

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR
Noel Hallelujah Merry Christmas Happy New Year



Glassboro First United Methodist Church

Gumwrapper December 2020 & January 2021

A Must for Your Tree

If there was ever a Christmas Tree ornament that described this entire year, it would have to be the one where Dr. Seuss's much beloved character, the Grinch, is holding in his hand a face mask and the words next to it are stink, stank, stunk. Who would have ever thought that we could relate so well to that cantankerous, mean-spirited, downright nasty old Grinch? Well, at least we relate to his feeling of stink, stank, stunk when it comes to the year 2020.

Yet, we are not the only ones who have ever had to deal with stink, stank, stunk. Just look at the Christmas story. The Roman government calling for a census to be taken now! This couldn't have been any more inconvenient for Mary and Joseph. And this only can mean one thing, taxes are about to be increased on an already tight budget. This just stinks!

And what about traveling all the way to Bethlehem. Yes, I know it may have only been about 80 miles, but who today can say they traveled 80 miles on the back of a donkey and nine months pregnant. Then to arrive after everything is closed and find there is no room in any house for you and your wife who is in labor with her first born. This just stank!

Finally, Mary and Joseph get some shelter but of all places in a stable, where there are dirty animals, dung on the ground, probably mixed with some warm humid air. And then in walks some shepherds. Nice of them to come and adore the newborn king, but they have been out in the fields, and I am sure they smell like sheep and body odor. This just stunk!

However, laying in the manger is the best smell of all. A newborn baby. Remember holding your child or grandchild for the first time and bringing them close to kiss their face, hold that tiny hand, and smell that incredible smell of new life, innocence and hope. Amid a night that stink, stank, stunk for Mary and Joseph, it became filled with an aroma of peace, joy, hope and love. I can only imagine that it overpowered every other smell that might have filled the air that night as

Jesus took those first breaths and let out that first cry, proclaiming to all that Emmanuel, God was with us in flesh.

Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians talks about how God in Christ spreads through us the fragrance that comes from knowing the Christ; that we are the aroma of Christ to the world around us that may stink, stank, stunk. Think about how every card we send to someone, every gift we buy for a stranger, every bill we pay for someone out of work, every bag of groceries we hand out to someone who has no idea where the next meal will come from, every prayer we lift for so many frontline workers, every ounce of faith we hold onto and demonstrate to others, every donation we make to keep ministry in the name of Christ alive, is the smell of that infant born in a manger that has come to save us all.

So yes, hang that popular ornament on your tree and find some humor in the words, stink, stank, stunk, but don't forget the fragrance of a newborn that has come to redeem, to give us grace, to show us the way of salvation from the stench of the world. And let us remember that we are to share such a fragrance from our own lives that has been touched by this Christ child.

By Glenn Conaway, Delaware Bay District Superintendent



Why Advent?

Waiting can be hard, and not just for children. But I do love Advent: this four-week time when the Christian church prepares for Christmas.

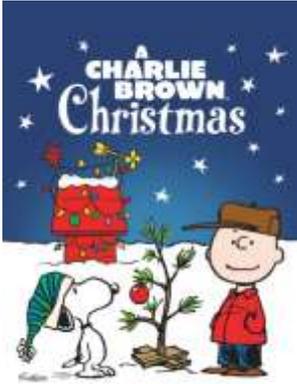
Maybe I like Advent so much because it involves active waiting, not thumb-twiddling. It is a gift the church offers the world, to be active (which isn't the same as busy) in ways that open our hearts — and the hearts we touch — to the true meaning of Christmas.

Mother Teresa said, “At this Christmas when Christ comes, will he find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God’s own love and concern.”

When I take time during Advent to remember in prayer and with gifts of money and time those who have less food than I do, those who are lonely, those without a home; when I pause to share love with a child or an elder, or gratitude for a healthcare worker, pastor or teacher; when I wait for justice to replace oppression but, while I wait, find ways to work for that result ... the Spirit’s warmth fills my waiting heart. I am ready to welcome Jesus.

—Heidi Mann





Christmas presence

Amid the secular trappings of the holidays, we can lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas, until we lament with Charlie Brown, “Isn’t there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?”

