



Weekly Booster

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Sunday Media Booth

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Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Drew Morelock,

Pastor David



Why Do Christians Observe Advent?

While the Bible doesn't say anything about observing the tradition of Advent, this tradition has existed within the global Christian church for centuries. It is nearly as old as the church itself, with the earliest mentions of the tradition happening as early as 380 AD at the Council of Saragossa. While that council was responding to a belief and practice that had migrated from traditional Christianity, the longstanding tradition of observing a time of waiting for the celebration of the incarnation has remained a profoundly meaningful and beloved tradition that has endured throughout the centuries.

What Is an Advent Celebration?

So, what does the celebration of Advent involve? Today, many evangelical churches celebrate the season in their Advent services by reading Scripture passages that relate to the incarnation (see below for the readings for 2022 from the Common Lectionary) and lighting candles that celebrate the traditional aspects of this period of waiting. These readings are typically part of Sunday services, so they begin 4 weeks before the Sunday of Christmas week.

Continued page 2.

“You just gotta keep going and fighting for everything, and on day you’ll get to where you want.” Naomi Osaka

“If you prioritize yourself, you are going to save yourself.” Gabrielle Union

Reminders

December 8th

PK-6 S.S.– After Children’s Message
Jr/Sr High S.S. – 10:30 a.m.
Confirmation Class – 10:30 a.m.

December 9th

Mat Making (Loom Room) 1:00 p.m.

December 10th

Bible Study – 11:00 a.m.
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir Practice – 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir Practice – 6:30 p.m.

December 11th

T.O.P.S.
Meals-On-Wheels Deliveries

****Worship Assistants are needed for January 2025**

**** Fellowship Volunteers needed sign-up in Fellowship Hall**

Advent - Continued from page 1.

While it’s true that those in the congregation sometimes anxiously hold their breath as a family’s 5-year-old shakily holds the lighter to one of the five candles, the depth of meaning behind these profound readings and this quiet practice increases as the Advent season progresses.

Each of the five candles has different meanings, and while different traditions use different colors, one traditional Advent candle color and order is as follows:

- First Sunday candle: Purple. This is known as the “prophecy candle,” or the candle of HOPE.
- Second Sunday candle: Purple. This is known as the “Bethlehem candle,” or the candle of PEACE.
- Third Sunday candle: Pink. This is known as the “shepherd candle,” or the candle of JOY.
- Fourth Sunday candle: Purple. This is known as the “angel candle,” or the candle of LOVE.
- Christmas Eve candle: White. This is known as the “Christ candle,” and it symbolizes many things, including PURITY, LIGHT, RESTORATION, HOLINESS, and VICTORY.

What is the Meaning of Advent?

The word “Advent” means “coming.” As the days grow shorter every year (at least in the Northern Hemisphere) and the darkness comes earlier, Christian families and churches look forward to the coming of the Light of the World—the celebration of the incarnation.

In a certain sense, it may be comforting for many reading this to understand that this tradition has been practiced for centuries longer than the current (sometimes anxiety-inducing) “traditions” tied to the holiday’s materialistic pursuits and social obligations. The “great cloud of witnesses” that the writer of Hebrews talks about in chapter 12 followed a somber but hopeful tradition of observing this time of waiting in the community—solidifying the bonds that tied the early church together and fostering unity and mutual identity in Christ. That’s what Advent does for Christians today as well. *Continued page 7.*

THE SECOND SUNDAY
IN ADVENT:

PEACE



Volunteers Needed



**LAST PERSON LEAVING
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS
AND LOCK DOORS**

First United Methodist Church
**Please wear your
name tag on
Sunday mornings**



Church Ad Board Members

- Michelle Morelock - Chair*
- Mary Peterson - Secretary*
- Margaret Brady - Vice Chair & Trustee*
- Gary Milstead - Trustee*
- Roger Jones - SPRC*
- Robin Hensen - Finance*
- Dave Lashier - Treasurer*
- Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference*
- Connie Anderson - Memorials*
- Linda Haldane - Membership*
- David Clark - Pastor*

Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School –
PK-6 during service,
Jr/Sr High 10:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday
**Choir –5:30 pm
Bell Choir –6:30 pm

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Wednesday
CLOSED
Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



In whose dream were there cows and ears of grains?

