

PEACEPRESS



Pastor's Perspective

A passage from the United Church of Christ Book of Worship describing the historical season of Advent...

Advent is the season of anticipation and preparation that precedes Christmas in the churches in the West.

It was first identified in the fourth century by Hilary of Poitiers (Bishop of Poitiers, a city in France) who indicated that it was observed for a three-week period in Gaul (which today includes France, parts of Belgium, western Germany, and northern Italy). In some instances, the season was related not to Christmas but to the older Eastern feast of Christ's birth, Epiphany. In the Middle Ages (476-1520 C.E.), the Western church gradually reduced the period from an eight-century pattern of six weeks to four weeks.

Now the first Sunday in Advent is the fourth Sunday before December 25th. The focus of the season includes not only preparation for the anniversary of Christ's birth but also the anticipation of Christ's return at the close of history. The seasonal color of purple announces Christ's royalty. In some traditions blue is used, jointly symbolizing royalty and hope.

Christmas, the festival day of the birth of Jesus Christ, falls on December 25th in the church in the West. This date in the ancient Roman calendar was observed as a winter solstice holiday associated with non-Christian rituals of light.

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By the year A.D. 354, the church in the West had transformed the day into the annual festival of the one born to be the Light of the World. White is the color of the season and is used from Christmas Eve through to the first Sunday in Epiphany. This is the season of joyful celebration.

Let it begin....
Pastor Tom

A Note from Elisabeth



December 2023, and time to again really think about Christmas – how we celebrate and its true meaning.

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. Isaiah 9:6 NIV

The beginning of 2023 brought the return of our choir, but not exactly the way it had always been before. We have met on Sunday mornings and prepared music to be sung in worship once a month during this year. We have invited the congregation to join us in singing some newer songs, and hopefully, we can sing them again and increase our worship repertoire. In December, we will be singing each Sunday in Advent and using selections from the cantata, I Hear the Prophet Callin'. It is a wonderful blend of folk styles written by Pepper Choplin. We are using songs about the prophecy, Jesus's birth, telling others about His coming, and then celebrating! Many, many thanks to those who are sharing their voices to help lead the congregation in worship!

We learn from reflecting upon and thinking about our experiences. What are your Christmas experiences? December brings back many memories (and for some not always happy memories). Let's really think about how we will celebrate this year, grow from the past, and not just "go through the motions" or do things from habit. Christmas does make us reflect and meditate, and how wonderful it is to celebrate together in worship as a church family!

Partnering with Parents to Nurture Faith

As we embark on this sacred season of Advent, it is a poignant time to reflect on the importance of guiding our children's faith, especially in the context of our ever-changing world. In the spirit of unity and shared responsibility, I feel so called to partner with our PUCG parents in this meaningful journey of nurturing and shaping the faith of our youngest members.

Advent, a season of anticipation and hope, provides a unique opportunity for families to come together and create lasting traditions that deepen connections to faith. As parents, you play a vital role in shaping the spiritual foundation of your children. We have some meaningful ways to partner with you during this Advent



season through the "Advent To Go" boxes that we will pass out to families on Sunday 12/3 along with Advent Calendars! We encourage families to engage in Advent devotions together with the provided resources and activities fostering a sense of anticipation and reflection.

In partnering with parents all throughout the year, we strive to create an environment where faith is not just learned but lived. I have a phrase I always keep in mind when approaching Youth Ministry- "Monday is Coming". This means to me, to always be intentional with the message I share on Sundays to best equip our youth for their lives outside of the church walls.

Mike Jeffries, a ministry leader at Orange (a strategic and researched-based youth ministry organization) says it best:

"Sure, everybody knows about Sunday. That's what churches do. What if the real action starts when the weekend ends and the week starts? What if it's not about what happens on Sunday, but about what happens on Monday?... Monday is when reality hits. Monday is when Sunday is tested. Monday is when faith has to work. The real question is, will what happens in church on Sunday make a real difference in someone's life on Monday?"

Together, let us embrace this opportunity to cultivate a lasting impact on the spiritual growth of our PUC Youth, fostering a love for God that will endure beyond the Advent season. And on Mondays and beyond. As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions and/or ideas you have and to connect further as partners in ministry.

Warm regards,

Rhiannon Kelly



Mission of the Month: Our Call to Support Foster Care Families



FAMILY ROOM
Foster Care Resource Center

In the tapestry of Christian values, the threads of compassion, love, and care are intricately woven. Supporting foster care families emerges as a profound expression of these core tenets, embodying the very essence of Christ-like love. Foster care families selflessly open their homes and hearts to children facing turbulent circumstances, mirroring our call to care for the vulnerable. James 1:27 reminds us that true religion involves caring for orphans, a duty that resonates strongly with the challenges faced by children in foster care.



