

From the Intern Pastor . . .

We are experiencing the shortest days of the year. It gets dark early in the evening and it's still dark come morning. My dog has been the one most affected by this change, since all of us humans forget to take him for a walk before the sun sets. As I'm writing this, I have not made the mental switch, that this is how it is now so I need to change some habits. Maybe take Ollie for a morning walk instead, although it's dark then too. Flashlights and a light up collar might be the way to go. Darkness tends to draw us inward- it makes me want to stay inside and curl up in a blanket with a hot drink. Ollie doesn't care, he just wants to be outside. This is his time of year- he loves the cold and the snow, and especially likes time away from his feline roommates who don't venture outside. Ollie waits expectantly for his walk. He is aware of the cues. He knows what to look for, what to listen for even, to know when his hopes are coming true. He knows I change shoes. He knows that when it's cold, I put on a particular pair of fleece-lined pants that have a swishy sound to them when I pull them out of the closet. He knows the sound of the door opening and his leash being grabbed. Just the hint of these things and he's up and wagging his tail, making excited whimpers and barks. I haven't even said the word yet- we have code words to keep us from triggering his excitement too soon, because "walk" will send him over the moon and there's no turning back.

Advent is a season not simply of waiting, but of longing. It is a season of anticipation, a season of hope. Each week we acknowledge the darkness by lighting a candle and then another and then another, adding more and more light, illuminating the darkness and signaling the coming Christ-child. We long for light. We anticipate the gift from God. We hope for the One who is coming, who is always coming. Who is always here and also not yet. And so we listen, and we watch, and at the sights and sounds of the season we find the excitement building. God hasn't said the word yet. But once he does, there's no turning back.

What do we do while we long for Christ to come?

We hold onto all the things that remind us of the One who loves us. We gather with others who also long for Christ to come. We read the letters that remind us that we are loved and that He's coming. We sing songs with some sense that these melodies will reach His ears, received as a joyful invitation. We find our hearts filled with the desire to live like Jesus, with more love, more joy, more generosity, more forgiveness, more justice, more compassion. AND the amazing miracle becomes real- as we do these things, Christ "happens." The longing is the gift of *hope*. The singing is the *joy*. The gathering is the *love*. The darkness becoming a little bit brighter each day is the *peace*. The imitation of Christ brings Christ into the world, filling the world with more and more and more light. Christ is always coming and you get to participate in it. Watch and listen. And like Ollie, get excited, because this is the best thing!

May the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ be what fills you this season.

Happy Advent,

Intern Pastor Amy





Advent and Christmas

Sunday, December 4th
Advent Band
9:30am

Saturday, December 10th
Woman's Advent Luncheon
11:30am

Sunday, December 11nd
Holden Christmas
9:30am

Sunday, December 18th
Christmas Pageant
9:30am
Trinity Care Ctr
1:30pm
Longest Night Service
7:00pm

Saturday, December 24th
Christmas Eve
Service
4:30pm

Sunday, December 25th
Worship Service
9:30am



Christmas Eve at Family of Christ
Saturday, December 24th
Join us for a candlelight service
at 4:30pm.



2022 Women's Advent
Luncheon
and
Basket Raffle
December 10th at 11:30am

Come one and all to our potluck luncheon, basket raffle and fellowship time. All women and girls are invited. (Grandmas, cousins, neighbors, friends too.) All are welcome.

It is a potluck with a \$5.00 donation (girls under 19 are free!)

Sign up on the clipboard and on the sign-up genius. Please consider donating a basket!

Raffle tickets will be on sale after service on Dec. 4th and the day of the luncheon.

Profits will go to 360 Communities Food Shelf



Longest Night Service
Sunday, December 18th
7:00pm

It is not a coincidence that Christmas falls near the longest night of the year. In the darkness we look for light.

Join us as we lift up the darkness and loss we face in our lives in this time when we are supposed to be celebrating in a special service of hope.

Family of Christ Bling

We are in the process of updating our logo and with it we will be ordering clothing and coffee mugs. Get ready for the online store that will be coming in the next few weeks.



Advent Band December 4th

Currently play and instrument? Played one many years ago and want to dust it off and see if you still have it? Then join us as we celebrate the Advent and Christmas season with a Sunday filled with instrumental music.

All abilities are welcome to join us as we celebrate the coming of our savior. Contact the church office or Jeremy Mann.



