



The Messenger

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF
SAINT ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TOPEKA, KANSAS



December 2021

Volume 43, No. 12



Are we there yet? Most of you have heard this question before. What memories does it bring to mind? Probably that of vacations of years gone by. For some, those were better days when family was all around, for others those were stressful days. Either way, the answer was usually, not yet.

The same is true about Christmas. This may be the December newsletter, but it is not Christmas...yet. We have to travel through Advent first. Be patient.

As a newly minted...I mean ordained pastor, I KNEW how incredibly important it was for congregations to not sing Christmas carols, until Christmas. But, you know what they don't tell you in school... the pastor who does not allow Christmas carols until Christmas will probably only be in that church for one Christmas!

What church members have taught me over the years is that it is ok to sing Christmas carols before Christmas, because there are plenty other ways to remember that this is the season of Advent, the season of waiting, the season of preparing and being patient. I find the best way to not rush straight to Christmas is through prayer.

When we pray, the **first** thing we do is **focus on God** with words of praise. We give praise to God for what God HAS done, IS doing, and promises TO DO. What follows easily and innately is **thanksgiving**. We thank God for being just that, God. Emmanuel, God with us, understands everything about us – even when we do not understand it ourselves. Next, we **confess our sin**. There is so much sin to confess, our personal sin and the corporate sin of the world: economic injustice, fear of strangers, racial injustice,

food insecurities, social media. So much to lift up in prayer of confession. Then, of course, **petition**, for ourselves and others. God, Emmanuel, knows what we need, even without our asking, but that doesn't mean we should not ask. We ask for what we need and even for some things we want, as long as we recognize the difference. Lots to lift in prayer.

Praise, thanksgiving, confession and petition. This is what we do in prayer as we walk through Advent and patiently work our way to Christmas. We are closer, but no, we're not there, yet.

But there are also those who find no joy in this season and look for it to be over as soon as possible. What about those for whom this season does not bring joy but instead brings painful memories? We must acknowledge the reality of the pain. Perhaps we pray as a friend who knew pain, first beginning with praise, "O God, we are here to worship You. We worship You in good times, knowing nothing can separate us from your love." And then, "O God, we are here to worship You. We worship You in bad times, knowing nothing can separate us from Your love." **Sadness alongside delight. Anguish alongside faith.**

This is how we make our way through Advent, into Christmas and beyond.

Pastor Stacey

.Providing for Others



This month is all about the Christmas Store, even if it is completely different than in years past! This year is not a 'Store', but more of a Christmas Adoption Project. All of the households we have adopted through the Christmas Bureau will receive a food order, health kit, blanket, a household item, a family fun pack with games, puzzles, etc., school supplies if appropriate and a \$20 gift card per person in the household. Distribution days this year will be December 14th – 17th. We have asked for items to be at Doorstep by December 1st this year because distribution will take extra organization on our part. However, with the cost of the gift cards and the food, our budget is already at least \$30,000. Where we have asked for items in years past, please help us monetarily with the gift cards and food by sending a check, or go to our website (www.doorstoptopeka.org) to donate by credit card. Please note your congregation with your donation.

We appreciate anything you can do to help this year while we are still in midst of a COVID Christmas.

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays from the Staff at Doorstep!

Rescue Mission

The Rescue Mission is also needing help with donations of new Christmas items to bless their guests and the community. Items needed are blankets, gloves, hats, socks, hygiene items, household items like coffee pots, skillets and other small kitchen appliances, and financial contributions. Blessings to all in this Christmas season.





A reminder that it is time to order poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for the Advent season. There will be one size; the cost is \$8:00.

It is requested that you have the orders to the church by December 13th. Order forms are enclosed and will be in the Narthex, or you may contact the church office.



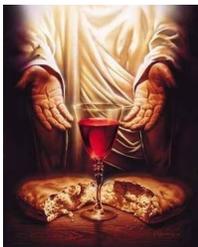
St. Andrews will celebrate its traditional **Candlelight Christmas Eve and Communion service at 5:30 p.m.**

Hopefully this time is accommodating for most people.

Join us for this meaningful and inspiring service, and join us in worship each week as we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord.



Communion



Holy Communion will be celebrated on December 5th during worship and the Christmas Eve Service



Thanksgiving Dinner

I would like to thank everyone who helped at our Thanksgiving dinner on the 21st. From the setup to the cleanup and all the food in between. You know who you are.

I thought it was successful. And it felt good to be able to fellowship with our church family as we gather together with grateful hearts for all of God's blessings.

Sharon McDaniels



The Lunch Bunch met on November 17th at the Big Biscuit. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, December 15th, at **The Bar N Grill**, 2121 SW Belle (about a block south of 21st and Belle), at 11:30. Everyone is invited.

Shawnee Choral Society

The Shawnee Choral Society will present its winter concert "The Very Best Time of Year", Sunday, December 5th, at White Concert Hall at 7:00. Stephanie Reynolds and Matthew Reynolds are members of the Choral Society. This is a wonderful evening of great choral music.



