

Advent Guide 2021

**A season of special opportunities
and experiences**



First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

P.O. Box 868

Moorestown, NJ 08057

fpcmoorestown.org

856.235.1688



*Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.*

The Meaning of Advent

"The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come."
~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus, his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, and his first miracle at Cana. During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration.

Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. At that time, the new Christian year begins with the twelve-day celebration of Christmastide, which lasts from Christmas Eve until Epiphany on January 6.

Advent 2021 begins on Sunday, November 28, and ends on Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24. Generally, the themes that correspond to each week of Advent fall into these categories:

Week 1: Hope (purple candle)

Week 2: Love (purple candle)

Week 3: Joy (pink candle)

Week 4: Peace (purple candle)

Christmas Eve: Christ Candle (white candle)

Advent Worship Schedule 2021

Our pastoral staff presents the Advent sermon series “What Are You Waiting For?” which begins Nov. 28 and runs through December 19.



November 28

First Sunday in Advent (Lord's Supper)

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship, 11:00 a.m. Contemporary
Sunday School 9:45-10:45 a.m.

December 5

Second Sunday in Advent (Lord's Supper)

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship, 11:00 a.m. Contemporary
Sunday School 9:45-10:45 am

December 12 ([Manger Sunday](#), [Poinsettias](#))

Third Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship, 11:00 a.m. Contemporary
Sunday School 9:45-10:45 a.m.

December 19

Fourth Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship, 11:00 a.m. Contemporary
Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Jesus Birthday Party

December 26

9:30 a.m. Worship, No Sunday School, Adult Education, Nursery

Poinsettia Sales

Order Forms Available through Dec. 5

Each year during the Advent season the congregation has the opportunity to remember a loved one, honor an individual or recognize an occasion by [purchasing a poinsettia](#) to be placed at the front of the sanctuary on Sunday, December 12, 2021.



Order forms are available November 21, 28, December 5, 2021 and [NOW ONLINE](#)! Plants will be displayed in the sanctuary on Manger Sunday December 12, 2021. Plants being taken home will be available after worship that day or may be picked up in the Commons Lobby.

Advent Devotional Guide

Purchase online; limited copies at church

[Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas](#)

So many things vie for our attention during the season of Christmas; parties, gifts, baking cookies, moving elves, that we seldom set aside time to focus on the meaning behind it all – Jesus Christ. Give yourself the gift of God’s presence in your life this Advent. Join us as we read *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas*, a collection of writings from classic and contemporary Christians. *Watch for the Light* contains daily readings starting on November 24, 2021 through January 7, 2022.

You can purchase your copy [ONLINE with Amazon](#) or through the church office, which has a limited quantity for \$12. Please reach out to Alison Mackey to receive your copy.

Virtual Gingerbread House Challenge

Posts are due by November 29

Our annual Gingerbread challenge will be virtual again this year. Come to the church and pick up a kit for you and your family to decorate together, beginning November 14 -23!

The challenge began on November 21 and ends on November 29 at midnight.

The kits this year are train-themed. As in previous years, it is a basic kit, and you will need to personalize it. You do not have to use the train kit. You can use one of your choosing. Make it colorful, make it interesting, make it unique!! HAVE FUN!

When you have completed your challenge, please take pictures, and either post them on the FPC Family Ministries Facebook

page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/455452324633585> (ask Holly to join). Or send photos to Holly Asciutto at hasciutto@fpcmoorestown.org.



Judging will begin on November 30 and end on December 3. Oh, and there will be prizes!!

For questions contact Holly Asciutto at 609-273-7465 cell/text or via email at hasciutto@fpcmoorestown.org.

Family Advent Devotional Bags

Create special memories of Christmas

Families are encouraged to pick up an Advent Devotional in a Bag from the Commons Lobby, as we prepare ourselves for Christmas. Pick a time when the family can sit down together and follow the included devotional guide and its family activity, which will usually take about an hour. Make memories that include preparing your hearts for Baby Jesus. Holly Asciutto has assembled these kits and lessons specifically with your families in mind.

