

Advent Devotional Room For Everybody



CHUMites,

The four weeks before Christmas are called Advent. Advent is the season of waiting for Christ to be born.

As we read the familiar Christmas story, we wait with Mary and Joseph who travel to Bethlehem to be counted in the census. However, our waiting is more than that. It's bigger than that. We aren't just waiting on the plot of a beautiful story that happened a long time ago.

When we wait during Advent, we are waiting for Christ to come again. We are waiting for Christ to be born in our hearts and in our world today.

God knows we need Christ to be born in our hearts. We are short tempered, sleep deprived, burned out and anxious. We waste time scrolling instead of paying attention to the people around us. We work extremely long hours at jobs that leave us feeling unsatisfied. We feel alone even when we are together because we are scared of being vulnerable and honest.

God knows we need Christ to be born in our world. Gun violence, poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, war, individual prejudices, and systemic oppression plague our societies. We have dehumanized each other in such a way that exclusion is the easy answer in almost any situation.

But that's not Christ's way.

Christ's way is one of making room for everybody and every body.

Let us devote ourselves to Christ's way of making room for the forgotten and excluded. May we pay attention to making room in all places. Because of Christ within us, we'll be able to do so with joy (not cynicism). And Christ will be born again, in the hearts of you and me. Together, we'll join God in the radical hospitality of making room for everybody!

It begins with prayer! Join me in reading this devotional as we open our hearts to Christ's transforming love this Advent.

Peace, Pastor Jill

ROOM FOR EVERYBODY



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This Advent devotional was written by Brian Sutton
with creative assistance from AI technology.

Advent Devotional: Room for Everybody

Week One: Hope – Making Room for the Forgotten

Scripture Focus: Mark 13:32–37

"But about that day or hour no one knows... Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the time will come."

The world says, "There is no room," but God begins with those overlooked—refugees, unhoused neighbors, queer and trans siblings, disabled bodies, the poor. Hope is God's way of making room where none seems to exist.

Lighting the Candle of Hope: Making Room for the Forgotten

One: Today we light the candle of Hope.

All: We light this candle for those who have been forgotten.

One: The world says, "There is no room," but God makes space for refugees, the unhoused, queer and trans siblings, disabled bodies, and the poor.

All: We say "Yes"—we will make room.

One: As this light shines, may we remember that hope begins when someone opens the door.

Prayer: God of Hope, awaken our hearts to those left out. May our lives reflect Your light and make room for all Your children. Amen.

November 30 – Watchful Hope

Scripture: Mark 13:33 – "Be alert! You do not know when the time will come."

Devotional:

Hope begins not with certainty, but with watchfulness. When Jesus tells his followers to stay awake, he isn't asking for sleepless anxiety but for spiritual attentiveness. To "keep awake" is to notice where God is moving—in quiet acts of kindness, in the faces of the forgotten, in the subtle cracks of despair where light seeps in. Advent invites us to watch the world not through eyes of fear, but through eyes of faith. Somewhere, God is already at work preparing space for love to be born again. The innkeeper who made room for Mary and Joseph did so not out of obligation, but because he was paying attention.

Prayer: God of hope, awaken me to Your presence in unexpected places. Let my watchfulness turn into compassion and my compassion into welcome. Amen.

December 1 – Saying Yes

Scripture: Luke 2:7 – “There was no room for them in the inn.”

Devotional:

The story of Christmas turns on a single “yes.” An innkeeper—whose name history does not record—opened a stable and made room for a young couple on the margins of society. In that humble “yes,” the Savior of the world found a place to be born. Hope is often hidden in small gestures that shift the story. When we say “yes” to welcoming someone the world has pushed aside, we echo that first act of hospitality that changed everything. Advent calls us to be brave enough to open the door, to make room even when our space feels full.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to say “yes” when others say “no.” May my life be a refuge where Your hope can be born. Amen.

December 2 – Hope for the Margins

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1 – “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse.”

Devotional:

When a tree is cut down, it looks lifeless. Yet from the stump, a small green shoot emerges—fragile, but alive. That’s how God’s hope works: from the remnants, from the forgotten places. Advent reminds us that hope isn’t born from abundance, but from lack. God grows beauty from brokenness, life from loss. For those who feel discarded or unseen, God’s promise is this: new life is already stirring. Hope never dies; it just waits for light.

