



# WCC UPDATE

## DECEMBER 2023



**MERRY CHRISTMAS!!**  
*FROM YOUR CHURCH STAFF—*  
*MATT, TERESA, RICO AND KAREN*

### **PERSONALLY FROM THE PASTOR**

To My Church Family,

As we enter into the final stretch of the calendar year—and as the days darken and grow short—our hearts and minds are naturally drawn to the joyous celebration of Christmas. However, amidst the bustling preparations and festive cheer, there exists a sacred and contemplative time known as Advent—a season of immense significance for Christians around the world.

Advent, derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival," is a time in which we prepare for the past, present, and future arrival of Christ into our world. This season isn't just a countdown to Christmas; it's an opportunity for us to ready our hearts to receive the light and life of Christ anew.

One of the most incredible ways to embrace this season is by making worship a top priority. I know the schedules get hectic during this time of year, but trust me: worship during Advent is a beautiful opportunity to reconnect with what truly matters, to center ourselves amidst the chaos, and to experience the profound hope, peace, joy, and love that this season offers.

I look forward to worshipping with you on Sunday!

Matt Stiveson

## MUSIC AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

Hello Church Family!

Christmas time can be a time of utter joy or just plain "blah" for all of us. I have noticed that I always get a huge boost of joy when I come to church on Sundays and Wednesdays. I just felt blue this Sunday morning on my drive to church, but as soon as I walked in the door, my mood immediately lifted, and I was determined to spread some joy to our congregation. It can be easy to isolate yourself when you feel down, but I've noticed that when I force myself to be around other people, that *always* changes. It helps to get my mind off myself and onto others. Thank you for always being there for me! I love all of you so much.

The choir has been working on the **Christmas cantata** on Saturday mornings called *The Splendor of Heaven*. "This mini-musical is bursting with beautiful and passionate praise for the long-expected Messiah. It includes favorite tunes such as *Joy to the World* and *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* with worshipful expressions of praise such as *Thrill of Hope*." I hope it will be a blessing to all of you on **Sunday, December 17th** during the morning worship service!

The **kids are starting their work on the Christmas play** and will present it on Sunday morning, **December 10th**. This time, it will be the traditional Christmas story "The Birth of Jesus" with a few traditional Christmas carols interspersed throughout. The kids seem to really enjoy these plays, and we all hope you will too!

God bless you all!  
Teresa

**Dr. Teresa Crane, D.M.A.**

### STAFF APPRECIATION

It is a tradition of our church to show our appreciation to the church staff at the end of service on the Sunday immediately preceding Christmas. There will be a green basket in the Narthex on December 24 for those who would like to give them a card.



In the introduction to his book ***For All God's Worth***, theologian N.T. Wright says,

*"Christmas is God lighting a candle, and you don't light a candle in a room that's already full of sunlight. You light a candle in a room that's so murky that the candle, when lit, reveals just how bad things really are. The light shines in the darkness, says St. John, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

For that reason, Wright explains, Christmas isn't a dream or a momentary escape but reality. And the same is true for Christianity. *"Either Jesus is the Lord of the world and all reality makes sense in his life, or he is dangerously irrelevant to the problems and possibilities of today's world,"* he adds. *"There is no middle ground. Either Jesus was, and is, the Word of God, or he, and the stories Christians tell about him, are lies."*

## SCRIPTURE READING SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Sunday, December 3—Revelation 19  
 Sunday, December 10—Revelation 20  
 Sunday, December 17—Revelation 21  
 Sunday, December 24—Revelation 22

## CHURCH HISTORY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE READING SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Wednesday, December 6—Chapters 35 and 36  
 Wednesday, December—13 Chapters 37 and 38  
 Wednesday, December—20--Chapters 38 and 39  
 Wednesday, December 27—No Wednesday night activities



Saturday, December 2	10:00 am	Decorate the church for Advent
	1:00 pm	Women's Christmas Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange Please bring a white elephant gift, and cookies or a treat to share. See Sue Libra or Ellen Cancino for more information.
Sunday, December 3 Revelation 19 <b>First Sunday in Advent</b>	We collect Pocket Change offerings on the first Sunday of every month and use the money given to this program to promote and purchase materials for the church.	
	9:30 am	Worship
	10:30 am	Brief congregational meeting for approval of the 2024 Church Officers
Tuesday mornings	8:30 am	Men's Bible Study—Book of Revelation—meeting at IHOP at 221 W. 104 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Northglenn. See Steve Cancino for more information
Wednesday evenings	6:00 pm	Potluck dinner (bring main, side, or dessert dish to share)
	6:30 pm	Adult Bible Study, <i>Church History in Plain Language</i> , and Youth Group
	7:30 pm	Choir
Saturday, December 9	11:00 am	Choir rehearsal
Sunday, December 10	9:30 am	Worship <b>Kids' Play—"The Birth of Jesus"</b>
Saturday, December 16	11:00 am	Choir rehearsal
Sunday, December 17	9:30 am	Worship <b>Choir Cantata—"The Splendor of Heaven"</b>
	11:30 am	Safety & Security Ministry Team Meeting
Sunday, December 24 <b>Christmas Eve</b>	9:30 am	Worship <b>Staff Appreciation</b>
	5:30 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
<b>Church office will be closed December 25 – 29</b>		
<b>NOTE: No Lessons in Grief Group, or Christian Women United Meetings this month</b>		
Sunday, December 31	9:30 am	Worship No Children's Church—5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Hot chocolate and coffee following worship

**2023 ADVENT SERVICE PROJECT**  
**RESTOCK THE FOOD PANTRY!**

**\*For our Advent service project this year, we are asking for help to restock the church's food pantry. Find a big box and keep it somewhere in your house. On each day of Advent, you will place the following items in the box. Once your box is full, bring the box to church and put it under the big Christmas tree in the narthex!\***

December 3: Hot cereal or cold cereal

December 4: Goldfish or Ritz crackers

December 5: Ensure

December 6: Rice or instant potatoes

December 7: Toilet paper or paper towels

December 8: Canned tuna or canned chicken

December 9: Soup

December 10: Diapers

December 11: Pasta and pasta sauce

December 12: Jerky

December 13: Small packages of tissue

December 14: Macaroni and cheese

December 15: Peanut butter and jelly

December 16: Gravy

December 17: Nuts or granola

December 18: Toiletry items

December 19: Granola or protein bars

December 20: Small bags of chips

December 21: Pudding

December 22: Baby wipes

December 23: Fruit snacks or dried fruit

December 24: Laundry detergent or dish soap (pods in baggies are acceptable)