

DECEMBER 2023



Worship & News

ENGLEWOOD CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A Note from David

With our lives already being inundated with Christmas ads, catalogues and decorations that have been up for a month, we can easily get caught up in this element of the season. Over the years, the commercial element of Christmas has come to dominate our culture and, therefore, our thinking of Christmas. The main driver is economics, purchasing gifts to give to loved ones that therefore drives the economy.

For centuries the Church has set aside the four Sundays before Christmas as a season of spiritual preparation. And with all the overwhelming cultural elements surrounding us, the season of Advent becomes all the more important.

Advent means “coming.” Advent is the time to long for and anticipate the coming of the Messiah. For 500 years, the Jewish people anticipated, hoped for, longed for the Messiah to come and rescue them from oppression. “When the Messiah comes....” was the phrase. But there was no promise of a date. They lived with anticipation, longing, and hope.

During this Advent Season, Doyle and I will be focusing on this element. Though we will hear “Joy to the World” and “Silent Night” sung over and over in the coming weeks, that is not the spirit of Advent. We are in the spirit of yearning, wondering, waiting. We see the world in pain; we feel the hurt and oppression.

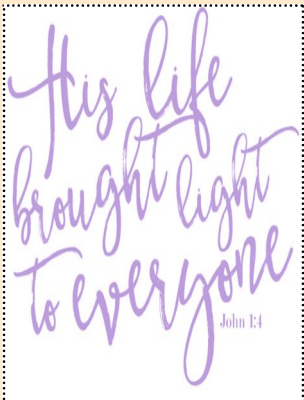
Until we have a heart longing for the Messiah, until we have mined the depths of our soul in grasping the despair and brokenness in our lives and world, until we have heard the cries of those in pain and suffering inflicted by greedy and power-crazy people, we are not ready to hear the message of Christmas. Wouldn't now be a nice time for the Messiah to come?

As you prepare to enter the worship services of Advent beginning December 3, let go of all the cultural trappings. Empty your minds of all the frantic schedule of activities. Enter the sanctuary with a desire to engage the longing and anticipation of what the coming of the Messiah means.



A generous person
will be blessed for
he shares his
food with the poor.

Proverbs 22:9



Dec. Birthdays

Kay Hartshorn	8th
Jeannette Biddle	10th
Sue Bennett	16th
Roi Lynn Knight	20th
Bart Roderick	20th
Connie Stenhoff	31st



WORSHIP & NEWS

Stewardship

THANKFUL – GRATEFUL – BLESSED

The Stewardship Committee expresses its thanks to all of you who have presented your 2024 pledges. We are grateful for all who have made this commitment. We had a good response and are putting final details together on the budget that will be presented on December 17. There are still a few pledges outstanding that are anticipated. If you have not made a pledge, we invite you to contact the church office or go online and fill out a card there.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee has been calling members the past few weeks inviting you to serve in various capacities in the life of the church. You are encouraged to seriously consider giving of your time talents in filling various positions that are necessary for being a functioning congregation. Englewood is a busy place with many ministries taking place. You are invited to be a part of the leadership team as we move forward with our mission of service.

December Ministry News

DID YOU KNOW? Englewood Christian Church and La Casa Hogar have sponsored Citizenship classes together since 2012. Volunteers work with small groups of students to help them learn the answers to 100 civics questions, using flash cards and learning materials provided by La Casa Hogar and also from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Many Englewood folks have helped teach these classes, and new volunteers are always welcome. Speaking Spanish is not required. Classes are held from 6 to 8 o'clock on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in our Fellowship Hall for ten-week sessions. Small groups break out into other upstairs areas also. If you have questions or want to help, contact Becky Buell, who has been our liaison and head teacher since 2012.

The students must demonstrate a basic knowledge of U.S. history and government, and an ability to read, write, speak, and understand basic English, as well as meeting requirements for naturalization. Then they are scheduled for testing at the Immigration office in Yakima. About 1250 new citizens have gone through our citizenship classes, and a group of new U.S. citizens recently took their oath of allegiance to the United States at the Capitol Theater.

~Sue Scott

SPECIAL VISION COUNCIL

A special Vision Council meeting will be held immediately after the morning worship service
Sunday, December 3.

