



# December Newsletter 2024

**“Inviting ALL to Live  
the Gospel through  
Faith, Love, and  
Compassion”**

10970 185th Street West ♦ Lakeville MN 55044 ♦ 952-435-5757 ♦ [www.familyofchrist.com](http://www.familyofchrist.com)

## Message from Pastor

After dropping cable, I was recently flipping through the “free” channels my outdated rabbit ears were picking up when I came across a “Classic” cartoon station. Watching for a couple of minutes I realized that the cartoons I watched taught me that dynamite and quicksand were going to be pretty constant concerns in my adult life. You don’t want to get blown up? Know what TNT stands for, keep an eye on the fuse at all times, and watch out for Wile E Coyotes. Don’t want to drown in quicksand? Read the signs, watch where you’re going, and know where the large branches and/or vines are nearby. Piece of cake. Yet, in all these cartoon-based life lessons, no one warned me about laundry and dishes. They’re relentless! You eat, then you have more dirty dishes to wash. You get dressed in the morning, and by the end of the day, you have clothes to wash. It’s a never-ending cycle! And if you’re like me, it took a while to figure out the ongoing cycle that life was about preparing for the extraordinary while living in the seemingly drudgery of the ordinary.

As we begin the season of Advent leading to Christmas and the beginning of the church year, you may be feeling the repetition of it all. The pressure to make Advent and Christmas feel special by being extra amazing. The crunch of finishing up end-of-year projects and new year’s promises. The busyness of extra rehearsals, gatherings, travel, parties. Yet just as our society enters a season of ramping up for Christmas celebrations and winter break, our faith invites us to slow down. The church calendar says, “Wait. Don’t rush in. Prepare.” And as amazing as the Christ child coming is, we’re not preparing for dynamite or quicksand. Our preparations to greet Jesus happen in the oh-so ordinary things of life, because that’s where we also need a savior. So join us for worship and all the other activities we can share over the next month. Spend some time waiting in hope, peace, joy and love because these are the gifts we need each and every day. These are the gifts that come to us over and over in a God who shows up in a simple manger year after year.

Peace,

Pastor Brent



## Advent and Christmas

**Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Advent Band**  
**9:30am**

**Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**Christmas Pageant**  
**9:30am**  
**Trinity Care Ctr**  
**1:30pm**

**Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**Woman’s Advent Luncheon**  
**11:30am**

**Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Holden Christmas**  
**9:30am**

**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Christmas Eve**  
**Service**  
**4:30pm**

**Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**Christmas Stories & Songs**  
**9:30am**



## Come, Let Us Adore Him

The Season of Advent is one of the highlights of the Christian Year. With this season, we launch another cycle of living into the story of Jesus and the church that emerges—of which we are a part.

We sometimes think we need to find a new way of telling this story and do something fresh and unique. There is certainly space for that, but tradition and remembering the songs and stories from our beginnings can be a powerful invitation to grow as disciples as we grow closer to Christ. So, we invite you to join us as we consider the Preparations and the Passion of Advent so that we might embrace the Presence and Promise of the Christ who comes. So, come, let us adore him.

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**Christmas Eve at Family of Christ**  
**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Join us for a candlelight service**  
**at 4:30pm.**



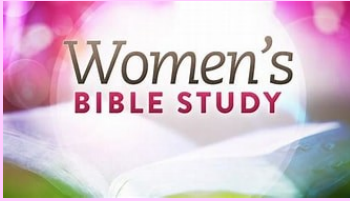
### **Advent Band, December 8th**

Currently play and instrument? Played one many years ago and want to dust it off and see if you still have it?

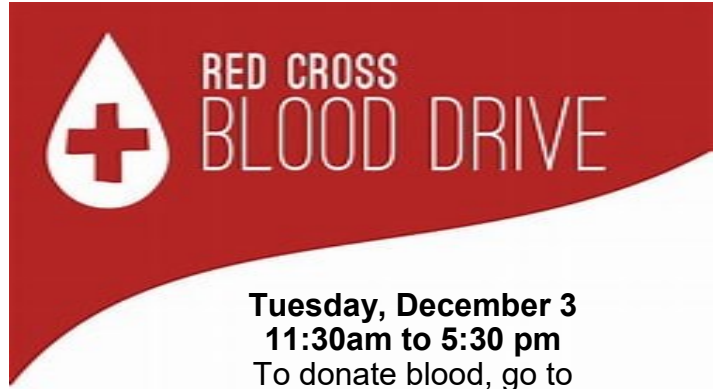
Then join us as we celebrate the Advent and Christmas season with a Sunday filled with instrumental music.

All abilities welcome to join us as we hope to celebrate the coming of our savior.

