

ADVENT 2016



anticipate...

**"But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD,
I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me."
Micah 7:7**

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 18, 2016

9:30 a.m.

Gathering Time
Passing of the Peace
Greeting

Please complete the connect card and place it in the offering plate.

Invitation to Worship

*Opening Hymn 175

Once in Royal David's City

Lighting of the Advent Love Candle

Martha Wallace and Mercedes Martinez

Abby Luchsinger and Dan & Kari Taylor

Special Music by our Pre-K and K children

Come On Ring Those Bells

Jingle Bells (handbells)

The Christmas Story (poem with movements)

Scripture Reading

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, Barb Johnson

Matthew 1:18-25 (Joseph's Story), Aaron Bryant

Ministry Highlight

Covenant Pines Ministries

David Cairns

*Song

The Power of Your Love

Prayer of the People

Giving and Living Out of Our Abundance

Choral Offertory

A Little Child Will Come To Lead Us (Don Besig)

Children in grades Pre-K through 2nd grade are invited to continue worshipping in Children's Church.

Please meet the teachers in the back of the Sanctuary after the offertory.

Message

anticipate... LOVE

Dave Brand

*Closing Hymn 78

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

*Sending Words

Micah 7:7

Postlude

Prepare the Royal Highway (arr. Michael Burkhardt)

Prayer Time for health and wholeness is offered in the Prayer Chapel following Worship.

TODAY

Welcome to Worship at First Covenant Church! *Wherever you find yourself on your journey of faith, we are glad you are here. The connect card in your bulletin provides a way to give or receive information, or to ask for prayer. Many are already part of our e-mail communication. If you would like to receive periodic church updates electronically, please indicate this on your connect card. Place your completed connect card in the offering plate.*

The Advent Candle is lit this morning by some of our prayer partners: Martha Wallace and Mercedes Martinez, as well as Abby Luchsinger and Dan & Kari Taylor. All youth, grades 7-12, are paired with an adult who commits to praying for them in the coming year. These special relationships are meaningful to those involved, and are a key way that we support our youth and families intergenerationally.

We welcome Steve Pittman, our new Gospel Choir Director! Steve, a Twin Cities native, is a gifted singer and musician who loves to inspire others through the gifts that God has given him. It is his hope, that as he utilizes those gifts, others will be compelled to have a deeper understanding and relationship with Christ.

A huge "thank you" to Sandy Whitby for all her work in putting together our Pre-K and Kindergarten Christmas music for this morning.

We are grateful that Dave Cairns is joining us today to share with us in Worship. Dave is the Executive Director of Covenant Pines Ministries, which includes Covenant Pines Bible Camp and Silver Beach Ministry in McGregor, MN, Adventurous Christians Ministry in Grand Marais, MN, and Day Camp Ministry.

Today we welcome Dave Brand as our speaker in Worship. Family ... wife Joan, daughter Jenna & son Joel ... member of FCC since 1971 ... Chair of FCC Leadership Team since September 2015 ... retired from 3M ... lives in Payne Phalen neighborhood ... loves to read.

9:30am

Nursery Care, (birth through age 3), *Rooms 105 & 106*

Children's Church, children pre-k - 2nd grade are dismissed with leaders during Worship and will return with leaders during the final song of Worship, *Room 104*

10:30am

Fellowship Time, *Upper Fellowship Hall*

10:40am

No Youth Group Music Lessons until further notice.

11:00am

Nursery Care, (birth through age 3), *Room 105*

Sunday School, (Pre-K - K), *Room 106*

Oliver! Musical Rehearsal, (Gr. 1-6), *Lower Fellowship Hall*

Confirmation, *Game Room*

Youth Sunday School, (Gr. 7-12), *Graffiti Room*

Adult Spiritual Growth Hour, *Upper Fellowship Hall*

Join us as Paige Mann leads us into the history behind some classic Christmas carols.

12:00-3:00pm

Caroling Extravaganza, *Pastor Anne and Gordy's home, 1108 E. Hyacinth Ave., St. Paul*

Due to the freezing temperatures, there has been a change in plans. At 12:00pm, we will meet in Upper Fellowship Hall to get organized with plans and rides. We will then drive to Pastor Anne and Gordy's house to sing some Christmas Carols, have chili and hot dogs, fellowship together, and have the option of watching the Vikings game.

TODAY (CONTINUED)

The Black Nativity - Pick up your pre-paid tickets today. See Susan Carlson at the table in Upper Fellowship Hall after Worship today. This event is now sold out.

