



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

DO JUSTICE. LOVE KINDNESS. WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD.
—MICAH 6:8

MIXON'S MUSINGS

Dear Friends,

Are you ready? Have you made your preparations? “Somethin's comin', somethin' good, if I can wait. Somethin's comin', I don't know what it is, but it is gonna be great.” With apologies to Steven Sondheim, these lyrics from *West Side Story* capture some of the significance of advent. Something or someone is coming. We may not be entirely sure of who or what, but we have a glimmer of what's promised. Are we ready to receive it, to embrace it, to incorporate it into our living?

Advent is a time of preparation for earth shattering revelation of Christmas when God comes to us in human form, when the Christ is born as a peasant child in a barn in Bethlehem, when the world is turned upside down (or is it right side up?!?), when the mighty are cast down from their thrones and the lowly are lifted up, when the hungry are filled with good things and the rich sent empty away. As we discussed in Bible study yesterday, looking at texts for the third Sunday, Gaudete or Joy Sunday, John the Baptist does not proclaim a Christ that comes to comfort the complacent. Christ comes to shake things up. Yes, good works are important. Doing the right thing matters. Working for the Beloved Community is our calling.

But the coming of Christ ought to be transformative. As Annie Dillard has observed “On the whole, I do not find Christians, outside of the catacombs, sufficiently sensible of conditions. Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews. For the sleeping god may wake someday and take offense, or the waking god may draw us out to where we can never return.”

In such challenging times, how do we ensure our preparations make us ready for what is to come? One very important way is gathering in community to support one another, to practice

ministry, to learn and grow, and just to hold on as we move uncertainly but courageously into God's future. In the last couple of weeks, I have observed the strength of this community as we have gathered to worship, study, make music, make beauty, make shelter and hospitality. This is a good place to dwell for a bit as we prepare for what lies ahead.

Advent – the waking God is closer than we think, the time is drawing near. We wait with eager anticipation and a bit of trepidation. We hope for something good, yes, even great. We long for peace and joy and love as we also feel some fear for what that might mean in transforming who we are and how live in this world. Oh, "Somethin's comin', somethin' good, if I can wait. Somethin's comin', I don't know what it is, but it is gonna be great." Are we ready for what is coming?

Blessings for the interim,

Pastor Rick

2025 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN UPDATES AS OF 12/4/24

\$126,242
needed to
meet
ministry
budget
proposal



19 pledges
need to
meet last
year's #
of
pledges



average pledge: \$6,050 | 7 new pledges | 37 increased pledges

Next Steps:

- budget committee meets this month to adjust budget as may be needed based on pledges received
- budget committee shares updates with church boards and boards modify proposed budgets as needed

- updated proposed 2025 budget is shared with congregation
- congregation-wide vote on 2025 budget at annual meeting on February 2

[Submit Online Pledge](#)



**AD LIBITUM
CONCERT SERIES**

Celebrating its 12th year, 2024-2025 / IV
Free Concerts and Open to the Public

**Celebrating
Christmas with
the World**

**Christmas Music
with Stories and Carol Sing**

Shin-Ae Chun, organ and piano
Robbie Stapleton and
Ed Parmentier, readers

**December 6, 2024
Friday at Noon**



**FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR**

734-663-9376 / www.fbca2.org

Our AD LIBITUM Concert Series presents "Celebrating Christmas with the World: with Stories and Carol Sing" on Friday, December 6 at noon. Arrangements of Christmas carols from different cultures by various composers will be performed by Shin-Ae Chun on the organ and the piano. Inspiring poems and stories will be read by Robbie Staple and Ed Parmentier. And we will also sing some carols together. This concert will be an opportunity for you to calmly prepare yourself for the hopeful and joyous season of Advent and Christmas. It is a free concert and open to all. Mark your calendar. Invite your friends and

neighbors. Let's celebrate the season together.



ABW Annual Bake Sale. This Sunday Dec 8, come and pick out some homemade goodies for a donation to our ABW Missions funds. We contribute to local, state, national and international mission groups. This is our annual bake sale to collect funds for our mission groups. Hope you will be there to enjoy a great selection of cookies, candies, sweet breads, etc.



Holiday Collection for the Hikone Community. For over 15 years we have collected food, health, and household supplies for our friends in the Hikone housing community, one of the sites of Community Action Network. Thank you to all who have donated food and financial gifts! But keep in mind, please, that we only have ONE more Sunday to gather your donations!

