



**Proclaiming God's Grace,
Creating Community,
Serving our Neighbors**

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Northminster News

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December 2018

Letter from the Pastor


Dear Northminster Family,

Over the years, I have practiced Advent in many ways. I find that the beginning of the season is a little awkward, like fumbling around waiting for something to happen. But as the season goes on, the practices begin to make more sense. Even when I miss a day, or even a whole week, I can feel the absence. This is why practice is so important. For this month, I've included just a short list of some possibilities. Try some of these, or find new ones. Pastor Jeny has included some of her practices in a later article. There is no exhaustion to the possibilities in Advent!

- *Hold a minute of silence before a family meal
- *Light a candle in your work space as a reminder.
- *Let your holiday decorating build over the season.
- *Find a journaling time each week for prayer.
- *Offer little gifts throughout the season as a way of protecting the day of Christmas for reflection and celebration.
- *Invite a new friend to dinner once a week.
- *Read a Psalm every day.
- *Read the first two chapters of Luke by reading only 5-10 verses a day.
- *Set one intention for the season and let a friend know about it.
- *Pray through O Come O Come Emmanuel, week by week.

Sometimes our greatest joy is in the preparation. The noise of our world will continue to increase, that is one thing that we can count on. We cannot stop it. However, we can prepare for a new kingdom. And we can begin to live that way right now, aligning ourselves with the everlasting king. It might not change everything, but it will change something.

I believe the word for us and for our church is just this: something. We might not be able to do everything, but that certainly leaves a lot of possibility for something. Advent is a time for something. All of our little somethings will add up as we prepare for the coming king. Come, Lord Jesus!

 *"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."*
-Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, Rev. Desmond Tutu

The Spirit of Christmas Neighborhood Party

December 9, 6:30-8:30pm

Bring all your friends and neighbors to share in some Christmas Spirit! Inspired by a request from some of our non-Christian neighbors who wanted an opportunity to come sing some carols with our amazing organ we are opening our hearts and our church to anyone who wishes to come and celebrate with us. We will have yummy treats, some fun holiday crafts, and then gather around to sing together. We want to show the whole neighborhood our Christmas Spirit and hospitality! We need volunteers to help provide cookies and cider, help with set-up and take-down, welcome hosts, and craft assistants. If you are willing to help, please contact Pastor Jeny at jeny.carlson@northminsterpres.org



Christmas Eve Service

December 24th, 8:00pm

Join us for this candlelight service celebrating the birth
of Jesus

Faith Formation: Focus on Advent

"Aslan" said Lucy "you're bigger".

"That is because you are older, little one" answered he.

"Not because you are?"

"I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger."

— C.S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Advent marks the beginning of our church year. It is a time of joyful anticipation of the birth of a baby: A baby who would change the course of human destiny. Each week of Advent during Sunday worship, we light a candle and touch on different parts of the Christmas story. Advent can also be a perfect time to bring the ritual and focus of our faith and relationship with Jesus into our daily lives at home. Advent is a great time to start a new practice because it's short-lived, and there are many resources out there to help you.

Advent calendars are an excellent start for young children. They can be as simple as putting a sticker on each day, or more complex like to opening a door or box to reveal a surprise. Taking that moment to connect together, offer a quick prayer or blessing, or reciting a scripture verse brings children into the daily practice of connecting with Jesus.

Advent Candles are another fabulous way to bring Advent home. There are some that have four candles, to light for each week. And there are some that have 24, so you can light one each night. As the days grow shorter, it can be an incredible visual to see the light grow brighter as we progress towards Christmas Eve, when the Light of the World was born.

For more personal practice, there are some wonderful Advent devotionals that offer scripture verse, a short message, and even some reflection questions. These can be done as a family or on your own. Our family will be doing *Advent in Narnia* by Heidi Haverkamp this year.

Whatever you try, don't be burdened by the practice. If you miss a week or a day, give yourselves the grace to pick back up when you can. The point is to enjoy the time together and to celebrate the waiting.

Singing w/ Zac

Sundays, 10:00am in the Whale Room

Want to learn new songs or get a chance to practice the hymns before church? Join Zac and our kids for this 20-minute sing-along every week!

An Advent Interfaith Prayer Invitation

During the weeks of advent, pray fervently for hope in the hearts and souls of Muslims, joy in the hearts and souls of Hindus and Buddhists, love in the hearts and souls of Christians and Jews and for peace for all peoples!

Christmas Pageant

Dec. 9, 10:30am in Sanctuary

Children and Youth are invited to participate in this fun annual tradition here at NPC! Zac will be leading our young worship assistants in relating the story of Jesus' birth.

Rehearsal

Schedule:

Dec. 2,

12:00pm

Dec. 5:

7:00pm



Deacon's Corner

Those of us who are Deacons have been meeting and working in a variety of ways to manifest God's love and compassion in the world. We would like to share what we have been up to! In addition to agreeing on our job assignments, we have been looking at the three areas of our mission and considering where we are devoting our time and money. We want to be thoughtful about this and to put our efforts where they will do the most good.

1. Serving the congregation. We serve NPC's congregation by making sure there are greeters, ushers, and flowers on Sunday mornings. We are responsible for providing communion and leading intercessory prayer during worship. We also provide copies of the Upper Room for the congregation as well as church members in need.

