

December 2023



# The Messenger

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Office Hours: 8:30 am - 2:30 pm Monday - Thursday

Sunday Worship: 9:30 am

Pastor Darryl Thompson Powell

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*Serving Our Neighbors by Sharing Our Blessings!*

Despite what the Hallmark Channel, 93.9 Lite FM, and all the retail stores and commercials say, the Christian season of Christmas begins on Christmas Eve and lasts for twelve days, ending on January 6. (No, the twelve-day season of Christmas didn't start with the song; it was the other way around). The time before Christmas is Advent, a season of preparation for Christmas. We prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jewish people for a Messiah. The Advent season reminds us of how much we also need a Savior today. We look forward to our Savior's second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first birth at Christmas. The word 'Advent' comes from the Latin word 'adventus,' which means 'coming' or 'visit.' In this season, we keep in mind both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.

I loved Christmas when I was young, partly because it celebrated the birth of Jesus, but mostly because it was a giant party in which I received lots of presents. Like many kids, I had a calendar that – starting December 1 – I would mark off the dates until I could open those presents. In a sense, Advent is a bit like my boyhood calendars, though it has a much more serious purpose. It's meant to get us ready, not for a present-opening party, but for a transformational celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Advent doesn't get much attention compared to Christmas, though interest in Advent is growing steadily in many churches and Christian homes. That's not to say everybody is an "Adventophile," a lover of Advent. Some Protestants ignore Advent because it isn't taught in Scripture and because they associate it with Roman Catholicism. Secular culture ignores Advent because there isn't much money to be made here. I suppose you might be able to make a few bucks selling purple and pink candles, but this isn't going to thrill most retailers.

I think, however, there are lots of good reasons to pay more attention to Advent. That's why we will have Wednesday Advent services (Dec. 6, 13, & 20) at 1:00 PM (in person) and 7:30 PM (virtually). I hope you'll join us as we ponder the question "*How Does a Weary World Rejoice?*"

And a side note: despite what many people say, Christmas isn't about family; it's about Jesus! That's why we will have our regular service on December 24 that celebrates the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent, along with a 4:00 PM family-friendly Christmas Eve service and our choir concert and evening service that begin at 10:30 PM.

-Darryl Thompson Powell, pastor

## **Council Meeting Minutes November 2023**

Our last Council meeting was held on November 13, 2023.

Devotions focused on this question: Did you ever make an impulsive decision and then regret your decision? Most people have this dilemma in their lifetime. Before you make another impulsive decision try this instead:

Be patient and let the Word of God not only guide our decisions, but override our emotions seeking to make our decisions. No matter what regrets you may be carrying around, they have been completely forgiven by Jesus. When a person places faith in Christ, they are given forgiveness for all of their sins —whether past, present, or future sins (Ephesians 1:7)

Sunday, October 1, 2023 - 45th Annual Eddie Biondo Fall Fest Parade: A special thank you to those who walked the whole 2-1/2 miles and handed out bread and water. It was a very hot day. Their efforts were greatly appreciated.

A special Coffee Hour was held on October 15, as Resurrection welcomed Rev. James Wetzstein from Valparaiso University. He is the Chaplain at the University but is doing graduate work on the artist, Professor Ernst, who designed our pulpit front altar and the statue of Jesus. He met and talked with our members about their thoughts and feelings about the pieces.

A luncheon was held on Reformation Sunday, October 29 for a very special guest.

The congregation welcomed Rev. CeCee Mills, who has been advising the Council and Vision & Mission Committee. She wanted time to work with the members about developing relationships.

The Council set the annual meeting for February 11, 2024 at 11:00 AM.

Our next Council meeting will be December 11, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

God bless.  
Jan Ramsson

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### Financial Summary October 2023

	October	Year to Date
Income:	\$6,557.06	\$69,670.13
<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>(\$11,963.65)</u>	<u>(\$127,745.97)</u>
Income Shortfall:	(\$5,406.59)	(\$58,075.84)
<u>Loss/Gain Investments:</u>	<u>(\$3,015.59)</u>	<u>\$6,028.92</u>
Total Gain/Shortfall:	(\$8,422.18)	(\$52,046.92)

*October* results show a loss in our investments of (\$3,015.59). Envelope income was over budget by \$589.00 for the month & over budget \$6,211.95 for the year. Expenses were under budget by \$1,102.18 for the month & under budget by \$2,912.36 for the year. Our cash position as of 10/31/23 is \$159,386.95 in total cash assets, spread across our investment, Money Market, Operating Accounts and other investments. The stock market was down a little in October. Hopefully it will go up the rest of the year.

God Bless. Be Healthy and Safe.  
**Wayne Molley, Treasurer**



How does a  
weary world  
rejoice?

#### Advent begins December 3!

Our Advent supplemental study series from A Sanctified Art is “How Does a Weary World Rejoice? An Advent Series in Luke’s Gospel”. It’s a thoughtful and beautiful way to deepen your spiritual experience during this season. Donations are being gratefully accepted to pay for the use of these materials and printing as this cost is not in the church’s budget. There is a donation jar on the small table by the entrance of the sanctuary for this collection. There is also a signup sheet if you would like a copy of the booklet. Please do not feel obligated to make a donation to receive a booklet. Digital versions of the booklet are also available.

The subthemes for each Sunday answer the question for the main theme:

Dec. 3 – We acknowledge our weariness.

**Dec. 10 – We find joy in connection.**

Dec. 17 – We allow ourselves to be amazed.

**Dec. 24 – We sing stories of hope.**



# Outreach Food4Life Food Pantry/Clothing Closet News



In October the Food Pantry served 128 families consisting of 258 adults and 118 children. We had 15 new guests this month. There were 5 Mondays in the month.

We are forever grateful to those who donate food each week. We received donations from 51 donators this month.

Our special item Sunday continues to be very successful, and we thank our members for their generosity. This month we had cereal Sunday. During the month of October, it will be soup Sunday. Everyone's help in keeping our food pantry stocked is greatly appreciated. Due to the increase in the number of guests, it is getting harder to keep the shelves stocked. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. We rely on our members, friends, and neighbors to keep the food pantry running.

Thank you to our personal shoppers who are helping buy the items that are not donated. Barb and Alan Miralgio and Walter Johnson are the shoppers. We are forever grateful for them.

Our volunteers continue to be dedicated and make our Mondays at the food pantry work. They work very hard in a short period of time to prepare all the donations that we give to our guests. Our team worked a total of 173 total hours in October. Thank you, God, for blessing us with so many people wanting to do your work.

The Clothing Closet is in need of men's casual shirts, jeans and shoes as well as coats for men, women and children.



## Church Calendar

December 3	Fellowship/decorate church	11:00 am
December 5	Finance Meeting	6:30 pm
December 6	Outreach Meeting	4:30 pm
December 11	Council Meeting	6:00 pm
Mondays	Food Pantry/Clothing Closet	12:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Wednesdays	Bible Study	2:00 pm
	Advent Services	1:00 pm & 7:30 pm
	Choir Rehearsal	6:00 pm
Thursdays	Al-Anon Meetings	7:30 pm

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### In an Emergency

If you have an emergency outside office hours, you may reach **Pastor Darryl at 847-616-0537.**



### Christmas Eve Worship Services

4th Sunday of Advent service at 9:30 AM

4:00 PM Christmas Eve service

10:30 PM Christmas Eve Concert followed by service at 11:00 PM