



# Radiance Community Church

## *This Year...*

I have a t-shirt I pull out in November of each year that says “Don’t judge my Christmas music.” While I am not one to decorate long before Thanksgiving, I do start playing Advent and Christmas music a few weeks early. In my defense, it helps me to get in the spirit as I plan and prepare for Advent. But I would probably listen even if this wasn’t the case. There is something about the familiar tunes and musical tellings of the story of Christ’s coming that soothes my soul.

In her poem “This Year Will Be Different,” Ann Weems writes:

Who among us does not yearn for time  
for our hearts to ponder the Word of God?  
moments of kneeling and bursts of song?  
the peace of quiet calm for our spirit’s journey?  
This year we intend to follow the Star instead of the crowd.  
But, of course, we always do intend the best.  
(And sometimes best intentions tend to get the best of us!)

This year, when we find ourselves off the path again (and we invariably will!),  
let’s not add yet another stress to our Advent days,  
that of “trying to do Christmas correctly”!

Instead, let’s approach the birth of our Lord with joyful abandon!  
And this year let’s do what Mary did and rejoice in God,  
let’s do what Joseph did and listen to our dreams,  
let’s do what the Wise Men did and go to worship,  
let’s do what the shepherds did and praise and glorify God  
for all we’ve seen and heard!

As for the Advent frantic pace, we don’t have time for that.  
We’ll be too busy singing!

This year, our Advent theme is Songs of the Season. As we listen to the songs of Isaiah, Zechariah, Mary, and the angels, it is my prayer that our hearts will be filled with the hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ brings. Inside this newsletter, you will find many ways our Ministries Council has provided for us to nourish hearts for God, be a home to friends and strangers, and be a hub for sharing God’s love during the four weeks that lead up to Christmas - and the 12 days of Christmas, too. Let’s get busy singing the songs of the season!

Blessings,  
Pastor Melissa



# pray for one another

- Those who are homebound or in retirement/nursing homes: Jim Bryant, Jane Byrum, Mary Durrer, Buddy Hawkins, Nadine Minnix, Cheryl Nicely, Betty Obenchain, Louise Parris, Betty Payne, Becky Peyton, Jack Pilcher, Evelyn Ragland, Alice Scogin, Vilas Secrist, Anna Mae Smith, Joe St. Clair
- Those with cancer including Dalton Burgess, Linda Dwyer, Wyatt Hodges (friend of the Kinseys), Susan Chambers Lasher (friend of Mary Ellen Gearhart), Penny Long (Bob Crawford's sister), Kathleen Lordan (friend of Joyce Waugh), Betty Nevin (friend of Betty Payne), Mary Seithalil (friend of Lisa Baker), Terry Schoonmaker (friend of Linda Murray), Wayne Simmons (cousin of Vilas Secrist), Betsy White (Joyce Waugh's niece), Carolyn Young
- Sally Crawford, recovering from surgery on her knee
- Mary Shirley's son-in-law, Craig McCown, with multiple leg fracture
- Ann Bashire, co-worker of Michael Carrier, having health issues
- Evelyn Lewis, recovering from a fall
- Becky Beard's brother, John
- Jane Byrum, with health issues
- Betty Payne, fluid on her heart

## Mark your calendars:

### Journey to Joy Women's Retreat

On Saturday, Feb. 7, we are joining with other churches in our community to provide a one day women's retreat, "Journeying to Joy." This retreat offers women a peaceful, welcoming space to step away from the busyness of life, rest in God's presence, and rediscover the deep and lasting joy that comes from Him. Through worship, meaningful breakout sessions, creative expressions of faith, and group Bible study participants will be encouraged, refreshed, and renewed. Mark your calendars now!

- Date: Saturday, February 7
- Location: Melrose Baptist Church  
3520 Peters Creek Rd.  
Roanoke, VA, 24019
- Time: 10 AM- 4:30 PM
- Cost: \$25/per person
- Register here: <https://melrosebaptist.org/joy>

## Radiance Giving

**Giving:** Thank you for your faithful support of the ministry of our church. If you wish to give an offering, you may do so by placing it in the offering plate during the service, via mail, electronically through your bank or our website, <https://bit.ly/givingrcc>.