Meet in the Library. The purpose of the meeting is to review and pass the proposed 2024 budget.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

PREPARING FOR ADVENT

It is time to prepare our sanctuary for Advent. We need some working hands to help put up the decorations on Saturday, December 2, at 10:00 am. We will be putting up banners, a Christmas Tree, a large wreath and other decorations as people and time permits. Join us as we prepare our place of worship.

ADVENT BEGINS

The season of Advent is the beginning of a new church year. Advent is the four Sundays prior to Christmas and is a season of spiritual reflection and anticipation of the coming of the Christ. The sanctuary will be decorated for the season; music of the Advent Season will be sung, and the Advent Wreath will take a special place in our worship as candles are lit to remind us of the coming of the Christ Child. Each Sunday will have a focus word: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

The children will be preparing elements that will be added each Sunday during Advent.

In the midst of the hectic life of December, make sure to set some time aside every Sunday to join with friends in centering our hearts and minds upon the reason for the season.

POTLUCK DINNER SUNDAY

December 3 will be our monthly Potluck Dinner following worship. Bring a dish or two of food and enjoy the fellowship around the table. Bring your own plates and silverware as well.

AED TRAINING

Thanks to a generous family in our congregation, we now have an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) located in our building. There will be a special training time for members of the congregation to learn how to use the device in case of an emergency. This will be held on Thursday, December 7, from 10am – noon. The training is free.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Want to sing some Christmas Carols to folk who are limited in their ability to get out and about? There are no tryouts for this group; you must want to help make a joyful noise as we sing some favorite carols and gladden the hearts of folk. Curtis Young is putting the event together and he promises a delicious pot of chili for all to enjoy at the end of the event. Dec. 10, 3:00 pm. A sign-up sheet is on the Welcome Table in the narthex.

MUSIC FILLS THE SEASON

Several musical events are filling the calendar at Englewood Christian. You are invited to check them out.

- **Dec. 10, 12 noon** - Flute Troupe will be entertaining us during the Coffee Time following worship.
- **December 10, 4pm** - Canticus Concert at ECC.
- **December 17, 2pm** Finch Family & Friends Christmas Concert

MEN'S BREAKFAST, NOW RENAMED "COMRADERY"

The December Breakfast will be December 16. It will probably be at Shari's on Fruitvale, but please look for a definitive notice closer to the date. Some women from the Monday hiking group are attending, so it is open to anyone to attend. 8:00 am is the regular time.



hope



Christ



joy

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, December 17 immediately following the worship service. There will be two items on the agenda: election of church officers and approval of the 2024 church budget.

A Nominating Committee is hard a work contacting folk about serving in various capacities during 2024. Prayerfully consider participating where you can and feel able.

The 2024 budget is coming together, thanks to all of you who made pledges on November 19.

PASTOR'S OFFICE PAINTING

The Pastor's Office is going to get a fresh coat of paint soon. December 21 will be a time to prepare the Office. Check with Herb Schmidt if you are interested in helping.

CHRISTMAS FAMILIES

Two families from Garfield Elementary have been chosen. A list of needed items will be displayed shortly. Anticipate helping make these two families have a Merry Christmas. One of the families would like to have some Christmas decorations. If you have some that you are not using, bring them this coming Sunday and Carolyn will make sure the family receives them.



CHRISTMAS SUNDAY

Christmas Sunday will be December 24 at our regular 10:45 worship time. There will not be a traditional Christmas Eve worship that evening. Since this is the 4th Sunday of Advent, the worship service will be a combination of Advent and Christmas. Rev. Doyle Hardy and Rev. David Helseth are planning a special service for that day which will help us focus on the birth of the Christ Child. We invite you to bring family and friends to join you that Sunday morning for a special service.

MOMENTS FOR COMMUNITY

We continue to lift up Connie Stenhoff and her family as they continue to grieve the sudden death of their granddaughter two weeks ago.

Loretta Krieger, a long-time member of Englewood Christian, died Saturday, November 18 at Cottage in the Meadow. A date for the memorial service will be set next week.

Thank you for your prayers

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The annual special Christmas offering goes to support the work of the Northern Lights Regional Christian Church, of which Englewood is a part. We have experienced directly this ministry through our Interim Regional Minister, Rev. Bill Robey, as he has worked diligently with our Search and Call Committee as we seek a new pastor. The Northern Lights Regional Christian Church is made up of 49 congregations spread across Washington, Northern Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

This special offering will be taken December 17 and 24. Thank you for your support.

