


*Tower Tidings*

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Advent 2022 / Winter 2023

# Home for the Holidays

 The  
Presbyterian  
Church in  
Morristown

# CELEBRATING ADVENT

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Nov 27

## **The First Sunday of Advent**

Celebrate with us and begin your Advent devotionals!

Pick up your Advent wreath from Mrs. Mead at worship.

Dec 4

## **Cocoa & Carols - Parish House - 4:30 pm**

Spread some holiday cheer before visiting Vail Mansion together for the Annual Theater of Lights at 5:00 pm.

Dec 24

## **Christmas Eve Service - The Sanctuary - 4:00 pm**

Family-friendly service featuring our annual Christmas Pageant. All children are welcome to participate!

## **Christmas Eve Service - The Sanctuary - 8:00 pm**

A beautiful candlelight service featuring Chancel Choir and Ringers on the Green!

Dec 25

## **Christmas Morning Service - Parish House - 10:00 am**

Join us in Sheffield Hall for food, carols, and the joy of being together to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

*Christmas jammies optional!*



# THE SEASON OF ADVENT: HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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## Dear friends,

You are invited to journey through a weekly devotional series created for our whole church family.

Each week, we begin with the suggested lectionary reading. The lectionary is the list of Scripture passages that many churches use to decide what will be preached weekly. It allows us to cycle through the Bible so we can learn as much as we can every year.

After you read the meditation and pray, you are invited to do an activity for the week. Each of these ideas are to help you find a moment in your week to celebrate the meaning of the Advent season, as we celebrate our theme: "*Home for the Holidays*." The meditations you find here will reflect on the concept of home in our church, our physical homes, and the many places that have been home to us.

You are also invited to read another Scripture passage to take a moment to pause during the middle of the week. A brief prayer is offered to go along with the reading.

We are so excited to celebrate this season together!

Audrey

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*Find a moment in your week to celebrate the meaning of the Advent season.*



# FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## LAS POSADAS: IS THERE ROOM IN YOUR HOME?

Sunday, November 27 | Isaiah 2:1-5 | Daniel Vigilante

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Growing up in New Jersey, I had never heard of the Mexican Christmas tradition called Las Posadas, which means in Spanish, "The Inns," and represents the inn from the Nativity story. It wasn't until my first call out of seminary - to a congregation in Southern California - that I learned about Las Posadas.

Each night, for the nine nights leading up to Christmas Eve (representing the nine months of Mary's pregnancy), townsfolk in villages across Mexico re-enact the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem. A procession of people, led by an "angel" holding a candle and children carrying poinsettias, knocks on the doors of homes, asking if there is room inside for the Christ-child to be born. Each night, there's music, food, prayers, piñatas, and even fireworks. I've come to love this special way of celebrating the days leading up to Christmas - and the way it draws us into that question - is there room in your home for the Christ-child to be born?

Long before the days of Las Posadas (which dates back over 400 years!) and even long before Jesus was born, Isaiah prophesied that the Lord's house would be established on the highest of mountains and that, "all the nations shall stream into it." Isaiah says that people will go up the mountain of the Lord where God, "will teach us his ways... that we may walk in his paths." But... two verses later, Isaiah refers to the house of the Lord, not as a mountain or even a place at all, but as a people. "O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!"

As we think about our Advent theme, *Home for the Holidays*, I wonder if the idea of home isn't so much about a place, but about the people who make it special. And if there is room among us for the Christ-child to be born yet again.

# FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## LAS POSADAS: IS THERE ROOM IN YOUR HOME?

Psalm 122:1-9 | Daniel Vigilante

### Activity

Why not add some international flair to your Advent? Do a Google search to learn more about the tradition of Las Posadas... or even better, search “Las Posadas” on YouTube and watch a video re-enactment of the journey of Mary and Joseph. Perhaps you could even incorporate a star-shaped piñata into your Christmas Eve celebrations!

### Midweek Reading and Prayer

*Psalm 122:1-9*

Loving God, we pray for all those who will travel today to school, or work, or play; for those who will journey home to visit families and friends at Christmas; for those who are seeking your will for their lives.

As we all travel through life, unite us as your people - your house - and help us to draw comfort and strength from one another as we grow in grace and love. Through Jesus, the Christ-child, Amen.

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*The idea of home isn't so much about a place, but about the people who make it special.*



# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Sunday, December 4 | Matthew 3:1-12 | Matthew Webb

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“Prepare ye the way of the Lord” is a text that I knew from the Scriptures as a child growing up in the Baptist tradition. My dad always told this joke: “Did you know that Jesus was a Baptist?” Inevitably, someone would ask, “How do you know that?” My dad would quickly reply with the most straightforward of logical arguments: “Well, John the Baptist was a Baptist, clearly, and John baptized Jesus, so obviously Jesus was a Baptist!” As an adult I hear “Prepare ye the way of the Lord” and instantly think of the opening of Stephen Schwartz’s musical *Godspell* with the awkward trumpet fanfare that is supposed to sound like a shofar.