You may also donate by scanning our QR code:



## Featured Dates

### Sunday, Nov. 30

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:30 AM
Worship: Hanging of the Green	10:30 AM
Youth-Food, Faith, & Fun	6:00 PM

### Wednesday, Dec. 3

Mid Week Bible Study	12:00 PM
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### Sunday, Dec. 7

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Saint Nicholas Party RCC Kids & Families	11:45 AM
Youth-Angel Tree Shopping	6:00 PM

### Monday, Dec. 8

Evelyn Townsend Circle	12:00 PM
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### Wednesday, Dec. 10

Mid Week Bible Study	12:00 PM
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### Friday, Dec. 12

Youth: Christmas Party	6:00 PM
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### Sunday, Dec. 14

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Dessert First Christmas Treats	11:30 AM

### Wednesday, Dec. 17

Mid Week Bible Study	12:00 PM
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### Thursday, Dec. 18

Young Adult Christmas Party	6:00 PM
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### Sunday, Dec. 21

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Christmas Caroling	3:00 PM


### Wednesday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve Worship	5:30 PM
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### Sunday, Dec. 28

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM

## Faith Formations

- **Sunday Morning Bible Study**, in the fellowship hall, 9:30-10:15 a.m. Rev. Steven Harris is leading adults in A Child is Born, a study of nativity stories in scripture. We also have classes for our children and youth, so there is something for your whole family.
- **Youth Advent Worship**, Sunday, Nov. 30, 5-7 p.m. Come for a time of fellowship around the table, followed by creative prayer stations that will help us prepare our hearts for Christmas.
- **Radiance Kids Saint Nicholas Party**, December 7, 11:45 am-1:30 pm. Radiance Kids and families, join us on Sunday, December 7, 11:45 am-1:30 pm for lunch and our Saint Nicholas party. We'll learn who Saint Nicholas was, play some games, make a craft, and receive a Saint Nicholas day gift for your family! Please let Pastor Melissa or M.J. Fanning know by December 3 if your family will be attending.
- **Advent devotion books**: Pick up your Songs of the Season Advent devotional booklet from the table in the foyer. Our church family has written devotions themed around the carols of Advent and Christmas. We pray these devotions and songs will point you to Christ as we await his coming. You can find the songs on a playlist at <https://bit.ly/rccadventsongs> or by using this QR code:  Feel free to share with your friends and neighbors, as well, and invite them to join you at our Advent and Christmas events!
- **Faith Library**: The bookshelf in the foyer has been filled with Advent and Christmas books for all ages. Feel free to borrow books to inspire, entertain, and guide you this season.

## Worship

- **Hanging of the Green**: Our worship service on November 30, the first Sunday of Advent, will be a special service as we prepare the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas and learn about the meaning of each of the decorations that beautify our space.
- **Christmas Eve Worship**, 5:30 p.m. We will celebrate the birth of Jesus with scripture, carols, and candlelight.
- **First Sunday of Christmas**, December 28: There are 12 days of Christmas, and we want to celebrate them all! You are invited to wear a Christmas sweater to worship to help us keep the spirit of Christmas going!

## Fellowship

- **Evelyn Townsend Missions Circle Potluck Lunch**, December 8, 12:00 pm. All women of the church are invited to a potluck lunch at the home of Ellen Scott.
- **Youth Reindeer Games Christmas Party**, December 12, 6-9:30 pm: Let's celebrate the joy of the season with food, fun, and friends! Bring a wrapped gift (cost of \$10 or less, please) for the gift exchange. Gifts can be funny or nice. Friends are welcome!
- **Dessert First**, December 14: We invite you to join us for a time of fellowship after worship. Bring your favorite Christmas cookies and treats to share!
- **Young Adult Party**, December 18, 6 pm: Join us at Pastor Melissa & Ric's house for yummy food, Christmas games, and catching up. Wear your festive Christmas sweater (or pajamas, if you'd prefer).
- **Ministries and Administrative Councils Christmas Party**, January 4, 4:00 pm, hosted by Pastor Melissa and Ric.
- **Deacons Epiphany Party**, January 11, 2:00 pm, hosted by Glenda and Steve Pollard



**Mission and Outreach**

Along with our ongoing support of our Blessing Box, weekend food bags for Keystone Community Center, and books for the Roanoke City Jail Library and TAP, we have some special projects this Advent season.

- **Angel tree:** This year, we will be providing gifts for 15 children and teenagers who are part of TAP's domestic violence services. If you would like to contribute to the cost of the gifts, please place your donation in the star-shaped box by the small tree in the foyer. Then, take an ornament created by our youth as a thank you gift for your donation. Place it where you will be reminded to pray for the families we will be assisting. Our youth will be shopping for the gifts on Sunday, Dec. 7, from 5-7 pm You are welcome to join us! (Youth, bring money for a fast food dinner that night).