Prayer: God of new beginnings, let your hope take root in the stumps of my life. Grow something holy where I thought nothing could live. Amen.

December 3 – Remember the Forgotten

Scripture: Psalm 146:7–9 – “The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down.”

Devotional:

Our God remembers the forgotten. While the world measures worth by productivity or popularity, God sees the unseen and calls them beloved. Advent invites us to join in this remembering—to see with divine eyes. The shepherds, the poor, the marginalized, the weary—all are precious in God’s sight. To remember the forgotten is to resist the world’s hierarchy and restore God’s balance. When we do this, we don’t just remember others; we rediscover our own humanity.

Prayer: Compassionate God, remind me that no one is beyond Your care. May I remember those You remember, and love those You love. Amen.

December 4 – Room for Difference

Scripture: Romans 15:7 – “Welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you.”

Devotional:

Christ’s welcome is radical. He didn’t just make room for those who looked, thought, or lived like him—he opened the table to all. True hope makes room for difference, not as a burden, but as a blessing. When we create communities where every body and every story belongs, we reflect the heart of Christ. Advent hope is not uniformity but unity—a tapestry of diverse lives woven together by love.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to welcome others as You have welcomed me—with open arms and an open heart. Amen.

December 5 – The Yes That Changes Everything

Scripture: Luke 1:38 – “Let it be with me according to your word.”

Devotional:

Mary’s “yes” was not naïve—it was courageous. She said yes to uncertainty, yes to carrying God’s promise into a world that might reject her. Each Advent, we are invited to echo Mary’s “yes.” God’s hope waits for our consent—to be born in our actions, our generosity, our courage. Saying yes doesn’t mean we understand the path; it means we trust the One who walks it with us.

Prayer: Holy God, help me to say yes to You today. May my openness make room for Your hope to live through me. Amen.

December 6 – Watch and Make Room

Scripture: Mark 13:37 – “What I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake.”

Devotional:

Advent hope is about readiness—not fear of the unknown, but faith in what God will do next. “Keep awake” is not a command to exhaustion, but to expectation. God is coming—not just in Bethlehem long ago, but in the neighbor who needs compassion, in the child who needs safety, in the stranger who needs welcome. We keep awake by keeping our hearts open. When we make room for others, we make room for God.

Prayer: God of hope, keep me awake to Your presence. Let my life be a place where the forgotten find room and where Your hope finds a home. Amen.

Week Two – Peace: Making Room in All Places

Scripture Focus: Isaiah 40:3–8

"A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'"

God's peace is embodied, not abstract. John the Baptist reminds us to prepare space—clear barriers, level inequities, smooth a path for all bodies in all places. Peace is not the absence of tension but the presence of justice and accessibility.

Lighting the Candle of Peace: Making Room in All Places

One: Today we light the candle of Peace.

All: We light this candle to remind us that God's peace is embodied, not abstract.

One: Like John the Baptist, we prepare the way—clearing barriers, leveling inequities, and smoothing paths for all bodies in all places.

All: We prepare space for every person to belong.

Prayer: God of Peace, help us to build accessible paths, open doors, and level ground. May Your peace dwell wherever we make room. Amen.

December 7 – A Path in the Wilderness

Scripture: Isaiah 40:3 – "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord."

Devotional:

The wilderness is where peace begins. Not in comfort or control, but in the raw, open places where we must depend on God. John the Baptist's voice echoed through the wilderness, calling people to prepare—not by escaping the rough places, but by transforming them. Advent peace is not the erasure of difficulty; it is God's presence in the middle of it. Our task is not to pave over the wilderness but to find holy ground within it.

Prayer: God of the wilderness, prepare my heart to be a path for Your peace. Where my life feels uneven, make me ready for Your coming. Amen.

December 8 – Barriers Removed

Scripture: Luke 3:5 – "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low."

Devotional:

God's peace levels the ground so everyone can walk together. The mountains of pride and valleys of oppression must be reshaped for the sake of the community. Peace is not passive acceptance—it is active participation in justice. As followers of Christ, we are called to clear barriers that prevent belonging: social, physical, economic, or spiritual. When all people can stand on level ground, peace is possible.

Prayer: God of equity, give me the courage to remove barriers that keep others from Your love. Let my actions prepare a level path for all. Amen.

December 9 – The Work of Peace

Scripture: Matthew 5:9 – "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."