The opening passage of Matthew 3 describes what many refer to as the official start of Jesus’ earthly ministry. John the Baptist’s zeal for Jesus and the justice that he would bring is in juxtaposition with the first adult appearance of Jesus in the account of his baptism. John called the religious leaders who sought to be baptized a “brood of vipers,” whereas Jesus came onto the scene, a seeming nobody to the religious leaders, humbly asking for baptism from John. At this time, the voice of the Spirit of God, as in the likeness of a dove said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Sometimes when we are passionate about things, like John was, we tend to think that we are so right that we need to call out everyone who doesn’t understand and appreciate our zeal. Jesus showed us, however, the way of humility and peace – knowing that he in fact was God, but seeking to lead by example, asking to be baptized by John, his wild and wooly, outspoken cousin. As we celebrate the second Sunday of Advent and expectantly wait for the coming Christ child, let us remember to prepare the way, not with trumpets and shouting and judgment, but in the still, small places of our hearts, living lives that reflect the justice, truth, and peace that came from the example of our incarnate Christ.

# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Isaiah 11:1-10 | Matthew Webb

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### Activity

Choose your favorite Christmas movie and ask a friend or family member to choose their favorite. Make some time to get together to watch them both, enjoy each other's company, and maybe find a new favorite movie!

### Midweek Reading and Prayer

*Isaiah 11:1-10*

Lord Jesus, who came to model for us a better, more just, more perfect way of living, show us how we can be your hands and feet to those in our congregation and in our community. Let us walk the way of peace, always seeking to create systems of equity and acceptance. May our church be a place where all people can find welcome and belonging. In the name of our Creator, our Savior, and the Spirit who offers us her guidance daily, Amen.

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*Let us remember to prepare the way, not with trumpets and shouting and judgment, but in the still, small places of our hearts.*



# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Sunday, December 11 | Luke 1:47-55 | Patrick Allred

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How many times have your holiday plans been interrupted by unexpected travel delays? Maybe it is a canceled flight due to severe weather, a family member getting sick, or some other unforeseen circumstance. More than likely, we have had to make that phone call because plans have changed. Hannah and I are from Texas and Oklahoma, so we've had to make those calls frequently since moving to New Jersey in 2017. These unforeseen circumstances take us away from our "home away from home." It's that place so familiar that even though it may not be our place of residence, we feel comfortable just reaching into a cabinet for a coffee mug and have no problem putting our feet up on the ottoman in the living room. That place might be with a family member, a friend, or that place you go to get away.

Mary's plans have changed dramatically in Luke 1, but it's not about travel plans. The entire scope of her life has changed with just one visit from the angel Gabriel. "And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus." This visit from the angel of the Lord causes Mary to make travel plans. Mary learns that Elizabeth, her relative, is also expecting a child and immediately visits her "with haste." Luke tells us that Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit once she greets Mary, her relative and fellow expecting mother. During her visit, Luke tells us that Mary spoke the words that we see as "Mary's song of praise" in Luke 1:47-55. "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary's visit with Elizabeth fills her with joy and calms her nerves about becoming the mother of the Son of God. Luke then tells us that she stays with Elizabeth for an additional three months. This became her home away from home.

May we all travel "with haste" this Advent to those people and places, our "home away from home," that fill us with the Spirit of God. Let us always run to those people and places, even beyond Advent, when we're feeling anxious, nervous, or just need a cup of coffee from a familiar cupboard that isn't our own.



# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Psalm 146:5-10 | Patrick Allred

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### Activity

Enjoy your “home away from home” this week! If it’s a friend or family member that lives far away, make some time to catch up on Zoom or FaceTime. If you don’t have the time to go to your true “home away from home,” try going to that new restaurant or coffee shop that you’ve wanted to try. In any case, spend time with that person or place that makes your spirit rejoice in God.

### Midweek Reading and Prayer

*Psalm 146:5-10*

Creator God, we pray that our soul magnifies and our spirit rejoices in you this day. Let us always run to the people and places where we see you and feel your presence. God, you are in all and with all. Give us the eyes to see and ears to hear you in our lives. Let us be open and present of the ways that you are using us to share your grace and mercy with others. Amen.

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*Let us always run to those people and places, even beyond advent, when we’re feeling anxious, nervous, or just need a cup of coffee from a familiar cupboard that isn’t our own.*



# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT MEMORIES

Sunday, December 18 | Matthew 1:18-25 | Alexandra Mead

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“God is with us.” This line from Matthew 1 is the essence of what coming home for Christmas meant to me during my college years. The creche would be set up in its usual place, the Christmas music would be set up on the piano, the count down to the Christmas Eve services would be on. I felt God with us as we prepared for Christmas but never more so than when we entered the Sanctuary on December 24.

I asked my children about their memories of coming home to church at Christmas...

“My favorite part of Christmas at church was staying up late with my mom to go to the Christmas Eve service. It was by candlelight, and we would ring in Christmas Day while singing *Joy to the World*. It is still my favorite part because it is a peaceful calm moment that transitions into the celebration of the birth of Jesus.”

“I always look forward to being home for Christmas with my family, knowing that we will all be together at church on Christmas Eve. Not just my family, but growing up in the church, I have had the privilege of becoming very close to those in our congregation. This congregation has helped me to have a strong faith and love for the church.”

