

# Family Notes

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

John called people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing would get in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: The assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

In his sermon, "It's About Time," Pastor Jim searches for signs of God's new creation breaking into and transforming our everyday life together.

The Sacrament today will be administered by pouring chalice. If you are visiting with us and believe as we do that in the Sacrament we receive God's gift of life and forgiveness, if you are a baptized member of the Christian Church, we hope you will join us at the Lord's table. Please note that we also have gluten free hosts.

During Advent:

- our paraments are blue, the color of hope
- our baptismal font with a baptismal candle is at the entry way of our church reminding us that this is how we begin our faith journey
- our confessional is led from the font each week
- our Advent banners are hung
- there are no regular altar candles or flowers
- special aisle candles decorated in blue remind us of this season of hope
- our choirs are not processing
- our Advent Wreath will be lit during the Prelude
- we sing a psalm response between our first and second lesson
- our Hymn of Praise is omitted
- a congregational response, the refrain of *O Come, O Come, Emanuel*, will be sung in place of the Alleluia verse
- we use the Nicene Creed
- we hear reflective music during communion distribution
- we gather each Wednesday at 12:15 & 7:30 p.m. for the Eucharist, to prepare for the coming of Christ
- we begin a new year of Gospel readings with most coming from St. Mark

Advent devotionals are available in the Narthex.

### Our Lessons:

Isaiah 40:1-11. In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. The Lord will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for his sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of the Lord.

2 Peter 3:8-15a. This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

Mark 1:1-8. The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

### TYING IT ALL TOGETHER:

Good news! The prophet announces that the time has come for the God who created and sustains all life to set God's people and all of God's creation free. Centuries later John the Baptist appears in the wilderness and echoes the words and promise of the prophet: "God is coming to set us free!" Now, centuries later, the people of Jesus Christ assemble to announce that coming of God's kingdom, the liberation of God's people and God's creation and the dawning of a new way of living in communion with God. Peter reminds us how difficult it is to wait in faith and hope when we know that at any minute, God's new creation promises to erupt around us. Just look around. It's about time, isn't it?

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## WELCOME

If you are visiting, we welcome you and hope you'll soon return to Faith, and that you'll feel free to share in all that is ours in Christ. Please sign our guest book and a visitor's card which you'll find in the pew. If you are interested in learning more about our community, please speak to Pastor Jim or Pastor Mac, or leave a note in the offering. Please stop by the Information Table in the narthex and pick up materials about our Family of Faith. While we encourage children's attendance and participation in our worship hour, we do provide nursery care for those needing this service. Our ushers will be happy to direct you to our downstairs Nursery.

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Family of Faith is a Christ-centered servant community that strives to be loving, forgiving, healing and affirming, as it continues to seek new opportunities to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

Sustained by the Holy Spirit, we worship, serve, learn and grow together by sharing God's gifts of our time, talents and treasures.

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**To all Committee and Task Force Chairs:  
Annual Reports are due in the Office by  
December 31, 2011, but your earlier submission**

is appreciated.

***Please Remember in Your Prayers:***

Vivian Mossberg  
 John Glass  
 Ben Santore  
 Jan Siberine  
 Lucas Reiling  
 Katie Anderson  
 Annie Scherba  
 Jim Connaughton  
 Heidi Santore  
 Bob Bell  
 Minet Merritt  
 Andrew Stofa  
 Rose Ondich  
 Donna Swanson  
 Anna Mae Glassman  
 Theri Rossol  
 Pat Bell  
 Molly Whitney  
 Bob Woodruff  
 Linda Eriksen  
 Joe Valentine  
 Bobby Adair  
 Donna Norby  
 Rita Regimbal  
 Frieda Andersen  
 Bob Delatour, Sr.  
 Kathryn  
 Pat Sheldon  
 Paul Lissy  
 Lorraine Shank  
 Donald Leshick  
 Dave Risavy  
 Paul Mossberg

Ron Waltemyer  
 Nancy Kordistas  
 Ruth Bentley  
 Paul Lutz  
 Constance Burde  
 Curtis D. Kelly  
 Eric Brodbeck  
 Julie Floch  
 Joe Auchter  
 PJ Sneeringer  
 Ted Moody  
 Loren Zachau  
 Ann Bueschel  
 Jim Mastakas  
 Eunice Neubeck  
 Tommy Byrne  
 Bob Evans  
 Cynthia Burde  
 Marie Varley  
 Jim Daraio  
 Ted Suttmeir  
 John Jackmin  
 Nikki Szpond  
 Raymond Heuke  
 Kristin  
 Patti Graf  
 Kylie Joy Suiter  
 Don Beckert  
 Madalyn Stofa  
 Pamela Schwierk  
 Chris Bjornstad  
 Heather LaBarbara  
 Matt, Tina & Tyler Snider

Joyce Larson  
 The Family of Todd Shell  
 The Family of Ruth Welther  
 The Family of Joshua Plaut

To add to or remove a name from the prayer list, please call the church office. Unless we hear otherwise, names are removed after three months.