- a) Pharaoh
- b) Joseph
- c) Daniel
- d) Chief cupbearer

Whose husband and two sons died while living in Moab?

- a) Naomi
- b) Hagar
- c) Tamar
- d) Orpah

Until when did Ruth glean in the field?

- a) twilight
- b) afternoon
- c) evening
- d) cockcrow

Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.



- 8th – Emma Robison
- 10th – Todd Ashenfelter
- 13th – Don Rorebeck

****See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to office@shen.church**

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

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Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new look at
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: A messenger from God is coming.

People: Prepare the way of the Lord.

L: A new day of mercy is dawning.

P: Prepare the way of the Lord.

L: A voice is crying in the wilderness.

P: Prepare the way of the Lord.

“The Way of Peace”

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:67-79

Songs

Come, Thou Almighty King #61

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee #89

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus #196

Last Week’s Attendance

In-Person Worship – 63

On-Line Worship – 13

Our Mission:

“Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ’s Love.”

Our Vision:

“We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world.”

**Answers for December 1st are c) Laban d) in whirlwind and storm b) Zilpah
Quiz hints – Q1) Genesis Q2) Ruth Q3) Ruth**



Food Pantry Monthly Needs

December 2024

jelly, wide egg noodles and other types of pasta noodles, microwave popcorn, hot chocolate mix, powdered milk, refried, chili style, pork & beans, sauerkraut, spinach, beets, cake, brownie, muffin mixes, mandarin oranges, and pineapple, hamburger, tuna, and chicken Helpers, bar soap, shampoo

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Community Food Pantry. We exist totally on donations - we couldn't assist those in need without your help!

If you or know of anyone who would be interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please have them contact Jeannine K. Liljedahl, at 712-215-2488.

*Bring Your Change
to Make a Change*

*Collected each Sunday after
the children's message*



"Each of you should GIVE what you have decided in YOUR HEART to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for GOD LOVES a cheerful GIVER." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The Noisy Offering is one more way to do ministry for those in need and teach your children the importance of giving and serving. Each Sunday a new opportunity for mission giving will take place after the Children's Message. Sunday School students will walk around the congregation, collecting your loose coins and currency in their colorful metal pails. This would be a good time to clean out the loose change from your pockets or purse. The money donated in December will go to **Midwest Mission** to make meal packets.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday
to Deliver Meals
Sign-Up Sheet is on the
Welcome Center Counter**

Over 30 years ago, concerned citizens in the Shenandoah community had a dream of all community families having a happy and healthy holiday and formed the **Adopt-A-Family** project. Our church will provide a local family-in-need with a brighter holiday with gifts appropriate for their age or need. No adult information will be given, this way we can help the children in more families. This year we will be able to ask for contributions of money in the Mission Cans as we have done before. The mission Cans are placed on top of the wooden offering boxes and just inside the middle set of the sanctuary doors. As soon as from the **Adopt-A-Family** committee regarding the size of the family and items on their wish list, that information will be listed in the Booster. This year Jr/Sr High Sunday School and Confirmation classes will take the lead as the go-to for questions. Thanks for your ongoing support for this important community project.



The Hispanic Center is now collecting items for their Christmas Shoe Boxes. There are 16 children, which includes 7 girls ages 7-14 years of age and 9 boys ages 1 ½ -12 years old. Children's lists of ages are on a sheet on the Welcome Center counter. If you plan to purchase for one of the children please bring the gifts to the church by December 15th. You may also contact Sue Jones with questions.

Hat & Mittens Collection – we are collecting hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves for children in need. Until the hat and mitten tree have been put up, please place these items in the back pew in the Welcome Center near the elevator.



Christmas *December 15th*
9:00 a.m. **Program**

*Program Practice - Saturday, December 14th
 4:00-5:00 p.m.*



Thanks to Heather Weiss, Jamie Burdorf, and Michelle Morelock once again for planning a caroling and soup supper Sunday, December 15th. The bus will depart from the church at 4:00 p.m. and the soup supper will follow caroling. They have planned to Carol to homes and care centers. There is a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Center counter if you are interested in caroling.

There is also a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Center counter those who would volunteer to make soup, bring cheese, crackers, raw vegetables, dessert, and volunteers to stay at the church during caroling to set up.

Finally, they would ask that you dress warmly and wear your ugly Christmas sweater if you have one in your closet.

