

narthex



CLOSE to HOME

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2021

When something hits “close to home”, it affects us deeply. It may surface tender memories, heavy longings, or vulnerable realities. This is especially true in the Advent and Christmas season, where love and loss, joy and pain, fullness and emptiness, all feel close to the surface. Our spiritual practices in this season give us space to both express these longings and honor the way God comes close to us right in the midst of these realities. God makes a home with us, whether our home is full of noise, joy, silence, or tears.

Our Advent theme this year is “Close to Home”, using the beautiful artwork, creative liturgy, and inspiring resources of *A Sanctified Art*. We will travel through stories in scripture, acknowledging the gritty realities of daily life alongside the joy of discovering the home God is building right here among us. We will gather in the home our sanctuary provides, celebrating our return while longing for the day when all feel safe to regather in person. We will acknowledge the “already but not yet” tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God’s promised day—our everlasting home—is not fully realized.

To prepare for Advent, ask yourself: What has hit close to home for you in this last year? How do you need to experience God making a home with you? How might we all pray for and build a home for all, here and now, that looks and feels more like our promised home?

This Advent, may we be comforted by the One who dwells intimately with us. May we expand safety and sanctuary for everyone wandering far from home. May we come home—wherever home is found—to live fully with joy, hope, and courage.

This special edition Advent Narthex is filled with many opportunities to serve, celebrate, worship, and learn as we explore what it means to be “Close to Home”.

Pastor Julie

ADVENT 2021

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ADVENT WORSHIP SCHEDULE

NOV. 28 @ 10 AM.....HOMESICK

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Luke 21:25-36 - We light the Candle of Hope

DEC. 5 @ 10 AM.....LAYING THE FOUNDATION

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Luke 1:57-80 - We light the Candle of Peace

DEC. 12 @ 10 AM.....A HOME FOR ALL

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zephaniah 3:14-20 - We light the Candle of Joy

DEC. 19 @ 10 AM.....SEEKING SANCTUARY

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Luke 1:39-55 - We light the Candle of Love

TUES. DEC. 21 @ 7 PM.....THE LONGEST NIGHT

WINTER SOLSTICE

December 21 is the longest night of the year. This service is designed to provide space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance. In this pandemic season of life, grief and loss may be magnified and nearly universal, so we hope this brief service will be a sacred space of calm, quiet, and healing.

FRI. DEC. 24.....INVITED HOME

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:30 pm Family Friendly Worship

Christmas Carols, stories, and activities geared toward families with children.

10 pm Candlelight Worship

With music and stories for all ages

DEC. 26 @ 10 AM.....CHOSEN HOME

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Luke 2:41-52

ADVENT RESOURCES FOR HOME

CREATE YOUR OWN ADVENT BAG

Bags and Advent Resources are available in the Gathering Space to assist you in observing Advent in your own home! We have a variety of resources available and listed below, which are appropriate for all ages. Build your own bag of resources and create a space at home for your own special preparation for the Christ Child this season.

NATIVITY STICKERS FROM ILLUSTRATED MINISTRY

Build your own nativity throughout Advent, using these unique, hand-drawn and diverse stickers. A fun project for any age, stickers can be placed on colored backgrounds provided with the stickers.

CLOSE TO HOME ADVENT CALENDAR

An interactive advent calendar to hang on your wall or fridge. Each day presents activities on the theme of home, perfect for families and people of all ages!

CLOSE TO HOME ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOK

Art, poetry, songs, and reflections for the Season of Advent.

AT HOME CANDLE LITURGY

Readings and reflections for each Sunday of Advent, to participate in your own home.

ADVENT CANDLES*

Purple and pink taper candles for your home advent wreath, and a white pillar Christ Candle for the center.

**Suggested donation for a set of candles is \$10.*

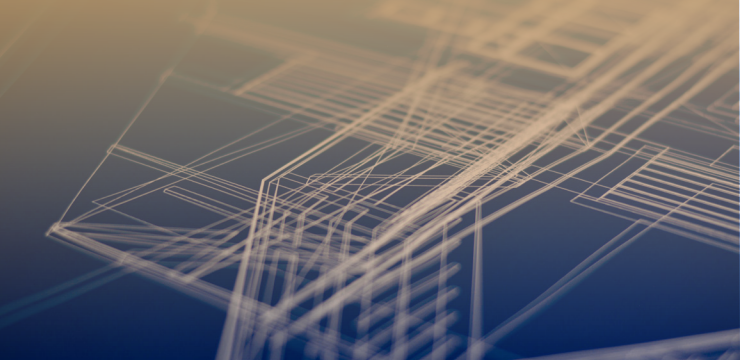


ADULT EDUCATION

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

**Wednesday mornings December 1, 8, 15
at 10 am in the Genesis Room**

Using the "Close to Home" resources from *Sanctified Art*, we will explore the stories and scriptures for Advent. The reflections will include artwork, poetry, discussion, and reflection time and will provide a respite from the busyness of the season in our church home.



FCC HAPPENINGS

CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS



Sunday, November 28 (The First Sunday of Advent)

Immediately following worship

Come young and old to join in the fun of decorating our tree, hanging wreaths, stringing garland, and illuminating outside as we prepare our hearts and sacred space to offer the warm hospitality of this sacred season.