“Coming home for Christmas always includes the Christmas Eve services at church. I am surrounded by the community that I grew up with – I always feel lots of love when I am there, the true spirit of Christmas.”

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT MEMORIES

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 | Alexandra Mead

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## Activity

Take time this week to breathe. Look at the Christmas lights as you drive through town. Watch a favorite Christmas movie, enjoy a favorite treat. Take a walk and notice the festive red berries on a holly bush. Enjoy these final days before we meet at church on Christmas Eve.

## Midweek Reading and Prayer

*Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19*

Lord, restore us with your love. May we enter each day filled with hope, remembering the gift you have given us with the birth of your son. Comfort those who grieve, lift up those who stumble. Fill us with the Holy Spirit to know you are always with us. We pray these words in Jesus' name. Amen.

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*This congregation has helped me to have a strong faith and love for the church.*



# CHRISTMAS EVE

## A HOME IN OUR HEART

Saturday, December 24 | Luke 2:1-20 | Audrey Webber

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As is the case with most people, I have lived in a number of different houses and apartments. I believe my count at this point is eleven. Each place I have loved in different ways, some because of the reasons for moving to that home: a new job, school, etc., but other times because of the actual space or neighborhood. My favorite homes, though, are those homes away from my physical home. My churches, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yankees Stadium, my schools, and my favorite parks to name a few. Really, though, those places, too, all revolve around the “internal home” - the memories I have shared with my family and friends, the moments that have been so meaningful, and the particular feeling I felt in each of those spaces.

In Jesus’ birth story, it is difficult to imagine how Mary must have felt in her momentary home where she delivered her baby, and she meets these shepherds who tell her that they heard these voices saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” After Mary and Joseph have gone through all of their travels to essentially do paperwork, they then can’t even find a place to deliver the baby. Once they do, they then get these strange visitors who they don’t know, telling them these beings from heaven have told them these things. At this point, I have a strong feeling that both Mary and Joseph aren’t surprised after their angel visits, nevertheless, Mary knows these visits are not something to be dismissed. She chooses instead to have one of the most intimate, quiet moments in Scripture: “But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.” It is at this moment that Mary is packaging up this memory, and keeping it for when she needs a home again - the home in her heart.

It is this home in our hearts that we carry with us into the Christmas season. Even as we light candles this Christmas Eve, as we open presents, as we celebrate Jesus’ birthday and the incarnation of God in all of our lives, we treasure the words of God in each of our hearts and come home to God again and again.

# CHRISTMAS DAY

## A HOME IN OUR HEART

Isaiah 9:2-7 | Audrey Webber

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### Activity

Christmas! This is the day! Likely you have many traditions which you follow every year. If you don't have a tradition of your own, pick something to make a new tradition to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Write a birthday card to Jesus, listen to hymns in the morning while you eat cookies, give Jesus a stocking (shoutout to a favorite film of mine: *The Bishop's Wife*), read the suggested text together, especially if you weren't able to make it to one of the Christmas Eve services, or create your own nativity.

### Midweek Reading and Prayer

*Isaiah 9:2-7*

Incarnate God, indeed you are with us! You have given us the ultimate gift of your son this Christmas and always. We are so grateful that despite our shortcomings and our constant failing, you cover us with this love you have sent to us through your Son Jesus and through the Spirit. Teach us to live into a place of peace, and help us to be doers of justice in a world which is in such need of your unbridled love. Increase our joy so that it might overflow to all those we meet. In your Son Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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*We treasure the words of God in each of our hearts and come home to God, again and again.*



# LOOKING FOR A NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION? WE'VE GOT A FEW FOR YOU!

## **Audrey**

Christmas Eve has always been a church day for me, so my family created what we call “Eve of Christmas Eve.” On “Eve of Eve,” we eat at one of our favorite NYC diners, go shopping, and generally stay out as late as possible celebrating, as we know we will be sleeping in the next morning to be ready for the night at church.

## **Alexandra**

My favorite family practice is that on Christmas Eve I give each of my children an ornament that represents their last year. It is specially wrapped and on the table to open after dinner. Some have been home made, some from a store, but all are meaningful. They all have a full box of ornaments now for their own homes.

## **Jeanne**

Every year at Christmas, our favorite holiday tradition is to prepare and light the luminaria candles around our home. We head out to Christmas Eve mass and then come back to our whole neighborhood full of Christmas light and peace. We take the dog and go for a midnight walk with the family.

## **Henry**

When I was a kid, my whole family would gather at my Grandma's house and she would cook Christmas dinner.

## **Paul**

Decorating the day after Thanksgiving with my daughter.

# LOOKING FOR A NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION? WE'VE GOT A FEW FOR YOU!

## **Kay**

We watch Elf every year!

## **Matt**

Going to see the Saks Fifth Avenue light and sound display in NYC!

## **Amanda**

All of my and my husband's family go get our Christmas trees together and then go to brunch!

## **Patrick**

My favorite holiday tradition is setting out cookies for Santa with Jane and Henry and then waking up the next morning to the magic on their faces when they're gone (their reaction to Santa's gifts are pretty good too!).

## **Inspired? Write down a new tradition for this year!**

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## **Daniel**

When I was a kid, my favorite tradition was coming home from church on Christmas Eve and being allowed to open one present.

