



THE ADVENTURE

Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church
December 2024 Issue

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION - FAITHFUL IN THE WORD

- + To **gather** as God's people and nurture one another.
 - + To **know** the Word of God.
 - + To **grow** in faith, love, and service.
 - + To **go** into the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.
-

INCLUDED IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER:

- Message from Pastor Matt, *page 2*
- December Worship Schedule, *page 3*
- Worship-Related Information & Opportunities, *pages 4-5*
- Volunteer Opportunities at Services, *page 6*
- Advent Community Events & Outreach, *pages 7-8*
- New Constitution Information, *page 9*
- Roof Replacement Project, *page 10*
- Prayers for our Military, *page 11*
- Birthdays, *page 11*
- Financial Report, *page 12*
- December Calendar, *page 13*

Rev. Matthew E. Ollikainen, pastor

45 Worthington Mill Road

Richboro, PA 18954

215-355-2529

www.adventrichboro.org

adventlutheranrichboro@gmail.com



COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS

Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church continues to have these precautions:

- Respect for those who choose to mask.
- Respect for those who choose social distance.
- Please stay home if you have any symptoms of illness or have been in close contact with anyone with COVID.
- Worship will continue to be available online.
- Those distributing communion will continue to mask but will no longer wear gloves. Personal communion kits are available to those who prefer to commune in the pew or at home.
- We will continue to share the peace with hand waves, peace signs and air hugs.
- Our leadership will continue to gauge the situation week by week and will keep the congregation informed of any adjustment to our precautions.

PASTOR MATT'S MESSAGE
December 2024: WORSHIP RENEWAL PROCESS

I am so excited that we are beginning a Worship Renewal process as part of our Strategic Mission Plan for Advent Lutheran Church. To begin, let me answer a couple of questions for you:

Why do a worship renewal process? The answer is so that we may be filled more deeply with God's resurrection love in worship so we may pour forth more of God's love around us.

Will the worship renewal process involve change? Yes, the process will involve change, though I am not able to tell you how much change. We will find out as the process moves forward. I think our worship is pretty good right now. I can feel God's presence with us. The first part of the Worship renewal process is simply learning about how we worship, what the parts of worship mean, and worship in general. These acts alone will renew our worship experience. As we learn about other worship practices, we may want to tweak what we currently do or try new things out. Learning new worship practices is like learning new ways to hear God say, "I love you". As we try new ways to hear God say, "I love you," we will be sure to keep the ways God says, "I love you" that are most meaningful to us.

How do we begin? Our first step will be learning about the parts of the worship liturgy. Our worship liturgy is like going on a date with God. In worship there are four things that happen that are like any date: Greeting, Word, Sacrament, and Sending.

During Advent, I will be preaching on each of the four parts of worship as part of a **Worship Sermon Series**:

Greeting (December 1st): At the beginning of worship is the Greeting. We say and God says to us how great it is to see you and be in your presence. This moment captures the yearning and joy of finally being together after enduring all the things in the world that would try to keep apart.

Word (December 8th): On a date and in worship, after the greeting, you catch up with one another. You may reminisce on the past week or remember a time of joy or challenge you have faced together. You may express your concerns and might talk of what needs to be done in the week to come. You speak words of love to one another. Reading scripture, the prayer of intercession and the sermon accomplish these things.

Sacrament (December 15th): Baptism and communion are things we do with God that bind us together with God, insuring our covenant of love. On a date having dinner, watching a movie, doing an activity like putt-putt, and being passionately intimate together are all ways of binding ourselves one another and reinforcing any formal or informal covenants to love each other.

Sending (December 22nd): The sending is saying good bye at the end of the date. It is saying "I love you" and it is promise, a commitment, to continue to love each other. It is a moment of joy recognizing how loved you are and how that love will sustain you.

Come to worship in person or online. Come learn more about the worship liturgy so your experience of worship may be renewed.