***Music Notes***

Today we sing two of the most well-known Advent season hymns as our opening and closing selections...Our Faith Bell Ringers provide today's prelude...they will also be ringing at the 8 pm Christmas Eve service...The Sanctuary Choir is in the midst of preparations for Christmas, when they will also be singing at the 8 pm service... Thanks today to Kelley Fahey, violin, who is playing at our services today during communion... Our new organ is now complete... listen for the many and various colors that help accompany our worship in the weeks to come.

**VISITORS CONTINUE**

Last week we again saw new visitors at worship! This means we've now had at least one new visitor at worship for 1289 out of the last 1312 Sundays. Make this week the time to invite a relative or friend to join us for our worship gathering. Share the Family! Share the Faith!

**AA**

The gift of healing is shared through our AA ministry each Monday through Saturday morning at 6:30 a.m. We give thanks to God for this healing ministry.

**A December Miracle**

**Our Family began this year with a Mission Plan shortfall of \$37,711. Yet because of mission need, we moved ahead on faith and have shared a wonderful year of growth, new life and amazing new opportunities to proclaim the Gospel. Through good stewardship and new commitments we have managed to eat into that deficit, but most of it still remains. Your special year end gifts make all the difference in closing our remaining gap, enabling us to enter the new year strong and empowered to do Christ's work.**

**HANGING OF THE GREENS**



Each year we share the Christmas season in a beautifully decorated sanctuary. Help make it happen as we gather immediately after the 11:00 a.m. liturgy on December 18<sup>th</sup> to decorate our Ministry Center. Sign up in the Narthex. If you would like to make soup for our group, please indicate when you sign up. Thanks.

**REMEMBRANCE ORNAMENTS**



Since 9/11 it has been the tradition of our Family to have a "Remembrance Tree" in the narthex during the Advent season. If you would like to make an ornament for a loved one to leave on the tree here or to take home, please speak with one of the Pastors who will get you the materials you need.

**COUNCIL AT THE DOOR**

If you have questions or suggestions for the Church Council, stop and see the Council Representatives at the door.

**Serving today are:**      **8:30 - Robin Bohnenberger**  
**11:00 - Linda Fuller**

Cross lapel pins identify our council members. We give thanks to God for these servants who undergird and direct our ministry.

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP**



Join us each week at 9:40 a.m. in Franklin Nelson Hall for coffee, light refreshments and fellowship before our Adult Forum begins. Thanks to today's hosts, Theri Rossol & Linda Hardy

**Upcoming hosts are:**  
December 11 - Robin Bohnenberger  
December 18 - Open  
January 8 - Open

If you would like to host one of our upcoming dates, please sign the sheets in the narthex or the Forum or call or write the Office.

**PASTOR AWAY**

Pastor Mac is away today. He will return for worship

on December 18.

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**PLAN AHEAD**

To help us better prepare for worship each week and to provide guidance for daily Bible reading, we publish the following Sunday's lessons each week. Take a few minutes each day to read over these Bible passages in anticipation of our sharing of the Word together. Next Sunday's lessons are:

**Third Sunday in Advent**

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

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**THE MINISTRY CENTER**

Your special mailing invited your prayerful and generous gift to further fund all the work on our Ministry Center. Over \$2,000,000 has been pledged and received and now we find ourselves with almost half a million dollars in final expenses that will have to be covered by our construction loan unless we receive sufficient gifts in the coming days. Incurring this debt will impact our ongoing ministries and so we pray for your sacrificial support.

If you have previously made a commitment and have been waiting to share your gift, NOW is the time.

If you have not yet made your commitment, please contact our Capital Campaign Chairs Theri and Fred Rossol (732-534 5350).

If you need assistance with stock transfers, please call the Church Office.