These reminders call us back to where it all began — in the heart of God.

“The giving of gifts is not something [people] invented. God started the giving spree when he gave a gift beyond words, the unspeakable gift of his Son.”

—Robert Flatt

“Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that he gave his only Son. The only requirement is to believe in him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.”

—Corrie ten Boom

“The great challenge left to us is to cut through all the glitz and glam of the season that has grown increasingly secular and commercial, and be reminded of the beauty of the One who is Christmas.”

—Bill Crowder

Worthy of repair

In Quito, Ecuador, Gonzalo Gallardo belongs to the Heritage Guardians, a group of traditional artisans. His specialty is restoring figurines, and near Christmas he often fixes Baby Jesus statues for nativity scenes. “People don’t throw them out,” he says. “The feeling is, ‘This is my figure, and I will repair it.’”

Gallardo’s restorative gifts don’t end there. He uses the same pigments (made from vegetables, minerals and oils) to treat actual humans. People with sunburns, bruises and scars stop by Gallardo’s shop for skin “treatments” that cost pennies. “We are here to help people,” he says.

How much more does God, through the Christmas gift of Jesus, repair our brokenness and restore us from death to life so we, like Gallardo, can help others.

Truth + love

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become reality.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Waiting until God is heard

We're often taught that prayer is speaking to God. And of course, that's part of it. It's good to pray for the well-being and needs of others — even Jesus prayed for his disciples. It's okay to pray for our own growth in faith and love. It's a wonderful, powerful thing, modeled especially by the Psalmists, to give God thanks and praise. And God welcomes our cries of pain and sorrow, offering the Spirit's help when words fail us (Romans 8:26).

But through the ages, many deeply faithful followers of Christ have practiced contemplative prayer, centering prayer and other forms of stillness before God. Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) expressed it this way: "To pray does not mean to listen to oneself speaking. Prayer involves becoming silent, and being silent, and waiting until God is heard."



Still searching for a New Year's resolution? None is more worthy than becoming Christ-like. In fact, 19th-century evangelist Henry Drummond calls it "the only thing in the whole world worth caring for."

Two modern-day authors offer more insights. Stormie Omartian points out that we're either making progress or backsliding on this goal. "There is no neutral position in the Lord," she writes. "You are either becoming more like Christ every day or you're becoming less like him." And followers of Jesus must keep the goal always in focus. Christ-likeness is our "eventual destination," writes Rick Warren, but the "journey will last a lifetime."

The Magi's story — and ours

The story of the Magi is our story. God has used his supernatural means to draw us unto himself. ... On one glorious day, when we were exhausted and wearied in our sin, God led us to gaze upon Jesus just as the Magi did. We see the glory of God manifested through Jesus Christ in the internal work of the Holy Spirit. We see our utter sinfulness and God's abounding grace offered in the Messiah. We are filled with joy as this grace sinks into our hearts.



We fall down on our knees and confess our need of this Messiah. We worship him and offer up our lives as our greatest offering to him. Then we continue on in our lives, carrying the truth about the Messiah.

—Travis Cunningham, tvcresources.net



Dear Church Family

Christmas is coming and we are in the middle of the most challenging Advent season in memory. Normally, as we wait to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and prepare for his return, we'd do so physically together—worshiping, learning, and serving hand in hand. That's not possible right now. Due to the rising number of cases in our community and the projections for even more, our church leaders, staff, and I have made the difficult decision to halt in-person gatherings and return to all-virtual worship to keep our congregation safe. Our 9am Elevate service and our 11am traditional service will continue to be live-streamed on our Facebook page every Sunday. As for Christmas Eve, we will livestream services at 5pm, 7:00pm, and 11pm. You'll find more details about those in our Lifeline newsletter, website, and Facebook page. Though much is different for all of us, none of our changes and challenges can prevent us from rejoicing in and welcoming Jesus Christ.

Christmas is coming and, even with the restrictions in place, our church has found other ways to wait and prepare this Advent season. We continue to worship every Sunday. Every Wednesday at 7pm, we are meeting online to study the life of Mary's husband Joseph and what he can teach us about God, ourselves, and the meaning of Christmas. Though we are not holding our Christmas Stocking Party this year, we will be providing food and coats for families in need on December 19th. The response from our congregation proves that this pandemic isn't keeping us from embracing the Spirit of the Season.

