sunday, December 24

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

8:00 a.m. Chapel Service with Communion

Rev. Danielle Jones preaching

Build Your Own Nativity 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Calling all kings, shepherds, and sheep! Help us re-create the Nativity in this child-centered Christmas service. Bring your own costume, or wear one we provide! *Childcare for ages Birth-4 available.*

Traditions Worship* 10:45 a.m. in the Chapel

Traditional worship with Christmas carols, and a sermon from Rev. Danielle Jones.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Christmas in Wakefield Chapel • 1:30, 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Chapel*

A traditional service with organist, soloist, a homily, and a Christmas message from Rev. Dr. John F. Ross.

Candlelight Family Christmas • 1:30, 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Sanctuary*

This wonderful experience for all ages includes music from the our contemporary music team, Tapestry, Christmas carols, candlelighting, a special moment for children, and a Christmas message from Rev. Dr. John F. Ross.

Festival Christmas Eve • 9:00 p.m., Sanctuary

With fanfare and joy we hear the Christmas story in festive music from the Chancel Choir and String Quartet, and a Christmas message from Rev. Dr. John F. Ross.

Midnight Christmas • 11:00 p.m., Sanctuary

A joyous and contemplative welcome of the midnight hour and the beginning of Christmas Day. We will hear a meditation by Rev. Dr. John F. Ross and share communion around the table. Moving music will guide us into a time of reflection.

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

Monday, December 25 • 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel

Come as you are on Christmas morning for warm, welcoming, and joyous Christmas Day worship. Hear Rev. Lindy Purdy's heartwarming story and uplifting music from our Youth Ensemble. Join in a Christmas carol sing-along, and Christmas cookies in Founders Hall.

* *Childcare available for Birth-1 year in the Dandelion Room; for Age 2 in the Sunshine Room; for Age 3 in the Treehouse Room; and for Age 4 in the Garden Room.*