The Family Room, a nonprofit founded and based in Greensboro provides love, encouragement, and support to families who foster and the children in their care by offering free resources to families that foster. By extending our support to The Family Room, we can play an active role in breaking the cycle of adversity for these children and support the families that care for them.

Please visit the donation tree in the Narthex decorated with ornaments of items needed at The Family Room and please take an ornament- or a few!!

- Items are not age specific as items for all ages are needed
- Toys, books, games, bikes, & car seats can be gently used
- Walmart gift cards can be for any amount you choose

Please return items unwrapped to the collection bins by 12/31. If you would like to make a financial contribution that will go towards the purchase of items, please write on the check memo line: "Family Room Mission".

Not everyone can foster - Everyone can help!

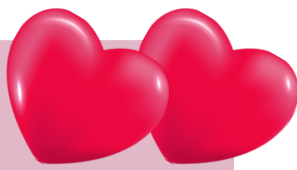
Foster Family Facts

- Most children arrive at homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs.
- Families that foster do not get upfront financial support to provide the kids what they need when they first come into care.
- Families can foster anywhere between 1-5 children at a time, creating unforeseen financial circumstances.



Ann McSwain shared her experience as a foster parent to the children during Children's Message and to the congregation on Sunday, November 26th. She and her wife have fostered 11 children three of whom they have adopted into their family.

Did You Know?



Did you know that Doris Jones and John Yeattes played in the sandbox together at the Reformed Church on Lee Street and grew up to get married and serve as lifelong members of this Church?

Sharing the Joy of Christmas at Peace



Life has changed so much since 2020. From hunkering down in our homes only going out for appointments and essentials, to worshipping online, to socially distanced worship services and wearing masks, to now finally back in the pews with no restrictions with the continued online worship presence. We have been through a lot and it is time we celebrate coming through this shared ordeal and reconnect with our church family.

This event promises to be a joyful occasion with a luncheon, caroling, live entertainment, an area just perfect for the kiddos, and of course fellowship time with you! RSVP (peaceucc2714@gmail.com) by December 10 and share the joy of Christmas with your church family!

Sharing the Joy of Christmas at Peace Guest Musician



Anja Arko is a Slovenian-born pianist, known for her sensitive lyricism and performances that portray a reserved care for a spectrum of tone colors and melodic shapes. Her infectious enthusiasm for music fuels Anja's active career as a performer and music professor. Anja is the winner of a Slovenian National Competition for Piano Duo and has performed widely across Europe (France, Germany, Austria, Czech, Serbia, Croatia) and the United States.

Anja is a recipient of the 2022/2023 Arts Greensboro Grant for her solo recording project that focuses on environmental issues and sustainability. Anja holds a Doctorate degree in Piano Performance from UNCG (2020), where she earned a Post-Master's Certificate in Music Theory Pedagogy. She is an active member of the Greensboro music community, serving as a teacher and as an adjudicator at local festivals and competitions. She currently works as an adjunct professor at High Point University and Guilford College.



10 Facts About Christmas Trees

1. The first written reference to a Christmas tree was in Germany in 1531.
2. Evergreen trees were used to celebrate the winter season before the birth of Christ.
3. Using small candles to light Christmas trees began in the 17th century.
4. The first artificial Christmas tree was created in Germany. It was made of dyed goose feathers.
5. Christmas trees have been sold in the U. S. since 1850.
6. In 2011 over 30 million live Christmas trees were sold in the U. S. for a market value of over \$1 billion.
7. An acre of Christmas trees provides the daily oxygen needed by 18 people.
8. Every year there are approximately 350 million Christmas trees growing on U.S. farms.
9. Commercial Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states.
10. Every year since 1947, the people of Oslo, Norway have given a Christmas tree to the city of Westminster, England. It is given in gratitude for the assistance given during World War II.

MORMON MEDIA NETWORK

• **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2**

The Women's Fellowship, along with helpers, will be decorating the church for Advent on Saturday, December 2 at 10:00 a.m. Come on out and help!

There are two trees, a Nativity, window decorations, and more!

• **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3**

First Sunday of Advent.

Bunong Baptist Church (Montagnard)

Christmas Service & Luncheon, 2:00

p.m. in the sanctuary. All Peace

Church members are invited!!

Important Dates

DECEMBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					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	27	28	29	30
31						

• **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10**

Second Sunday of Advent.

Consistory will meet in the Bertha Work Room at 1:00 p.m.

• **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17**

Third Sunday of Advent.

• **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24**

Fourth Sunday of Advent.

Morning Worship Service.