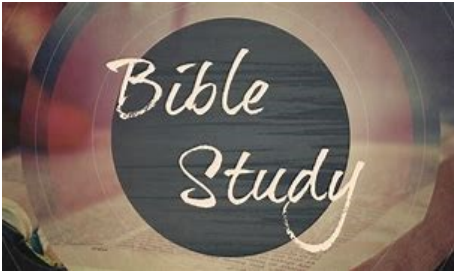
**Contact Jeremy Mann**  
**for additional information.**



The FOC Women's Bible Study will meet  
**Monday, Dec. 2nd at 10:00am**  
 at Family of Christ.  
 We will continue our study of  
*Ephesians: God's Power Works In Us.*  
**All our Welcome!**



**Tuesday, December 3**  
**11:30am to 5:30 pm**  
 To donate blood, go to  
[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)  
 Contact Glenda Lind for more information.



**Tuesday Morning Bible Study**  
 Join us on Tuesday mornings from  
 7:00-8:00 AM in the conference room as  
 we share our stories and grow our faith by  
 studying the scriptures.  
 You can either join us in-person or online.



**Trinity Care Center Gift Tree and Party**  
**Sunday, December 15th**

Join us in one or two ways as we support the residents at  
 Trinity Care Center.  
 Pick a stocking from the gift tree in the narthex, take the name out, write  
 your name next to the resident's name on the sign-up sheet,  
 then buy and wrap a gift/s for that person.  
**Please bring the labeled wrapped gift/s to church by December 8th.**



Then join in helping the residents celebrate the season by delivering the  
 presents to them, singing carols at the party, and enjoying refreshments  
 as we get to know the residents on Sunday, December 15th at 1:30.  
 Come dressed in festive wear- all ages welcome. It is a wonderful way  
 to serve together as a family. Please sign up on the clipboard so we  
 know how many can help at the party.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have graciously accepted to help  
 with our Sunday School, Confirmation, or Youth Group this year.  
 Our programming thrives because of you. Thanks for being a shining  
 example of service to others. It has been a great fall  
 and we look forward to a wonderful year supporting our youth, young  
 and old, on their faith journey. So, a huge thank you to you all!





**Christmas Pageant  
The Biggest and Best Christmas Gift  
December 15th**

It's time for the Family of Christ's Christmas Pageant. If you haven't already, please let us know if you (adults welcome) or your children would like to be a part of the program. Whether that's through acting, singing, helping with props and costumes or anything else, we can use your help. Contact Dana or Pastor Brent if you are interested in helping or participating.



Below is the schedule for this year's Christmas Program and Sunday School.

Sunday, Nov. 24 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS  
 Sunday, Dec. 1 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS  
 Sunday, Dec. 8 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS  
 Saturday, Dec. 14 Dress Rehearsal 9:30-11:00am for all  
 Sunday, Dec. 15 Christmas Pageant 9:30am – Arrive by 9:00am

Dec 22 and 29: No Class- Holiday Break

**Save the Date: Saturday, December 21st  
Advent Luncheon and Fundraiser for Messiah  
Community Food Shelf**

Come enjoy the Christmas spirit and join in our potluck luncheon, basket raffle, and fellowship time on December 21st at 11:30. All women and girls are invited. (Grandmas, cousins, neighbors, and friends too.)

It is a potluck with a \$5.00 donation.

Sign up on the clipboard and on the Sign-up Genius.

Please consider donating a basket!

Raffle tickets will be on sale after worship on Dec. 8th and 15th and the day of the luncheon.

Proceeds will go to Messiah Lutheran Food Shelf.

We are looking for a few members to help with this event.

Look for a volunteer sign-up genius. Reach out to [Dana@familyofchrist.com](mailto:Dana@familyofchrist.com) if you are interested.



**Raffle Basket Donations**

Our Advent Luncheon and Fundraiser will be here before you know it. It is time to start planning a basket to donate. Bring the baskets in any time between now and Dec. 8th if you can. We will be selling tickets ahead of our luncheon. Those dates will be Dec. 8th and Dec. 15th.

So, we need baskets to raffle off! They do not need to be big and extravagant, just something fun!

We will also auction off any larger items (event tickets, cabin getaways, etc.)

Need an idea?? The options are endless...

- |                    |                   |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Spa Basket         | Date Night Basket | Fishing Basket   |
| Baking Basket      | Ice Cream Basket  | Gift Wrap Basket |
| Kid's Craft Basket | Book Basket       | Coffee Basket    |
| Movie Basket       | Chocolate Basket  | Wine Basket      |





### Wednesday Night Schedule:

- 6:00pm: Pizza Dinner
- 6:20 - 7:40pm: Confirmation
- 7:40 - 8:40pm: Youth Group



### Youth Schedule:

- Nov 26: Youth game night 6th-12th grade
- Dec 4: Confirmation and Youth Group
- Dec 8: Youth Sunday
- Dec 11: Confirmation and Youth Group
- Dec 18: Christmas Party
- Dec 27 and Jan 1: No Class – Holiday Break



### Youth Game Night

Do you love games and hanging out with friends? Are you a 6th-12th grader? If so, then come and join us on Tuesday, November 26th from 6:30-9:00. Feel free to bring caffeine-free drinks to share and/or a snack to share. Bring your favorite games as well. It is also a great opportunity to invite a friend or two. Adult chaperones are welcome as well.

