



### Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Hope, Peace, Joy and Love! These are the themes for the four weeks of Advent. For some, Advent is marked with candles and daily chocolate hidden behind little doors of scripture. For others, it's a time of great expectation filled with shopping and planning of gatherings to share the season. But there is so much more to consider when it comes to this time known as Advent.

The word "advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit." Advent is a season to consider both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come. In the Bible we are told that when Jesus comes again as a victorious King, he will usher in the Kingdom of God with all of its blessings. God's peace and justice will fill the earth. There will be no more sorrow or tears. People will turn implements of war into tools to produce food, and "Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). As we pull out or storage bins of Christmas decoration and trimmings lets pack away the issues that keep us from revealing the true meaning of Christmas. Let's reach out beyond our family and friends and share the good news that Christ was born to make a difference in the world. And we are called to do the same.

It's easy for those of us who live in safety, comfort, and prosperity to neglect a Godly hope for the coming of the Kingdom and all of its benefits. Yet, this hope can be inflamed within us when we reach out to share life and care for people in need, for the hungry and homeless, for victims of injustice and oppression, for those who suffer from sickness or sadness. Advent can be a time to touch those in need, not only so that we might share God's love with them, but also so that our yearning for the Kingdom might be renewed within us.

This Advent and Christmas let's all remember our brothers and sisters who are not as fortunate as us. One of the best ways to recognize this is to reach out with hope, peace, joy and love to someone you know who is struggling. This may be for someone you know or a random act of kindness given to a stranger. After all, this is a time of giving. You will never receive a greater gift than knowing you made a difference for the better, in someone's life.

Be mindful of God's voice in the next four weeks and may you have a blessed Christmas this year!

God's Peace,

*Rev. Joe Jeffers*

#### Looking Ahead

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|---------------------|--|
| <b>Dec. 3rd -</b>   | Hometown Holidays<br>Gingerbread House<br>workshop 11am-1pm;<br>Holiday Home Tour<br>1pm-4pm |
| <b>Dec. 4th*-</b>   | 2nd Sunday in Advent<br>Candle of Peace  |
| <b>Dec. 11th -</b>  | 3rd Sunday in Advent<br>Candle of Joy;<br>FIA Adopt-a-Family<br>Donations are DUE            |
| <b>Dec. 18th* -</b> | 4th Sunday in Advent<br>Candle of Love   |
| <b>Dec. 24th* -</b> | Christmas Eve<br>Candlelight Service 7pm   |
| <b>Dec. 25th -</b>  | Christmas Day Service<br>and Christmas<br>Carols 10am  |
| <b>Jan. 1st* -</b>  | 10am service   |

\*Service of Holy Communion during  
worship.

## Mission and Outreach

Your donations of laundry products for Faith In Action totaled \$235.00 for October. We do not collect items for the months of



November and December since we are given our Adopt a Family from FIA. The wish items from our family are posted on the board for easier viewing, but in order to donate you must take a tag from the tree and replace the tag with a bulb from the basket. Wrapping instructions are on the board. We need to have the items at the church no later than December 11th so we can deliver everything to FIA that next week for distribution. We will also be giving the family a gift certificate from Polly's Country Market so they may buy food for their holiday meal.

The Mission and Outreach committee will be meeting to distribute your generous gifts to other needy organizations for our end of the year giving. As always your generosity is amazing and we hope to make a difference by giving to several local organizations as well as other countries. We have given to our Foster Child this year, Project 418 and will again be making a donation to the Heifer project. All giving will be detailed in our year end report.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Charlotte Bentley, 734-216-2171.

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year from the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Charlotte Bentley, Judy Murphy and Laura Downer

## Nominating Committee News

The nominating committee is looking to fill a number of open committee positions for next year. We're asking you to prayerfully consider sharing your talents and contributing to the vitality and life of our church. Committee descriptions are available on our website at <http://chelseafcc.com/ministries.html>. New committee assignments will start in February 2017 after the annual congregational meeting. Please speak with Janis Horning or Julie Nelson about your interest in serving on a committee. Thanks for your consideration and thanks to all of you who are already serving on a committee (or two!)

## Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee is pleased to announce that a very important addition to our worship service is a new sound system for the sanctuary. The funds for this huge project are made possible with memorial monies from Ed Visel's account and Ginny Visel's generous heart. The sound system is very old and was in need of updating, which will be completed in three stages. Upcoming will include a hearing system for the impaired and will also place a speaker in the nursery/youth room.

Ginny had asked on an Sunday for a direction to use Ed's money and the following Tuesday Council meeting indicated the sound system was high on the needed items and when I contacted Ginny to see if we could use Ed's memorial money to get started she said "Yes, and I would like to do the complete project!" Ginny indicated the Ed couldn't hear very well and she thought it would be a very fitting memorial in his name. What a great and important gift to our church!

