

THE FIRST WORD



Advent 2017

FROM YOUR PASTOR

Well, I've trimmed back the bushes, flowers and have even transplanted some decorative grasses. Looking around, there is very little evidence that anything was ever growing, blooming, or flowering. All I can do now is hope, and trust in my preparations. I must wait until some time in the future (the other side of winter), to see new life beginning to push up through the warming soil.

Wait and hope. Two words that are at the very core of the idea of expectation. We now enter the season of Advent, the very season of expectation, anticipation, and hope of great things to come.

This is the season that invites us to prepare our hearts to remember the birth of the child in Bethlehem. But it also invites us to wait and hope for the future day of salvation when Christ comes again, bringing with Him the Kingdom of God.

All around us, Heaven and Earth are pointing to the coming of Christ. Are we paying attention?

This Advent, I invite you to open your hearts to hear the Good News of God. May we all hear His call to care for one another, and to care for his whole creation, as we await Christ's return.

*In His Peace,
Rich*





SCHEDULE FOR ADVENT

Dec 03 – Candle of Hope. Isaiah 64: 1-9 Revelation 1: 4b – 8

A discussion about the meaning of Advent, and how we should live in a fast “want it now” world.

Dec 10 - Candle of Peace. Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13 Isaiah 9: 2-7

We will explore the many prophecies of the Old Testament foretelling the Coming of the Messiah.

Dec 17 - Candle of Joy. Isaiah 40: 1-11 Luke 1: 5-17

Who were the Priest Zechariah, his wife Elizabeth and their son John who “was to make ready for the Lord a prepared people.”

Dec 24 - Candle of Love. Micah 5: 2-5 Luke 1: 26-38

“I am the Lord’s Servant.” A look at Mary and Joseph’s unwavering faith and devotion to God.

Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Service 12:30 p.m. (following a light lunch)

Christ Candle. Luke 2: 1-20

A celebration of Christ’s birth with scripture, prayer and song.



2017 Christmas Season

Again this year instead of purchasing poinsettias, we will be taking donations for the **SHOE FUND** or **THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**. Your "in memory of" or "in honor of" loved ones will be included in our Christmas bulletin. Please make your check out to First Christian Church and mark the designated **FUND** on the memo line and return it to the office by Sunday, December 17th. Thank you!

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM _____

SHOE FUND _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Given by _____

First Christian Church

1425 King Rd.

Ashland, OH 44805

Reminder!

Congregation's Annual Meeting

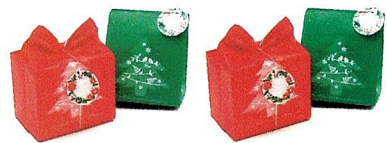
Our Annual Meeting will be Sunday, December 10th immediately following worship. We will be presenting the budget and the nominations for the coming year for approval.



Our Christ love and sympathy go out to the families of Michael Glasser, Frances Bally, Mary Ellen Johnson, Mary Richey, Penny Koch and Robert Lowrie. These members and friends all passed in October and November.



CHRISTMAS GIFT BAGS



We are in the midst of gathering items for the **Christmas Gift bags** that will be delivered to our shut-ins, homebound, and those unable to attend. We are also including five adults and four children under the age of seven who are residing at our **Safe Haven Shelter** here in Ashland. We fill the bags with cookies, candy, fruit and other goodies. We also include lotions, note pads, calendars and the like. A detailed list and sign-up is available in the Gathering Room. They will be delivered on the 17th of December. Our youth will be caroling that Sunday and will help deliver the bags too. We would like to have the items to the church by the 10th if possible. Thank you!



The boxes that we sent to Garry Burgett and his company stationed in the Middle East arrived and he and all his platoon were thrilled with all the goodies. The socks, snacks and personal items were very much appreciated. We thank everyone who contributed to this worthwhile ministry and also to our "After School" young people who packed the boxes and sent letters.

Pvt. Garry Burgett



Just a reminder that we would like the items for the gift bags for our shut-ins by December 10th if possible and the donations and In Memory or In Honor of to the office by December 17th in order to be included in the Christmas Bulletin. Any questions, please call the office 419-289-7439 and leave a message and we will get back to you. Thanks!



First Christian Church

1425 King Rd.

Ashland, OH 44805

Rich Pate, Pastor

Brian Nabors, Director of Music

firstchristianchurch@zoominternet.net

www.firstchristianashland.org

419-289-7439

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