

It has happened again. The church year is over and we are already in Advent and preparing for Christmas! The authors of *Sundays and Seasons*, our ELCA worship planning resource, note that “Advent is a time of anticipation. For there to be anticipation there must be something or someone coming. Anticipation doesn’t take place in a vacuum, though. We don’t just feel or think anticipation; we live it. In other words, when we anticipate a coming, we prepare.”

Take a moment to reflect on all the things we eagerly anticipate. Some have prepared for surgery in recent months, others for new babies, and most of us for house guests or holiday travels. Once the time arrives, life is different. Patients begin the healing process. New parents adjust their routines. Family and friends enjoy fellowship together and a rest from their travels.

“During this Advent we live in anticipation of the final coming of Christ by pleading, preparing, proclaiming, and participating in his coming.” Worship is the primary place where this happens.

Wednesdays in December at 7pm we will be worshiping using the O Antiphons from the carol *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* as our theme. Come at 6pm and you can enjoy supper and a presentation each week on preparing for “end of life” issues, such as preparing wills, living wills, durable power of attorney for health care, estate planning, planned giving, funeral home questions, funeral service planning and hymn selection.

Wednesday, December 24th we will have two Christmas Eve candlelight services, a family service at 5:30pm and a more liturgically formal traditional service at 7:30pm. You are welcome to come to either or both.

If you are coming to the Family Service, please bring a candle (of any type) for your family to share, or bring a candle for each member of your family if you like. If you have extra candles at home you may want to bring one to donate for those who forget. We will bless and light our own candles and take them home with us as a reminder that Christ goes with us.

May God bless our service of worship as we plead, prepare, proclaim, and participate.

Wishing you a blessed Advent and a merry Christmas,
Pastor Chris