Devotional:

Peace rarely arrives by accident. It is cultivated, tended, and sometimes hard-won. Jesus blesses the peacemakers—not the peacekeepers—because peace built on avoidance is fragile. True peace requires truth-telling, listening, forgiveness, and courage. As God's children, we inherit this calling to be bridge builders in a world divided by fear. In our conversations, communities, and churches, we can practice peace as a daily discipline of love.

Prayer: Prince of Peace, shape my heart into a peacemaker's heart. Where there is division, help me bring understanding. Where there is harm, help me bring healing. Amen.

December 10 – Embodied Peace

Scripture: John 14:27 – "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."

Devotional:

Jesus' peace is not merely an idea—it is embodied in relationship, touch, and presence. When Jesus says, "My peace I give to you," He offers Himself. Peace is something we live, not just something we speak. It moves through our bodies as gentleness, through our hands as service, through our hearts as grace. Advent reminds us that God's peace entered the world in a body—the body of a child.

Prayer: Jesus, let Your peace dwell in me. Help my body, words, and actions carry Your calm and compassion into the world. Amen.

December 11 – Accessibility as Peace

Scripture: *Galatians 3:28* – “There is no longer Jew or Greek... for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”

Devotional:

God's peace dismantles exclusion. In Christ, all barriers of hierarchy and identity dissolve into beloved belonging. Yet in our world, many still struggle to access what others take for granted—safe spaces, mobility, inclusion, affirmation. Advent invites us to consider peace through accessibility: peace that opens doors, widens aisles, and redesigns systems to include every body. Peace is when everyone has room to move freely and fully in God's world.

Prayer: Inclusive God, make me aware of the spaces that exclude. Show me how to be part of building a community where all belong and thrive. Amen.

December 12 – Peace That Holds

Scripture: *Psalms 85:10* – “Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.”

Devotional:

Peace and righteousness are inseparable. Where there is justice, peace takes root; where there is peace, love blossoms. God's peace does not deny pain—it holds it tenderly, transforming it through compassion. The kiss of righteousness and peace is not sentimental; it is revolutionary. This Advent, may we seek a peace that holds steady in the face of chaos—a peace that rests on love and truth entwined.

Prayer: God of steadfast love, let righteousness and peace embrace in my life. Help me live with honesty, gentleness, and holy courage. Amen.

December 13 – Prepare the Space

Scripture: *Isaiah 40:8* – “The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.”

Devotional:

All things fade, but God's promise of peace endures. Advent peace invites us to prepare spaces that reflect eternal truth rather than temporary trends. The world often prizes speed, noise, and control, but peace grows in simplicity, silence, and surrender. To prepare space for God's peace is to clear away the clutter—externally and internally—that distracts from what lasts. Make room for what endures: God's word of love.

Prayer: Eternal God, clear away what is temporary and plant Your enduring peace within me. Help me prepare a still, open space for You. Amen.

Week Three – Joy: Making Room with Joy

Scripture Focus: *Isaiah 61:1–4*

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me... to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives.”

The prophet Isaiah imagines a world rebuilt on joy. Joy in Scripture is not shallow emotion—it is deep resistance to despair, a choice to trust that God is still at work. Mary's song and the joy of the shepherds remind us: joy makes room for every body to belong and to celebrate God's liberating love.

Lighting the Candle of Joy: Making Room with Joy

One: Today we light the candle of Joy.

All: We light this candle for the joy that resists despair.

One: Joy comes when captives are freed, when the lowly are lifted, and when every body finds belonging.

All: We rejoice in God's upside-down kingdom of love and liberation.

Prayer: God of Joy, may this light remind us that joy is not escape but strength. Fill us with the courage to celebrate and to make room with joy. Amen.