Christmas Memorial forms and envelopes are available today at the Welcome Center. The poinsettias that brighten the sanctuary for Christmas are purchased with the donations given in memory of loved ones, who will be listed in the bulletin on Christmas Eve. Include the names of your loved ones on the form, along with cash or a check made out to First Covenant Church. Place the envelope in the offering plate or Rachel Hank's mailbox in the church office. Thank you to all who have donated! Given the holiday schedule, people will be able to take the plants home following the service on January 1. **Deadline is today to make sure all names are printed in the bulletin.**

Giving Christmas Away, Christmas Tree in Upper Fellowship Hall

Deadline is today to return your unwrapped gifts, with the numbered ornament attached. Questions? Contact Judie Ramsey, judrams@yahoo.com.

New church directory and giving options verification, last day!

Tables near the Arcade Street west windows

If you have not already done so, we need everyone to stop today to look at your directory entry to indicate any changes, or to let us know if you choose to not be in the directory.

2017 Giving Envelopes are now available. Please stop at the table to pick yours up.

Paul Carlson Partnership Congo Clinic Display, Upper Fellowship Hall

Visit this display to learn more about the Congo Medical Clinic that FCC is helping to support through our 2016 Christmas Eve offering.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Stay connected: Stop by the Welcome Center to order a CD of any worship service. Weekly worship bulletins and podcasts can be found on the church website under the Worship and Arts tab. CDs of a session with Efrem Smith and FCC leadership can also be ordered.

The Alley Shoppe is closed during the Christmas season. Today is the last day to drop off items until January 2017. If you have items to donate, please hold onto them until then, or donate them to another charity. Thanks for your help!

Needed: a few greeters for Christmas Eve. Would you be able to greet folks coming in for the Christmas Eve Service on Saturday, December 24? You will need to arrive at 3:15pm to greet before the 4:00pm service begins. This "one time" commitment would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Tricia Sargent, 651-235-5359, or trish.sargent@hotmail.com.

THIS WEEK

Gospel Choir Rehearsal, Thursday, December 22, 6:00pm, Choir Room

Everyone is welcome to join us as we prepare to sing on Christmas Eve, December 24. CDs are available at the Welcome Center.

Christmas Eve Worship, Saturday, December 24, 4:00pm, Sanctuary

Invite your friends and family as we celebrate our Savior's birth through intercultural and intergenerational worship featuring our Gospel Choir, Sanctuary Choir and Handbell Choir. Our nursery will be open, but not staffed.

Christmas Day Worship, Sunday, December 25, 10:30am, Sanctuary

Join us for a more casual worship service as we continue to celebrate Jesus's birth.

LOOKING AHEAD

The church office and building will be closed on Mondays, December 26 and January 2.

New Year's Day Worship, Sunday, January 1, 10:30am, Sanctuary

"In it Together, A Community Prayer Gathering", Wednesday, January 4,

5:45pm: Dinner, 6:15pm: Prayer Gathering begins, First Covenant Church

All are encouraged to attend this community prayer gathering sponsored by Contender For the Faith Church, Family Values for Life and First Covenant Church, St. Paul. Childcare will be available for 6th grade and under.

Volunteers are needed to take down sanctuary decorations, Sunday, January 8, 5pm

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Michelle Fure, 651-707-7699 or mkib73@hotmail.com.

Prayer Partner Meet Up, Sunday, January 8, 10:30-11:00am, Graffiti Room

A gathering for youth and their adult prayer partners will be held during the Fellowship Hour on January 8. Prayer partner information will be sent out soon. Questions? Contact Kate Makosky, Minister of Youth and Families, kate@first-covenant.org.

Oliver! rehearsals: Following the Sunday, December 18 *Oliver!* rehearsal, we will take a break until **Sunday, January 8**, when we will resume our rehearsals.

Wednesday afternoon and evening programs begin again on Wednesday, January 11.

Adventurous Christians Winter Retreat, March 10-12, 2017

Adventurous Christians, Grand Marais, MN

Join us for a fun winter weekend in the beautiful Boundary Waters! This can be as relaxing or active of a weekend as you want at our Covenant owned camp just north of Grand Marais. There will be skiing, snowshoeing, broomball, eating, games, and relaxing. A sign up sheet will be at the Welcome Center in January. Please contact Mandy or Peter Griffin with any questions: mjcline8@gmail.com 612-369-0805.