

Advent/Christmas 2023



“Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.” Matthew 25:13

Surrounded as we are by wars and rumors of wars, environmental catastrophes and ever-present uncertainty, Jesus’ words loom over us as a warning: our time is limited.

Could Jesus’ words also be an invitation? An invitation to step out of time, to shift our focus from what’s next on the schedule to watch and listen for where and how God appears?

Beyond Human Time

Throughout the coming weeks that lead up to the celebration of Christ’s birth at Christmas, the gospel lessons skip backward and forward over Jesus’ life. One week, Jesus speaks of a day to come; the next week, John the Baptist speaks of Jesus’ coming. Past and future collapse into God’s present, and the lines blur between Jesus’ first and second arrivals. This is chronologically disorienting in a way that seems intentional. God, who created time and exists beyond it, is busy within, around and beyond our human experience of time.

Again this year, we observe an extended Advent, beginning November 12 and lasting seven weeks instead of four so we can dwell in the mystery of God’s time. In worship we will watch for the One who calls to us from **BEYOND HUMAN TIME** as we wait to celebrate Christ’s birth into our time.

Sunday worship with Communion each week

8:55am – **Worship** (in-person and [livestream](#))

10:15am – **Fellowship** Enjoy a hot cup of coffee or tea along with a few Christmas cookies after worship each Sunday this Advent season. *Sign up on the Narthex kiosk if you’d like to bring cookies!

Longest Night Service – Thursday, December 21, 7pm (in-person only)

A worship opportunity for those who struggle with grief, loss, or loneliness in a season of joy and hope, as well as those for whom darkness and quiet and candlelight come as a bit of relief in the midst of the commercial Christmas blare.

Sunday, December 24th

8:55am – Service of Lessons and Carols (in-person and [livestream](#)) – On the morning of Christmas Eve, we gather in anticipation of celebrating the birth of Emanuel.

Christmas Eve Worship

5:30pm (in-person only) – We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, with carols, the Christmas story, Communion, and candle lighting!

6:45pm – 7pm Silent Night at the Christmas Tree (in-person) – We’ll gather on the corner of Church Street and Perrin to hear story of Christ’s birth, light candles, and sing Silent Night! The entire community is welcome!

7:30pm (in-person and [livestream](#)) – We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, with carols, the Christmas story, Communion, and candle lighting! Extended Prelude beginning at 7pm.

More Ways to Celebrate this Advent/Christmas Season!



Make a joyful noise! Would you like to add your voice (or instrument) to our Christmas Eve celebration? We are preparing special music at both 5:30pm and 7:30pm and for an extended prelude before worship! If you'd like to participate, sign up at <https://blcfairport.org/music-sign-up/> or contact Raelynn Clare, Music

Director: raelynn.clare@blcfairport.org for more information!

Sunday, November 26 at 10:15 am following worship: Wreath-making! Make a festive wreath to decorate your home and visit with your BLC friends as we observe the Advent season together! Be sure to sign up at <https://blcfairport.org/wreath-sign-up/> ASAP or [contact the church office](#) if you'd like to make a wreath (all supplies provided, along with expert guidance from our resident horticulturist, Brain Edwards!)



Poinsettia Orders Forms are due on Sunday, **December 10.**

Visit <https://blcfairport.org/poinsettia-sale/> to place your order for poinsettias and/or make a donation to Lutheran Disaster Response- Middle East Crisis.

Sunday, December 17 at 10:15am: Decorate our Church Home after worship!

Grab a cup of coffee then help hang the greens, put the Chrismon ornaments on the tree, set up the nativity and otherwise help us deck our halls. Contact Donna Berner if you'd like to participate.



Angel Tree: Share God's love by fulfilling a need from the Angel Tree! Look for the Angel Tree in the narthex beginning on November 26 with angel tags listing the requested gift item. Take a tag (or several if you'd like), purchase the gift, wrap and affix the angel tag to the outside of the package. Please contact the church office if you would like a tag mailed to you. Please bring wrapped presents back to BLC by

9am on Sunday, 12/17 so they can be delivered that day.

Advent Devotional: If you are looking for a resource to guide your Advent reflection at home, we commend to you *Bless the Advent we Actually Have* by Kate Bowler. The devotional which can be downloaded from [her website](#) starts on December 3 (the more traditional first Sunday of Advent) and includes Scripture, reflections, and blessings around seeing the world as it really is; Practicing hope for the coming King; Celebrating generosity and love any chance we get.