Advent - Continued from page 1.

Of course, the tradition of waiting for the Messiah to arrive has been an integral part of the lives of God-followers for thousands of years. One of the main identifiers of the Jewish people since the time of Abraham (and even, arguably, from the time of Adam and Eve; see [Genesis 3:15](#)) has been the faith-defining hallmarks of patience and hopefulness as they wait for the promised Messiah to come.

Many of the Old Testament's most beloved verses detail the hopeful waiting that was at the center of Jewish faith and practice. These are the same verses that Christians throughout the world still read and ponder today as they wait every year for the celebration of the incarnation:

- The Lord your God will raise for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. [Deuteronomy 18:15](#)
- Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. [Isaiah 7:14](#)

- For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7
- But your dead will live, Lord; their bodies will rise—let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy—your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead. Isaiah 26:19
- “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” Micah 5:2
- Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Zechariah 9:9
- “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.” Zechariah 12:10
- “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Malachi 3:1

These and hundreds of other verses in the Old Testament point to the long-awaited Messiah—for whom many adherents of Judaism still wait. When Christians participate in Advent within their families and congregations, they join in that millennia-old tradition of waiting with expectant hope for the coming of the Savior of the world.

Why Observe Advent? Teaching

Speaking of families, Deuteronomy 6:6-7 gives us one critical answer to the question of why we should celebrate Advent: teaching our children to also wait with patient expectation for the coming of the Lord into the world as a baby.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up. Deuteronomy 6:6-7

The story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2 is endlessly fascinating, especially to young children. The shepherds resting quietly with their sheep in the fields; the angels appearing in a blinding and deafening display of celebration; the shepherds' hopeful search for the baby Jesus the angels had described; the image of the baby in the stable with his parents huddling close—all of these images, taught to our children early,

endure throughout their lives as the celebration of Christmas approaches every year. Indeed, “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

When we observe the season and the service of Advent by lighting the five candles, whether within the context of a church service or a family gathering, we also carry on the long tradition of allowing our children to ask questions about why we’re doing what we’re doing. The meaning behind the five candles of Advent provides those of us who are parents with wonderful opportunities for leading our children to come to know and believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

And what better way could there possibly be for a parent to take their child’s mind off the hype of this materialistic season? The Scripture readings of Advent, as well as that mesmerizing candle-lighting tradition, allows all who participate to slow down and consider what the waiting they’re doing is all about.

Why Observe Advent? Personal Preparation for the Season of Christmas

Teaching these things to our children and participating in the Advent season’s beautiful traditions also prepares mature Christians for the season of Christmas. How many beleaguered 21st-century Christians long for what the prophet Isaiah offered when he said,

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

As we approach the holiday season every year, those of us who observe the Sundays of Advent find an opportunity to calm our hearts and minds and refocus on the true reason behind the season of Christmas: to celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world. This coming changes everything in the lives of believers, allowing hope to permeate our lives and our hearts, and hopefully become a part of our practice in the weeks leading up to the holiday—and beyond.

Hearing the Scriptures repeated before the lighting of each candle brings those who have grown up with the tradition back to their roots. The communal experience of Advent allows individuals to be reminded of their core identity as those whom God loved so much that he sent his only Son into the world to save them (John 3:16). When that profound reminder of God’s intense and eternal love for us is reawakened in our minds, hearts, and imaginations, the season of Christmas takes on a much greater depth of meaning.

It also allows those who participate in it to understand themselves in the context of the greater Christian church around the world. This centuries-old celebration connects individuals and congregations in myriad Christian traditions, centering billions of minds and hearts on the one thing that binds us all together: our identity as those who are loved by God and saved through faith in the sacrifice and resurrection of his Son.

Why Observe Advent? Spiritual Preparation for Christ's Return

Finally, the observance of Advent (particularly represented in the liturgical color of the three purple candles, reminding us of Lent), helps us to look forward to the coming celebration of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The incarnation, as wonderful and heartwarming and festive as that celebration is, is always followed closely by the reality of the reason behind the incarnation: that baby in the manger would grow up to become the ultimate sacrifice for human sin.