God's blessings be with you!
Pastor Matt



SUNDAYS OF WORSHIP- DECEMBER SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 1 – First Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship Service with Holy Communion Sunday School age 4 - grade 6
10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Time: Open
10:45 a.m.	Bible Study: George Henry

DECEMBER 15 – Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship Service with Holy Communion Christmas Pageant
10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Time: Ward Family
10:45 a.m.	Church Council Meeting

DECEMBER 24 – Christmas Eve

7:30 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service
-----------	-----------------------

DECEMBER 8 – Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship Service with Holy Communion Sunday School age 4 - grade 6
10:30 a.m.	Annual Christmas Brunch & Christmas Tree Decorating

DECEMBER 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship Service with Holy Communion Sunday School age 4 - grade 6
10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Time: Open
10:45 a.m.	Bible Study: George Henry

DECEMBER 29 – First Sunday of Christmas

9:00 a.m.	A Service of Lessons & Carols
10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Time: Open



SERVING IN WORSHIP – DECEMBER 2024 SCHEDULE

LAY READERS		COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	LAY READERS		COMMUNION ASSISTANTS
8:00 AM			9:30 AM		
12/1	Rose Herbert		12/1	Jennifer McQuiggan	
12/8	Dave Elkin	Janice Hoffmann	12/8	John Flint	Megan Ward
12/15	George Henry		12/15	Gail Oines	Kristi Ward
12/22	TBD		12/22	Bruce Eklund	Joyce Heiss
7:30 PM					
12/24	Jeanne Gryszka	Gail Oines			
9:00 AM – No Communion					
12/29	George Henry & Jeannie Gryszka				

ALTAR GUILD: Gail Oines, Joyce Heiss, Jeanne Gryszka

OUR TECH CREW: Pastor Matt, Mike Dettra, Tony Gryszka, Gary Zimmerman

FLOWER DISTRIBUTION: Linda Brownlee, Audrey Savchuck, Nancy Sclight, Rhona Slawter

WORSHIP-RELATED INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES

ONLINE WORSHIP INFORMATION

Worship services may also be attended by Zoom and it will be live streamed on Facebook. A recording of the service will be uploaded to YouTube and linked to our website immediately after the service concludes.

ZOOM INFORMATION

Topic: Advent Lutheran Church Traditional Worship 8:00 am service

Time: 8:00 AM

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89195039877?pwd=dnVRTlRGamJQVXNZbENlVDJTT0pnUT09>

Meeting ID: 891 9503 9877

Passcode: 443533

Topic: Advent Lutheran Church Contemporary Worship 9:30 am service

Time: 9:30 AM

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85405629972?pwd=aGErSFNlbVAvNmZsQkIzWVpTTktlQT09>

Meeting ID: 854 0562 9972

Passcode: 506714

While using Zoom, please mute yourself when you are not speaking.

Phone instructions: Call 1-646-558-8656

MISSION DEDICATIONS



Dates remain open for December Mission Dedications and the 2025 sign-up sheet is also now available. The Mission Dedication donations benefit our sister church, Iglesia Luterana Nueva Creacion, which does vital work in North Philadelphia. Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex on the table by the sanctuary doors. Please include your name and dedication. Dedications cost \$25. You can also call the church office to submit your mission dedication at 215-355-2529.

ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS



Dates remain open for December Altar Flower dedications and the 2025 sign-up sheet is also available. Please sign up on the sheet on the table in the narthex with your name and dedication. Two bouquets are available for dedication each week. The cost is \$25 per bouquet. Bouquets are available to take home after the 9:30 a.m. service to enjoy during the week. If you have any questions, please call Cindy Frey at 267-205-0713. Thank you for helping to beautify the altar!

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE



A sign-up sheet for dedicating poinsettias for Christmas Eve is on the table in the narthex. **Please sign up by December 18.** You can also call the office to leave your dedication. Poinsettias may be picked up any time after the 7:30 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. The cost per plant is \$15.

WORSHIP-RELATED INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES (continued)

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT – DECEMBER 15



Our Sunday School students are preparing for the upcoming Christmas mini-pageant, a feature of the 9:30 worship service on December 15.

Each Sunday during Advent season, they will have rehearsal time before their lesson. All are invited for the performance with family and friends to experience the joy our young actors will share! Thank you to our Pageant Parents for helping to coordinate the details.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY



On December 29, there will be no Sunday School class. Class will resume on January 5, 2025.



BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY

Sunday in-person Bible Study with George Henry will be held this month on December 1 and December 22 at 10:45 a.m., following Fellowship.



THURSDAY NIGHT ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study is held **Thursdays at 7:00 pm** led by Pastor Matt. Utilizing the “The Jewish Annotated New Testament,” we will delve deep into Jesus’ times to better understand the Gospel of Matthew written to a Jewish-Christian audience.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82089110140>

Meeting ID: 820 8911 0140

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT SERVICES

PRaise BAND & VOCAL CHOIR SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

Advent's Praise Band and Vocal Choir invite you to join them during the Advent season!