DECEMBER 2021 LECTIONARY READINGS

December 5 – 2nd Sunday of Advent- Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;
Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

December 12 – 3rd Sunday of Advent- Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6;
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 19- 4th Sunday of Advent- Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46-55 or
Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

December 24 - Christmas Eve- Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96:1-13; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

December 25 - Christmas Day- Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1-9; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12);
John 1:1-14

December 26 - 1st Sunday of Christmas- 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148;
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52



December Birthdays

Jeanette Luedke, December 1st
Bill DeShazer, December 10th
Randy Luedke, December 16th
Kathy Fuller, December 19th
Megan Reynolds, December 23rd
Bob Bodenheimer, December 30th
Kelly Carr, December 31st

December Anniversaries

Paul and Kathy Mitchell, December 3, 1977

Bill and Betty DeShazer, December 4, 1966

Tad and Gail Estes, December 25, 1986



Caring for our Members and Friends



Dana McDaniels, Kaylin McDaniels;, Richmond and Sharon McDaniels and Family-Linda, Dana, Kelly & Jim, Dolores Wilmers , Kathy Fuller, Mary Jane and Junior Elder, Norm Schiesser Rita Kelly, Cheryl Kelly, Ezra Krumalis, Ainsley Jones, Marlene Watson, Suzanne Liapis, Family of Shirley Pletcher

Praying for...

Andy O'Neill, Jim O'Neill, Mark O'Neill, Rev. Mike Kuner Evon, Socorro, El Shaddai Temple de Alabanza, Sheila.

Remember all those who serve -our active duty and veteran personnel, firefighters, EMTs, police officers, and medical personnel who continue to serve, the hungry and the homeless.

Pray for peace and calm for our nation and our community. Keep in your prayers those who continue to suffer from the effects of natural disasters.

Pray for our government officials and world leaders that they may lead with wisdom and compassion.

SESSION



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS-November 15, 2021

[P] '23 Betty DeShazer [P] '22 Claudia Hamer [P] '21 Dianne Deuser
[P] '23 Bill DeShazer [A] '22 Matthew Reynolds [P] '21 Sharon McDaniels
[A] '23 Charles Franks [P] '22 Stephanie Reynolds [A] '21 Jo Ann Miller
[P] '23 Linda Ozaki [P] '22 Jan Rice [A] 'Janet Schiesser

[P] Session Moderator- Rev. Dr. Stacey Shaffer Jones
[P] Clerk of Session-Bill DeShazer
[A] Treasurer-Stephanie Reynolds

Amount in checking as of 10/31/21 -\$25,464.16. Memorial Fund – \$417.30. Pledge income - \$4,211.00. Non pledge income – \$740.00. Loose offering - \$231.56. Total current income for October -\$5,232.56. Total current expenses – \$7,061.08. Expenses high due to building maintenance and repairs.

Exit lights were repaired. Electrician suggested that the light fixtures at the top of the fellowship be replaced with LED fixtures with bulbs/tubes that would last probably five years. These are the lights that take an extra tall ladder, which we don't have, or a scaffolding set up. Session approved replacing the fixtures as the tubes go out.

Thanksgiving dinner to be following worship and the congregational meeting on the 21st.

Income from the garage sale and holiday decorations sale is approximately \$4,100.00, with more expected from on line sales. As is customary, St. Andrews donates ten percent of sales from functions we have to raise money to a mission cause. Session voted to donate \$450.00 to the Battered Women's Shelter at the YWCA.

Adult Bible Study continues to meet Sunday mornings at 10:15 in Fellowship Hall. There will be two sessions on the Lord's Prayer. For the advent season, there will be a study of four Christmas carols. Take this opportunity to learn more about subjects pertaining to our Christian faith.

Our Christmas Eve and Candlelight service with communion will be at 5:30 p.m.

Next Communion will be on December 5th.

December 2021						
◀ Nov 2021						Jan 2022 ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Jeannette Luedke B'day	2	3 Paul & Kathy Mitchell – Anniv.	4 Bill & Betty DeShazer-Anniv.
5 Communion	6	7	8	9	10 Bill DeShazer B'day	11
12	13	14	15 11:30-Lunch Bunch The Bar N Grill	16 Randy Luedke B'day	17	18
19 Session Kathy Fuller B'day	20	21	22	23 Megan Reynolds B'day	24 5:30-Christmas Eve Svc.	25 Christmas Tad & Gail Estes Anniv.
26	27 Richmond McDaniels -B'day	28	29	30 Bob Bodenheimer B'day	31 Kelly Carr B'day	

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



December 2021

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standrewspresby@sbcglobal.net

**WELCOME TO
SAINT ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rev. Dr. Stacey Shaffer Jones, Pastor
Worship 11:00 AM**

Christmas Eve Candlelight/Communion Service 5:30 PM