No experience is required, and there is a job for everyone and all ages! Children will have their own special time of creating ornaments, and will join us at the end to add their creations to our tree. Light refreshments will be provided by Board of Congregational Connections.



The traditional Christmas Cookie Exchange is again being flipped upside down! The Congregational Connections and Diaconate Boards are joining forces to bring joy and Christmas cookies to folks from our congregation who could use an extra dose of Christmas cheer. But we need YOUR help!

1. Sign up to BAKE (see eblast or visit fccfaithful.org/happenings).
2. Bake 4 dozen (or more) of your favorite Christmas cookie.
3. Drop your donation on Sunday, December 12 between 9 am and noon at the Community House.

A team of folks will safely gather on Sunday at noon to create special cookie boxes, which will be delivered that afternoon to our older members, the homebound, and others who may be missing a bit of the holiday spirit! If you have questions, please contact Betsy Hanzelin at bhanzelin@fccfaithful.org or 708-704-7096.

FCC HAPPENINGS

FAITH IN ACTION



ANGEL TREE

The Board of Faith in Action has joined with our Community Partner, Bethel Family Resource Center in Chicago Heights, to serve individuals and families who are without homes, and who are currently housed in a local hotel. Angel Tree will provide basic assistance, clothing, and food to our neighbors in need.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

ADOPT

an individual or family,

PURCHASE

art supplies or craft kits, or

MAKE A MONETARY DONATION.

1. Visit fccfaithful.org/happenings or check your eblast to access the signup and wish lists.
2. Bring the unwrapped items to the FCC Community House on Sunday, December 19 between 10 am and noon. (Pick up can be arranged on request).

Monetary donations can be sent to Flossmoor Community Church (2218 Hutchison Rd., Flossmoor, IL 60422) or through our online giving portal at fccfaithful.org/giving. Please indicate "Angel Tree" on your donation.

If you have questions or need more info, please contact Betsy Hanzelin at bhanzelin@fccfaithful.org or Jackie Riffice at jarriffice@comcast.net.



Intergenerational Build Project SAT. DEC. 4



**8 am - 4 pm in Park Forest
For Adults & Teens Ages 16+**

The Board of Faith in Action is sponsoring this Habitat for Humanity build in Park Forest to finish a home for a father and his two children, and they need our help. This is a multigenerational event for youth (age 16+) and adults who want to help. Registration is limited to 30 people. Lunch will be provided, and you must provide your own transportation. (We can help with carpooling.)

Habitat provides all the tools, building materials, and training; no construction experience is needed. Please register online at fccfaithful.org/happenings.

STOCK UP SUNDAY

**to benefit the Center for Food Equity in Medicine
Sunday, December 5**

Help fill the pantry for The Center for Food Equity in Medicine, located in the church basement. Their mission is to make certain that individuals navigating a cancer diagnosis or other chronic health conditions get the nutrition they need. While there is always a need for boxed and canned goods, this month we're focusing on PASTA AND SAUCES. Bag up some noodles and jars of assorted pasta sauces and drop them in the basket when you walk into church on December 5.

Children's Ministries



Ornament Craft & Deck the Halls

**Sunday, November 28 - First
Sunday of Advent**

To celebrate the beginning of Advent, Children will be making ornaments after their lesson during Children's Worship. Following worship, all are invited to help Deck the Halls (see page 4). Children will be invited to hang their special ornament on the tree in the Sanctuary. If you are unable to attend and would like the items to make a Christmas Ornament, please contact Leslie Maxie at lmxie@fccfaithful.org to arrange for a bag of supplies to make one at home.



ALL ABOARD
for a Drive-In Viewing
at the Community House
Wednesday, December 15
at 6pm!

THE POLAR EXPRESS

Come in your jammies and bring your stuffies and popcorn for a drive-in viewing of The Polar Express in the Community House parking lot!

This event is FREE!

BUT...help fill the pantry for The Center for Food Equity in Medicine with pastas and sauces. (See page 5 for their mission and details.)



Family Christmas Party

Sunday, December 19

The whole family is invited immediately following worship for a brief party including Christmas music, treats and games in Fellowship Hall!



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YOUTH MINISTRIES

Save the Date for the **YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Sunday, December 12

White elephant sock exchange,
fun and games, plus of course, an
opportunity to do some good!
Stay tuned to eblast for details!



MORE NEWS

Announcing our new Interim Organist & Accompanist, **Jeff Hamrick**

Jeff is delighted to be able to make music for a welcoming and diverse congregation just around the corner from his house. He and his partner Chris moved from Chicago to Flossmoor Park in late 2019 and have enjoyed getting to know their new neighbors, several of whom recommended the position to Jeff! He previously served as keyboardist and music director at Countryside Church UU in Palatine and, most recently, at First Unitarian Church of Chicago in Hyde Park. He has been active throughout his three decades in Chicagoland as a singer, accompanist, and Slavic and Romance languages diction coach and works as an editor at the University of Chicago Press. If there is time to spare, you can find Jeff puttering around in his backyard "woods," trying to figure out how to restore the ecosystem one native plant at a time.



Have you turned in your pledge for 2022?

November 14 was Commitment Sunday, and
we celebrate that we are 1/3 of our way to our goal!



**There are many different ways to be "IN!"
Please be in prayer for the commitment you can
make to support our ministry.**





Flossmoor Community Church
Where Christ is Central and Diversity is Cherished

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