We are providing for 30 families so please consider donating multiples of the same item and please donate individual family sized jars/bags/boxes. We also need financial donations to cover the many items that have been purchased already (e.g. 30 laundry detergents, 30 packages of toilet paper, 30 individual health and hygiene products, etc.) Please place your financial donation in the offering plate this Sunday with a notation it is for Hikone. (Please address the check to Sue Ellen Glover). **We need all donations by this Sunday, December 8.**

We would love to have you join us on Tuesday, December 10, starting at the church at 10:30 as we sort the donations, pack everything in boxes, then transport things to Hikone and unload and carry things into the Community Center. We will be done by 12:15.

Thank you for your generosity!

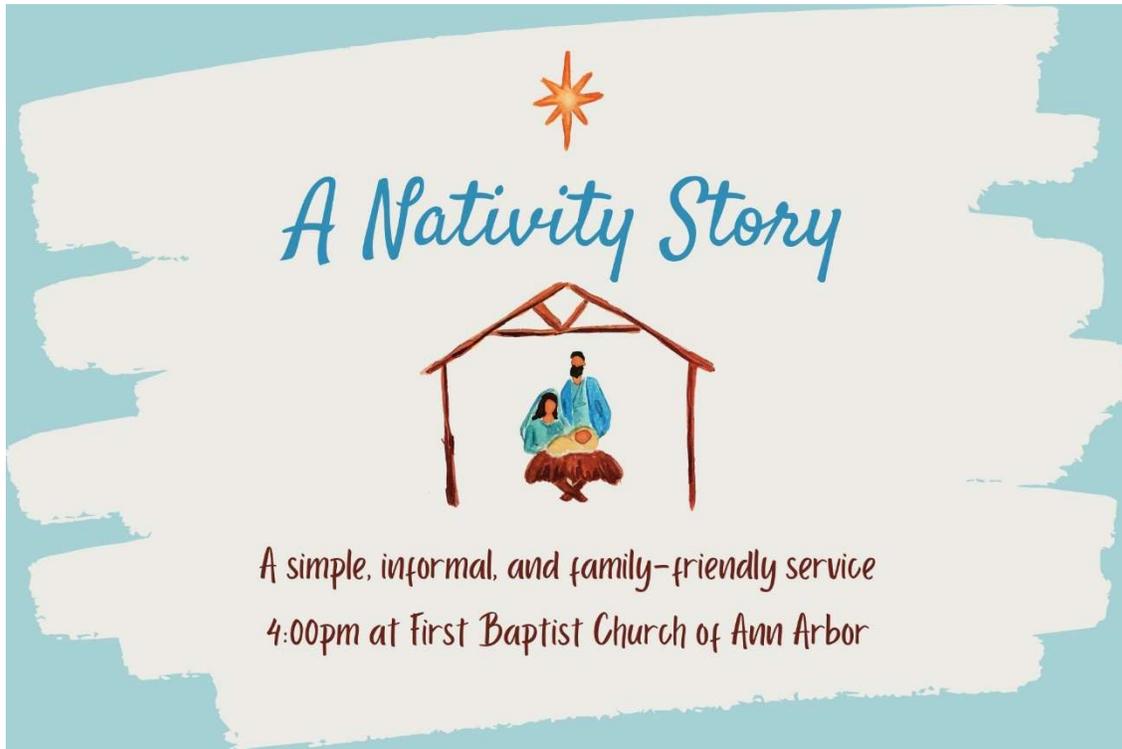


Throne at FBCA2. We're delighted to be hosting one of the Throne Labs here in our parking lot at First Baptist Church. During a recent community meeting with unhoused folks, our staff team and lay leaders responded to the concerns expressed with a commitment to work towards an accessible restroom solution. In conversation with city and Throne Labs staff, the Throne at Liberty Plaza is now open 24/7, one has been moved to our lot, and we have tap cards here at church to distribute to folks without smartphones. These restrooms are cleaned 4-5 times daily and are located throughout the city. Along with our restrooms on the lower level that are open to the public whenever the building is open, we're glad to offer hospitality in this new way.



FBC Carol Sing. Join us for a carol sing after service on December 22 at 11:30am! Grab a cup of coffee and then come back to the sanctuary to sing our favorite Christmas carols together.

Sunday Morning Ministry Tasks. We invite you to join us in making Sunday mornings at FBCA2 happen! Please take a moment to check out our online signups and indicate when you're able to [read, greet, host fellowship time, serve communion](#), and/or [provide flowers for worship](#). Thank you for being partners with us!



