

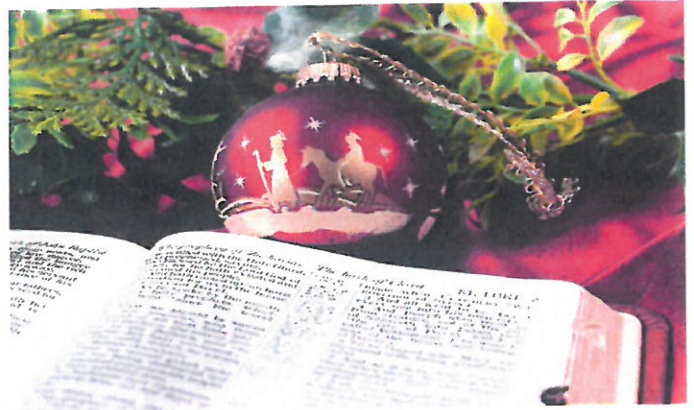
Advent 2023

First Baptist Church Amherst

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Dear First Baptist Members and Friends,

As you read this letter, on paper or online, ‘Judy’s Joyful Christmas Tea’ will have already happened, as well as the town light-up with hundreds entering our pews for carols with the school band, and also the festive parade right by our building. The Christmas Tree for Boston visited the downtown also in mid-November. ‘The season’ has definitely begun!

In Christianity, of course, we split the ‘Christmas Season’ into two parts (at least). Advent – celebrating the coming of Christ into the world – begins this year on December 3. Christmas proper begins at sunset on December 24th, and runs for the twelve days that follow.

A week before writing this letter to you, an acquaintance asked me about Christmas Eve. “When is Mass?” she said. “Six P M,” I answered. I thought there was no need to correct what protestant Baptists call their Christmas Eve Service; I knew what she was asking. And this year we are indeed trying the six (6) PM time for our traditional candlelight service. Last year, with a power outage across our area, our attendance was less than two hundred. We will be ready for more this Christmas Eve.

Other events and opportunities of Advent and Christmas are listed on the reverse side of this letter. May you be blessed to make the most of your opportunities, wherever you may be.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff White".

Rev. Jeff G. White, Senior Minister

Hangings of the Greens Service:

At 10:30 am, on the First Sunday of Advent, (December 3), we worship again with the tradition of 'greening the church.'

Advent Craft Festival:

Stay after the morning service and enjoy fellowship, creative arts and crafts, and a bagged lunch.

Ecumenical Advent Service:

While Shepherds Watched. Our first annual worship together for the start of this special season! Sunday, December 3, 3:30 pm at Holy Family RC Church. A service celebrating promises and hope. Refreshments served after.

Church Family Turkey Dinner:

After service on December 10th, we enjoy a festive feast together, downstairs in the Christie Room.

Singing at White Birches:

The next sing-along at White Birches will be on Thursday, December 14 at 1:30 pm.

Rachel MacLean Concert:

A Christmas Music Concert on Friday, December 15 for The Amherst Food Bank, in the beautiful Sanctuary of our church. Admission: Your gift of a cash donation to the Food Bank.

Church Office Christmas Hours:

The Church will be closed on Monday, December 25 - Wednesday, December 27. The Church will reopen on Thursday, December 28. We will also be closed on Monday, January 1 & 2 and will reopen on Wednesday, January 3.

Christmas Cheer

Packing Food Boxes after church Sunday, December 17. Picking up of Food Boxes Thursday, December 21. The value of each food box is in excess of \$100.00.

If you would like to sponsor a box or any part of a box, you may drop into the Church Office with your sponsoring gift or through your offering envelope with "Christmas Cheer Food Box" marked on it. Any and all amounts help.

Let Your Light Shine celebration:

The "Let Your Light Shine" celebration is being held in our church again this Christmas Season. You may purchase a **white light** [\$10 each] or a **gold light** [\$20 each], a **white candelabra** [\$50] or a **gold candelabra** [\$100]. The candles will shine from our church windows "In Honour of" or "In Memory of" a friend or relative. A leaflet with all the names will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. **The last day to purchase candles is Sunday, December 17.**

Christmas Caroling:

Let's go Wednesday evening, December 20, driving around the community to sing. Rev. Jeff will lead the way. Meet in the church parking lot out back at 6:00 pm.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:

This year's service will be held at 6:00 pm. Please bring your own candle if you can (wax, or battery).

Christmas Eve Wedding:

At 4:00 pm on Christmas Eve, we will be celebrating the wedding ceremony of Alex Harrison and Kelsey Chappell.

Sunday Morning Attendance

	June	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
1 st	80	56	70	51	49
2 nd	55	59	50	46	55
3 rd	47	62	46	67	95
4 th	53	75	50	58	69
5 th				55	