Knowing that this has happened and believing that Jesus' sacrifice was for each one of us who believe, we now look forward to that amazing day when we will see Jesus come again on the clouds of heaven. The angels who appeared at Jesus' ascension made this promise to those who watched Jesus leave:

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11

The apostle John reiterated this promise when he wrote:

"Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen. Revelation 1:7

This is why the writer of James wrote,

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. James 5:7-8

This is perhaps the most important result of observing the season of Advent: "standing firm" for the day when we will meet Jesus, whether that happens on the day of his return or the day of our passing into glory.

What that means is different for each individual, but the apostle Paul instructs us as to what this surely will mean for all who desire to become more and more like Jesus in our daily living:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. [Philippians 2:6-11](#)

Adapted from Mike Vander Klipp, a senior editor with Zondervan Bible Group. NIV Weekly Blog, All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, December 2, 2024.

I came across this story and had to share. It made me reflect on how blessed I have been in life and how there are people in our country and community that are not as fortunate. They don't look for handouts but always do what they can for their family and their survival. I hope this touches you in some way as it did me.

Deshan Ekanayaka:

We rode the two miles to Mrs. Jensen's pretty much in silence. I tried to think through what Daddy was doing. We didn't have much by worldly standards. Of course, we did have a big woodpile, though most of what was left now was still in the form of logs that I would have to saw into blocks and split before we could use it. We also had meat and flour, so we could spare that, but I knew we didn't have any money,

so why was he buying them shoes and candy? Really, why was he doing any of this? Widow Jensen had closer neighbors than us; it shouldn't have been our concern.

We came in from the blind side of the Jensen house and unloaded the wood as quietly as possible then we took the meat and flour and shoes to the door. We knocked. The door opened a crack, and a timid voice said, "Who is it?" "Lucas Miles, Ma'am, and my son, Matt, could we come in for a bit?"

Mrs. Jensen opened the door and let us in. She had a blanket wrapped around her shoulders. The children were wrapped in another blanket and were sitting in front of the fireplace by a very small fire that hardly gave off any heat at all. Mrs. Jensen fumbled with a match and finally lit the lamp.

"We brought you a few things, Ma'am," Daddy said and set down the sack of flour. I put the meat on the table. Then he handed her the sack that had the shoes in it. She opened it hesitantly and took the shoes out one pair at a time. There was a pair for her and one for each of the children - sturdy shoes, the best, shoes that would last. I watched her carefully. She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling and then tears filled her eyes and started running down her cheeks. She looked up at my Daddy like she wanted to say something, but it wouldn't come out.

"We brought a load of wood too, Ma'am," he said. Then turned to me and said, "Matt, go bring in enough to last awhile. Let's get that fire up to size and heat this place." I wasn't the same person when I went back out



to bring in the wood. I had a big lump in my throat and as much as I hate to admit it, there were tears in my eyes too. In my mind, I kept seeing those three kids huddled around the fireplace and their mother standing there with tears running down her cheeks with so much gratitude in her heart that she couldn't speak.

My heart swelled within me and a joy that I'd never known before filled my soul. I had given at Christmas many times before, but never when it had made so much difference. I could see we were saving the lives of these people.

I soon had the fire blazing, and everyone's spirits soared. The kids started giggling when Daddy handed them each a piece of candy and Mrs. Jensen looked on with a smile that probably hadn't crossed her face for a long time. She finally turned to us. "God bless you," she said. "I know the Lord has sent you. The children and I have been praying that he would send one of his angels to spare us."

Despite myself, the lump returned to my throat and the tears welled up in my eyes again. I'd never thought of my Daddy in those exact terms before, but after Widow Jensen mentioned it I could see that it was probably true. I was sure that a better man than Daddy had never walked the earth. I started remembering all the times he had gone out of his way for Mommy and me, and many others. The list seemed endless as I thought about it.

Daddy insisted that everyone try on the shoes before we left. I was amazed when they all fit and I wondered how he had known what sizes to get. Then I guessed that if he was on an errand for the Lord the Lord would make sure he got the right sizes.

Tears were running down Widow Jensen's face again when we stood up to leave. My Daddy took each of the kids in his big arms and hugged them. They clung to him and didn't want us to go. I could see that they missed their Daddy, and I was glad that I still had mine.