A Nativity Story. Join us for a simple, informal, and family-friendly Christmas Eve service on December 24 at 4:00pm. We will sing together, hear from our children's choir, and listen to a reading of the Nativity Story.

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

DECEMBER 24 • 7:30PM
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR



A Festival of Lessons and Carols. Join us for our traditional Christmas Eve service on December 24 at 7:30pm. This service is modeled on the world-famous carol service from King's College in Cambridge, England. Come hear the Christmas story, join in singing beloved Christmas carols, and enjoy beautiful music from our choir and organist.



The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) is always about celebrating, thanking and lifting up our servant leaders. We remember the pastors, missionaries and leaders who have served ABCUSA churches and ministries. Each of those who have celebrated the wondrous works of Christ will be remembered in the form of a thank you check – a tangible expression of our enduring gratitude for their service.

You can write a check to FBCA2, indicating RMMO in the memo line, or put cash in an offering envelope found in the pews.

CONGREGATIONAL NOTES

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve. Each year we decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias in honor/memory of those we love for the Christmas season. Poinsettias are \$20.00 each. The deadline to order is Monday, Dec 16. You are welcome to take your poinsettia home with you after the Festival of Lessons & Carols service on Christmas Eve. Poinsettias can be ordered online [here](#), or you can use this form and send it to the office.

POINSETTIAS ORDER FORM

Please order _____ poinsettia(s) for the Christmas services at \$20 each,
and list as such in the bulletin:

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

From: _____

I have enclosed \$ _____ as payment for the poinsettia(s).

Please have paid orders to the office by Monday, December 16.

Thank you!



Greeters needed for Christmas Eve. The Board of Worship is looking to recruit a couple of greeters for the evening of December 24th. Interested or have questions? Connect with Jeremy Bon (bon.music.ed@gmail.com).





Intergenerational Advent Event: There's Room in this Inn! This year we focused on getting our space ready to offer hospitality to our unhoused neighbors. We were able to decorate our Christmas trees with ornaments, make paper chains to decorate the space, tie 9 blankets, wrap 50 gifts, and prepare 140 muffins and 260 cookies for our rotating shelter and warming center guests. Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers and organizers who helped make this event possible. And thank you to everyone who attended and made it so much fun!





Decorating the Sanctuary for Advent. Thank you to all the “elves” who joined together to decorate the sanctuary! There was a record number of 34 people including 7 children participating. AND we also completed this fun “task” in record time as well.



ADULT FORMATION

Adult Formation. Three Sundays of Advent reflection and preparation:

- December 8 – we will explore the origins and meaning Advent and its significance in our own lives for the coming of the Christ.
- December 15 – we will share some of the marvelous poetry of Advent that covers such wonders as angel visitations, miraculous pregnancies, arduous journeys, wondrous revelations, promises of good things to come. If you have a favorite Advent poem, please bring it to share.
- December 22 – we will spend time singing beloved songs of the season led by Bonnie and Shin-Ae.

The Gathering. Our campus ministry meets each Wednesday evening for dinner and conversation. Our hope is to support this ministry by providing dinner – home-cooked or otherwise! Please choose a date that works for you to provide a meal for 10. Dinners should be dropped off ready to serve by 5:15p. You can sign up [here!](#)

Wednesday Bible Study. Join us for Bible study this Wednesday, 1:00 - 2:00 in the memorial lounge. Enjoy Rev. Dr. Rick Mixon leading along with coffee and fellowship as we receive the gift of God's living word.

Advent Reflection. As we prepare for this time of preparation for the coming of the Christ child, we are making available an Advent reflection resource titled *Daring to Connect: Advent as Adventure* by Dawn Darwin Weaks, which provides daily meditations throughout the season. These are designed to deepen our experience of waiting, watching, and wondering for what is to come. These booklets can be picked up at church this Sunday!

FBC Ladies' Book Club. The FBC Ladies' Book Club will next meet on Tuesday, December 10th at 7:00pm to discuss *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan. We will meet at Madeline Drake's home. Please reach out to [Janice Stumpf](#) or [Mary Gregg](#) with any questions. All ladies are welcome :)

PRAYER REQUESTS. Praying together is a core element of our life together. Each Sunday during worship (10:00a on our [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#), and in person), we pray for those we know to pray for by name during the Prayers of the People. You are invited to share prayer requests/praises using [this form](#).

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE. The next newsletter will be Thursday, December 19. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday, December 17.