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To: fccv@snet.net;
Date: Fri, December 7, 2012 11:42:32 AM
Cc:
Subject: Pastor's Weekly Email

This Sunday is the Second Sunday in the season of Advent. It seems to me that to many, Advent is one of the least favored seasons in the church year. It's a season set aside for us to give thought to the hunger and great anticipation that the world experienced waiting for the wondrous revelation of God's majesty that comes in the birth of Jesus Christ. Now, we associate it with waiting and hoping. These are qualities that lack appeal to a culture known for immediate gratification and "fast, fast, fast relief." And so, too often, we enter into Advent in a spirit of determination. "Let's get this over so we can celebrate Christmas." Give Advent a chance. Embrace the values of anticipation, waiting and hoping. These values helped our ancestors to hone their faith in profound ways. Our lives can likewise be deeply enriched.

One of my memories of Advent as a child was getting an Advent calendar. Each night, as my mother tucked me in, after saying good night prayers, she would let me open another door on the Advent calendar, building anticipation for Christmas. Many years later, it still is one of my fondest memories of this time of year. In the first year after we were married, my new wife Maggie, got me a chocolate Advent calendar. Each night, after dinner, we'd open a door and get a chocolate to share. Recently, a friend has introduced me to a new form of the Advent calendar. It's an online calendar that uses images of space taken by the Hubble telescope to count down the days till Christmas. I've always been fascinated by these photographs and seeing a new one daily has been a rich experience this season.

The online Advent calendar can be found at this link----
<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/11/2012-hubble-space-telescope-advent-calendar/100415/>

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Last Sunday, we both entered into the season of Advent, a time of hope and anticipation, and also said good-bye to Pastor Cindy Carr . It was a blessed time, full of mutual affirmations and blessings.

This Sunday, the Second Sunday in Advent, our focus will be on the values of Advent--waiting and hoping as we prepare ourselves for the wonders of God's redeeming love. The Scripture lesson will be Luke 21:25-36, one of the traditional lessons of Advent. We will be celebrating our Angels Among Us as our children lead us in worship. Also, this Sunday, our sacred music will be led by the Transformers, the Little Bells and the Contemporary Choir.

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NOTA BENE---There will be Sunday school this Sunday, December 9th, and next Sunday, December 16th.

After worship this Sunday, we will be having the annual Advent Workshop in the Fellowship Hall. All are invited to come and be a part of this special time of this special season. If possible, please bring a snack to share and mittens, gloves, or hats for the Mitten Tree.

In the afternoon, the annual Christmas Concert will be held at 4 pm. This is part of the Music @First concert series which benefits the Les Childs Music Scholarship. During this concert, all of our choirs will be performing the wonderful music of the season. Refreshments will follow. A suggested donation is

requested, but all are welcome to attend.

In this sacred season of waiting and hoping, let us all be mindful of those in time of need. Among the opportunities available to help others are the Mitten Tree in the Fellowship Hall and the Christmas Giving Tree in the rear of the sanctuary. Specifics for how to help others are detailed in the Sunday bulletin.