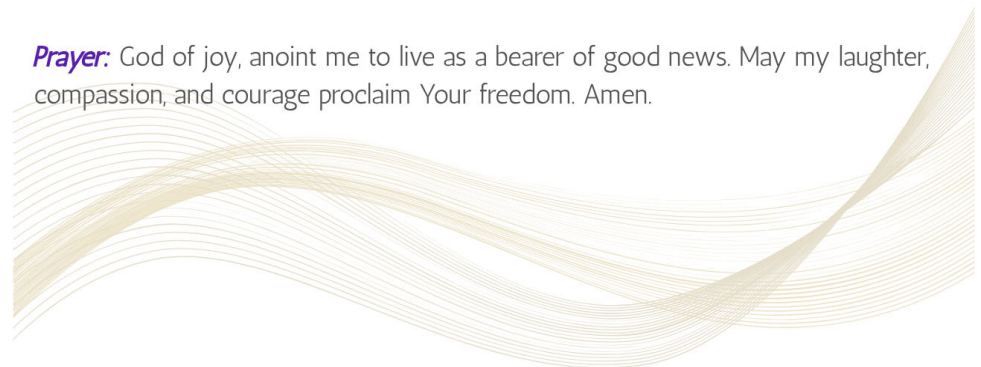
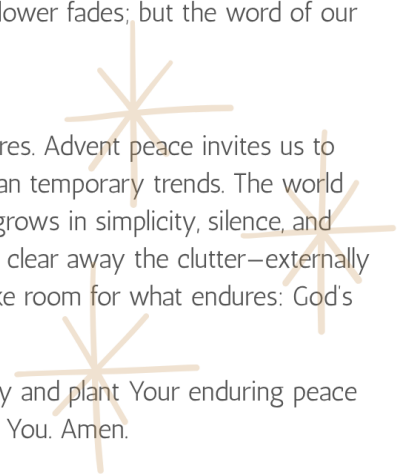
December 14 – Joy as Defiance

Scripture: *Isaiah 61:1* – “The Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the oppressed.”

Devotional:

Joy is not denial—it's defiance. To proclaim good news to the oppressed is to believe, even in hardship, that love is stronger than cruelty, and hope more enduring than hate. Isaiah's words echo across time, reminding us that joy is not reserved for the comfortable—it is born in the struggle for freedom. When we sing, laugh, and dance even in the shadow of empire, we bear witness to a God who cannot be silenced. Joy refuses to give despair the final word.

Prayer: God of joy, anoint me to live as a bearer of good news. May my laughter, compassion, and courage proclaim Your freedom. Amen.



December 15 – Rebuilding with Joy

Scripture: Isaiah 61:4 – “They shall build up the ancient ruins... they shall repair the ruined cities.”

Devotional:

Joy is the mortar that rebuilds what has been torn down. Rebuilding—whether relationships, communities, or hope—takes more than effort; it takes joy. Not the joy of pretending everything is fine, but the deep, sustaining joy that knows God is already at work among the rubble. When we join in the rebuilding of what's broken, we participate in God's restoration project. Each act of repair, no matter how small, is an act of joy-filled resistance against despair.

Prayer: Restoring God, let my hands and heart join in Your rebuilding work. May joy strengthen every repair I make in Your world. Amen.

December 16 – Mary's Song

Scripture: Luke 1:46–48 – “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Devotional:

Mary's song is the heartbeat of Advent joy. She sings while still pregnant with uncertainty, proclaiming that the mighty will fall and the humble will rise. Her joy is not naïve—it is revolutionary. Mary rejoices not because the world is already made right, but because she trusts that God's justice is unfolding. In a culture that often silences women's voices, her song resounds through the centuries, calling us to magnify God through our own joyful witness.

Prayer: God of Mary's song, help me to rejoice in Your unfolding justice. Let my life be a melody of joy that magnifies Your love. Amen.

December 17 – Joy in Community

Scripture: Philippians 4:4 – “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.”

Devotional:

Joy multiplies when it is shared. Paul wrote these words from prison, yet his joy was contagious. He knew that even in confinement, the Spirit's freedom could not be contained. Community joy does not ignore suffering—it holds it together with hope. When we gather in worship, in song, or around a table, we rehearse joy. Each shared story and each shared meal becomes a small echo of heaven's feast where all belong.

Prayer: Joyful God, thank You for the gift of community. Teach me to rejoice with others and to find strength in shared joy. Amen.

December 18 – The Oil of Joy

Scripture: Isaiah 61:3 – “To give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning.”

Devotional:

God trades our grief for grace—not by erasing pain, but by transforming it. The “oil of gladness” is not a denial of lament; it's the healing balm that reminds us we are not alone. The Spirit anoints us with this oil, marking us as people who can hold sorrow and joy together. The world teaches us to choose one or the other, but God's joy embraces both. Joy is what allows us to rise again, not because life is easy, but because love endures.

Prayer: God of comfort, anoint me with the oil of joy. Heal what is broken and teach me to find joy even in the ashes. Amen.