Praise Band practices from 6:30 to 7:15 pm

Vocal Choir from 7:15-8:00 p.m.

December Practice Dates: 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18

Please see Mike Dettra, Music Director for more details.

Choir will sing at the Christmas Eve Service.

CALL FOR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Advent Lutheran Church wants some new faces/voices helping before and in the services! We want you, in other words. Please consider sharing your gifts with us as an **Usher/Greeter**, **Lay Reader**, or **Communion Assistant**. Also, if you know a youth who may be interested in being an **Acolyte**, we could use them, too.



FELLOWSHIP TIME

We need committees or individuals to sign up to provide refreshments after the 9:00 a.m. and/or 9:30 a.m. service. The sign-up sheet through January is on the fellowship table. Advent supplies hot beverages (i.e., coffee & tea) and all paper products.

If you would like to support Fellowship Time but do not have the time or ability to bake or shop for snacks, please consider donating a few dollars. All the hungry snackers will appreciate it!

PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN NEED

At Advent, we actively pray for those in need by name through the *Prayers of Intercession* during worship and through the *Prayer Chain* during the week.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION DURING SERVICES

To add names of those in need of prayer:

- ❖ *If you are attending worship in-person*, please provide the person's name to Pastor when he takes names at the beginning of the service.
- ❖ *If you are worshipping online*, please message or chat the name on Zoom or Facebook live stream and we will add the name to the list.

Because services are available world-wide through the internet, we use only baptismal or first names and omit surnames. The list of names gathered for the *Prayers of Intercession* in worship are maintained for just that day.



PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain is a group of volunteers at Advent who pray every day, confidentially, for people added to the Prayer Chain. Names are maintained for one month unless asked to be removed earlier.

To add names to the Prayer Chain:

- ❖ Complete a Prayer Request Card found in the pews of the sanctuary. Please place completed cards in the offering plate, or
- ❖ Submit names by email directly to Gail Oines at alcdeacon@yahoo.com

More information may be provided to allow the Prayer Chain volunteers to pray more specifically for the person added to the list.

ADVENT COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH

COMMUNITY QUILT FOR NANCY HILL

Members of the community came together to create a quilt for Nancy Hill. A special thank you to Fran Zanis for putting together the beautiful quilt. Nancy had been fighting cancer for many months. The quilt was intended to express the congregation's love for Nancy and bring her comfort in her final days. The quilt was dedicated and presented to Nancy on November 10th. Nancy was accompanied by her sons, Rich and Dave. Nancy passed away on Thursday, November 28th. Rich and Dave would like to thank the congregation for all the love and support with which the church has surrounded Nancy and her family. They will always treasure the quilt given to Nancy.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BRUNCH – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Advent's annual Christmas brunch will be held on Sunday, December 8, 2024, in the Fellowship Hall, immediately after the 9:30 worship service. This event lasts about an hour and festive live Christmas music will be provided by Advent's own talented musicians. The sign-up sheet in the narthex provides additional information, and all family members and friends are welcome to attend. Thank you!

ADVENT'S CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING -SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, AFTER BRUNCH

We will be decorating the Christmas trees in the narthex and sanctuary on Sunday, December 8, after the Christmas Brunch. All are invited to participate.



MEN'S BREAKFAST – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

The Men's Breakfast will be held on **Saturday, December 14**. Coffee will be ready at 7:30 a.m. A disappointment this year is that Santa refuses to attend. His weak excuse is that he is not up to those heavy guys sitting on his lap anymore.

CHRISTMAS JAZZ CONCERT - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

The annual Christmas Jazz Concert will be held at Advent on **Saturday evening December 21 at 7:00 p.m.** under the direction of our organist and choir director, Mike Dettra and his band, The Dettra Mental Trio. You can look forward to kicking off the holidays with an hour of relaxation and entertainment! A free-will offering will be taken and light refreshments will be served. Thank you for supporting Mike and his band.



TUESDAY EVENING PING PONG

All are welcome to join us for an evening of Ping Pong at the church on Tuesday nights at 6:30 p.m. Please call the church 215-355-2529 if you want to give it a try. (It helps to know how many tables to set up).

ADVENT COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH (continued)

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

WARMINSTER FOOD BANK

We were honored to have Mike Cerino, the Director of the Warminster Food Bank, speak to the congregation on Sunday, November 10.