# STAR WORDS

**"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice" - T. S. Eliot**

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I must admit I love tangible things. Two of my favorite “tangible faith tools” we have here at PCM are our wonderful holding crosses and our prayer shawls, both of which are handmade by gifted members of our church. One of my other favorite “faith tools” is star words.

For those who have not received one before, the premise of star words is that the Magi followed the star to find baby Jesus, bringing their gifts to him. We are also looking for Jesus, and hoping for God to give us signs to guide us closer to the holy.

**On Epiphany Sunday**, everyone will be invited to take a star during worship. On each of the stars is a word. In some sense, the star chooses you instead of you that chooses the word (however if a word really doesn't work for you, you are free to trade in your word). You are then invited to carry that word with you and take notice when it comes up in conversation, in your reading, and in all that you do throughout the year. Keep your star nearby – put it on your desk, your wallet, or your refrigerator so you can be reminded to have it be your guide as you trust God to hold you this coming year.

I cannot wait to receive our star words together this year as we let God be our guide this coming year!

Audrey





# ONE PARISH ONE PRISONER: EVERY CHURCH A LOCAL RESURRECTION COMMUNITY

Chris Hoke | The Presbyterian Outlook

## When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, what if nobody had rolled away the stone?

I ask this question from the pulpit in nearly every church where I speak – Presbyterian, Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Methodist, Mennonite, Baptist, evangelical, even Unitarian. I'm almost always recruiting congregations for our One Parish One Prisoner reentry program with Underground Ministries in Washington State.

"How would you feel," I ask, "if you came to life inside that deathly tomb and nothing else happened?"

"Terrified," someone will say.

"Stuck."

"Confused?"

"Totally hopeless."

"All alone."

"Desperate."

This, I tell them, is exactly how hundreds of men and women have described their experience to me as they are released from prison gates only to face immense "barriers to reentry" in the community.

*Where will I live? Who will rent to me? How do I pay "first, last and deposit" fresh out of prison? Who will hire me with my criminal record? If I get a job, how will I get there – not only with no car, but with no driver's license? I tried to apply for a driver's license but learned that there's a hold on getting one. My legal financial obligations – LFOs – are in the thousands now, since the courts charged me fines that have now added up due to 12% compounding interest all those years I was locked up. I guess I'll drive someone else's car with no license...*

Read the rest of this article, "[One Parish, One Prisoner](https://pres-outlook.org)," by visiting [pres-outlook.org](https://pres-outlook.org)

## A note from Daniel:

As we think of our theme this Advent Season, Home for the Holidays, we're mindful that not all can be home with friends or family. This article highlights how congregations are helping to support newly released prisoners as they attempt to create new lives and new homes. One way to support incarcerated individuals this season is through the Chaplaincy Morris County Correctional Facility (MCCF) Christmas Gift Bag Program.

# FAMILY PRACTICES TO MAKE ADVENT SACRED

Alexandra Mead, Director, Children's Ministry

An Advent wreath is a great way to come together and focus on the season with your kids. If you do not have an Advent wreath, you can pick one up from Alexandra at the Parish House. Set up your wreath with four candles. Light one candle per week, starting with the first Sunday in Advent (four weeks before Christmas). On each subsequent week, light an additional candle. The first week represents **hope**; the second, **peace**; the third, **joy**; and the fourth, **love**. On Christmas Eve, light all four candles as well as a candle in the middle, representing the baby Jesus.

During each of the four weeks of Advent, on Sunday evening after dinner, sit around the table with your dessert and candles and go through the simple routine of lighting the candle, discussing the Advent value, and ending with a simple prayer.



## Week One: Hope

**Light:** Today we light the candle of hope.

**Read (optional):** Psalm 25:4-5

**Discuss:** What does it mean to have hope? What do you think about when you hear the word hope? How can we share hope with others?

**Pray:** "God, we thank you for giving us hope. Help us to have hope and to share hope as we wait for Jesus to be born. Amen."

## Week Two: Peace

**Light:** Today we light the candle of hope and the candle of peace.

**Read (optional):** John 14:25-27

**Discuss:** What does it mean to have peace in your heart? How can we share peace in our family and in the world?

**Pray:** "God, please help us to understand peace and to share it with others. We wait for Jesus to be born with hope and peace. Amen."





### Week Three: Joy

**Light:** Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

**Read (optional):** Philippians 4:4-6

**Discuss:** What does it mean to rejoice? How is joy the same or different from happiness? How can we share joy with others?

**Pray:** “God, we thank you for the gift of joy. Help us to share it with one another. We wait for Jesus with hope, peace, and joy. Amen.”

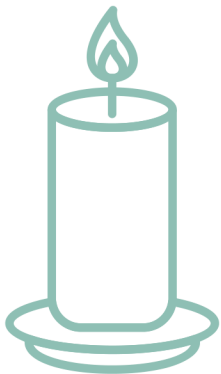
### Week Four: Love

**Light:** Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love.

**Read (optional):** 1 John 4:7-12

**Discuss:** When have you felt or seen God’s love? How can we show God’s love to the world?

**Pray:** “God, thank you for showing us what true love is. Help us to love you and to love one another. We wait for Jesus with hope, peace, joy, and love. Amen.”



