



THE NATIVITY

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A Message from the Rector...

Did you know the modern Advent wreath has been around for less than 200 years?

Johnann Hinrich Wichern was born into poverty. Brought up with seven siblings, he became a teacher and a Lutheran pastor. He inspired Christians to make real efforts to assist people living in poverty, suffering through disability, or overcoming criminal pasts.

He started a school for children living in poverty called Rauhes Haus—'Rough House'—in Hamburg, Germany. Every day in Advent, the kids would ask the predictable question: is it Christmas yet? Wichern transformed an old cart's wheel into a large wooden ring. Every weekday and Saturday, he and the children would light a small red candle. Then on Sundays, they lit a large white candle.

Protestant Churches started following this tradition, and it evolved into the smaller wreath with only four or five candles that we use today.

Roman Catholics in Germany followed suit in the 1920s, and the custom spread to North America in the 1930s, and kept on going. They've really only been widely used for under a century!

There are a bunch of different traditions around the wreath. Wreaths are normally circular, to represent God's infinite love. The evergreen boughs are signs of the hope of eternal life. The increasing glow from the candles as we get closer to Christmas speaks of the light of God coming into the world through Jesus' birth. Sometimes the candles are violet—the colour of fasting and penitence, as we prepare in a season not unlike Lent. Other places use blue, to represent hope. Still others use red, following Christmas traditions.

This season isn't just about a birthday, even if it is God's birthday. The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'coming' or 'arrival.' We are waiting for the coming of Christ in three different ways, only one of which is Jesus born in Bethlehem. We also use this season to look for the coming of Christ into the hearts of each believer; and we look for the return of Jesus, and the fulfilment of God's reign (something to remember when we sing "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending"!).

Advent. God draws close. God reminds us—when we need it most—that God wants to be with us! God chooses to live among us, shows us how to live in Jesus, and reminds us of the staggering depths of God's love for us. And our cherished traditions—whether wreaths and trees, carols and food—are ways we try to make that love visible now. May God's blessing be with you as you show your love to all the world!



WHAT'S HAPPENING...

COMMUNITY LUNCH

Our Community Lunches are back after the pandemic pause. Invite a friend along and come out for a delicious hot lunch with dessert and great company! Mark your calendars and save these dates in the new year:

January 20

February 21

March 17

April 21



MITTEN TREE

The mitten tree is up and ready to accept donations of hats, mittens & scarves for those in need.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

If you would like to place flowers on the altar on Christmas Eve, please contact Patty at 905-547-2816 by December 10th.

2022

TAX RECEIPTS

We are only able to issue tax receipts for the 2022 year for funds that we receive in 2022. Since Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, we wanted to offer a timing reminder: please make sure that you've made the gifts you plan to for 2022 by noon on December 31st. We will be emptying the mailbox then, and any gifts received after that point will be receipted with the 2023 year.

Finances at a Glance...

REVENUE	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2022 Budget	
<u>Offerings</u>	10 months			
Envelopes	73,013	59,737	73,000	
Pre-Authorized Givings	83,854	59,222	82,000	
Other	10,306	5,253	15,550	
Total Givings	167,173	124,212	170,550	
Rental Income	17,899	17,518	18,000	
Miscellaneous Income	17,330	19,893	24,550	Note 1
Total Revenue	\$202,402	\$161,623	\$213,100	
EXPENDITURES				
Building Operations	42,220	53,140	48,250	Note 2
Parish Operations	5,302	7,176	8,634	
Employee Compensation	115,181	111,326	140,500	Note 3
Diocesan Mission & Ministries	34,211	29,331	35,204	
Total Expenditures	\$196,914	\$200,973	\$232,588	
Net:	\$5,488	-\$39,350	-\$19,488	
Surplus (Deficit) on Cash Basis	\$5,488	-\$31,349	-\$19,488	
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investment Fund	5,733	-29,440	12,000	Note 4
Surplus (Deficit) with Non-Cash Gain	\$11,221	-\$60,789	-\$7,488	

Note 1: \$17,000 from Rectory Fund for Rectors Housing Allowance and \$8,000 for hall lighting improvements

Note 2: Includes approximately \$10,000 for Capital Improvements (new hall lighting) and increased heating cost

Note 3: There is a diocesan-recommended 2% compensation increase for 2022, but the vast majority of the difference year-over-year is that we were still receiving Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) monies in 2021 that reimbursed a significant portion of our employee compensation. CEWS ended in October of 2021

Note 4: There has been a significant drop in the value of invested funds due to stock market downturn. There was an improvement in July of approximately \$30,000

Advent and Christmas Services & Events

Sunday, November 27 Advent 1 8:30 am
10:00 am

Sunday, December 4 Advent 2 8:30 am
10:00 am

We'll host our annual Advent Brunch after the 10:00 am service - please contact Larry at 289-962-6354 if you'd like to attend so we know how many people to plan to feed! (While you can make a free-will offering, all are welcome at no cost.)

Sunday, December 11 Advent 3 8:30 am
10:00 am

Tuesday, December 13 **Christmas Communion** 11:30 am

The Nativity Ladies Group invites everyone to a special Christmas Luncheon followed by a Carol Sing. Please contact the office for tickets (\$15).

Sunday, December 18 Advent 4 8:30 am
10:00 am

Christmas Songs & Stories 3 pm

Bring your family, friends, and neighbours for this fabulous event! We'll sing familiar hymns, hear some Christmas stories—both secular and scriptural—and enjoy musical offerings from the choir, from Derek and his tenor guitar, and from Matthew and his guitar!

Saturday, December 24 Christmas Eve 4:00 pm
8 :00 pm

At four o'clock, we'll unwrap the joys of Christmas as we rejoice in God's coming among us and celebrate the Eucharist in this less formal service.

At eight, the choir will lead us in our choral eucharist as we celebrate!

Sunday, December 25 Christmas Day 10:00 am

Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year, and there will be one service at 10 am.

Sunday, January 1 The Naming of Jesus 10:00 am

We'll hold only one service on January 1st, at 10 am—join in as we celebrate the Naming of Jesus and continue our Christmas festivities!

Sunday, January 8 The Theophanies 8:30 am
10:00 am

The days of Christmas conclude as we celebrate the three astounding ways God makes God's self known to all the world—in the magi visiting and marvelling at the new-born King, as Simeon & Anna marvel at the Messiah in the temple, and as Jesus is baptized and begins his ministry proclaiming the good news of God's reign!