Thank you to all who brought donations on Sunday, November 24 as part of Harvest Home and to all who bring food donations throughout the year. Thank you for your continued efforts to help our neighbors in need.



DRIVE IN AND DROP OFF FOOD COLLECTION

If you have food for the Warminster Food Bank that you or your friends would like to donate and the church is not open, just drive in and drop off the food under the seat of the bench outside the front door. You may still bring food into the church narthex during church and office hours. Most needed items currently include:

Food Items

Beef Stew, Can
Chicken Breast, Chili,
Sloppy Joe Mix, Jelly,
Ravioli, Syrup,
Saltines, Taco Shells, and Salsa



Non-Food Items

Store Gift Cards, Laundry Detergent Pods / or
Liquid, Household Cleaning Supplies,
Toothpaste/Toothbrushes/ Oral Care, Toilet Paper,
Paper Towels, and Gently Used Grocery Size
Paper Bags

CARING FOR FRIENDS

Thank you to all who carefully assembled meals for recipients served by *Caring for Friends* throughout the year. Kevin and Christine Welsh and family have done an excellent job in organizing and preparing everything we needed to complete 229 dinners and 22 soups for donation this year, with additional food provided by Cindy Frey. Our Thanksgiving dinners were dropped off in November in time for distribution.



♥ gratitude ♥

NEW CONSTITUTION REVIEW AND VOTE BY THE CONGREGATION

We are writing to update the congregation on the final steps in what has been a fairly lengthy journey on adopting a new Constitution for Advent Church. It is nice to bring this journey to a close, which began in 2021 when an Advent work group was formed to begin the discerning and writing processes for creating a new constitution. This was followed with Church Council reviewing, editing and submitting the document to the Synod Constitution Committee for review, who required two iterative submissions. This Synod Committee has given us approval to proceed to the congregation voting on its adoption.

The process for the congregation's review and vote on the new constitution will take place as follows:

1. December 2024 - the old and new constitutions will be made available to the congregation
2. January 2025 - a presentation and Q/A session for the congregation
3. February 2025 - 1st Congregational vote
4. March 2025 - 2nd Congregational Vote

There are many people to thank for working on this important project and guiding us in the process to this point in time. First is the initial work group of Ray Heiss, Cindy Frey, Mike Sitler, and Pastor Matt. Second is Church Council, especially Council members George Henry and Cindy Frey, for their dedicated and sustained work on the project. Last, but not least, is Pastor Matt for his personal and spiritual guidance and facilitation of the process with the Synod Constitution Committee. All of these individuals spent countless hours on the deliberation and writing of the new constitution, ensuring that we were following the ELCA guidelines and requirements, while upholding and incorporating our values as a congregation.

Please actively participate in this final phase of reviewing and voting on our new constitution. Your involvement is important to creating a living and vibrant constitution that will be used to guide our policies, procedures and organizational structure for years to come. Please see Pastor Matt or Council President Mike Sitler if you have questions or would like any additional information. Thank you in advance for participating in this important part of church governance.

Mike Sitler, Council President

The Rev. Matthew Ollikainen

ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT COMPLETED

Our roof replacement project is now behind us with the final work having been completed in early November 2024. In addition to high-quality shingles being installed, all of the gutters were replaced and re-aligned for proper drainage. The four skylights in the narthex and the large skylight in the multipurpose room, which dated back to when the facility was built, were also replaced. Paramount Home Solutions (Souderton, PA) was contracted to do the work. They were a pleasure to work with throughout the project, from working with our insurance carrier, getting Northampton Township permit approval, to high-quality installation work. They were also very generous in that they absorbed \$27,000 of the project's cost, helping to reduce out-of-pocket cost for Advent.



Paramount worked with our insurance company (Church Mutual), which resulted in a claim totaling \$81,385 for the roof replacement (total cost \$161,701). You will recall that Advent's land sale resulted in \$125,000 being set aside for the roof replacement, but because of the insurance claim reimbursement and Paramount's generous \$27,000 cost reduction, Advent's out-of-pocket costs for the project were greatly reduced. Still in play are two costs, which are under review by Church Mutual, but are anticipated to be paid by the insurance company.

Once all of the roof replacement costs have been paid, it is anticipated that Advent will retain around \$88,000 from the land sale for use in other capital projects (per the agreement with our mortgage company Mission Invest Fund). Church Council is currently assessing and planning for other capital projects that are needed.