Christ is coming and if this past year has taught me anything it's that the world as it is cannot compare to the world as it will be when Christ returns. The trials, troubles, and terrors of today are not forever. The reason we celebrate Advent isn't just to remember that Jesus Christ came to us as a baby in a manger; it's to refocus our lives on the truth that Jesus Christ will come again as our eternal king. So, regardless of what the world is like or what challenges we face, we are called to embody the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ as we continue making disciples and building God's Kingdom until Christ returns. We will get through this together. Take heart, nothing can change his promise and our calling.

Christ is coming. Be ready.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor John



Although we are not worshipping in our Sanctuary, our ministries (we are planning great things!) and financial obligations are ongoing. We thank you for your support and are asking that you continue to support our church through your gifts and tithes. There are several options for you to make your donation; online (click on the blue button below), text, download the GivePlus app or you can mail your gifts to the church office at 60 State Street, Glassboro, NJ 08028. Thank you for your continued financial support!



Each Sunday at 10:15am, our Sunday School program will have activities and learnings for your children! Our theme for the fall is “celebrate wonder” this week we go live on zoom with awesome lessons, music and activities. All of this can be found by clicking the link below and joining the private no limits Children’s ministries group link below and joining in! Every other week we will have a Bitmoji classroom where you will be able to click the links for all the amazing things we have to offer!

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, MEDIA TEAM MEMBERS ARE NEEDED TO CONTINUE OUR LIVESTREAMING PROCESS.

TRAINING IS AVAILABLE.

CONTACT PASTOR JOHN IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

*many hands
make
light work*



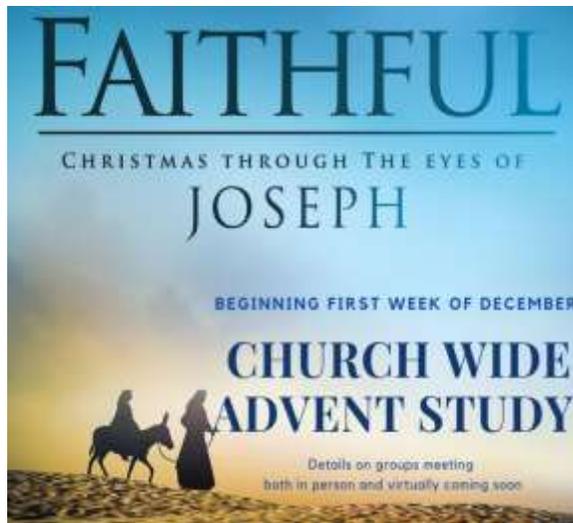
FAITHFUL

CHRISTMAS THROUGH THE EYES OF
JOSEPH

BEGINNING FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER

CHURCH WIDE ADVENT STUDY

Details on groups meeting
both in person and virtually coming soon



FUMC GLASSBORO CHRISTMAS EVE 2020

5:00 Family Service

tune in to our Facebook page for a fun, family-friendly digital service

7:00 Contemporary Service

join us outside on church grounds for a brief candlelight service
in the case of inclement weather, this service will be live-streamed only

11:00 Traditional Service

tune in to our Facebook page for a 'carols and candles' digital service

[FACEBOOK.COM/GLASSBOROUMC](https://www.facebook.com/glassboroumc)

Non-perishable food items such as cereal, soup and pasta for the Samaritan Center may be brought to the Samaritan Center at 123A East High Street on Monday or Wednesday from 12 to 3 PM. Items may also be placed in the box in the Narthex. Please contact Dave Walters with any questions, dnwalters83@gmail.com



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Bible Quiz

Which of the four Gospels name(s) Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth?

- A. Only Luke
- B. Matthew and Luke
- C. Mark and John
- D. All four

Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:1-7.)

Puzzle!

Use the code to complete Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus, our Savior.

