



# Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd

Reaching Individuals and Families of the Concho Valley with the Transforming Love of Jesus Christ!

## AGNUS DEI

December 2021

### *NOW IS THE TIME TO REJOICE!*

As we are approaching the Second Week of Advent, we are already in process of preparing for the celebration of the coming of the Messiah to redeem us from our sins and to lead us into Kingdom life. Advent reminds us to slow down and to smell "the greens" of the season. Christmas songs have now been playing in the stores for weeks and Hallmark has their Christmas-romance movies in full display. Along with the seasonal joy comes stress. Am I prepared for the social events? How much baking do I need to have done? Have I sent out enough Christmas cards? Have I forgotten anyone? How can I afford all of the gifts I would like to give? These seasonal activities are traditional and are activities worth considering. Give yourself permission to slow down, count your blessings, pray for those whom are meaningful to you, and emphasize why we celebrate Christmas. It's not all about family reunions and festivities.

When we slow down to prepare for the celebration of the Lord's incarnation, we must remember that the same God who created billions upon billions of stars and the complexity of organic life has created you and knows your hurts, ambitions, joys, and dreams. Our happiness, peace, and purpose does not have to depend upon how we script the holiday to our liking, but the fact that God had you in mind when he sent his only Son that you may have abundant and a fulfilled life. When we place our focus on what others are doing or what they have, it's not unusual to feel a little depressed or sad. When we focus upon our problems (and our lives are always full of problems), we are ignoring the reality that our Creator has placed you right where you are now. Of course, bad decisions from ourselves and others influence our hardships, but the story of Advent and Christmas is that God is showering you with opportunities to live through the process of transformation and spiritual growth. Sure, we all would like to snap our fingers and God grant us our three wishes for whatever we wanted. The truth is that most of us are not wise enough to know what is best for ourselves and others. Study the lives of lottery winners who have won multiple millions of dollars. You will discover that overwhelmingly most of the winners were poorer than they started ten years later and their lives were in shambles. By slowly listening to God, patiently waiting for his direction, truly submitting ALL things to him, trusting him in his Word, living by his Spirit, we become transformed by love. Advent is pressing on with true focus on our Savior. Christmas is a time to rejoice regardless of secular customs and traditions.

*(continued)*

*"For to us a child is  
born, to us a son  
is given; and the  
government shall  
be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall  
be called Wonderful  
Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.  
(Isaiah 9:6, ESV)*

**Anglican Church**  
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Learn to “lean into” the Lord and laugh. God has this all figured out. Your life story as a believer is to glorify God and not to impress people. God plants into us the eternal—and never leaves or forsakes us. Now is the time to make those phone calls and reconnect with family members with whom you remain irritated. (Be careful to only reconnect in person when the Lord gives you peace that the other person would not physically or emotionally harm you.) Start telling people around you that you love them. You will discover that your “love muscle” will grow and you actually enjoy sharing love. All this requires time and practice. That’s why we have Advent.

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6, ESV)*

While you are looking through the newsletter and noticing all the special seasonal events, please begin praying for each of these special times where God allows us to prepare. I look forward to seeing you as we grow together. I love each one of you and pray for you. All of you are my favorites and I smile when I think of you. The Spirit is with us!

*J. Hal* s!



*Christmas Cantata*

*Please join us!*

*Sunday, December 19, 2021*

*at our 10:30am Worship Service*

## **THE HANGING OF THE GREENS**

**December 12<sup>th</sup>** we will celebrate the coming of Christmas with the annual Hanging of the Greens!



After a lunch of pizza and salad, we will gather in the sanctuary to begin decorating the church for Christmas.



**The church will provide the pizza and drinks.  
Please bring your favorite salad to share.**

See you there!

FMI you can contact Sharon Weber at 325-245-8616.





# THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Christ's Mass Eve  
Candle Light  
Holy Eucharist



Friday,  
December 24, 2021  
at 6:00 PM

The Church Office will  
be closed  
December 24th & 25th  
and the week of  
December 27th ~ 31st.



## THE DECEMBER 2021 VESTRY MEETING

is Monday,  
December 20th  
at 5:30 PM in the  
conference room.



DON'T FORGET OUR  
*PROJECT DIGNIDAD COLLECTION DAY IS  
THE LAST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH.*  
PLEASE BRING YOUR NON-PERISHABLE  
DONATIONS TO BE BLESSED.

We at Good Shepherd are a prayerful congregation. Aside from prayer lists within each Sunday bulletin, the Intercessory Prayer Group maintains a lengthier list which goes out weekly by email with frequent updates. If you would like to receive this list by email, contact Jean Stinnett at [stinnetttranch@zipnet.us](mailto:stinnetttranch@zipnet.us).



Our Christmas Party  
will include a

Christmas

COOKIE

EXCHANGE

Please bring a dozen  
cookies to share!





Please join us for a

# COZY CABIN CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 5th  
at 6pm in the Parish Hall.

This is a potluck! Please bring a  
casserole, soup, side, or salad.  
Drinks and desserts will be provided.

