



ADVENT EVANGELICAL *Lutheran Church*

Third Sunday of Advent
December 14, 2025
9:30 AM




We Gather in Jesus' Name



Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church
45 Worthington Mill Road
Richboro, PA 18954-1909
215-355-2529
www.adventrichboro.org

Welcome Visitors! Discover god's abundant grace and love.

We extend a cordial welcome to all who worship with us today. We give thanks that you are here with us. Please sign our guest book and come back to worship with us again.



In the principal service of Christian worship, the Holy Spirit gathers people around the means of grace—the saving Word of God and the sacraments. From the table of communion where Jesus Christ comes with forgiveness, life, and salvation, God sends us out to share the good news and to care for those in need. The basic pattern of this service—gathering, word, meal, sending—is a structure that allows for freedom and flexibility in the ways worship may be shaped locally, while focusing on what the church holds in common. The whole people of God are joined by the same gifts of grace, for the sake of the same mission of the gospel, into the life of the one triune God.

We Gather in Jesus' Name ¹

Prelude *(a time for silent meditation)*

Announcements

Confessions and Forgiveness ²

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.
C: Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

**C: we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

P: God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.

✝ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: Amen.

¹ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

² On the day of Christ's resurrection, and at other times, God gathers us in Christian assembly. We confess our sin and hear God's word of forgiveness. We give thanks for God's mercy in the gift of baptism.

Gathering Song ³: “How Many Kings”

1 Follow the star to a place unexpected
Would you believe after all we've projected
A child in a manger
Lowly and small the weakest of all
Unlikeliest hero wrapped in His mother's
shawl
Just a child is this who we've waited for

2 Bringing out gifts for the newborn Savior
All that we have whether costly or meek
Because we believe
Gold for His honor and frankincense for His
pleasure
And myrrh for the cross He'll suffer
Do you believe
Is this who we've waited for

Chorus 1

How many kings stepped down from their
thrones
How many lords have abandoned their homes
How many greats have become the least for
me
And how many gods have poured out their
hearts
To romance a world that is torn all apart
How many fathers gave up their sons for me

Chorus 2

How many kings stepped down from their
thrones
How many lords have abandoned their homes
How many greats have become the least
How many gods have poured out their hearts
To romance a world that is torn all apart
How many fathers gave up their sons for me
Only one did that for me

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Advent 3

P: Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.

C: Amen.

Light the third candle.

“Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jesse,
free your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel.

³ Singing at the gathering may include hymns old and new; a prayer for God's mercy to fill the church and the world; a canticle of praise to God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ.

Prayer of the Day ⁴

P: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Children's Sermon

The Reading of God's Word ⁵

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom
abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

⁴ During the gathering, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the name of the triune God. The presiding minister gathers the assembly into prayer.

⁵ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song. The word of God is proclaimed within and by the gathered assembly. The first Bible reading, usually from the Old Testament, is followed by a psalm sung or spoken in response. The second reading, usually from the New Testament letters, bears the witness of the early church. We acclaim the living Word, Jesus Christ, present in the gospel reading. Preaching brings God's word of law and gospel into our time and place to awaken and nourish faith.

Psalm: Psalm 146:5-10

- ¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;
² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**
³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**
⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.
⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**
⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
¹⁸ **Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**
¹⁹ And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist,
yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Guest Speaker: Mike Cerino, Director of Warminster Food Bank

Sermon

Hymn of Praise ⁶: “Once in Royal David’s City” WOV 643



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed;
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895
Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

⁶ God's word is further proclaimed as we sing and as we confess our faith with the whole church. After praying for the whole world, we receive and extend to one another the gift of Christ's peace.

Apostles' Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Each petition ends with: God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The Offering ⁷

Please leave your offering by scanning the QR code

or on our website: <https://giving.servantkeeper.com/adventrichboro>



Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray...

**C: Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.
Amen.**

⁷ A collection of material goods for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, is a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. The table is set with bread and wine.

Sacrament ⁸

The Great Thanksgiving ⁹

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer ¹⁰

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father who art in heaven,

hallowed be Thy name,

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

⁸ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

⁹ Before the Lord's supper is shared, the presiding minister leads us into thanksgiving. With the whole creation, we join the angels' song.

¹⁰ The grace of God's gift is always proclaimed in Jesus' own words of command and promise at the table. A full thanksgiving also includes praise to God for creation and salvation; remembrance of the crucified and risen Christ; and prayer for the Holy Spirit in this meal. The thanksgiving concludes with the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us.

Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

Distribution ¹¹

The body of Christ, given to you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Prayer after Communion ¹²

Let us pray...
God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.
C: Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
C: Amen.

