

Pastor Jeanie's December News

Here we are again: waiting, watching, and wondering through Advent. We have so much to do, so much to accomplish before December 31st ends 2025. Presents still to buy, work still to finish, parties to host and

attend—so very much to do! And yet so little time to remember... So little quiet time to consider... So little time to look forward to what is coming... Into our world and into our hearts...

Advent has a way of sneaking up on us just as the calendar fills to the brim. We know it's supposed to be a season of holy anticipation, but life rarely slows down simply because the church calendar says it should.

And so Advent asks us, gently, persistently, to carve out space anyway. Not perfect space, not magazine-spread peace and serenity, but a few honest moments to breathe and wonder: *What is God doing in me this year? What needs to be born? What needs to be let go?*

During this Advent season we will gather on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. to

reflect on our journey to Jesus' birth. Advent begins the church year and sets the stage for Christ's coming among us, but it is also an invitation to prepare, to reflect, and to slow down just enough to notice God's movement in our midst. This year we'll be guided by an ELCA resource titled **"Waiting, Watching, and Wondering."**

"In the spirit of 'keeping vigil,' the first week centers upon watching for Christ's coming again. The second week calls us to prayerful waiting in preparation for the coming of Jesus. Drawing upon the idea that 'wisdom begins in wonder,' the third week invites us to embrace imaginative wonderment at the things of God."

I don't know about you, but that sounds like a breath of fresh air in a season when I often feel more frazzled than faithful. Watching. Waiting. Wondering. Three postures that don't require any shopping, wrapping, calculating, or scheduling—just a heart willing to pause and pay attention.

And, of course, this particular Advent finds this congregation preparing for more than Christmas. **2026 will bring a new Pastor to United in Faith**, and with her will come new opportunities to "be God's hands, feet, and voice in the world." Preparing the way is part of our mission as Christ followers; being ready, spiritually, emotionally, communally, is too.

Advent gives us practice at that kind of readiness.

So as we move through these December days, may we listen a little more closely for Emmanuel—God with us—and for the cries of the least among us. May our waiting be holy, our watching attentive, and our wondering wide and brave, trusting that Christ is coming to make all things new, including us.

Pr. Jeanie