December 19 – Joy as Justice

Scripture: Psalm 98:8 – “Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy.”

Devotional:

Creation rejoices when justice reigns. Joy is ecological, cosmic—it ripples through the earth like laughter in a forest. When we live justly, creation joins our song. Advent joy is not only human; it is shared by every living thing that longs for renewal. The rivers clap, the hills sing, and we remember: joy and justice are intertwined. To work for justice is to make joy possible.

Prayer: Creator of joy, teach me to live in harmony with all creation. Let my pursuit of justice join the earth's joyful song. Amen.

December 20 – Joy That Makes Room

Scripture: Luke 1:52–53 – “He has brought down the powerful... and filled the hungry with good things.”

Devotional:

Joy makes room for others—it rearranges the world in favor of love. When Mary sings of the lowly being lifted and the hungry being fed, her joy becomes an act of revolution. Advent joy doesn't ignore injustice; it upends it. It fills empty tables and opens locked doors. Joy makes room for every body, because joy knows God is big enough for all. To live in Advent joy is to live as though the world is already being made new.

Prayer: God of abundance, let my joy make room for others. May I celebrate in ways that open doors and fill hungry hearts. Amen.

Week Four – Love: Making Room for God

Scripture Focus: 2 Samuel 7:4–9

"I have been with you wherever you went... and I will make for you a great name."

God's love is not distant—it moves into our messy, embodied, justice-hungry neighborhoods. In Christ, love pitches its tent among us and calls our ordinary lives holy ground. Making room for God means recognizing that God already makes room for us.

Lighting the Candle of Love: Making Room for God

One: Today we light the candle of Love.

All: Love moves into our neighborhoods and makes its home among us.

One: Like Mary, we say yes to God dwelling within us.

All: We open our hearts to Love made flesh.

Prayer: God of Love, dwell within us. May this light remind us that Your home is here—within our hearts, our church, and our world. Amen.

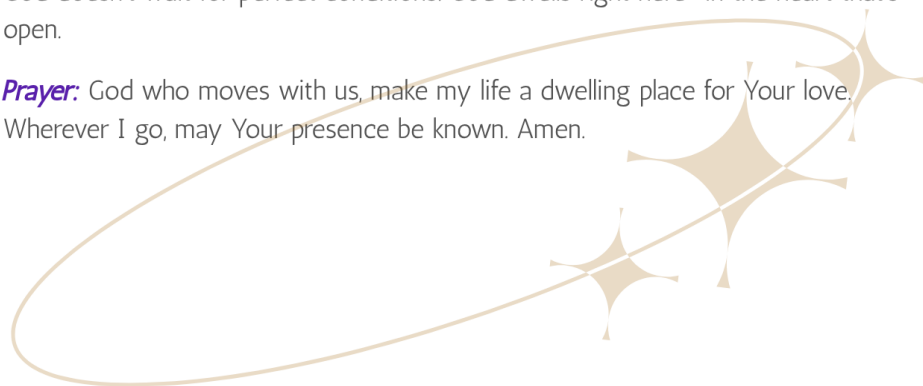
December 21 – Love Dwells Here

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:6 – "I have not lived in a house since the day I brought the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent."

Devotional:

God's home is mobile. In the wilderness, God dwelt in a tent—a reminder that divine love travels wherever the people go. God's presence is not confined to temples, pews, or steeples but is found in the streets, shelters, classrooms, and homes of those who love mercy and do justice. When we make room for love, we discover that love has already been moving toward us all along. Advent reminds us: God doesn't wait for perfect conditions. God dwells right here—in the heart that's open.

Prayer: God who moves with us, make my life a dwelling place for Your love. Wherever I go, may Your presence be known. Amen.



December 22 – Home Within Us

Scripture: John 14:23 – "We will come to them and make our home with them."

Devotional:

Love builds its home not in grand palaces but in human hearts willing to receive it. Jesus promises that God's love will take up residence within us—not just visit on Sundays, but move in permanently. Making room for God isn't about external preparation; it's about interior hospitality. As we open our hearts through prayer, compassion, and forgiveness, God's Spirit takes root within us. Love becomes the architecture of our souls.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, make Your home in me. Fill every corner of my heart with Your peace, and let love overflow into every part of my life. Amen.