And as you feel blessed by this ministry that we share, we invite your special gift at this time.

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**ADVENT SERVICES**

Today, December 4, is the second Sunday in Advent. Be with us each week as we journey through this season of expectation and preparation. Midweek Advent worship continues this Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, and continues on December 14<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>, with liturgies at both 12:15 and 7:30 p.m. Our theme this year is "Stories to Tell." Mark your calendars now for time to get ready for Christ.

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**ARC Group Home**

Please remember the residents from the Group Home when sending your Christmas cards this year. Cards can be sent to:  
Regina, Rosa, Susan and Anthony  
c/o ARC Group Home

4 Possum Way  
New Providence, New Jersey 07974



World Hunger is before us as we support the ELCA's world and local hunger ministries. This includes our own outreach ministries: St. John's Soup Kitchen, Hospitality and the annual Food Collection which is now underway. Soup Kitchen and Hospitality alone have expenses of more than \$13,000 a year. Our special hunger mailing shared more about this ministry and your opportunity to share God's gifts.  
**Gifts after 3 Sundays total: \$2,460.**

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**It's Pledge Response Time**

Faith's Grateful Response has 152 pledges totaling \$600,727 toward the 2012 budget. This generous response by the Family shows our continuing commitment to the needs of many, both near and far. However, as we reach year-end and the Church Council plans for 2012, we need everyone in the Family to respond in order to support our ministry goals.

In December, our stewardship appeals highlight examples of ministries that encompass caring and sharing.

The Christmas Sharing Tree has been in the Narthex this fall and many of you have taken a tag to purchase a desired gift. For this ministry, Faith members collect Christmas presents for distribution to several organizations in the local area, including Community Service Association of New Providence, ARC of Union County, Possum Way Group Home in New Providence, St. Stephan's Grace Lutheran Church in Newark, and Cheshire Home in Florham Park. This year, the children at St. Stephan's have asked that donations include a small gift along with a monetary donation to support the ELCA's campaign against malaria. In 2010, 111 gifts were collected, including 30 from Faith Nursery School and Faith's staff.

The family, through its benevolences, supports the Chaplaincy services at both Overlook and Morristown Hospitals. Each hospital receives \$350 from Faith to support the Chaplaincy services, which offers spiritual care to patients and their families. A Chaplain will visit upon request and an Interfaith Chapel is available, along with special services for different faiths.

If you haven't already done so, please prayerfully consider what your pledge will be for the upcoming year. Complete and return your pledge card today and join in strengthening our commitment to share what has been so freely been given to us.

The Stewardship Committee

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**2011 NATIVITY PRESENTATION  
DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 5:00 P.M.**

Plans are being put together for this year's Nativity. On Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m., the Family of Faith will join together to share the sights and sounds of the season. For more information, contact Chris Melhuish at 908-451-4815.



**NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM?**

We are exploring a trip to the Holy Land a year from now. If you would be interested in learning more about this possible journey, please email Pastor Mac at

[pastor.mac@verizon.net](mailto:pastor.mac@verizon.net) or call the church office. If we have enough folks interested, we will hold a preliminary meeting to explore options.

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## DID YOU KNOW...

Today is the Second Sunday in Advent...our Advent Craft Event was 2 weeks ago...our Interfaith Thanksgiving Service was last week...our Fall Food Drive concluded last week...AA meets Monday through Saturday mornings...Faith Nursery School is still registering for the 2011-2012 school year...we've had at least 1 new visitor 1289 out of the last 1312 weeks...a special welcome to all who are visiting with our Family today...check next week's lessons...we continue to have a host of new visitors - welcome...why not bring a friend to Worship next Sunday...new 2012-2013 calendars are available at cost in the narthex ...see you in church next week!

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## Family Prayers

We continue to pray for ALL those whose lives have been forever affected by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, especially the over 7300 service personnel who have been killed. Today we pray by name for the families of allied service personnel who have died in both wars. Please pray for the families of the following, all of whom died recently:

