



# Calvary Crier

December 2021  
Advent Addition

## A Word from Pastor Cheryl



Do you ever grieve that time we choose to celebrate Christ's birth is so cluttered with commercialism and secular celebrations?

This struggle is not new, it has been around since the ancient church started to celebrate Christmas in the fourth century.

This is how it came about. In ancient Rome, there was a celebration called Winter Solstice where the Roman people worshiped the "Physical Sun of the Cosmos," also known as "Sun of Righteousness". Winter Solstice took place in the dead of winter, when the sun is furthest away from the equator; long winters had a direct connection with the fear of economic fallout. In an agrarian culture, the unseasonably long winters could be devastating. Long winters meant failed crops, loss of family income and, in severe cases, even famine. As a result, the celebration of Winter Solstice consisted of people making incantations in pagan ceremonies, beseeching the sun to return to earth so that the people could experience a shortened winter, a longer planting season, and more plentiful crops. These festivities often included drunken feasting and reveling.

This was the world into which Christianity was born. In the Roman world, people were at the mercy of the gods and the fates. To avoid tragedy, appeasing these gods was very important. The first Christians were common laborers who likely felt that they were at the mercy of the elements. As a minority, Christians were also at the mercy of their culture, which was quite leery of this new faith. Yet despite their unfavored status, these early believers refused to conform to worldly standards.

So, they formed an alternative celebration of prayer and fasting. Taking a page from the book of the first professed Christian Emperor, Constantine, they substituted the phrase "Son of God" for the standard "sun of the cosmos" in their winter celebrations. The early church developed Advent as a response to the pagan Winter Solstice. Advent is a time the church sets aside to prepare the Christians' heart for the coming of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. As our church ancestors said,

***"For this reason, for which the church doesn't number her days or measure her seasons so much by the motions of the sun as by the course of our Savior. Who, being the true Sun of righteousness, began now to rise in our world."***

***Continued***

What a beautiful statement! The Christian worships the one, true God, not circumstance. We cannot measure our days by flexible seasons, astrology charts, the stock market, job security, or governmental power. Our faith is built on a firm foundation of a changeless God. It's interesting to note that the early church did not just celebrate the one day of Christ's physical birth. Instead, they had an extended celebration, so they could allow time for preparation.

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As they put it,

***“Even as you would prepare for celebrating the birthday of great lord by putting your house in order, so you should put your house in order for the Great Lord.”***

While the Romans had feasts and revelries, the Christian celebration was intended to be pensive and full of self-reflection and prayer. The season began with Advent on November 11 and continued until December 25. Advent was a time Christians set aside to prepare themselves for Christ’s second coming by observing the characters and events of the first coming through His birth. The Church’s celebration of Advent was never intended to celebrate the date on which Christ was born—in fact, the Scriptures give us no exact date. During Christmas and Advent, we celebrate the reason Christ came. Historically, Christmas has never been about when Jesus was born, but why he was born. The early Church began celebrating Advent around the fourth century. Advent means "coming," and the fourth-century church took a more a holistic and Biblical approach to celebrating Christ’s coming than we do. The early church’s intention was to set aside a season for quiet reflection— a season that did not merely meditate on Christ’s birth in history. This church celebrated something called the ***Paraousia***, which means “*coming*.” It focused on how Christ came in the past through the prophecy; how He comes in the present in conversion in the heart of the believer; and how He will come in the future for His final reign.

This sentiment of Christ transcending time in His coming is reflected in Revelations 4:8

***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”***

This which teaches us that Christ’s coming is eternal. He is the Christ who was, the Christ who is, and the Christ who is to come.

Originally during this time, three masses (worship services with communion) were celebrated. The first mass celebrated Christ’s eternal birth with God before the world began; this was called “**The Mass of the Incarnation.**” The second mass celebrated Christ’s birth of a human woman; this was called “**The Virgin Mass.**” The third celebrated Christ’s "mystical birth in the believer’s life" and this last mass was known as “**The Christ Mass.**”

Therefore, Christians celebrate Christmas because of Christ birth in heart. Our most sacred, practical and cherished teaching is that Christ can be born into the believer’s life. This is the most important of all the lessons of Christianity. We do not merely celebrate a historical person who was born in an ancient city somewhere in Judea. We do not merely become sentimental about the beauty of the human birth in the midst of poverty. We do not merely celebrate an abstract idea of the theology that this Child taught in promoting human love for one’s neighbor. We celebrate the living Christ who is born in the heart of the believer. We celebrate the believers’ transformations in Christ through their faith in Christ. This belief is the foundation of all Christianity.

So next time you wish someone Merry Christmas! Remember the history of that phrase and quietly pray that Christ would be born in their heart today!!