At the door, he turned to Widow Jensen and said, "The Mrs. wanted me to invite you and the children over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. The turkey will be more than the three of us can eat, and a man can get cantankerous if he must eat turkey for too many meals. We'll be by to get you about eleven. It'll be nice to have some little ones around again. Matt, here, hasn't been little for quite a spell." I was the youngest. My two brothers and two sisters had all married and had moved away.

Mrs. Jensen nodded and said, "Thank you, Brother Miles. I don't have to say, May the Lord bless you, I know for certain that He will."

Out on the sled, I felt a warmth that came from deep within and I didn't even notice the cold. When we had gone away, Daddy turned to me and said, "Matt, I want you to know something. Your Mother and I have been tucking a little money away here and there all year so we could buy that rifle for you, but we didn't have quite enough.

Then yesterday a man who owed me a little money from years back came by to make things square. Your Mom and I were really excited, thinking that now we could get you that rifle, and I started into town this morning to do just that, but on the way, I saw little Jakey out scratching in the woodpile with his feet wrapped in those gunny sacks and I knew what I had to do. Son, I spent the money on shoes and a little candy for those children. I hope you understand."

I understood, and my eyes became wet with tears again. I understood very well, and I was so glad Daddy had done it. Now the rifle seemed very low on my list of priorities. He gave me a lot more. He had given me the look on Mrs. Jensen's face and the radiant smiles of her three children. For the rest of my life, Whenever I saw any of the Jenssens, or split a block of wood, I remembered, and remembering brought back that same joy I felt riding home beside my Daddy that night. He had given me much more than a rifle that night, he had given me the best Christmas of my life.

Scholarship applications are open December 1 – March 1 annually. All applications and required documents, such as essays, references and transcripts can be submitted through the online portal. Once you click on the application link, you will be brought to a third-party website. Please contact Cassie (cassie.parks@iumf.org) with questions related to scholarships. Please contact our partner Kaleidoscope (help@mykaleidoscope.com) with questions related to the application. You can also utilize their [Help Center](#).



The Iowa United Methodist Foundation offers thousands of dollars in scholarships every year to students who demonstrate academic and community excellence. We offer:

- [High School Senior Scholarships](#) for graduating high school seniors
- [Non-Methodist College Scholarships](#) to all students of the church
- [United Methodist College Scholarships](#) for students who will be attending United Methodist colleges
- [United Methodist Seminary Scholarships](#) to students following the call to join the ministry
- [Westmar College Scholarships](#) for students who will attend or are attending United Methodist colleges in Iowa





Acknowledging that the holidays can be a mixture of joy and grief, consider joining us for our Blue Christmas service on Thursday, December 19 at 6:30pm. Whether it is your first holiday season without a loved one or it is your tenth, it is important to acknowledge the pain and sadness. Sometimes it is a person we grieve, sometimes it is the loss of a job, or the loss of a dream. It may be that you live with mental health concerns and the bright lights and celebrations make it all the worse. Christ comes in the midst of our loneliness, pain, and grief. Our Blue Christmas service creates that sacred space where we might encounter the Christ child in very midst of the dirt and muck of human life.

I had a conversation just the other day about one of the lines that we repeat together in the liturgy for Communion: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." Grammatically, this feels like three separate events happening in sequence. But the words that are said just before that line are: ". . . as we proclaim the mystery of faith." I believe that the mystery beyond the grammar is that these three events are happening at the same time in the sacrament of Communion. In the sacraments, time is enfolds and we participate in the mystery and grace of God.



This is also true in the season of Advent. Time enfolds into the present reality that Christ has come, Christ is come, and Christ will come. This season can be incredibly busy. I will feel it, especially next week as every concert and play that my kids are in is happening in the span of one week. You all feel the busyness as well. That busyness can overwhelm us so much that we lose track of time and place. Advent is an invitation to stay awake to a different sense of time that is found in the life of Christ. Perhaps, if we remain aware that the past, present, and future are events happening now, then the busyness will not overwhelm us but will give us more opportunities to connect with our loved ones in meaningful ways and to connect with God in the midst of everyday life.

Grace and peace,
 Rev. David B. Clark
 Pastor | Shenandoah, First UMC
 308-258-7749 (cell) - 712-246-2081 (office)

This week is photo number 20 in a series of unique pictures from all over the world. For some pictures, you may need to squint and then you will see what the picture represents, others you will see it right away. I have found these amazing and wanted to share them.

#20