Chief Petty Officer Raymond Border, 31, USN, Ohio  
Staff Sgt. Robert Cowdrey, 39, USA, Ohio  
Spc. Michael Elm, 25, USA, Arizona  
Lance Cpl. Scott Harper, 21, USMC, Georgia  
Cpl. Agris Hutrof, 25, Estonian Army, Estonia  
Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jerome Miller Jr., 23, USAFR, Washington, DC  
Staff Sgt. Jorge Oliveira, 33, USA, Newark, New Jersey  
Rifleman Vijay Rai, 21, Royal Gurkha Rifles, Nepal  
Spc. Jeremiah Sancho, 23, USA, Florida  
Pfc. Steven Shapiro, 29, USA, California  
Chief Petty Officer Michael Tatham, 33, USN, Washington, DC  
Staff Sgt. Houston Taylor, 25, USA, Texas  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 James Wilke, 38, USA, California  
Sgt. Nathan Wyrick, 34, USA, Washington

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### IRAQ/AFGHANISTAN

We continue to pray for all the people affected by the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our website offers prayers for these folks and affords the opportunity to list service personnel serving there. To include a name, please see Pastor Mac. Today we pray for SPC Joe Ellis, a member of our Family, who is on active duty at Camp Drum after a year in Afghanistan. We also remember Lt. Christopher Wilk, a friend of the Daniels and Kyle Fell, Anne & Fred's nephew.

We remember Scott Farrell in our prayers. Scott is a relative of the Novaks, who is now recuperating at home after being wounded in Afghanistan.

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### CHARITY RATINGS AVAILABLE

To sort out the ongoing flood of charity solicitations, Faith maintains ratings of national charities by two of the top authorities in the field: the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance and the American Institute of Philanthropy. There is also advice on how to handle solicitations coming through the mail, by telephone, and the front door. The AIP report has a list of 25 "over-funded charities. Be sure to use these aids as you plan your giving for yearend and the new year. They may be found under "Charities" in the top drawer of the file cabinet outside Room 202, opposite the church office. More detailed reports on most of the charities may be obtained directly from the rating service. If interested, contact Bob Hasbrouck (908-464-9430).

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### STOCK EXCHANGE

As we get to year end, it is traditionally a time when many

members make a regular or special gift to the Family, using stock. If you are contemplating such a gift, please contact Paul Mossberg, our Financial Secretary at 908-338-4570, [pmossberg@verizon.net](mailto:pmossberg@verizon.net), or the church office. Working through our broker, there is an easy way to effect this transfer for you and for Faith. Thanks for your help.

## UPCOMING -

Dec. 4 - Advent II  
6 - Broadway House  
6 - FNS Lunch Party  
7 - Daytime Bible Study  
7 - Spoken Eucharist - 12:15 p.m.  
7 - Evening Prayer & Eucharist - 7:30 p.m.  
8 - FNS Lunch Party  
10 - Soup Kitchen  
11 - Advent III  
12 - Finance Committee  
13 - Council  
14 - Daytime Bible Study  
14 - FNS Christmas Program  
14 - Spoken Eucharist - 12:15 p.m.  
14 - Evening Prayer & Eucharist - 7:30 p.m.  
15 - FNS Christmas Program  
16 - FNS Christmas Program  
18 - Advent IV  
18 - Church Decorating  
18 - Living Nativity  
19 - Staff Worship Planning  
21 - Daytime Bible Study  
21 - Spoken Eucharist - 12:15 p.m.  
21 - Evening Prayer & Eucharist - 7:30 p.m.  
22 - Menorah Lighting  
24 - Christmas Eve Worship  
4:00 p.m. - Service for Children & Families  
6:00 & 8:00 p.m. - Candlelight Eucharist  
w/ pre-service music  
25 - Nativity Eucharist 10:00 a.m.  
Jan. 1 - Carol Eucharist 10:00 a.m.

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### NEW BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

We will be starting a new book discussion group in January, which will be led by Ruth Roemer. We will begin initially reading *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. The group will decide what book to be read in the following months. The group will meet monthly from 7 to 8:30 pm, starting at Ruth's home in Morristown and then rotating to other group member's homes as individuals are interested in hosting.

Both men and women desired and welcome!! No long-term commitment is required; come to discuss a book of particular interest or stay for as long as you like. If you are interested please contact Ruth directly via email at [ruth24@optonline.net](mailto:ruth24@optonline.net) or by phone at 973-845-6317. Once we identify those interested we will settle on a day of the week most convenient to the group.

A short description of *An Altar in the World*:

"With calm confidence and hard won humility, Barbara Brown Taylor continues to serve our recovery of a whole faith, a performed faith, a lifesaving and lifegiving faith. With a delightfully deft touch, she replaces a wide array of false dichotomies with true coherencies. The heart of her matter—and of ours—is finally a recovery of genuine prayer, the prayer of a heart awakened to God's Presence—here, and now, and ever."