### Mission Trip

Calling all families of 6th-12th graders. We will be headed to a Native American Reservation in Lake Traverse, SD the week of **July 11-16, 2025**. If your youth has a heart for serving, meeting new people, becoming closer to each other and growing in their faith, then have them join us on our Mission Trip next summer. The cost is \$575.

A \$50 deposit was due to secure a spot.

We are working on Fundraising Opportunities. Our first one is Nov. 24th bagging groceries. If you have other ideas, please contact Dana at [dana@familyofchrist.com](mailto:dana@familyofchrist.com)



### Fall Youth Retreat

Twenty-two of our youth had a wonderful weekend at Camp Spring Lake Retreat Center in Rosemount Oct. 4-6th. It turned out to be perfect, and our youth had fun exploring their faith, eating yummy food and snacks, playing games, Grogg in the dark woods and of course battling it out in the hunger games.

Thanks to Brent, Dana, and Nick Hendrickson for helping lead and chaperone.



**December Mission of the Month**  
**FAMILY OF CHRIST COMMUNITY FUND**

Helping and encouraging people of Family of Christ and those around us is an important part of family of Christ. Each year we collect donations for this fund so we can help those in need and encourage one another in faith. Please consider making a donation to this fund or buy some gift cards and send them to church.

**2025 Statement of Intent Pledge Cards:**

If you have not already turned in your pledge card for 2024 they are available from the church office or online.

Please contact Linda at [linda@familyofchrist.com](mailto:linda@familyofchrist.com).

**DEADLINE FOR 2024 GIVING:**

**Please note all gifts for 2024 need to be received in the office by Sunday December 29th.**

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Linda

**Thank you for all your gifts to Family of Christ.**



**The Church Office is open**  
**Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays**  
**8:30am to 3:00pm.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Sunday, December 22nd @ 6:30pm**  
**CHRISTMAS CAROL SING-ALONG**  
**with COCOA, COFFEE AND COOKIES**

You are invited to the  
Third Annual Caroling Event.  
Join Jon and Solveig Englund at their home for a  
fun evening of music making.  
Text Solveig for her Lakeville address:  
(480) 406-4066

*"FoCus" is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.  
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.*

**Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:**

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Musicians:	Mary Wescott Ann Mikiska Solveig Englund Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

**Family of Christ Lutheran Church**  
is a member of the **ELCA**

Email us at:  
[office@familyofchrist.com](mailto:office@familyofchrist.com)  
Visit us at: [www.familyofchrist.com](http://www.familyofchrist.com)  
Telephone: 952-435-5757



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### Tanzania Thank You, Asante Sana

Thank you to all those who helped support Ann, Tami, and Pastor Brent as they visited our partner congregation and larger Lutheran church in Tanzania.

They will formally share their journey in the new year, but stop and ask them about their experiences with our family of Christ across the world. We look forward to hearing how we can continue to support and encourage our communities of faith in the future.

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### Tanzania Scholarships THANK YOU!

Thanks to all that donated to the Scholarships for Tanzania Secondary Students. We raised \$8,400.

In addition the Illula Hospital Team raised \$3,500 at craft sales this fall.

Thank you all for your generosity!



### **Dates to Remember**

- Sun. Nov 24: Program Practice BEGINS**
- Tues. Nov 26: Youth Game Night**
- Wed. Nov 27: No Conf/Youth Group**
- Sun. Dec 1: Trinity Care Gift Tags available  
Program Practice**
- Tue. Dec 3: Red Cross Blood Drive**
- Sun. Dec 8: Advent Band/Youth Sunday  
Raffle Basket tickets go on sale  
Program Practice**
- Sat. Dec 14: Program Practice**
- Sun. Dec 15: Program during service  
Trinity Care Party**
- Wed. Dec 18: Youth Party**
- Sat. Dec 21: Advent Luncheon**
- Sun. Dec 22: Holden Christmas  
Christmas Caroling**
- Tues. Dec 24: Christmas Eve Service**
- Sun. Dec 29: Christmas Stories & Songs**

### **Vision Statement**

*Family of Christ invites ALL to Live the  
Gospel though Faith, Love, and  
Compassion*



### **Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:**

**Faitch**  
**Accceptance**  
**Meaningful relationships**  
**Invide**  
**Love**  
**Youth**