Sending Hymn: “Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)”

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 What hope we hold this starlit night
A King is born in Bethlehem
Our journey long we seek the light
That leads to the hallowed manger ground</p> <p>2 What fear we felt in the silent age
Four-hundred years can He be found
But broken by a baby's cry
Rejoice in the hallowed manger ground</p> | <p>3 The Son of God here born to bleed
A crown of thorns would pierce His brow
And we beheld this offering
Exalted now the King of kings
Praise God for the hallowed manger ground</p> <p>Chorus
Emmanuel Emmanuel
God incarnate here to dwell
Emmanuel Emmanuel
Praise His name Emmanuel
(Praise His name Emmanuel)</p> |
|--|--|

Chorus

Emmanuel Emmanuel
God incarnate here to dwell
Emmanuel Emmanuel
Praise His name Emmanuel

Chorus

Emmanuel Emmanuel
God incarnate here to dwell
Emmanuel Emmanuel
Praise His name Emmanuel
(Praise His name Emmanuel)

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.
C: Thanks be to God.

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¹¹ In Christ's body and blood given to us, God forgives us and nourishes us for mission. It is traditional to sing as the bread is broken and as the meal is shared. We ask God to send us in witness to the world.

¹² God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world. God's mission includes the gifts of grace that we share in worship and take also to the absent; now, we are sent to continue our participation in God's mission. With the blessing of God, we go out to live as Christ's body in the world.



OUR MISSION

- + 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

SERVING OUR LORD IN WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor	The Rev. Matthew E. Ollikainen
Music Director	Michael Dettra
Lay Reader	Bruce Eklund
Communion Assistant	Joyce Heiss
Fellowship Time	Open

Altar Flowers

The Altar Flowers are dedicated to the Glory of God.

Mission Support

Mission Support is dedicated to the Glory of God.

Worship Attendance for **Sunday, December 7:** **Total: 56**

8:00 AM: 6+1 9:30 AM: 39+1 Sunday School: 9

Communion Reminder

The Worship and Music Committee would like to remind the congregation that those going forward to the altar for communion have a few options. There is gluten-free bread in the small clear glass bowl, and white grape juice for those who prefer. Just let the Pastor or assistant know your preference.

Contacting Pastor Matt

If you need to speak with Pastor Matt when he is not in the office, particularly in the case of a pastoral emergency, please feel free to call his cell at 215-859-3778 or email him at pastormattolikainen@gmail.com.

Praise Band and Vocal Choir Rehearsals

Rehearsals for both Praise Band and Vocal Choir are held on Wednesday evenings.

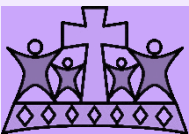
Praise Band: 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM

Vocal Choir: 6:15 PM – 7:00 PM

If you are interested in sharing your musical talents through Praise Band and/or Vocal Choir, please contact Mike Dettra, Music Director.



Call for Worship Assistants



Advent needs volunteers to assist with worship services! Training is provided for those interested in serving as **Lay Reader, Communion Assistant, Acolyte or Greeter**. Volunteers can also assist **behind the scenes** with set up prior to services. Contact

Kristi Ward for more information: kward1411@yahoo.com or 215-284-2669.

Thursday Night Bible Study via Zoom

most Thursdays except the 1st Thursday of each month

Thursday Night Bible Study now offers you an opportunity to "Stump the Pastor!" Submit your scripture-related questions via email to adventlutheranrichboro@gmail.com with "Stump the Pastor" in the subject line OR handwrite your questions on the Stump the Pastor slips located in a basket on the round table in the narthex. George Henry will tabulate the questions and select those to be answered each week during the Zoom Bible Study.

A weekly commitment is not needed! Come virtually with your Bible or just listen and follow along as your schedule allows. **Zoom link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82089110140>

Dedications for Sunday Services

Payments for dedications may be made using the marked envelopes by the sign-up charts.

Please place payment in the offering plate or mail payment to the church at

45 Worthington Mill Road, Richboro, PA 18954.

*Please write check to **Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church***

*and write **Altar Flowers** or **Mission Support** in the memo line on your check.*

2025 Altar Flowers Chart

The 2025 Flower Chart to dedicate altar flowers each Sunday is on the table in the narthex. The cost is \$25 per bouquet, and you are welcome to take the flowers home following the late service. You can also call the church office to submit your mission dedication: 215-355-2529

2025 Mission Support

The 2025 Mission Support Chart is available for sign up on the table in the narthex. Mission Support Dedication donations benefit our sister church, Iglesia Luterana Nueva Creacion, which does vital work in North Philadelphia. Dedication donations are \$25. You can also call the church office to submit your mission dedication: 215-355-2529

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 Linda Weaver at lindaweaver3@comcast.net.

If you would like to be a Prayer Chain volunteer, please contact Linda Weaver.

Sunday School Assistants Needed



A sincere **Thank You** to all who have signed up to help with Sunday School! Our Sunday school program continues to need an assistant for class time each week at 9:30 AM. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex for volunteers to offer their help, one Sunday at a time.