TRINITY CARE CENTER GIFT TREE and PARTY



Join us in one or two ways as we support the residents at Trinity Care Center. Pick a stocking from the gift tree in the narthex, take the name out, write your name next to the resident's name on the sign-up sheet, then buy and wrap a gift/s for that person.

Please bring the labeled wrapped gift/s to church by December 11th.

Then join in on helping the residents celebrate the season delivering the presents to them, singing carols at the party and enjoying refreshments as we get to know the residents on **Sunday, December 18th at 1:30**. Some folks can meet at church at 1:00 to help load up the gifts to bring over. Come dressed in festive wear. Please sign up on the clipboard so we know how many can help at the party.

Art and Faith



Art is a way we can understand and access the holy in our lives. We are looking for people to purchase faith based art for the walls of Family of Christ while supporting up and coming artists. There will be a board in the narthex with images of art prints. Pick one or more that intrigue you and put your donation in the envelopes provided or make them online.

Women's Bible Study

Monday, December 5th at 10:00am

The Women's Bible study will meet monthly at 10am on the first Monday of the month.

We will again use the Gather Magazine Bible Study.

The fall sessions are entitled Jesus and Nature: Teachers of Faith.

All women are welcome! Invite a friend.



**Book Club will not be meeting in December.
Watch for information for the January 26, 2022 meeting.**

Contact the church office or Sandy Soukup for additional information

**Christmas Pageant
Deconstructing Christmas
December 18th at 9:30am**

It's time for the Family of Christ's Christmas Pageant. If you haven't already, please let us know if you (adults welcome) or your children would like to be a part of the program. Whether that's through acting, singing, helping with props and costumes or anything else, we can use your help. Contact Dana or Pastor Brent if you are interested in helping or participating.

Below is the schedule for this year's Christmas Program

Sunday, Dec. 4 Practice 10:30-11:30am for SS kids

Sunday, Dec. 11 Practice 10:30-11:30am for SS kids

Saturday, Dec. 17 Dress Rehearsal 9:30-11:00am for all

Sunday, Dec. 18 Christmas Pageant 9:30am – Arrive by 9:00am (Trinity Party at 1:30)

Parent's Night Out: Mission Trip Fundraiser: December 9th 5:30-8:30

Want to have a night out with your spouse or a quiet night in your own home? Need time to Christmas shop without dragging around little ones? If so, then drop off your kiddos at Family of Christ on Friday, December 9th at 5:30. Our Mission Trip Youth will be here to take care of your littles. We will have games, snacks, crafts and a movie. All ages are welcome. Look for the sign up after worship.

All Ages: Dinner and Movie Night - Rescheduled

Friday, December 30th at 5:30

Come one, come all to Movie Night at Family of Christ for fellowship and fun. We will be watching a movie (most likely ELF) on Friday, Dec 30th. Dinner is beforehand starting at 5:30, movie will follow at around 6:00.

Bring your own comfy chairs, blankets, pillows, etc. Feel free to wear PJs! Popcorn will be served as well.

Sign-up coming soon.



Thank you!

Thanks to all who contributed candy and chips for our Trinity Care Halloween Outreach Event. We filled over 120 bags and delivered them to Trinity while they were having their Halloween Party. They were surprised, shocked, and appreciated this kind act very much. Thanks to all who helped decorate and fill the bags.



**Youth Game Night – Rescheduled
Friday, December 2nd at 6:30**

Do you love games and hanging out with friends?
Are you a 6th-12th grader? If so, then come join
us on Friday, December 2nd from 6:30-9:00.
Bring your favorite snack...drinks provided.
Feel free to invite a friend or two.

FALL RETREAT 2022!



Youth Schedule:

November 30: Confirmation and Youth Group
December 2: Youth Game Night 6:30-9:00
December 7: Confirmation and Youth Group
December 9: Mission Trip Fundraiser: Parent’s Night Out
December 14: Feed My Starving Children
December 21: Christmas Party
December 29: No Class – Holiday Break
January 4: Confirmation and Youth Group

Congratulations to our recent 2022 Confirmands!

**Owen Basballe
Will Christiansen
Brodie Majewski
Donovan Mann
Caleb Sahlin
Gavin Specht**

Thanks to all the adults who helped guide these young men throughout their confirmation years. Please keep our youth in your prayers as they continue on their faith journey.