## December Volunteer Schedule

### Dec. 4th

Usher/Greeter: David & Terri Drenth  
Lay Reader: Lisa Connolly  
Coffee Hour: Ron & Jean Satterthwaite

### Dec. 11th

Usher/Greeter: Lyle & Nell Olson  
Lay Reader: Stu Holmes  
Coffee Hour: Steve & Cyndi Bertsons

### Dec. 18th

Usher/Greeter: David Drenth & Jane Shrosbree  
Lay Reader: Jane Shrosbree  
Coffee Hour: Jane Shrosbree & Lisa Jeffreys

### Dec. 24th

Usher/Greeter: David & Terri Drenth  
Lay Reader: Terri Drenth

**\*\*Two additional worship assistants needed\*\***

### Dec. 25th

Usher/Greeter: TBD  
Lay Reader: TBD

## Volunteer for 2017

Please take a look at our sign-up genius (<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10cod4da4ac29a7fd0-2017>) or the sign-up sheets posted in the lounge and see what dates would work for your schedule to help on a Sunday morning. Thank you!!

## Advent and Christmas Worship

The Advent season of waiting, longing, and expectation is upon us. Each week we light a new candle as we anticipate the birth of the Messiah. We lit the candle of HOPE on Nov. 27. using a drama from Advent Now and Then, a candle-lighting collection written by Linda Allen. Allen writes: “Sometimes the words of the Christmas story become too familiar and predictable. We’ve heard them all before, and rather than truly listen, our minds fill with thoughts of the present – not the past. We may feel removed from the real people and events of two thousand years ago. In Advent Now and Then, scenes take us from modern folks who ponder the contemporary challenges of their lives to men, women, and one teen who lived the Christmas story.” Here are upcoming scenes:

Dec. 4: Peace within the Storm (PEACE) includes three modern men on a retreat and Joseph, Mary’s betrothed.

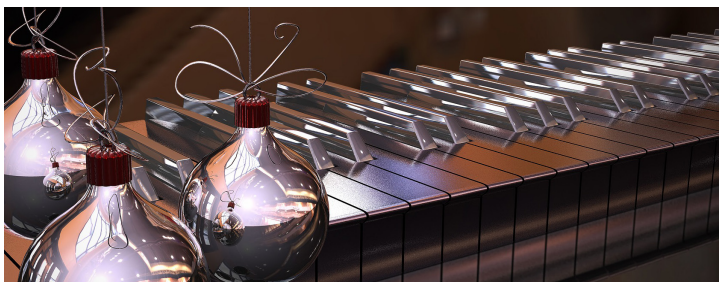
Dec. 11: The Gift of Joy (JOY) includes holiday shoppers and the three magi.

Dec. 18: A Brave Love (LOVE) includes three women and Mary, mother of Jesus.

Thank you to everyone who will bring these scenes to life for our worship experience. We offer special thanks to Lisa Jeffreys for her service as creative director. Please contact Lisa if you would like to participate.

Our Christmas Eve service will be on Sat., Dec. 24 at 7 p.m. Pastor Joe’s message will help us understand how Jesus can be born anew in each of our own hearts. There will be special choral music, Holy Communion, and some creative surprises to help make this night meaningful. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to invite extended family, friends, and neighbors to FCC.

Christmas Day falls on Sun., Dec 25. We will have our regular Sunday morning worship at 10 a.m. This worship service will include singing many familiar Christmas carols.



## Sounds Incredible!

Thanks to the enormous generosity of Ginny and Ed Visel, we have a new sound system! Phase one, installed on Nov. 28, includes new sanctuary speakers, a new mixer and amplifier, four new wireless receivers/body pack microphones and a wireless hand-held microphone at the new frequency (our old frequency would have soon become unavailable), the ability to record onto a thumb drive, remote operation of the mixer from an i-pad, and rechargeable battery packs for Pastor’s microphone and the hand-held microphone. The wiring on the existing pulpit microphone is repaired. Both the pulpit and lectern microphones now pick up sound more sensitively. The sound broadcast through the new speakers feels like the difference between looking through very dirty, blurry glasses, and then suddenly having clean lenses with the right prescription. It is amazing!!

Phase two, which will happen in mid-December, includes installing new speakers in the nursery and an inductive loop around the perimeter of the church, which will provide assistance for the hearing impaired. This loop transmits sound directly into hearing aids that have a “t-coil.” For those folks who have older hearing aids, or who don’t wear hearing aids, but would like hearing assistance, we have two individual units that can be worn during worship. These two hearing assistance units are available right now. Please see an usher if you would like to try one of them!

The Bible has 99 verses that include both the words “listen” and “hear.” These two verses highlight the importance of providing the ability for all peoples to listen and hear during worship.

“Come here and listen, O nations of the earth. Let the world and everything in it hear my words.”

Isaiah 34:1

“Then Jesus added, ‘Pay close attention to what you hear. The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given—and you will receive even more.’” Mark 4:24

Thank you Ginny for helping communicate God’s messages to all who walk through our doors!

Marsha Rinke,  
on behalf of the Worship Committee



**First Congregational United Church of Christ**

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Return Service Requested



**Deadline for January Commentary  
is December 28th**

*Merry Christmas to you and yours!*

**Pastor:** Rev. Joe Jeffreys  
**Office Administrator:** Sarah Herwick  
**Office Hours:**

Tuesday - Friday 9am - 2pm  
Please call ahead for special needs  
734-780-1561 Pastor's cell phone

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**Commentary - December 2016**



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