2. Serving church members in need. This involves visiting homebound church members and extending friendship through cards, bringing flowers, bringing or sending Upper Rooms, making phone calls and occasionally providing meals and/or communion. It also means bringing members who can't drive to church. We are looking at ways to better organize ourselves to do this and for ways to foster a community of caring among our Northminster family. We are so thankful for the many caring people in our congregation who drive people to and from church and visit homebound members. That is a great gift.

3. Serving the community. We do this primarily by disbursing Deacons funds to organizations that are helping our neighbors in need. We also do this through periodic community drives, such as collecting sun screen for the homeless this summer and organizing a giving tree to benefit the women and children at Mary's Place at Christmas. We provide support by sharing flowers with neighbors, leading intercessory prayer, and participating in the prayer chain. We end up contributing most of our time and effort towards serving the congregation and helping to serve church members in need. We also distribute Deacons funds to organizations that serve needs in our community. At our November meeting we authorized distributing \$1,000 each to the Ballard Food Bank, the Mental Health Chaplaincy, and Northgate Elementary School (which has a high percentage of homeless and low income children).

We are prayerfully considering other ways to provide community service, perhaps through hands on projects. If you have suggestions, please let us know.

Thank-you for your generous support of our mission!

Liz Tennant, Moderator of Deacons

Alternative Christmas Faire

We're already announced PalCraft (Palestine) and Mennonite Missions (South Africa) as partners that will offer you opportunities to give twice! First your gift goes to those working for peace, justice and wholeness in our world; second, you'll have a card or certificate to put inside a holiday card or even under the Christmas tree creatively wrapped.

Two additional possibilities to bless our global neighbors: support secondary education for students in Rwanda (more details during November 25th worship) via Presbyterian World Mission, or elementary and middle school students in Central Asia (including an all-female math group) via Frontier Fellowship. 10,000 Villages will also be joining us this year. They represent Fair Trade artisans from around the world.

Make sure that you can attend one of the Faires – Sundays, December 9 and 16 – with the hope to have a miniature faire open on Wednesday, December 12 at the Friendship luncheon. See Trisha Wirta or Jonna Reeder to learn more. (Checks or cash accepted at any faire, but credit cards only on Sundays, technology permitting.)



Alternative Christmas Faire Committee,
Jonna Reeder and Trisha Wirta

Stewardship News:

We are coming to the end of our budget year and we are running behind in our annual income. As we all consider our stewardship and charitable giving, let's consider three things.

- 1) Donations in 2018 will help meet our current year expenses and keep us from needing to draw from reserves.
- 2) Estate planning gifts can cement our long-term support and help Northminster after we're gone.
- 3) Pledges and gifts in 2019 will help Northminster grow and evolve to meet the needs of our congregation and the ever-changing world.

Adult Ed: Be Inspired!

Join us Sunday mornings in January at 9am as we read through Rachel Held Evan's book *Inspired*.

Ms. Even's book explores our cultural and personal relationship with scripture and leads us in an examination of some of our more challenging understandings of the Bible and how it has been used (and abused). Please contact the church office if you would like to order a copy of the book, or purchase on your own.

Christmas Fellowship Lunch

December 12, 11:15am

A special Christmas lunch is planned with a surprise pre-event at 11:15. Holiday music will be provided by our Choir Director, Miriam Anderson. Please contact Jan Olson or Beth Schmidt with questions. Suggested donation, \$5.

LECTIONARY FOR SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

December 2 Advent 1	December 9 Advent 2	December 16 Advent 3	December 23 Advent 4	December 30 Christmastide
Luke 21:35-36	Luke 3:1-6	Luke 3:7-18	Luke 1:39-45	Luke 2:41-52

Northminster Neighborhood Clean-up Day!

November 11, 2018

“I wish to be useful, and every kind of service necessary to the public good becomes honorable by being necessary.”

~Nathan Hale





Around 25 folks gathered at Northminster on Sunday, November 11th to organize into groups and clean up around the church and into the neighborhood. People cleaned bathrooms and windows, changed light bulbs, cleaned-out closets and cupboards, spray-washed sidewalks and shoveled-out gutters. One crew weeded and pruned at the Manse, while another planted flowers at Saleh's and another pruned and weeded in the back garden of La Copa Café.

We also sent out letters and treats to local veterans in honor of Veteran's Day.

People were hard-working and cheerful, and we really got a lot done! We plan to do more of these clean-up days in the winter and spring. There are always maintenance projects around the church, and it was great to reach out into our neighborhood too.



NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

a village church in the city

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Please notify us with corrections if needed, or if you wish to stop receiving the Northminster News.

Looking Ahead

Sunday December 2

Adult Ed Class: Comparing Nativities

Wednesday December 5

Mocktails & Cheese Community Dinner

Sunday December 9

Christmas Pageant

Alternative Christmas Faire

The Spirit of Christmas

Neighborhood Party

Wednesday December 12

Christmas Fellowship Lunch

Sunday December 16

Alternative Christmas Faire

Sundays in January

Adult Ed Class: Inspired

Northminster Staff

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Rev. Dani Forbess

Associate Pastor

of Formation and Outreach

Jeny Carlson

Director of Community

& Youth Engagement

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