We have many people to thank for guiding this project through to its completion. First is Ray Heiss for his vision of selling part of our land, creating funding for capital improvements to include the roof replacement. Second is Church Council for their many hours dedicated to work on the project, in particular our Property Chair Lynn Roccograndi, Council President Mike Sitler, and Pastor Matt. These individuals spent countless hours in planning, contract talks, and on-site monitoring of the work being done.



All of this is a true blessing for our congregation at this point in our history. We can rejoice now that the roof replacement project is completed and make plans for other capital improvements that will serve our church family well into the future.



THE ARMED FORCES

Please keep in your prayers all our service men and women and especially those related to our congregation:

- ❖ **Colonel Andrew M Frey, Jr.**, son of Cindy Frey, is serving as Command Center Director, NORAD/NORTHCOM, stationed at Peterson SFB, Colorado Springs, CO
- ❖ **US Army Ranger Liam McKendry**, grandson of Pastor Jo Wright, stationed in Fort Benning, GA
- ❖ **Specialist Joseph Vanderstine**, grandson of Rhona & Alan Slawter, stationed at Fort Drum, NY

Please contact the church office if you or someone you know has been omitted from the list.

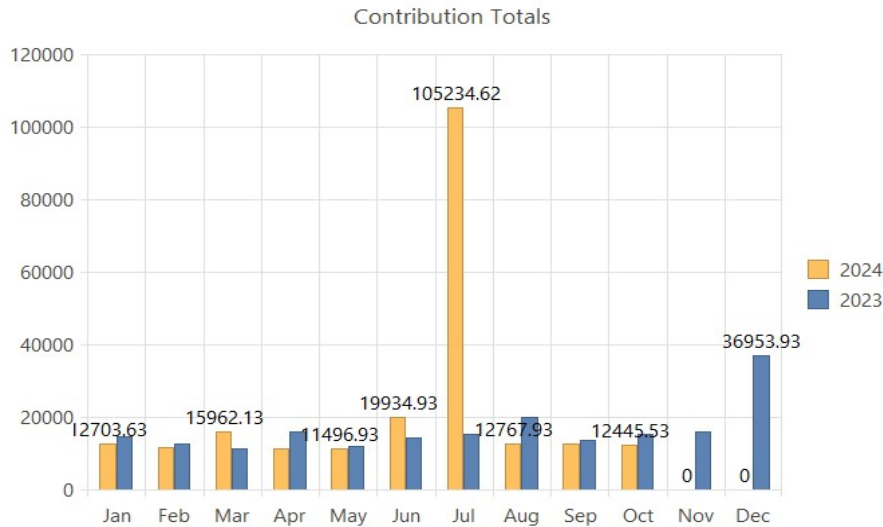


Dec 6 Tom McQuiggan
 Dec 10 David Schearer
 Dec 12 Logan Frey

Dec 22 Pastor Matt & Drew Frey
 Dec 26 Judy Buttil & Victoria Flint
 Dec 30 Shirley Morris

Please contact the church office if you or someone you know has been omitted from the list.

FINANCIAL REPORT



Financial Report for October 2024

Rec'd for Oct 2024

Budget for Oct 2024

General Fund	\$10,219.53	\$17,482.00
Mortgage	\$1,376	\$1,898.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$125	\$75
Other Benevolence	\$725	
Insurance Settlement		
Web Upgrade		
Total	\$12,445.53	\$19,455.00

Rec'd YTD 1/1-10/31/24

Budget YTD 1/1-10/31/24

General Fund	\$110,036.39	\$174,820.00
Mortgage	\$16,952.00	\$18,980.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$535.00	\$750.00
Other Benevolence	\$5,595.00	
Insurance Settlement	\$87,496.69	
Web Upgrade	\$5,780.00	
Total	\$226,395.08	\$194,550.00

*Funds received from the insurance company due to storm damage to the roof.