## FAITH NURSERY SCHOOL Registration Continues

Faith Nursery School continues registration for the **2011-2012 School Year**. **Three different morning** classes are offered: a class for 2 ½ year olds that meets on Mondays and Wednesdays; a class for three year olds that meets on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; and a Pre-K class that meets Monday through Friday. If you are interested in more information or are ready to register your child, please call Susan Nord, Director, at (908) 542-1252.

## SHARING TREE 2011 - Today



Our Christmas gift giving ministry is underway. This year's gifts will be collected for our Possum Way Group Home, Cheshire Home in Florham Park, ARC of Union County, local residents through the Community Service Association of New Providence, and Grace Community Lutheran Church, Ironbound. All you need to do is take a tag from the tree, sign it out, buy and wrap the gift (**no bows**), and return it no later than **tomorrow**. If you have any questions, please call our coordinator, Linda Daniels (973-514-1665).

**Let's work together this year to make Malaria History!** The children of St. Stephan's Grace Community want to give up some of their gifts so that children around the world might live better, healthier lives. Instead of buying \$30 or \$40 worth of gifts, please buy one small gift (\$10) and give the rest of the gift (\$20, \$30 or more) to help the ELCA's campaign against Malaria. Please, use the attached envelope and return it to the church office with the wrapped gift. Make checks out to Faith Lutheran Church (memo: St. Stephan/Malaria).

## Fall Food Drive - 2011

Over 90 members of the Family of Faith turned out to help pack and sort thousands of dollars worth of food for our Annual Fall Food Drive on Saturday, Nov. 19th. Together with the local Cub Scouts, we collected, sorted and boxed nearly \$19,000 worth of food in about 4 hours time. A BIG thank you to all the volunteers for their hard work! And thanks to all the members of Faith who donated food over the last month. 175 boxes of food went directly to 38 local families in need - most living here in New Providence. The remaining 285 boxes were transported on Nov 26th to the Starfish Pantry, an interfaith pantry in Plainfield. Very special thanks to our Task Force: Beth Bertolini, Diana Bjorge, Marie Hays, Larry Holt, Peter McQuaid, Fred Fell, Lois Rafferty, Shannon Naughton and members of the Peer Leader Servant Ministry Team.

*Our special thanks to Cheryl Bock who again organized this huge ministry this year.*

## A Gift for You

Thanks to Faith Nursery School for again providing Advent calendars as gifts for our entire congregation, one to a household. Pick yours up today.



**On Earth as in Heaven:  
Praying at the Crossroads  
Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.**

Join us for a close reading and study of the Lord's Prayer and an ongoing conversation about being in relationship with God, discerning God's will and making decisions. Invite some friends. To sign-up, please use the registration sheet in the narthex or e-mail Pastor Jim ([Pastorjim2006@verizon.net](mailto:Pastorjim2006@verizon.net)). Classes will meet each Wednesday, through December 21.

## ADULT FORUM

Our Adult Forum continues its weekly educational ministry this morning at 9:40 in Franklin Nelson Hall. Plan on joining us each week for these rich educational opportunities that share the faith and Faith. We gather at 9:40 each week for Coffee and light refreshments followed by our 50 minute program at 9:50.

**TODAY: - DECEMBER 4 & 11 - "MEET MARK"** - Join Pastor Jim for an overview of Mark's Gospel, focusing on the parable of the Sower and the parable of the Vineyard.

**DECEMBER 18 - "ADVENT MUSIC"** - Dr. Girvin guides us through the rich and varied tradition of Advent Music.

**JANUARY 8 - "A SEMINARIAN'S LIFE AND STORY"** - Vicar Jane returns to share the story of how God has been at work in her life as she prepares for ordained ministry.

**JANUARY 15 - "MISSION PARTNERS' STORIES"** - Our partners from St. Stephan Grace Community Church in Newark come to share the Gospel.

**JANUARY 22 - "A MISSION PLAN TELLS THE STORY"** - The 2012 Budget. It's not just a financial document...our Mission Plan tells the story of how we believe God is challenging the Family to live as Christ's servants in the world in 2012.