### Christmas Eve or Christmas Day: The Christ Candle

**Light:** Today we light the candles for hope, peace, joy, and love, and we light the center candle for the birth of Jesus.

**Read (optional):** Luke 2:1-16

**Discuss:** The day we have been waiting for is here! How does it feel to celebrate the birth of Jesus today? What does the birth of Jesus mean to you?

**Pray:** “God, today we are thankful for the birth of your son, Jesus, and for the lessons he teaches us about how to love one another. Help us throughout the year to share hope, peace, joy, and love wherever we go. Amen.”

## Christmas Eve Family Service and Pageant

All are invited to join us on Christmas Eve for the family service which includes a pageant! All children 10 years and younger are invited to put on a costume and join in the procession as we bring to life the story of Jesus’ birth. **The service starts at 4:00 pm but please arrive by 3:40 if you would like to have your child participate in the pageant.** Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or you would like to pick up an Advent wreath.

May you feel the Holy Spirit in all you do this Advent season,

Alexandra Mead [amead@pcmorristown.org](mailto:amead@pcmorristown.org)

# WAITING

**Jeanne Mueller, Director, Presbyterian Church Nursery School**

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Waiting...one of the hardest things for young children to do and during Advent and Christmas, there is a lot of waiting to be done!

The hub bub of the holiday season can overtake all of us – we are shopping, planning parties, attending parties (with those little ones dressed oh so sweetly), baking incredible holiday treats, not to mention creating perfect holiday traditions that you want your children to remember fondly. I remember being stressed out about getting it all done, wrapped, and under that tree. Phew, now that is a lot of pressure on you parents! I think we forget that the waiting should be part of the enjoyment of the season. This Advent, take a moment to try and slow down and appreciate the wait for the big Christmas Day celebration.

Young children find waiting very hard to do, but it is a necessary thing in life. Advent is the perfect time to show children how to use waiting time to prepare each day for something important. Being active while waiting will help them enjoy marking each day with something meaningful accomplished. Engaging young children in activities and planning them together will help them be positive about waiting. Focusing on doing these activities that are simple while they wait for the big day will help you and them enjoy the Advent and Christmas season.

Looking back with my adult children, their favorite Christmas activity was always bagging and lighting the luminaria candles on Christmas Eve just before we would go off to the church service. We would come home, and the neighborhood would be full of lovely Christmas lights. We would hurry in to get our dog and walk around the neighborhood late at night and enjoy the beautiful, peaceful moment. It was always the family experiences we enjoyed together – not the hub bub beforehand - that made our fond Christmas memories.

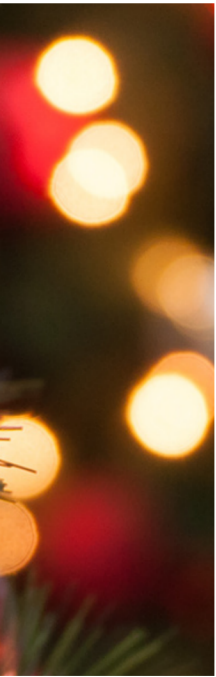
We have created a list of Advent Kindness Activities for you to do with your children during Advent. Make it as elaborate or easy to fit your family's style – have your child think of ideas so they feel part of the process. When children's ideas are brought into action, they feel important. We hope this helps your children enjoy the waiting season of Advent as much as opening those presents on Christmas morning.

The Presbyterian Church Nursery School and staff wishes the church family a peaceful and safe Christmas holiday.

*-Jeanne Mueller and Staff*



# ADVENT CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



## Acts-of-Kindness Advent Tree

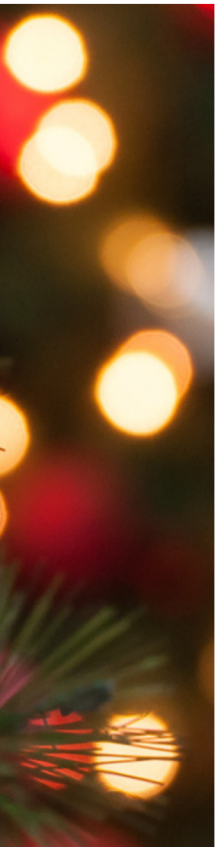
**Step 1:** Find a branch in your yard and put it in a vase.

**Step 2:** Write down acts of kindness (see below for examples – have your children help create their own ideas, too!) on paper ornaments and place them in a basket.

**Step 3:** As you complete each act of kindness throughout the Advent season, punch a hole in the ornament and tie it to your acts-of-kindness tree.

### Ten acts of kindness for your Advent tree:

1. Hold the door open for someone at the store.
2. Give someone you love a hug.
3. Bake sweet treats and take them to a neighbor.
4. Help a family member or friend put up Christmas lights or decorate their house.
5. Leave a kind note on someone's windshield.
6. Send a card to a friend.
7. Collect mittens and hats for a local charity.
8. Pick up trash in your neighborhood or local park.
9. Bring dog or cat food to a pet shelter.
10. Color pictures and take them to a senior center.



