



First  
Presbyterian  
Church  
of Waynesboro, Virginia

# The Columns - *Online.*

December 9, 2020 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement.*



The holiday season, such as it is, has come to my office. I don't know about you, but this season is really bringing my priorities into clarity. There are so many things I usually do that simply aren't going to happen, and so much energy expended just to get through the days and weeks - I really wasn't looking forward to it, at all.

But then I started to see certain things; my grown children, decorating the house, just like they used to do, only with less breakage; the girls making cookies with Ann; shopping online for the perfect stocking stuffers for 'my person' (our adult way of sharing presents); planning a Christmas Eve which, for the first time *ever*, will be a stay-at-home affair for the whole family.

This are strange days - frustrating,

frightening, confusing days. But they are the days of Advent, the days of looking forward, not just to *better* times, but to the *best* of times: the coming of the Lord. Cookies and decorations remind us of holidays past, just as Christmas reminds of of Jesus' birth. But we are people of the *Resurrection*, anticipating with joy the return of Christ. In these days of enforced separation, let us cling to that hope: in Christ we are one, and will be together - world without end.

*Prayer*

COVID average Incidence Rate per 100,000  
from the Virginia Dept of Health.

Augusta County:	56
Harrisonburg	49.4
Staunton	81.4
Rockingham	59.6
<u>Waynesboro</u>	<u>57.5</u>
<b>Average/100K</b>	<b>76.6</b>

*Session will schedule in person worship when the incidence rate reaches 10 or less. For more information about incidence rates and their significance, click this link:*

*Click here to learn more about incidence:*

**Covid  
ActNow**





Henry Ossawa Tanner, *The Annunciation*, 1898, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art

The third Sunday of Advent traditionally celebrates Mary’s joyous response to hearing that she will bear the Son of God. Fortunately, a plethora of music has been written to Mary’s exclamatory text. The prelude, anthem and postlude all reflect her exuberant declaration. The prelude is one of six organ pieces composed by Marcel Dupré (1886-1971) that are dedicated to Mary’s text. The French organist was one of the foremost organists of his time. Among other things, Dupré followed in the footsteps of his teacher, Charles-Marie Widor, who retired in 1934 as head organist at Saint-Sulpice in Paris. Dupré served in that position until the day he died – Pentecost in 1971.

The anthem is part of Johann Sebastian Bach’s setting of the *Magnificat*. Bach composed the work for chorus, orchestra, and soloists for the first Christmas he served as Kapellmeister at St. Thomas Kirche in Leipzig, Germany, in 1723. *Quia fecit mihi magna* is written for two bass lines – a bass voice and, in this case, the organ. Bach shows, yet again, his mastery of musical counterpoint in the way he weaves the two parts around one another and how he sets the text, particularly *sanctum nomen* (holy name).

The final *Magnificat* of the service was composed by Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707), whom Bach greatly admired. Buxtehude, like Bach and Dupré, was also one of the finest organists of his era. His *Magnificat* is filled with the jubilant energy that leaps out of Mary.

This opening hymn this week is one of the oldest in the canon. The melody of *O Come, O Come Emanuel* was written over 1000 years ago,

in the eighth or ninth century. The harmonization was written a mere 150 years ago, in 1854, by the English priest and organist Thomas Helmore (1811-1890). Singing the ancient tune is one of the tangible ways we connect to our medieval past.

The text of the closing hymn, *Come Thou, Long Expected Jesus*, was penned by one of the finest – and most prolific - hymn writers of all time, Charles Wesley. He was known to have written texts for over 5000 hymns, including *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*, *Come Thou Almighty King*, and *Hark, The Herald Angels Sing*.

On this Sunday that we celebrate Mary’s acceptance of God’s Holy gift, may our hearts be open to all the blessings He bestows upon us. And although we are not together physically, we know that, through the grace of God, we are together in spirit.

Blessings and Peace –

Roger and Kimberlea Daggy



In the season of Advent, we reflect upon the gift of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and ask the question with poet Christina Rossetti,

*what can I give, poor as I am?*

None of us is so poor we cannot rejoice in God's many blessings.

Please return your pledge card as a reminder to yourself and a planning aid for the session. Remember: during this time of enforced separation, the work of the church goes on. Mail your pledges and contributions to:

P.O. Box 877  
Waynesboro, VA 22980



**Virtual Worship.**  
*click on the pic*

**FPC Waynesboro**  
12 subscribers

**First Presbyterian Church**  
of Waynesboro, Virginia

# Advent Fun Facts

**It started as a season of FASTING.**

Advent is a term derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning arrival. Scholars aren't sure exactly when Christians began observing Advent, but as early as the fifth century AD, monks began fasting three times a week in November, in preparation either for Christmas or Epiphany. Much like the Lenten season, Advent encourages Christians to fast so they can focus on repentance and prayer.



## The Advent Calendar

An Advent calendar is a special calendar used to count the days of Advent in anticipation of Christmas. First created by German Lutherans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the first advent calendars featured windows which opened onto illustrations of a Christmas-related item such as a reindeer or a stocking; later, the windows would open to reveal chocolate, candy, or other sweet treats. Today, you can buy an advent calendar featuring twenty four Legos, mini liquor bottles, or even diamonds.



**The Pink Candle is always third.**

On the third Sunday of Advent, called Gaudete (Joy) Sunday, the advent season takes a break from repentance to celebrate Christ's imminent arrival. Churches use rose-colored candles and decorations, focus on themes of joy, redemption, and blessings.



## The Twelve Days of Christmas aren't in Advent

Although we sing about them even before Thanksgiving, the Twelve Days of Christmas (also called *Christmastide* or *Twelvetide*) are numbered from the 25th of December to the 5th of January, which in English Tradition is *Twelfth Night*, ending the season with feasts and merrymaking.



# Advent

### Sources of Information

*click on the links*

- [PC\(USA\) News](#)
- [Virginia Department of Health updates](#)

### Sources of Inspiration

*click on the links*

- [Daily Readings from the Lectionary](#)
- [Jan Edmiston's Blog](#)
- [The Upper Room Devotional](#)

### Sources of Fun

*click on the links*

- [Daily Christmas Countdown](#)
- [Today's Holiday](#)

## CAKE OR DEATH

by alex baker



**FORTUNATELY, THE STAR NEVER APPEARED TO THE UNWISE MEN**