- **Cards to shut-ins:** Directories are available on the table in the foyer (and can also be e-mailed to you, if you prefer). Pick one up, and send some cards to our shut-ins, who are listed in the bulletin, to let them know they are remembered this Christmas.



- **Christmas Caroling,** December 21, 3:00 pm: We're joining Colonial Presbyterian Church for Christmas caroling, first at Harmony (Pheasant Ridge) and then in the neighborhood around the church. Gather at CPC at 2:45 to carpool.



- **Global Missions Offering:** During this season, we are learning more about the work of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship through the Global Missions offering. Each Sunday in worship, we will offer a mission moment focused on the work of field personnel. We will also be collecting an offering to support their work. You can find envelopes and prayer guides for this offering on the table in the foyer. Our goal is \$800. Gifts can also be given in memory or honor of loved ones. Forms for this are also available on the table, and a list of those being honored will be included in the December 21 bulletin.



Kaitlyn	Dillon	December 01	Jennifer	Minnix	December 15
Camryn	Durrer	December 01	Cindy	Poff	December 20
Patsy	Waters	December 03	Ray	Wolfe	December 23
Linda	Murray	December 12	Brennon	Viele	December 31
Nancy	Burgess	December 13	Alyssa	Viele	December 31
John	Pilcher	December 15			



## From the Finance Team:

Thank you for returning your pledge cards. So far, we have received pledges of \$128,108 in support of our 2026 budget. If you have not returned your pledge card, you can do so by placing it in an envelope and putting it in the offering plate (please write "pledge" on the envelope so it is only seen by our administrator.

As you consider your giving, we'd like to share some words from Rick Warren's devotional newsletter:

"No one sacrificed like the early church. In Acts 2:44-45, the Bible says, "All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need" (NIV).

These early Christians didn't just give their money. They were generous with everything they had. When they saw a need, they did whatever they had to do to meet it-and at their own expense. There was a spirit among them of awareness and concern that led to selfless and sacrificial generosity. You could say they were radically generous.

And they didn't give grudgingly. The Bible also says, "They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God & enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46-47 NIV).

People noticed this radical way of living, of freely giving to meet the needs of others. The joy the early church found in generous giving drew many more people into God's family.

What would happen through our churches today if we were just as radically generous? The Bible says we're stewards - or managers - of all that God has given us. We're responsible to use our resources in a way that impacts the kingdom. God doesn't just give you resources for your own enjoyment. He wants you to make a difference in the world around you. God never blesses us just so we can take care of ourselves. He blesses us so we can bless others. That's a hopeful and encouraging truth to remember all year long, because generosity isn't something we only display at Thanksgiving or Christmas. It's a way of life, and it's even more impactful when the church practices it together. Find ways to be radically generous so you can make an eternal impact on the people in your church, in your community, and in the circles where God has placed you."

## Worship Leadership Schedule

### December 7

- **Greeters:** Bobbie Hawkins, Neal Kinsey
- **Scripture Reader:** Anne Andrews
- **Offertory Prayer:** Ric Scott
- **Children's Worship Leader:** Donna Kester
- **Offering:** Becky Beard, Janice Deyerle, Jonathan Melson, Ray Templin
- **Communion Prep:** Becky Beard, Janice Deyerle
- **Communion:** Becky Beard, Paul Howell, Linda Murray, Glenda Pollard, Joyce Short

### December 14

- **Greeters:** Lisa Baker, Nancy Vest
- **Scripture Reader:** Janice Deyerle
- **Offertory Prayer:** Joyce Waugh
- **Children's Worship Leader:** Glenda Pollard
- **Offering:** Gerri Mills, Ric Scott, Mark Smith, Gordon Williams

### December 21

- **Greeters:** Mary Shirley, Gordon Williams
- **Scripture Reader:** Ellen Scott
- **Offertory Prayer:** Joyce Short
- **Children's Worship Leader:** Nancy Vest
- **Offering:** Jenna Dillon, Kathy Kinsey, Ric Scott, Gordon Williams

### December 28

- **Greeters:** Bobbie Hawkins, Vicki Wray
- **Scripture Reader:** Ray Templin
- **Offertory Prayer:** Nancy Burgess
- **Children's Worship Leader:** Mary Harris
- **Offering:** Cason & Michael Krawchison, Ray Templin, Vicki Wray

*Your Place*  
**In Service**

**Radiance Community  
Church**

4165 Colonial Ave.  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
540-774-2084

**Our Church Staff:**

Rev. Melissa Scott  
Pastor

Rev. Steven Harris  
Minister in Residence

Karen Viele  
Church Administrator

Bill Lininger  
Music Director

# ADVENT

*A Season of Preparation*