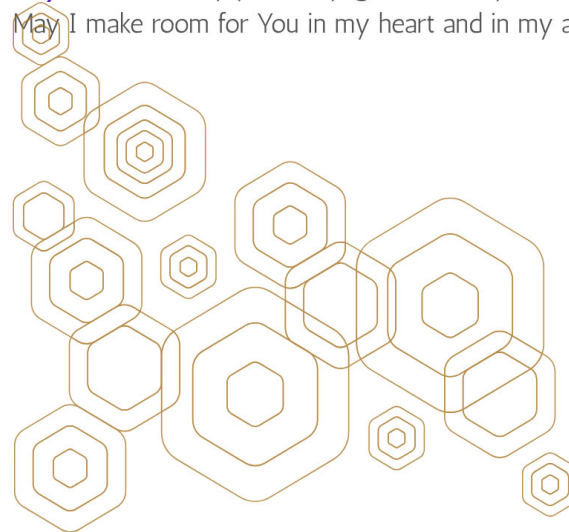
December 23 – Saying Yes to Love

Scripture: Luke 1:38 – "Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.'"

Devotional:

Mary's "yes" changed the course of the world. Love entered history through her willingness to make room. Saying yes to love often means embracing the unknown—trusting that God's promise is enough even when the path isn't clear. Love rarely arrives when we're ready; it comes when we're willing. As Advent draws to a close, we are invited to echo Mary's courage: to say yes to God's dream being born in us, for the sake of the world God loves.

Prayer: God of holy possibility, give me Mary's courage to say yes to Your love. May I make room for You in my heart and in my actions. Amen.



Christmas Eve – Christ: Making Room for Everybody

Scripture Focus: Luke 2:1–20

"And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

The story that begins with "no room" ends with God finding a way.

Lighting of the Christ Candle: Making Room for Everybody

One: Tonight we light the Christ candle.

The waiting is over—Love is born among us.

In a world still longing for peace, justice, and joy,

God's light breaks through every shadow.

All: We welcome Christ, the Light of the World.

Love that cannot be contained,

Peace that cannot be silenced,

Hope that will never fade.

One: Christ comes to us—

in every act of compassion,

in every voice that seeks truth,

in every hand that builds peace.

All: We light this candle to proclaim:

Love is here. Christ is among us.

The light shines, and the darkness will not overcome it.

December 24 – The Ultimate Welcome

Scripture: Luke 2:10–11 – "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people."

Devotional:

In a world that could find no room, God made a home among us. The manger becomes a sanctuary, the stable a cathedral of welcome. The birth of Jesus is the great reversal: the small are lifted, the poor are honored, the forgotten are remembered. This is not a story of scarcity, but of abundance that overflows. On this holy night, heaven and earth meet, and love becomes flesh. The invitation still stands: make room for Christ, who has already made room for you—and for everybody.

Prayer: Emmanuel, God-with-us, thank You for making a home among us. Fill our hearts with the joy of Your coming and teach us to make room for every body You love. Amen.

ADVENT ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14 – Advent Bible Study: 11:30am.....The Study

Nov. 30 – Advent Spiral and Dinner: 5:30pm.....Fellowship Hall

Dec. 5 – Winter Wonderland (CHUM Booth): 6:00pm.....Naftzger Park

Dec. 6 – Prayer Labyrinth: 8am – 3pm.....Fellowship Hall

Dec. 6 – Drop and Shop (Parent's Day Out): 12–5pm.....Children's Area

Dec. 13 – Children's Christmas Party: 4–6pm.....Miss Jodi's House

Dec. 14 – Cantata, Children's Pageant, Special Music.....9am & 10:15am

Advent Fair: 9:30am–Noon.....Parlor

Caroling: 4:00pm.....Homestead Estates

Dec. 20 – Youth Progressive Christmas Party: 4:00pm.....People's Homes

Dec. 21 – Longest Night Service: 6:00pm.....Chapel

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Services:

6:30pm – Contemporary Service.....Fellowship Hall

7:30pm – Cookies and Cocoa.....Parlor

9:00pm – Traditional Service.....Sanctuary

Dec. 25 – Merry Christmas (Church Building and Office Closed)

Dec. 28 – One Service: 10:00am.....Fellowship Hall

Jan. 1 – Church Building and Office Closed

Jan. 2 – Youth Ice Skating Party: 1:00–3:00pm.....Wichita Ice Center

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