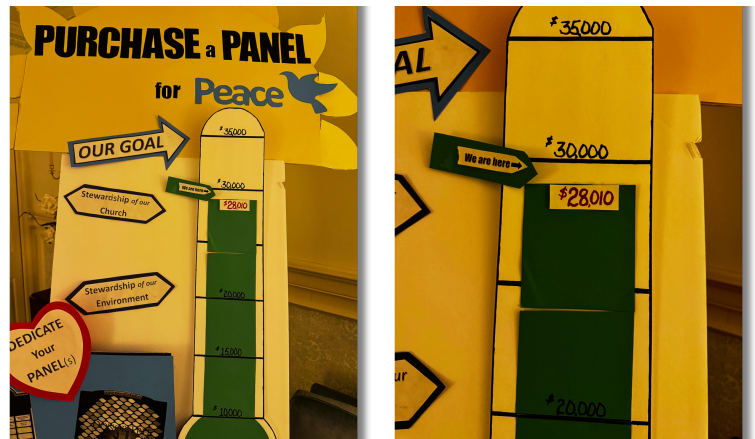
Christmas Eve Worship at 6:00 p.m.

• **DECEMBER 25-JANUARY 2**

Pastor Tom will be on vacation.

Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship is having a Christmas luncheon at Bravos on Tuesday, December 5th in the Friendly Center at 11:30 a.m. Women's Fellowship members will have a business meeting and devotional in the Parlor at 10:00 a.m. as usual. The luncheon is open to everyone in the congregation. Reservations should be made with Abbie Wheeling by Monday, 12/4, (336-708-6478) if you plan to attend the luncheon.



There is still time to purchase a solar panel in memory or in honor of a loved one. We currently have \$6,990 left to make our goal!

Happy Birthday

- 8th - Jason Goode
- 9th - Ian Myers
- 12th - Dave Dole
- 18th - Ramona Griffin
- 22nd - Alexa Dole
- 26th - Russ Haver
- 28th - Don Wheeling
- 29th - David Hirano
- 21st - Deb Shiner
- Olivia Jolliff
- Laura Small
- Daniel Warren
- Connor Hughes



Peace United Church of Christ - Greensboro NC
Treasurer's Report as of October 2023 for General Fund

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

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Account #Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining	
Offerings					
4001	Pledges	11,527.35	98,961.50	117,110.00	18,148.50
4003	Loose Offerings	57.00	1,086.00	500.00	(586.00)
4004	Initial Offerings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4006	Non-Pledged Offerings	500.00	5,610.00	25,870.00	20,260.00
4007	Sunday School	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
	Total Offerings	\$12,084.35	\$105,657.50	\$143,580.00	\$37,922.50
Fundraising					
4102	Jambalaya	0.00	3,200.00	4,000.00	800.00
4104	Yard Sale	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4106	Brunswick Stew	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
4121	History Room	0.00	600.00		
	Total Fundraising	\$0.00	\$3,800.00	\$7,000.00	\$3,800.00
Special Offerings					
4009	Communion	0.00	(82.60)	100.00	182.60
4108	Birthday/Thank You	0.00	50.00	100.00	50.00
4110	Christmas	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
4112	Easter	0.00	45.00	50.00	5.00
4114	Memorials	0.00	590.00	0.00	(590.00)
4116	Thanksgiving	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Special Offerings	\$0.00	\$602.40	\$350.00	(\$252.40)
Other Services					
4118	Weddings	200.00	200.00	0.00	(200.00)
	Total Other Services	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	(\$200.00)
Miscellaneous Income					
Facility Use Donations					
4124	New Arrivals Institute	0.00	22,650.00	30,360.00	7,710.00
4126	Narcotics Anonymous	75.00	750.00	3,000.00	2,250.00
4128	Alliance Church	500.00	2,750.00	3,000.00	250.00
4130	Fellowship Hall Use	350.00	1,200.00	1,000.00	(200.00)
	Total Facilities Use Donations	\$925.00	\$27,350.00	\$37,360.00	\$10,010.00
4122	Miscellaneous Income	(144.20)	3,269.44	0.00	(3,269.44)
4123	Sales Tax Refund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Miscellaneous Income	\$780.80	\$30,619.44	\$37,360.00	\$6,740.56
4109	Easter Lilies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4111	Flower Fund (Covid Worship)	(80.00)	200.00		
4115	Community Event Donations	40.00	40.00	0.00	(40.00)
4119	Oatmeal	(5.00)	0.00		
	Total Offering Income	\$13,250.15	\$141,069.34	\$188,290.00	\$48,020.66

