



Although we are accustomed to celebrating Christmas on a single day, in both Christian tradition and on the Church calendar, the Christmas season lasts sundown on December 24 (Christmas Eve) through Epiphany of the Lord (January 6). This is sometimes popularly referred to as “the twelve days of Christmas”.

The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning “coming” or “visit,” begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the

beginning of the liturgical year for Christians.

During advent, we prepare for, and anticipate, the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for, and need of, forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.



The Advent Candles, are shaped in a perfect circle to symbolize the eternity of God. In some churches, four purple candles, one for each week in Advent, are used with one larger white candle in the middle as the Christ candle. Other churches prefer three purple or blue candles with one candle being rose or pink, to represent joy. The Advent wreath began in the time of the Protestant reformer Martin Luther.

During each Sunday of the Advent season, we focus on one of the four virtues Jesus brings us: *Hope, Love, Joy and Peace*. Others consider the lighting of the first candle to symbolize expectation, while the second symbolizes hope, the third joy and the fourth purity. The Christ candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day reminding Christians that Jesus is the light of the world. The order and exact wording vary among churches, but the wreath (circle) continually reminds us of whom we are called to be as followers of Jesus.



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Volume V - Issue XII

December 2017



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2017

Rev. David Madden

My friends, I pray that you know the truth this Christmas. And the truth is that, “The light always shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish the light of Jesus Christ!” Amen

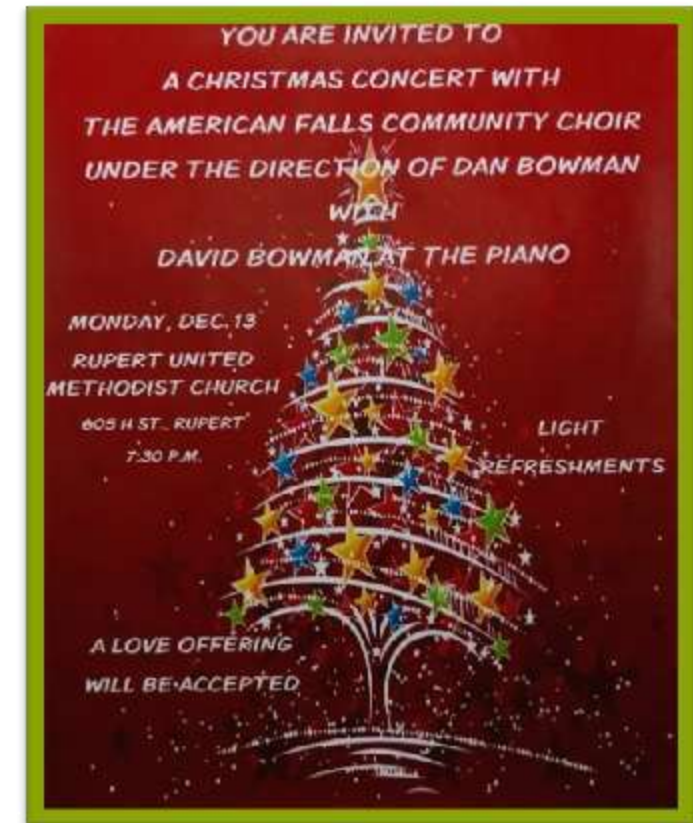
Christmas is God’s response to the brokenness and pain of this world. The birth of Jesus Christ is God’s way of dispelling the darkness and bringing light into the world. We need this Christmas hope. In fact, we need Christmas because we need light now more than ever!

We are all waiting for Christ’s second coming; a time when God will establish his Kingdom here on earth for all time. In this “in between time,” we still see the signs of darkness around us. But that’s why we also need to celebrate each Christmas, to remember the light that shines in the midst of such darkness.

Zechariah sang, in Luke 1:78:

“Because of our God’s deep compassion, the dawn from heaven will break upon us, and to give light to those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide us on the path of peace.”

Two thousand years ago, Christ brought joy to the lives of many who were living in fear and hardship. Today, we can rest secure in the same promise. Even in the midst of the darkness of this world, Christ, the light of the world, will return to drive out once and for all the darkness that haunts us.



Please join us in welcoming the American Falls Community Choir on Monday, December 13, at 7:30 p.m. This 55+ voice choir has graced our church and community for three years. We are so glad they keep coming back. Please bring your friends and neighbors. A Love Offering will be accepted on behalf of the choir. Light refreshments will be served.

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Office Hours: Mon, Tues,
Wed., 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Food Pantry: Mon. & Wed.,
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Rev. David Madden is in the
office on Mon. thru Thurs.
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by
appointment. 436-3354
pastordavid@cablone.net

Access Sunday sermons and special music at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/RUMC83350>

Radio Station KUMC LP 101.7 FM owned and operated by the Rupert UMC
Listen to live broadcast of Sunday worship service at 11:00 a.m.
Service re-broadcast at 5:00 p.m. on Thursdays



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Open Hearts  Food Pantry
WITH AN OPEN HEART

The Open Hearts Food Pantry has truly been richly blessed. With the help of you, (our congregation), the Boy Scouts of the Minidoka County area, the Lutheran Church, Idahoan Foods, the Bishop's Storehouse and Stokes Grocery Store through Kat Kountry 106 KKMV's Turkey Drive, we were able to get almost everything we need to give out 100 Christmas Food Boxes this year.