## Homemade Cinnamon Ornaments

**SERVINGS: 20 -40 ORNAMENTS | PREP TIME: 15 MINS**  
**COOK TIME: 2 HRS | TOTAL TIME: 2 HRS 15 MINS**

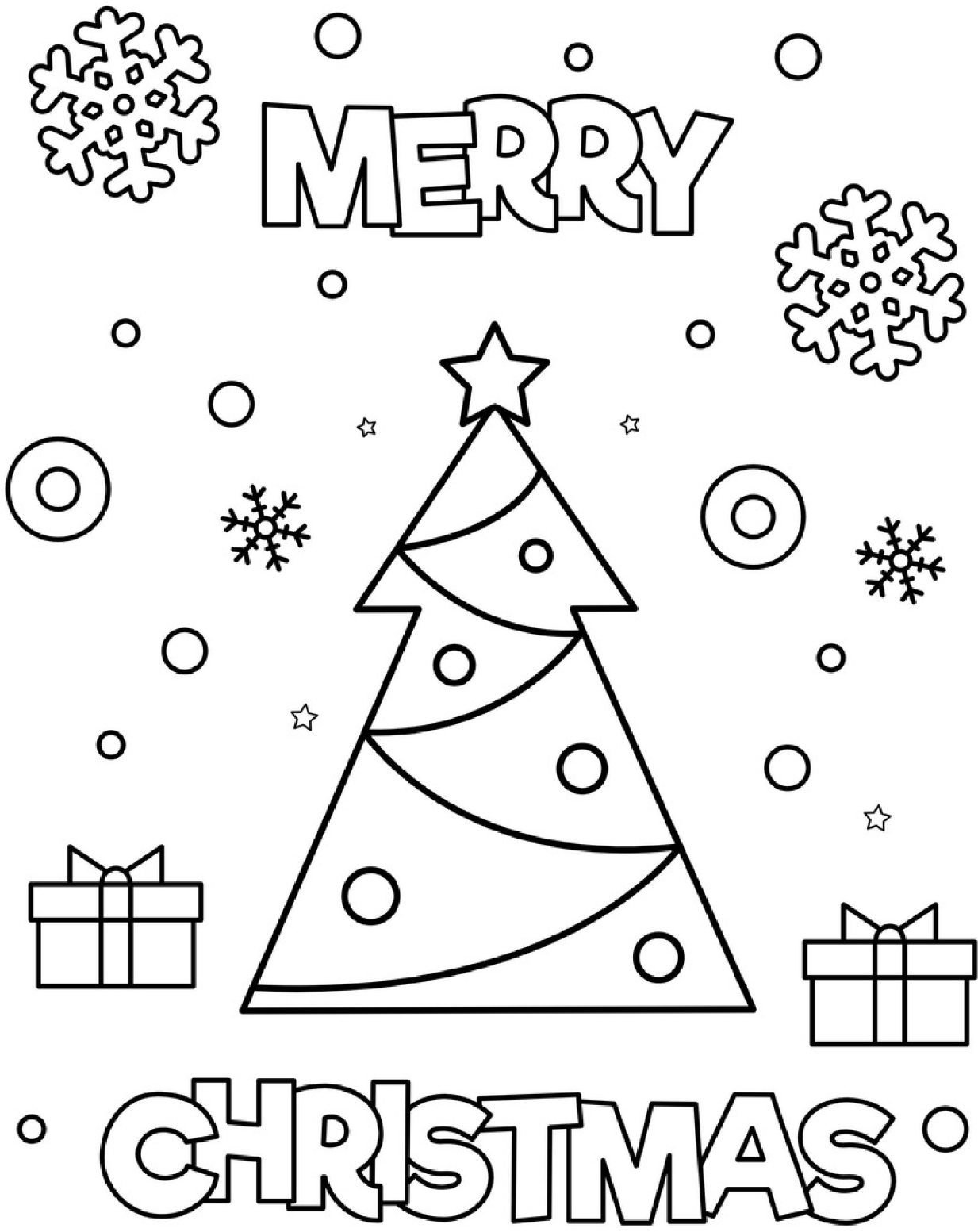
These easy homemade Christmas ornaments will make your house smell like cinnamon!

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup applesauce
- 1-1 1/4 cup ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon ground cloves (*optional*)

### Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 200 degrees F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.
- In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine the applesauce, cinnamon, and cloves (if using). You want the dough to be able to form a ball without being too sticky. Add additional applesauce or cinnamon if needed. You can also mix dough by hand.
- Sprinkle clean surface with cinnamon (as you would with flour while rolling out cookies).
- Place the dough on the surface and sprinkle with more cinnamon. Use a rolling pin to roll the dough to 1/4 inch thick, sprinkling with more cinnamon to keep from sticking.
- Cut out into desired shapes & place on prepared sheet pan so they aren't touching.
- Use a skewer to poke a hole into each ornament (to attach string).
- Bake in the preheated oven for 1 1/2 - 2 hours or until rock hard.
- Loop a decorative string through the ornament and hang on your tree!