***For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”***

***Isaiah 9:6***



Words of Wisdom From our Parish Associate,  
Rev. Donna Yanosy

***Prayerful Practices  
for People of the Presence***

During the season of Advent we often find opportunities to be generous. There are food collections, Christmas gifts for families in need, opportunities to give financially to worthy causes. There can be great satisfaction in knowing that someone's life has been touched and blessed because of our generosity.

Indeed, the apostle Paul wrote,

***“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God”*** (2 Corinthians 219:11, NIV).

I wonder if this capacity for generosity can be further extended in our daily living. Generosity to pause and really listen when someone talks to us – putting aside the phone, tablet, newspaper, or other preoccupation and choosing to really pay attention and listen; taking time to write a note or make a phone call saying “I am thinking of you”; choosing patience and kindness in challenging or annoying situations; taking time to more deeply give of our ourselves and our time and attention to attend to others in response to God's great generosity to us.

Here is a prayer that might lead us to be more generous in spirit.

**Heavenly Father, thank you for your great heart of generosity towards me. You gave your Son to die for me. Thank you that your love is poured in my heart by the Holy Spirit so that I can be generous at all times. Today, I make a fresh commitment to respond to others with generosity of heart. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.** (Yvette Stupart)

Rev. Donna Yanosy  
Parish Associate  
[donna@calvaryenfield.org](mailto:donna@calvaryenfield.org)



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



We would like to have poinsettias in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Orders must be placed by calling Janice Singer (860) 763-2936 by Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. The price is \$7.00 (yes, seven dollars).

Checks may be handed to Janice at church.

## Music News

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Celebrate this special season singing the music of Advent and Christmas with the Choir! We will be singing on Sundays, December 5 and 19, meeting at 9:15 to warm-up, and on Christmas Eve, December 24. Rehearsals are on Sundays, November 28 and December 12 at 11:30.



Lori Bourret

## Kids Connection & Operation Christmas Child

On November 21, 2021, Our “Kids Connection” Group came together to help assemble shoe boxes for the Operation Christmas Child event.

They filled boxes with socks, crayons, pencils, erasers, stuffed animals, toys cars and other small items. These boxes will be given to children that are less fortunate. What a joy it will be for these children to have a gift to open on Christmas Day.

This program is run by the Samaritan Purse non-profit organization.

Thank you to those who donated gifts and time towards this wonderful outreach program.



Pictured L—R

Will, Emily, Wesley, and Bethany

# *CALVARY POST OFFICE*

**NOW OPEN**



There is a  
“Christmas Card Mailbox” in  
the hallway, next to the gym,  
where you can place and pick  
up your Christmas cards to &  
from each other.



## **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

**Let's Celebrate Christ's Birth together!**

**Please join us for our Christmas Eve Service here  
at Calvary Presbyterian Church.**

**7:00 Pm**



**For Unto us is born this day in the city of David  
A Savior, Which is Christ the Lord.**

**Luke 2:11**

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING & CHILDREN'S CRAFT TABLE AT THE ENFIELD MALL



Do you like to sing?

Join us ...

December 11, 2021

1pm-3pm

At the Enfield Mall

to sing Christmas carols. Jim Lenn's Ukulele Ensemble will be joining us as well.

There will be also be a Children's Christmas Craft Table for the youngsters.

If you would like to sing with us or help out at the Children's Craft table  
Please See Sign-up Sheet in Fellowship.

*ALSO.....*

*On that day, it is Pastor Cheryl's birthday and we will be going to  
"The Outback Restaurant" at 4pm to celebrate this special day. If you  
would like to attend, see sign up sheet in  
fellowship mall or call the church office at 860-745-5211*



*Have you or someone you know lost a loved one?*

*No should have to bear this alone.*

**Here at Calvary Presbyterian Church, there is a support meeting every  
Saturday from 10:30am – 12:pm in Room UL8.**

**This support group meets for 13 weeks.**

**For more information, you may call  
the church office @ 860-745-5211**

**Or see Linley Ruoss.**



- 2 Anna Brown
- 3 Len Kane
- 5 Avis Hall
- 7 Nancy Gardner
- 9 Will Gallacher
- 10 Al Marcil
- 11 Cheryl Kincaid  
Paul Sorel
- 13 Janet Cushman
- 18 Arlene Ellis  
Carol Sorel
- 19 Melissa Thayer
- 25 Jo Destro

- 4 Donna & Gary Hess
- 6 Marjorie & Jay Stradinger
- 15 Sharon & Winston Walsh
- 17 Penny & Evans Farrell
- 30 Donna & Paul Yanosy



Mark Your Calendar....December 19,2021

You are invited to our  
Calvary Presbyterians Church All-Church Birthday  
Celebration.

Its someone's birthday this month and we want to celebrate  
that special day with them!

Following our church service,  
we will sing "Happy Birthday to You"  
And have some delicious birthday cake.

And Don't forte....Bring a family member, A friend or someone  
you know who could use a  
special day of celebrating them!!

Merry Christmas  