CODE:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q

10	23	13	17	14	6	18	21	21			
11	14	12	10	21	21	14	13				
6	24	23	13	14	1	15	4	21			
12	24	4	23	2	14	21	24	1			
22	18	16	17	3	8	16	24	13			
14	5	14	1	21	10	2	3	18	23	16	
15	10	3	17	14	1	25	1	18	23	12	14
24	15	25	14	10	12	14					

ISAIAH 9:6, NIV

Answer: And he will be called Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6, NIV

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>29</p> <p>FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT</p> <p>9am - Elevate</p> <p>10:15am - Power Hour</p> <p>11am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>6pm - Young Adult Study</p>	<p>30</p> <p>8pm - NA</p>	<p>1</p> <p>7pm - Men of Armor</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6pm - Pastor's Bible Study</p> <p>6:30pm - Refresh @</p> <p>7pm - Faithful Christmas</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30pm - Children & Family</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6pm - Carols and Cocoa</p>
<p>6</p> <p>9am - Elevate</p> <p>10:15am - Power Hour</p> <p>11am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>6pm - Young Adult Study</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6:30pm - Directors meeting</p> <p>8pm - NA</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10am - UMW</p> <p>6pm - Mission & Outreach</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6pm - Pastor's Bible Study</p> <p>6:30pm - Refresh @</p> <p>7pm - Faithful Christmas</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13</p> <p>9am - Elevate</p> <p>9:50am - Care Givers</p> <p>10:15am - Power Hour</p> <p>11am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>6pm - Young Adult Study</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6pm - Worship Committee</p> <p>7pm - Finance Team</p> <p>8pm - NA</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7pm - Men of Armor</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6pm - Pastor's Bible Study</p> <p>6:30pm - Refresh @</p> <p>7pm - Faithful Christmas</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>9am - Elevate</p> <p>10:15am - Power Hour</p> <p>11am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>12:15pm - Ageless Angels</p> <p>4pm - "All is Calm, All is Well"</p> <p>6pm - Young Adult Study</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8pm - NA</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6pm - Pastor's Bible Study</p> <p>6:30pm - Refresh @</p> <p>7pm - Faithful Christmas</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>	<p>24</p> <p>CHRISTMAS EVE</p>	<p>25</p> <p>CHRISTMAS DAY</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>9am - Elevate</p> <p>11am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>6pm - Young Adult Study</p>	<p>28</p> <p>10am - History Team</p> <p>8pm - NA</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7pm - Men of Armor</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:30pm - Refresh @</p> <p>8pm - AA</p>	<p>31</p> <p>NEW YEAR'S EVE</p>	<p>1</p> <p>NEW YEAR'S DAY</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10am - Women's Grow</p>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 9am - Elevate 11am - Traditional Worship 6pm - Young Adult Study	28 10am - History Team 8pm - NA	29 7pm - Men of Armor	30 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day	2 10am - Women's Grow
3 9am - Elevate 10:15am - Power Hour 11am - Traditional Worship 6pm - Young Adult Study	4 6:30pm - Directors meeting 8pm - NA	5 6:30pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	6 6:30pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	7 6:30pm - Children & Family	8	9
10 9am - Elevate 9:40am - Care Givers 10:15am - Power Hour 11am - Traditional Worship 6pm - Young Adult Study	11 6pm - Worship Committee 7pm - Finance Team 8pm - NA	12 10am - UMW 6pm - Mission & Outreach 7pm - Men of Armor	13 6pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	14	15	16
17 9am - Elevate 10:15am - Power Hour 11am - Traditional Worship 12:15pm - Ageless Angels 6pm - Young Adult Study	18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day 7pm - Church Council 8pm - NA	19	20 6pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	21	22	23
24 9am - Elevate 10:15am - Power Hour 11am - Traditional Worship 6pm - Young Adult Study	25 10am - History Team 8pm - NA	26 7pm - Men of Armor	27 6pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	28	29	30
31 9am - Elevate 10:15am - Power Hour 11am - Traditional Worship 6pm - Young Adult Study	1 FIRST DAY OF BIBLE HISTORY 6:30pm - Directors meeting 8pm - NA	2	3 6pm - Pastor's Bible Study 6:30pm - Refresh @ 8pm - AA	4 6:30pm - Children & Family	5	6 10am - Women's Grow