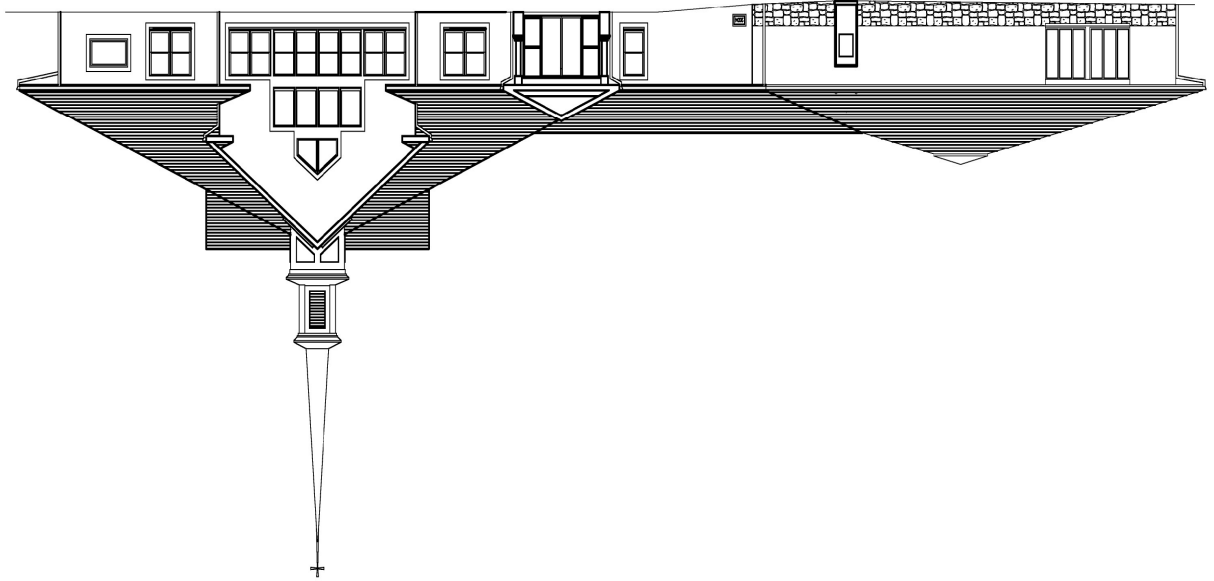
Thanks to everyone for your continued financial support of the church this year. We greatly appreciate it. There are numerous ways to continue your offerings.

- Drop off your offering at the church office. The office is usually open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10 AM and 1 PM. Call to confirm hours.
- Mail a check to the church. The mailing address is "Advent Lutheran Church, 45 Worthington Mill Road, Richboro, PA 18954"
- Contribute online at www.adventrichboro.org. At the top of the page, click the "Give Now" link to see frequently asked questions. At the bottom of the page click the "Give Now" link for our Giving platform. You may also choose to set up recurring donations or a one-time donation.

Again, thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions concerning your offering please call Cindy Frey, Financial Secretary 267-205-0713

December 2024 Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 First Sunday of Advent 8:00 AM Traditional Worship with Holy Communion 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 AM Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study	2 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting	3 1:00 PM Ladies Lunch Group Pineville Inn 6:30 PM Ping Pong	4 6:30-7:15 PM Praise Band Practice 7:15-8:00 PM Vocal choir Practice	5 7:00 PM Bible Study via zoom	6 7:30 PM A.A. Step Meeting	7
8 Second Sunday of Advent 8:00 AM Traditional Worship with Holy Communion 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 AM Advent Brunch & Tree Decorating	9 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting	10 6:30 PM Ping Pong	11 6:30-7:15 PM Praise Band Practice 7:15-8:00 PM Vocal choir Practice	12 7:00 PM Bible Study via zoom	13 7:30 PM A.A. Step Meeting	14 Men's Breakfast 8:30
15 Third Sunday of Advent 8:00 AM Traditional Worship with Holy Communion 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion & Christmas Pageant 10:30 AM Fellowship 10:45 Church Council Meeting	16 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting	17 6:30 PM Ping Pong	18 6:30-7:15 PM Praise Band Practice 7:15-8:00 PM Vocal choir Practice	19 7:00 PM Bible Study via zoom	20 7:30 PM A.A. Step Meeting	21 Christmas Jazz Concert 7:00 p.m.
22 Fourth Sunday of Advent 8:00 AM Traditional Worship with Holy Communion 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 AM Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study	23 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting	24 Christmas Eve 7:30 PM Candlelight and Carols with Holy Communion	25 Christmas Day	26 No Bible Study	27 7:30 PM A.A. Step Meeting	28
29 First Sunday of Christmas 9:00 AM Lessons & Carols Service – No Communion No Sunday School No Bible Study	30 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting	31 New Year's Eve	January 1 New Year's Day	2 Office Opens 7:00 PM Bible Study via zoom		



Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church

45 Worthington Mill Rd.

Richboro, PA 18954-1909