*Homemade*  
GIFTS MADE EASY





*Homemade*  
GIFTS MADE EASY

# COLLEGE: HOME AWAY FROM HOME

**Patrick Allred, Director, Youth and Young Adults**

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Advent is a wonderful season in the life of the church. Not only do we have beautiful services celebrating the birth of Christ, but we get to see people that we may not see every day. Perhaps it's our family that lives a few states away (or even a few countries away!) that can come to town for a few days. Maybe it's those close friends who live in town, but you just haven't found the time to get together lately.

I think about our college students who are back for a few weeks during winter break. It's a joy to talk about their favorite courses, the best part about living on-campus, the friends they've made, and the worst meal in their college cafeteria. I always enjoyed visiting my home church during college breaks because it still felt like home. I encourage you to check on our college students when you see them at church during the Advent season. It means the world to have a home congregation that still knows you by name, even when you enter a new season of life.

## **Ben Knesl, Junior at Delbarton HS**

"Christmas is always a special time to be with family. Only my immediate family lives in the U.S., and while we always have a great time at Christmas, it's a wonderful experience to be able to visit family overseas, one that helps us all grow closer together and better appreciate the meaning of Christmas."

## **Leah Curnow, Freshman at Virginia Tech**

"I'm most excited to spend time with all of my friends who are also coming home from college! We've all experienced so much in the last four months and I know that this first time seeing each other again will be very special."



# OPERATION LOVE

## BRING CHRISTMAS CHEER TO NEIGHBORS IN NEED!

**November 20 – December 11, 2022**

For 38 years, the Presbyterian Church in Morristown and the Church of God in Christ in Morristown have partnered in this Christmas-time effort to bring “comfort and joy” to those in our community who need both.

Please join in the wonderful, fulfilling outreach effort, Operation Love, to help Morris County families and senior citizens celebrate Christmas with food and gifts. To make sure recipients get exactly what they need, we will only be giving ShopRite, Walmart, and Five Below gift cards. We need donations of gift cards, and volunteers to pack and deliver the cards in gift bags.



### How to Participate:

#### Donate:

- Beginning on Sunday, November 20 to Sunday, December 11, purchase \$10, \$15, or \$25 ShopRite, Walmart and/or Five Below gift cards and drop them at the Parish House office Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm or at Sunday service.
- Give online through Breeze and select “Operation Love” or mail a check to Presbyterian Church in Morristown, 65 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 and note “Operation Love” on the memo line.

#### Pack Gift Bags:

- Join other volunteers at the Church of God in Christ to pack gift bags Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, December 14, 15, and 16 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Masks are required.

#### Deliver Gift Bags:

- Help deliver gift bags on Saturday, December 17, from 8:45 am -12:00 pm. Meet at the Church of God in Christ.

**Church of God in Christ is located at 3 Rev. G.A. Rogers Way (formerly 3 Rowe St.), Morristown, NJ.**

Please let us know if you can pack or deliver gift bags by signing up online by November 28 or by contacting Karen Griffith at [kgriffith32@aol.com](mailto:kgriffith32@aol.com).

# CHAPLAINCY MORRIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY CHRISTMAS GIFT BAG PROGRAM

November 20 – December 11, 2022

**“I was in prison, and you visited and comforted me.” Matthew 25:36**

The Chaplaincy Program of the Morris County Correctional Facility (MCCF) is a nonprofit organization that has been sponsored by our church for many years. It supplies the Chaplain for the Morris County Jail and provides services and ecumenical materials for study and spiritual guidance for the inmates and Corrections Officers. Part of what they do is supply a Christmas Gift Bag for each inmate that includes basic necessities such as underwear and toiletries.

Volunteers who work with the Chaplaincy Program, including members of our congregation, report that these Gift Bags are a true highlight of the inmates' lives in prison. The holidays are an especially difficult time for inmates and their families. In so many cases the inmates' relationship with their families has deteriorated and there's nobody visiting or talking to them. The Chaplain fulfills part of that role, but these little gifts can really brighten their lives by showing that there are people on the outside who care about them.

**And are rooting for them.**



The Outreach Committee invites you to offer comfort to those in prison this holiday season by purchasing and donating the necessary items listed below for Christmas Gift Bags for each of the inmates. Please donate **ONLY** items on this list because jail security has approved only these items.

**NO gift wrap – just plain, all-white clothing items in original packages!**

**Where to donate items:** Items can be dropped off in marked bins at the Parish House Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, or at Sunday service in the Narthex and near the Mutch Hall back entrance.

**Would you like to help assemble Christmas Gift Bags?** Gift Bag assembly will take place on Monday, December 12, at 9:00 am at the Calvary Baptist Church, 10 Martin Luther King Ave., Morristown, NJ. Email Dick Kaller at [rwkaller@verizon.net](mailto:rwkaller@verizon.net) to sign up. Program questions? Email Karen Griffith at [kgriffith32@aol.com](mailto:kgriffith32@aol.com).

- Men's white crew neck t-shirts (Mostly large, XL, 2X, 3X; NO pockets or V-neck)
- Men's white briefs (M, L, 2X, 3X)
- Men's white crew socks (All sizes; NO stripes)
- Women's white briefs (all sizes)
- Women's white sports bras (all sizes)
- Women's white crew socks (all sizes)
- Toothpaste
- Conditioner, (neutral scents, no pumps)
- Lotion (neutral scents, no pumps)
- Deodorant (unscented or neutral scents)
- Bars of Soap (neutral scents, individually wrapped)

# A NOTE OF THANKS FROM OUTREACH

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## A Big Thank-You for Your Winter Coat Donations!