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Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Expenses					
Missions					
5001	OCWM	0.00	2,000.00		
5003	Community Outreach Publicity	0.00	333.99	400.00	66.01
5005	Community Outreach Events	1.80	39.65	150.00	110.35
	Total Missions	\$1.80	\$2,373.64	\$550.00	\$176.36
Consistory					
5101	PeaceCare	0.00	219.31	350.00	130.69
5103	Membership Growth	0.00	0.00	700.00	700.00
5104	Membership Support	180.47	585.47	800.00	214.53
5105	Worship Committee	568.00	1,333.75	1,700.00	(201.75)
5106	Stewardship	0.00	70.69	250.00	179.31
	Total Consistory	\$748.47	\$2,777.22	\$3,800.00	\$1,022.78
Christian Ed					
5117	Christian Ed Literature/Supplies	16.00	46.00	400.00	354.00
5119	Youth Fellowship	84.32	536.26	500.00	(36.26)
	Total Christian Ed	\$100.32	\$582.26	\$900.00	\$317.74
Property					
5210	Janitorial	700.00	7,000.00	8,800.00	1,800.00
5212	Grounds	416.67	4,166.70	5,417.00	1,250.30
5214	Property Insurance	1,243.92	12,133.44	16,000.00	3,866.56
5216	Building Equipment/Maintenance	104.99	5,368.53	10,000.00	4,631.47
5217	Boiler Maintenance	751.52	7,381.62	15,000.00	7,618.38
5219	ADT Security	53.75	224.99	600.00	375.01
5221	Supplies	0.00	297.37	1,000.00	702.63
	Total Property	\$3,270.85	\$36,572.65	\$56,817.00	\$20,244.35
Administration					
5401	Postage	21.34	1,070.09	1,300.00	229.91
5403	Office Equipment Lease	182.42	2,653.48	4,000.00	1,346.52
5405	Computer Software/Maintenance	0.00	970.48	1,000.00	29.52
5407	Telephone/Internet	248.86	2,494.76	3,100.00	605.24
5409	Office Supplies	38.64	1,606.15	1,500.00	(106.15)
5410	Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	214.71	1,000.00	785.29
5412	Bank Charges	40.55	412.73	600.00	187.27
	Total Administration	\$531.81	\$9,422.40	\$12,500.00	\$3,077.60

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Account #Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Utilities				
5301 Gas	1,444.00	9,551.00	15,000.00	5,449.00
5303 Electricity	1,463.43	10,224.21	11,500.00	1,275.79
5304 Water	468.20	4,260.50	7,000.00	2,739.50
Total Utilities	\$3,375.63	\$24,035.71	\$33,500.00	\$9,464.29
Pastoral Compensation				
5501 Cash Salary	2,790.84	27,908.40	33,491.00	5,582.60
5503 Housing Allowance	1,416.66	14,166.60	17,000.00	2,833.40
5505 Social Security Reimb.	338.76	3,370.72	4,065.00	694.28
5507 Annuity	589.05	5,638.05	7,069.00	1,430.95
5509 Insurance	1,745.37	17,453.70	23,000.00	5,546.30
5510 Medical Reimb.	0.00	1,892.14	2,500.00	607.86
5511 Mileage Reimb.	0.00	458.25	500.00	41.75
Total Pastoral Compensation	\$6,880.68	\$70,887.86	\$87,625.00	\$16,737.14
Personnel				
5601 Organist/Dir of Music	1,200.00	12,700.00	15,600.00	2,900.00
5603 Secretary	0.00	4,014.00	18,720.00	14,706.00
5604 Office Support	1,225.00	10,495.00	0.00	(10,495.00)
5605 Nursery Attendant	0.00	265.50	1,800.00	1,534.50
5607 Youth Leadership	375.00	3,129.00	9,360.00	6,231.00
Total Personnel	\$2,800.00	\$30,603.50	\$45,480.00	\$14,876.50
Personnel Benefits				
5612 Social Security Exp.	214.21	2,341.21	3,479.00	1,137.79
5614 Worker's Comp Insurance	0.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
5618 Conference & Meetings	0.00	200.00	200.00	(50.00)
Total Personnel Benefits	\$214.21	\$2,541.21	\$4,879.00	\$2,237.79
Fundraising Expenses				
5701 Jambalaya Expense	0.00	1,288.46	1,500.00	211.54
5703 Yard Sale Expenses	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
5705 Brunswick Stew Expenses	0.00	0.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
5707 History Room Expenses	0.00	386.99		
Total Fundraising Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,675.45	\$3,300.00	\$2,011.54
5224 Cornerstone Solar Panel Loan Interest	262.63	827.86		
	\$262.63	\$827.86		
Difference	\$18,136.40	\$182,299.76	\$249,351.00	\$70,266.09
	(\$5,166.25)	(\$41,230.42)	(\$61,061.00)	

October Income-Expenses \$13,020.15 - \$18,186.40 = -\$5,166.25

2023 Income-Expenses \$141,069.34 - \$182,299.76 = -\$41,230.42

2023 Budget Income-Expenses \$188,290.00 - \$249,351.00 = -\$61,061.00