The evening will include a  
Christmas Cookie Exchange!  
Please bring a dozen cookies to share!

## LIVING WITH JESUS: ANTICIPATING THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

### **Advent**

Thanksgiving is behind us as we sail through the 2021 calendar year. Most people enjoyed a four-day weekend and Black Friday sales. Christmas is five weeks away. And, as the Christian Liturgical calendar begins, the best is now at hand. During Advent we celebrate this holy time of the year: the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, the Reason for the Season.

Advent means "arrival" or "coming," the time of preparation for both the birth of Jesus and His expected second coming at the end of times. Advent is replete with hope, peace, joy and love. Anticipation--the quiet longing and eager waiting for something expected in a positive way-- is a thrilling experience. Four weeks before Christmas we prepare our hearts, minds and spirits to receive the Newborn King. Who is this Babe who is a King?

The apostle John, who knew Jesus personally, describes Jesus as being with God in the beginning, part of the triune God, or Elohim, who was present when life began. Jesus is the light of the world who came from the Father, as foretold in Isaiah 9:2. And, although no one has seen God, we know God through His Son. Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead, and in Him there is no fault.

Can we ever have too much of Jesus? The answer is a resounding and unanimous "NO!" How do we prepare ourselves, then, to receive Jesus into our lives during the holy season of Advent? I suggest four steps based on the word PRAY: 1) praise, 2) repent, 3) ask, and 4) yield.

1) Praise: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Worship Him in holiness and wonder and joy! Meditate upon the great grace God has poured into your life. Consider all your blessings, strengths, and spiritual gifts. Thank God for all these things and ask Him to open your eyes to new opportunities in which to better serve Him.

2) Repent: Ask for forgiveness of sins such as fear, worry, discouragement, pride, self-pity, shame, and guilt. Let Jesus free you from generational sin, from the bondage and pain of remorse, from disillusion and despair, from your unrealistic expectations of yourself and others, from disappointments and unfulfilled dreams. Then place all your burdens at the foot of His cross.

3) Ask: With a penitent and contrite heart approach the throne of grace and ask for His mercy which renews each morning. Our God delights in a close and personal prayer relationship with us. The more we seek Him the closer He enters into our lives. So, invite Him to abide in you.

And finally 4) Yield: Turn over your need to control your life and let Jesus do it for you. Thy will be done, Lord God Almighty, on earth as it is in heaven. Wonderful things happen when we move out of God's way and let Him power through us. Untold blessings beyond our wildest dreams occur when we give Him control over our lives.

Meditate and ponder the great joy of the Word made flesh who dwelt amongst us: Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. O come, let us adore Him!

Here is my prayer: Abba Father God, we gather together in Your name to praise and adore Your One and Only Son, Jesus Christ, who was in the beginning, is now and ever more shall be. Forgive us of our many sins as we have already forgiven those who sinned against us. Deliver us from the evil one who would destroy our faith in You. Instill in us the desire to know You more through Your Scriptures. Inspire us with Your Holy Spirit to use the gifts and talents so graciously given. Open our hearts to receive our Newborn King. Guide us in Your light. Cleanse our minds to think only good thoughts which are pleasing to You. Hold our tongues so that all we say may edify others in humility and obedience. Lead us in Your way and truth. Anoint us with the oil of joy. Grant us Your peace, which passes all understanding. Transform us with the love of Jesus and bring us into everlasting life through His salvation. May all that we think, say and do bring honor and glory to You: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus, the name of love, I pray. Amen

**Reflection: Joy to the World**

**J**ust before Son-rise darkness is stark, the air crisp and still.

**O**nly stars dare pierce the sky.

**Y**onder in the east the sun's first rays crawl

**T**oward new day, new hope, the promise

**O**utlined in His Word.

**T**rembling hearts beat quickly, flesh tingles, and spirits soar—

**H**e is coming soon!

**E**xpectation explodes in awesome wonder.

**W**ait for Him, all ye chosen.

**O** people of the living God,

**R**ejoice! Praise and adore the

**L**ord, the Christmas Child born to

**D**eliver you.

Jean Stinnett



**A SERVICE OF PRAISE MUSIC  
AND PRAYER**

*All are invited to join us for  
**Praise & Prayer  
Fellowship**  
in the Nave at 5:30pm  
each Saturday.*

IN  
THIS  
ISSUE

## AGNUS DEI



- Pastor's Message  
Now Is the Time to Rejoice
- Cozy Cabin Christmas Party ~ December 5
- The Hanging of the Greens
- Christ's Mass Eve Service
- Living With Jesus:  
Anticipating the Reason for the Season  
*by Jean Stinnett*

## December Birthdays

- 12/2 Tom Thornton  
Karla Gould
- 12/11 Carol Emmons
- 12/13 Jenny Schroeder  
Henry McWilliams
- 12/29 Anita Reisdorfer



**January Agnus Dei Deadline is December 17th**



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