We still need these items-

- Packages of turkey gravy mix
- Wrapped Christmas Candy

We will be filling the 100 boxes on Friday, Dec. 15, @ 6:00 p.m. Please drop by the church and help us. We will give the boxes out on Sat., Dec. 16, 9:00 a.m. to Noon. This is done on a first come, first served basis. When we run out of boxes, or when Noon strikes, we will be done.

Thank you to the following people who volunteer regularly in the food pantry. There is always much to be done, from picking up at-date produce and bakery items at Ridley's, unloading the IFB truck, handing out boxes, registering recipients, picking up donated items, picking up unused food from Kentucky Fried Chicken to doing reports - Cheryl & Roger Juntunen (Cheryl is the heart of the pantry), Leanna & Stan Bruns, Regina Ball, Penny Berg, Chris & John Paulson, Dan Jarolimek, Don Wiedenheft, Pastor David, Tim & Linda Gregersen, Peggy Hess, Scott Stanfield, Karen Campbell, Karen Kovar, Sue Hare, Debby Hare, Marcie McGuire. O, I hope I have not forgotten anyone. We so appreciate all of these people for giving their time. We also appreciate you, our congregation, for your support through donations of money and food. Thank you!

We will again be adopting a family or two for Christmas, through the School Dist. When we get the particulars, ages, sizes, etc. it will be announced. Your wrapped packages can be put under the tree on the stage. Watch for more info in a Sunday bulletin.

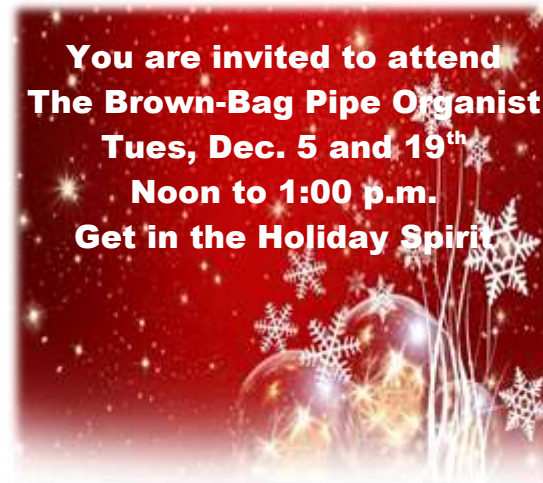


Please join us each Sunday in December for special services in line with the Advent Season. Our Choir will be performing special music, the Bell Choir will be playing, there will be other special music along with Communion and candle lighting. You will not want to miss one Sunday in December.

Other events:

- Tues. Dec. 5th - WMW Annual Tea Buffet @ 7:00 p.m. The choir will entertain
- Monday, Dec. 11 - The American Falls B# Choir will perform their annual Christmas Concert under the direction of Dan Bowman @ 7:30 p.m.
- Tues., Dec. 5th & 19th, The Brown-Bag Pipe Organist will perform from Noon to 1 p.m.
- Christmas Eve Service at Paul UMC, December 24, 5:00 p.m.

Please attend these activities and bring a friend or two.



COUNCIL PRESENTS THE ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Members of the Council presented to the congregation the annual report of the "State of the Rupert United Methodist Church for 2017". Council members reported on our Mission Statement and Vision, our 2017 goal results, including attendance, visitors, Facebook activity, partnerships with the community, and Ministry Teams. The Trustees gave reports on the state of the facilities and the parsonage, what projects were completed and what still needs to be done. The SPRC gave reports on the 2018 Pastor Compensation package, as well as the staff salaries. The Finance Team gave reports on the 2017 budget spending and revenue. They also presented the 2018 budget and estimated revenue. A review of what the Council has accomplished over the past three years, both positive and negative, led to a discussion of should we continue with the Single Board Governance system. Those present were able to voice their concerns and opinions. A vote was called to continue as a Single Board Governance, with a few adjustments. The vote was 24 in favor of continuing to 5 against. Please contact a member of the Council, if you have questions you would like to discuss, or if you would like more details. Here is the list of 2018 Council Members. **Tim Gregersen, Chairman, Rev. David Madden, (Trustees) - Kris Somsen, Dan Jarolimek, Cliff Hieb, (SPRC) - Brian Williams, Barbara Rodgers, Joanne Clark, (Finance) - Terri Bruns, Jim Rodgers, Sara Somsen-Fowler, Peggy Hess, Lay Leader, Barbara Nyblad, member to Annual Conference, Cheryl Juntunen & Mike Noss, Members at Large, Sharon Crowe, Secretary.**

About this time last year, Jim & Barbara Rodgers thought that we needed some new Chrismons for the sanctuary tree. So, under their direction and with Leanna Bruns volunteering to make new Chrismons, here they are. There are about 30 of them. You must come see them on the tree. The pictures do not do them justice. They are gorgeous. Leanna has such a talent creating wondrous items with her computerized sewing machine. Thank you, Leanna.

Here are short explanations of each symbol.

1. Persecuted Christians of the early church used the fish symbol as a secret sign to identify one another.
2. The Crown represents the majesty and royalty of Christ.
3. Greek characters of the first letters in the name, "Jesus".
4. The Celtic Cross used in the British Isles
5. IX - type of early Christian monogram
6. Chi Rho - one of the earliest forms of christograms.
7. Omega Cross - Jesus is Alpha & Omega
8. Triangle Triantarian - Trinity symbol used in architecture and Christian symbolism.
9. Trumpeting Angel - God's messenger
10. Butterfly - Symbolizes the Resurrection of Christ.