To all who dropped off coats, hats, scarves and gloves, the Outreach Committee sends a heartfelt thank-you for supporting the Market Street Mission Coat Drive. This year **123 coats** and **86 winter accessories** were donated for distribution to children, families and individuals in need of warmth.



*Thank You*

# EASTLEIGH CHURCH IN NAIROBI

## RECENT REFLECTIONS

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Behind the scenes, the Eastleigh/PCM teams continue to work on opportunities to connect and to pray for each other and our churches. The PCM team members are: Karen Brunner, Bruce Frazier, Marnie Kaller, and Leanne Rea. In addition, Patrick Allred is earnestly working with the youth so that they might become involved, and Rev. Audrey Webber is learning about our partnership and is very supportive.

Please read recent reflections by the team members:



Being part of PCM's Eastleigh Partnership team has given me the opportunity to do something I was interested in when the first partnership was created in the 1990's. The timing wasn't right for me then so I participated when related events occurred in Morristown. In 2016, I went on a Foundation for Peace mission trip to Nairobi. I assisted in building a church as well as holding medical clinics for residents of the area and meeting school children, AIDS patients, and orphans. Most importantly, it allowed me to work and worship side by side with the beautiful Kenyan people. It was a life changing experience! I am glad that I am contributing as part of our team in creating a relationship with PCM and Eastleigh. We are learning as we go along and look forward to involving more people from our congregation.

**- Karen Brunner**



Meeting via Zoom with the people of Eastleigh Church in Nairobi, Kenya, is remarkable – for one, that we have the technology to see and hear each other in real time – but mainly because we really have the opportunity to get to know each other. It sometimes is a bit of a challenge to understand the Kenyan accent but that just makes me pay closer attention! I can only assume that they have the same challenge with our American accents. Although we are different in so many ways, we have so much in common!

**- Bruce Frazier**

# EASTLEIGH CHURCH IN NAIROBI

## RECENT REFLECTIONS

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It was a joy to be able lead the children's sermon (even though it's such a difficult task filling Mrs. Mead's shoes!) and talk about World Communion Sunday with our children. How neat is it that we have a church on a different continent that is praying specifically for our church today, and that we get to reciprocate. I always look forward to the Zoom calls with the team at the Eastleigh church. It's encouraging to hear how God is working in Morristown and Nairobi!

**- Patrick Allred**



Our company (family, friends, etc.) should not only be those familiar with ourselves and our traditions, but also those we wish to mentor and those with whom we wish to be mentored by. By doing so, we expand our personal growth and development, our diversity of thought, and our inclusiveness of the outside world. At your Thanksgiving table this year, give thanks for the loved ones and friends who grace your table. In that moment, we ask you to also prepare a special place setting for those yet to attend or those you wish to honor. This Thanksgiving, if only as a symbolic gesture or thought, please be sure to set a place for our brothers and sisters at The Eastleigh Church in Kenya. May our partnership bring about a new reflection to our tables, our commitment to Christ, and our sisterhood yet to flourish.

**- Leanne Rea**



Working with our own PCM team and the sister church team from Eastleigh in Nairobi has brought a renewed sense of joy to my life and my faith. Please consider becoming involved in this partnership as we continue our journey toward peace and unity with all people in God's world.

**- Marnie Kaller**

For more information, please contact Marnie Kaller at [marniekaller@gmail.com](mailto:marniekaller@gmail.com).



# LET'S STAY CONNECTED

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## VISIT

**We worship weekly in-person at 10:00 am in our Sanctuary**  
***Our weekly service is live streamed*** and is available at: [pcmorristoryn.org](http://pcmorristoryn.org)

The **Parish House** is located at 65 South Street | The **Sanctuary & Chapel** are located at 57 E Park Place

Please feel free to contact our offices at the Parish House at **973-538-1776**

## CONTACT

**Reverend Daniel Vigilante** | *Senior Pastor* | [dvigilante@pcmorristoryn.org](mailto:dvigilante@pcmorristoryn.org)  
**Reverend Audrey Webber** | *Covenant Supply Associate Pastor* | [awebber@pcmorristoryn.org](mailto:awebber@pcmorristoryn.org)  
**Dr. Matthew Webb** | *Director of Music* | [mwebb@pcmorristoryn.org](mailto:mwebb@pcmorristoryn.org)  
**Alexandra Mead** | *Director of Christian Education* | [amead@pcmorristoryn.org](mailto:amead@pcmorristoryn.org)  
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**Sigris Lorena Girón Sorto** | *Weeknight Custodian* - **Cory VillNeuve** | *Weekend Custodian*  
**Jeanne Mueller** | *Director of Presbyterian Church Nursery School* | [jmueller@pcmorristoryn.org](mailto:jmueller@pcmorristoryn.org)

## FIND US ONLINE @PCMORRISTORYN





65 South Street  
Morristown, NJ 07960

*Please contact the office to update your contact information.*