Volunteers require a background check. Feel free to contact me for more information.
- Jeanne Gryszka, Sunday School Director

Donations for Fellowship Time

Fellowship Time is held Sundays directly following the 9:30 AM service. The sign-up sheet to provide refreshments for Fellowship Time is available in the narthex on the refreshment table. Advent supplies hot beverages and paper products. *If you are looking for a way to assist with Fellowship Time but do not have the time or ability to bake or shop for snacks, please consider donating a few dollars.*

Our Daily Bread



The regular and **large print editions** of Our Daily Bread devotional are available in the narthex at Advent. Please note that the large print edition and the regular edition are on different print schedules and cover different months. The devotionals are also available digitally. Go to www.odbm.org for more information.

If you have any questions or need assistance accessing the devotionals digitally, please contact the church office at 215-355-2529 or adventlutheranrichboro@gmail.com.

Drive-in & Drop-off Food Collection – Warminster Food Bank

If you have food for the Warminster Food Bank and the church is not open, just drive into the parking lot and drop off the food inside the bench outside the front door. You may still bring food into the church narthex during church and office hours. Check their website for the most current needs: www.warminsterfoodbank.org. Thank you for helping our neighbors in need.

Recycling Can Tabs for Ronald McDonald House Charities

We are collecting can tabs to support the Ronald McDonald House Charities which help alleviate some financial burdens for families along their child's healthcare journey. Last year alone, they helped families save \$736 million in lodging and meal expenses. Tabs can be placed in the marked containers in the narthex, on the shelf above the coat rack. *No cans, please – just tabs!*

Coat Drive Thank You



Thank you to everyone who donated coats in this year's Coat Drive. Your generosity exceeded our expectations. Know that you've met the needs of those who need it most.

November Financial Report

Financial Report For November 2025		
	Rec'd for November 2025	Budget for November 2025
General Fund	\$28,704.93	\$18,609.00
Mortgage	\$1,790	\$1,898.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$1,110	\$133
Other Benevolence	\$2,010	
Memorial		
Web Upgrade		
Total	\$33,614.93	\$20,640.00
	Rec'd YTD 1/1/-11/30/25	Budget YTD 1/1-11/30/25
General Fund	\$137,295.07	\$204,699.00
Mortgage	\$15,856.00	\$20,878.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$1,822.00	\$1,463.00
Other Benevolence	\$6,821.00	
Memorial	\$2,495.00	
Web Upgrade	\$450.00	
Total	\$164,739.07	\$227,040.00

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Gift Card Collection for the Holidays



We are once again collecting gift cards for our neighbors who depend on the Warminster Food Bank for food each month. The collection envelopes are available on the table by the entrance of the sanctuary and will be given to our neighbors beginning in December. Please consider helping our neighbors in need as we have done in the last few years. Your donations are greatly appreciated! Please contact Nancy Sclight if you have any questions.

Poinsettia Dedication Sign-up for Christmas Eve Service

Deadline: Sunday, December 14



A sign-up sheet for dedicating poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service is on the table by the Mission Dedication and Flower Dedication Charts. Please sign up by Sunday, December 14. You may also call or email the church office with your dedications. Poinsettias may be picked up any time after the 7:30 PM service on Christmas Eve. Cost per plant is \$15.



Christmas Jazz Concert: Saturday, December 20, 7:30 PM

The annual Christmas Jazz Concert will be held at Advent on Saturday, December 20, at 7:30 PM under the direction of our organist and Music Director, Mike Dettra and his band, Dettra Mental Music. 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!



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 24, 7:30 PM – corrected time

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at Advent on Wednesday, December 24, at 7:30 PM. The service will be available in-person and online via Zoom and Facebook.

THIS WEEK AT ADVENT

SUNDAY, December 14 **Third Sunday of Advent**

- 8:00 AM Traditional Service with Holy Communion
9:30 AM Contemporary Service with Holy Communion
Special Guest: Mike Cerino, Director of the Warminster Food Bank
Sunday School
10:30 AM Adult Bible Study with George Henry in the Parlor
Fellowship: Open
Church Council Meeting

MONDAY, December 15

- 7:30 PM A.A. Open Meeting

TUESDAY, December 16

- 6:30 PM Ping Pong

WEDNESDAY, December 17

- 5:30 PM Praise Band rehearsal
6:15 PM Vocal Choir rehearsal

THURSDAY, December 18

- 7:00 PM Zoom Bible Study with Pastor Matt

FRIDAY, December 19

- 11:00 AM Holland Village Communion Service
7:30 PM A.A. Step Meeting

SATURDAY, December 20

- 7:30 PM Christmas Jazz Concert with Mike Dettra and Dettra Mental Music

SUNDAY, December 21 **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 8:00 AM Traditional Service with Holy Communion
9:30 AM Contemporary Service with Holy Communion
Sunday School
10:30 AM Fellowship: Open