Questions? Contact Holly Asciutto at hasciutto@fpcmoorestown.org.

Alternative Gift Market

November 28-December 24

This year, our [Alternate Gift Market](#) has been expanded and will be available in person after services on Dec. 6, Dec. 13 and Dec. 20 as well as virtually through the church's website fpcmoorestown.org. Alternate Gifts allow donations to worthy causes in the name of the gift recipient. The Alternative Gift Market Catalog will be available at fpcmoorestown.org and on the events page starting December 1st. Gifts begin at \$5.00 and a broader range of 50 gifts is now available to assist



our ministries. Visit the tables in the narthex and Commons Lobby on Dec. 6, Dec. 13, and Dec. 20th to purchase your alternative gifts.

Online orders, cash or checks please (checks made payable to FPC Moorestown). Or pick up your gifts at a contact-free pickup. For information contact Linda Jagiela at cell/text 267.275.7582 or missions@fpcmoorestown.org. Fulfillment volunteers are needed to staff the Alternative Gift Market on Sundays in December. Please contact Linda Jagiela if you can help.

The Chrismon Tree

One delight of the Advent season is seeing the Chrismon tree in place in the sanctuary. “Chrismon” combines two words - Christ and monogram. The ornaments are white and gold, white being the liturgical color for Christmas, and gold being the symbol for the glory and majesty of God. Chrismon designs are simple copies of symbols from early Christianity. Some familiar ones are the star, the cross, the fish, the Rose of Sharon, the crown and the Dove. The triangle symbolizes the Triune God, and some have significant Greek words.

In 2019 we celebrated the 50th year that women of the church have decorated the tree. As we view the tree, we reaffirm the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Savior in its symbols. Thank you Presbyterian Women!

Christian Caring Center Gift Drive ONLINE

Available now; purchase Nov. 11-29

As we did last year, the Deacons have organized a convenient [online gift drive](#) through YouGive Goods to provide much needed items to local families this holiday season. Please visit yougivegoods.com/fpcm2021 to go to our personalized event page where you can “shop” and choose which items to give. This Wish List includes an array of cold weather accessories, clothing, games and books. Items purchased will be delivered directly to the Christian Caring Center and distributed to those in need this December. **Please complete online gift purchases by Monday, November 29.** Have fun shopping! Any questions please contact Deacon Caroline Joyce at dmcljoyce@comcast.net.

West Jersey Chamber Music Society

“An International Christmas Celebration”

December 5 (7:30 p.m., live stream)

West Jersey Chamber Chorale and Brass, directed by Joel Krott, will present a Christmas choral concert entitled [“An International Christmas Celebration.”](#) As the title implies music from many cultures will be sung, telling the saving grace of God from the promise of Advent to the Nativity and through the response of Epiphany. Pieces are short and colorful and filled with variety; young as well as older listeners will readily enjoy the beauty and truth of Christmas through music: familiar, ancient, and new.

The program will be about 70 minutes long and is a ticketed event: \$28 regular, \$18 senior (65 and older), and 18 years old or younger, FREE. Tickets are available at the door or by calling Andrew Cates at 856-495-4636.



The concert will also air via live stream. Find the link at both the West Jersey home page: www.wjcms.org or on www.fpcmoorestown.org/live-stream.

Christmas Toy Drive

Yes, Annette Emerson is conducting the annual toy drive for the Presbytery Food Shelf in Camden! Can you help? Drop off new, unwrapped toys labeled “Emerson” at the Emerson home (329 Springhouse Lane, Moorestown) or the box in the Commons Lobby. Or call Annette Emerson at 856-234-0717 for a pickup. Gifts are most needed for ages 3-13.

Mitten Tree “Blooms” December 5

On December 5th, visit the Mitten Tree presented by the Knitting Network in the Commons Lobby. It will be decorated with handmade mittens, hats and scarves. You are welcome to add your handmade objects to the tree. All items will be donated to Urban Promise and local charities. If you knit or crochet, join the Knitting Network on the first Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m.