Sunday School Schedule

December 4: Christmas Program Practice/Class
December 11: Christmas Program Practice/Class
December 17: Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal
December 18: Christmas Program
(and Trinity Party at 1:30)
December 25: No Class- Holiday Break
January 1: No Class – Holiday Break



Mission of the Month
FAMILY OF CHRIST COMMUNITY FUND

Helping and encouraging people of Family of Christ and those around us is an important part of family of Christ. Each year we collect donations for this fund so we can help those in need and encourage one another in faith. Please consider making a donation to this fund or buy some gift cards and send them to church.

Season of Giving

As you buy your Christmas gifts for families and friends we invite you to join us at Family of Christ with gifts that will make an impact in our congregation and in the world around us.

Trinity Care Gifts

Family of Christ will again be providing gifts for the residents of Trinity Care Center in Farmington, Please pick a name(s) on the Giving Tree, located in the Narthex and bring your gifts, with a clearly marked label on Dec 11th. All are encouraged to participate in this annual event. If you aren't in the spirit by then, you will leave feeling blessed.

Community Fund

We have historically reached out to offer financial assistance to a member(s) of our Family of Christ Family and others in our community during the Holiday Season and throughout the year who need our prayers and help due to hardship, illness or family emergency. Please consider purchasing a gift card or make a donation to the community fund to share with our friends and family around us. Cards and donations can be made after worship in the narthex.

Family of Christ

As your end of the year generosity is being spread around, please consider an additional financial gift to the ministries of Family of Christ. We continue to look for ways to build up our financial strength as we enter a new year of ministry in God's kingdom.

Give the Gift of Art

Pick out a piece of art to be ordered in the narthex and make a donation for the purchase of prints and frames to enhance our spaces.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Christmas Week:

Open Tuesday, December 20th through Thursday, December 22nd only.

New Years Week:

Open Tuesday, December 27th through Thursday, December 29th.



TANZANIA UPDATE



Last month we were able to lift up \$7,400 for Tanzania Secondary Scholarships and \$2,704 to Iringa Hope Microfinancing. Sew4Scholarships craft fairs for support of the Medical Scholarships are nearing an end. We will update you next month on this total. This will go a long way!

Thank you for your generosity!

RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE

Tuesday, December 6

11:30am to 5:30 pm

To donate blood, go to
www.redcrossblood.org.



2023 Statement of Intent—Pledge Cards:

If you have not already turned in your pledge card for 2023 they are available from the church office or online. Please contact Linda at linda@familyofchrist.com.

Year End Giving Statements

Family of Christ will be sending out end of the year Giving Statements by email for all members that have an email address. If there is a particular email address that you would like us to use or if you would prefer to receive paper statements, please contact Linda at linda@familyofchrist.com or by calling church office.

DEADLINE FOR 2022 GIVING:

Please note all gifts for 2022 need to be received in the office by **TUESDAY, December 27th.**

Online gifts need to be in the system by **Monday, December 26th.**

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Linda before December 22nd.

Thank you for all your gifts to Family of Christ.

*"FoCus" is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.*

Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Pastor Intern:	Amy Vigessaa
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Musicians:	Mary Wescott, Morgan Jones, Laura Porter-Jones, Rebecca Nystuen, Ann Mikiska, Solveig Englund
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

Family of Christ Lutheran Church
is a member of the **ELCA**

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***December
Dates to Remember***

- Sun. Dec 4: Sunday Worship with
Advent Orchestra
Pageant Practice**
- Wed. Dec 7: Confirmation/Youth Gr**
- Sat. Dec 10: Ladies Advent Luncheon**
- Sun. Dec 11: Sunday Worship with
Holden Christmas
Pageant Practice**
- Wed. Dec 14: Confirmation/ at FMSC**
- Sun. Dec 18: Christmas Pageant
Trinity Care Ctr Caroling
Longest Night Service**
- Wed. Dec 21: Conf Christmas Party**
- Sat. Dec 24: Christmas Eve Worship**
- Sun. Dec 25: Worship**
- Wed. Dec 28: NO Confirmation/Youth**

Vision Statement

Family of Christ seeks to be a
Grace filled family of God, living the
Gospel through faith, love and
compassion.



Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:

- Fait**
- Acc**
- Meaningful relationships**
- Impact**
- Love**
- Youth**