**JANUARY 29 - "MISSION REPORTS"** - Leaders tell the story of God in action through the Family's ministries.

## HOLIDAY GRIEF

The holidays are often a difficult time for families who have lost loved ones. This week we have distributed holiday grief resources to over 20 folks who have had loved ones die this year. *Tinsel and Tears: A Holiday Guide* and *Getting Past Christmas* offer helpful hints for coping with holiday grief. If you'd like a copy for yourself or a friend, pick them up in the narthex.



**Parents' Afternoon Out**

**Saturday, Dec. 10, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

Parents, give yourself an afternoon to shop, reconnect, recharge, whatever you need. Youth & Family Ministry and Peer Leaders are offering you a Parents' Afternoon Out on Saturday, Dec. 10, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Bring the kids to Faith for an afternoon of Crafts, Games, Snacks and a Movie, and take the three hours to do whatever you need to do. To reserve your place, please use the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or e-mail Pastor Jim at [PastorJim2006@verizon.net](mailto:PastorJim2006@verizon.net). Please be sure to include the names and ages of your children.

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## *You Are Invited*



Join our Jewish sisters and brothers as they light the third candle of the Menorah on our lawn Thursday, December 22, at 7:00 p.m. This is a special time for the members of Temple Sinai, the Summit Jewish Community Center, Beth Hatikvah and our Family of Faith, as we recognize our common roots and celebrate another of God's gifts.

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### **Assisting Ministers**

As we began the new church year, last week we gave thanks for our Assisting Ministers who guide our worship each week: Courtney Auchter, Jessica Bohnenberger, Allison Bradley, Arlene Douglas, John Everson, Ed Johnson, Carol Lutz, Jane McCready, Theri Rossol and Kerry Stahlin.



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### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING at Broadway House** – *more than a house...a home*

Join us Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, when we travel to Broadway House, our AIDS ministry, to sing Christmas carols with the residents. We will be meeting at church at 3:15 p.m. to carpool and will return by 6:00. All ages and abilities are welcome--families, join us! Look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

For more information on ways you can help at Broadway House both on-site and off-site, contact Jane McCready at 908-233-8935 or [jane@mccready.com](mailto:jane@mccready.com) or Carol Suiter at 908-431-9463 or [suiterc157@yahoo.com](mailto:suiterc157@yahoo.com).

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### **Sharing the Story**

Pastor Jim was a presenter at the New Jersey Synod's Transformational Ministry Team's training event for congregations in the Maryland/Delaware Synod held Dec. 1 through Dec. 3 at St. John Lutheran Church in Linthicum Heights, Md. The New Jersey Synod's Transformational Ministry Team conducts events designed to help congregational leaders and their congregations rediscover the missional heart of their ministry.

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### **The Liturgy is the Message**

One of the wonderful gifts of the liturgy is its ability to communicate the Gospel to us. The four week Advent season is a rich reminder of Christ's coming in each of our lives, and of our need to prepare for that gift. Page one of our Family Notes lists all the liturgy changes that emphasize this waiting time. Notice also the musical variations that will occur during these coming weeks.

**Advent 1** – We have a Prelude and Postlude.

**Advent 2** – **We have just a Prelude.**

**Advent 3** – We will not have a closing hymn or music after worship.

**Advent 4** – We will worship with a minimum of music, using the "O Antiphons."

As we move closer to Christmas, and our world becomes more frenzied, the growing simplicity of our liturgy will call us to quiet reflection of God's awesome gift.

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### **Every Member Response**

It is the Family of Faith and their wonderful commitment sharing God's gifts that makes our extensive ministry possible. Our commitment packets for another year of ministry have all been distributed. Please prayerfully consider your proportional, growth and response in thanksgiving for all God has shared with us. Make this the year to grow towards a tithe, responding to God's blessings. Thanks to Paul Mossberg, our Financial Secretary and our Stewardship Committee for getting this resource ready for us. As of November 23, we have received 152 commitments for a total of \$600,727. The last two weeks in January we will again share thanks with all those who have shared commitments to undergird our Family ministry.

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## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### December 24 - Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m.- Children's Service of Lessons and Carols

**6:00 & 8:00 p.m. - Candlelight Eucharists**

*"The Old, Old Story"*

6:00 p.m. - Soloist

8:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir, Faith Bell Ringers & Instrumentalists

Pre-Service Music to begin at 7:40 p.m.

### December 25 - Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. - Festival Eucharist

*"Word in the Flesh"*

### January 1 - First Sunday of Christmas

10:00 a.m. - Eucharist, Carols & Lessons

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