Longest Night Service December 12 (7:00 p.m., live stream)

This unique service provides peace to those dealing with grief, illness, anxiety or depression this holiday season who may not feel the joy or celebration seen in others – for many reasons. [The Longest Night](#) includes elements from a Service of Remembrance, including the Lord’s Supper, special music and a time for prayer. All ages and faiths are welcome. The service will be live streamed for those who may wish to participate from home. Princeton Theological Seminary intern Paul Savage will lead this service. Please share this event with those you know who may need a quiet place in the busy rush of December.

Manger Sunday

Return unwrapped gifts December 12

In one of our congregation's many beautiful traditions, members are invited to bring **unwrapped** gifts to worship on Sunday, December 12th for our [Manger Sunday presentation](#). Gifts will be received outside under the portico for easy drop off. Gifts will be given to the clients of Oaks Integrated Care for the clients to use as gifts for their own families, a beautiful gesture.

For those not attending services, gifts may be dropped off between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. at a contactless drop at the Blessing Box.

For gift suggestions, [see the complete list on our website](#) and Manger Sunday current event page. For information or questions contact Linda Jagiela at missions@fpcmoorestown.org.



2021 Giving Statements Available

Need a copy of your current 2021 giving record to see where you are with your 2021 pledge? Statements are always available by contacting the church office and Norman Vandergrift at 856.235.1688, Ext. 112 or nvandergrift@fpcmoorestown.org.

Special Holiday Giving Opportunities

Year End Stock Donations

Please remember the church in your [year-end donations](#). Process gifts expediently by contacting your broker or Norman Vandergrift at 856-235-1688, Ext. 112.

Holiday Offering Mailing

This year we will be mailing home to our church households an opportunity to give for the holidays and for end-of-year support to our ministry. Our holiday offerings include:

- **Christmas Green Offering**— directly aids our FPC Moorestown church program areas (also in boxed sets).
- **Christmas Joy Offering**— our denominational gift to assist racial-ethnic schools and retired church workers who need financial assistance.

Year-End Budget Help

These critical year-end donations above your pledged giving keep our ministry going forward. Every love gift will enable us to start the new year with the needed funds to compensate our Associate Pastor and Youth Director in 2022. Donate online at www.fpcmoorestown.org. Watch your mail for a special year-end letter from Pastor Spencer celebrating our year in ministry. What a year it has been!



Christmas Parties

During regular group meeting times

Wednesday, December 8

Kingdom Kids Christmas Party

4:45-6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 8

Crossing Zone Christmas Party

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 15

Middle School Youth Group Christmas Party

6:30-8:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 19

High School Youth Group Christmas Party

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Jesus Birthday Party

Sunday, December 19 (9:45-10:45 a.m.)

During Sunday School on December 19, the third week of Advent, we will celebrate the birth of Baby Jesus. Happy Birthday to you ...



Christmas Eve Eve Worship

Thursday, December 23

A new tradition, born out of the Coronavirus pandemic. We will gather for an outdoor candlelight service on Christmas Eve Eve, as we did in 2020 at the height of the Coronavirus pandemic. This 30-minute service will be held in the sanctuary courtyard and accented with fire pits, luminaria, Christmas carols and the glow of the Christmas season. Bring your own chair, if you wish. Masks are optional.

- 3:00 p.m. Outdoor Worship
- 7:00 p.m. Outdoor Worship



Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

Friday, December 24

This year's four Christmas Eve worship services mark a return to in-person Christmas Eve services for our congregation. In 2020 Christmas Eve services were safely held via live stream only or outdoors.

All Christmas Eve services will feature COVID-safe battery operated candles and masks are optional for those fully vaccinated.

- 4:00 p.m. Family Service
- 6:00 p.m. Family Service
- 8:30 p.m. Communion Service
- 11:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols



Sunday, January 2, 2022

Regular Schedule

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
Sunday School and Adult Education 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Sunday, January 9, 2022 (7:30 p.m.)

Epiphany Concert

Save the date for the annual Epiphany Concert featuring the Choristers (grades 5-8), Chapel Choir (grades 9-12) and Adult Choir.

