



St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

460 NW Washington Avenue Elkhart Iowa 50073



First Sunday of Advent
December 2, 2018

It is customary at St. Mary-Holy Cross after the final song, the assembly kneels and silently prays the "Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be" for the next person of our Parish who dies. Parishioners near death have expressed the comfort they experience knowing the Parish Community is praying for them. Please join us in this sacred prayer.

Dear Friends in Christ,

While it would not technically be wrong to greet someone beginning this Saturday evening with "Happy new year," let us avoid such a trite phrase and focus on what is really happening. Not only is this the beginning of a new liturgical year, it is also the first Sunday of Advent. The literal translation of 'advent' is 'come toward.' A few less than literal translations are 'arrival,' 'approach,' and 'visit.' Even though Advent is a liturgical season of its own, it still takes place, like the other seasons, within the context of the overall year. Perhaps another way to think about this is that 'come toward' does not make sense by itself. It makes reference to something else, in this case, *someone*. Of course that someone is Jesus Christ. So we celebrate Advent to prepare for his coming toward us at Christmas. A question that we might ask ourselves is, "What will he find when he arrives?" He inevitably comes, but will we be prepared to receive him?

Certainly there are many ways to prepare. Try not to limit yourself, especially when there is a plethora of opportunities to prepare by allowing God to build you up with His grace. On that note, a couple opportunities here at St. Mary-Holy Cross will be Mass followed by adoration on Tuesdays during Advent from 6 to 7:30 PM and the communal Reconciliation service on December 9 at 2 PM. Thanks to those of you who have provided feedback that contributed to this extra Mass and prayer time.
- Fr. Andrew

Parish Information

Parish Phone	515-367-2685
Fr. Andrew Windschitl	515-367-2685
Deacon Terry Schleisman	515-669-6158
Parish General Email	smhc@saintmaryhc.org
Parish Fax	515-367-7028
Parish Web Site	www.saintmaryhc.org
Parish Facebook Site	St. Mary's Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart
Fr. Andrew Windschitl	Fr.Andrew@saintmaryhc.org
Deacon Terry Schleisman	tschleisman@saintmaryhc.org
Adult Faith Sharing	
Nicole Cory - Confirmation	ncory@saintmaryhc.org
Andrea Fisher - RE, 7th-12th	afisher@saintmaryhc.org
Stacie Hergenreter - PreK-6	shergenreter@saintmaryhc.org
Melissa Kahler - RE, 7th-12th	mkahler@saintmaryhc.org
Barb Liske - Secretary	bliske@saintmaryhc.org
Celeste Muehlenthaler - Music	cmuehlenthaler@saintmaryhc.org
Peter Relyea - Bookkeeper	prelyea@saintmaryhc.org

Mass Schedule	Wednesday	5:30pm	Holy Cross
	Thursday	8:00am	St. Mary
	First Friday	9:00am	St. Mary
	Saturday	5:00pm	St. Mary
	Sunday	8:00am	Holy Cross
		10:00am	St. Mary

Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:00 - 4:30p.m. St. Mary

Baptism: Contact the Parish Office about a preparation program

Marriage: Contact the Parish Office at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date

Priesthood and Religious Life: See Diocesan website at <http://www.vocationsonline.org>

Masses

Tuesday, December 4

6:00pm St. Mary †Ron Hamm

~ followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Wednesday, December 5

6:00pm St. Mary †Deceased Ladies of the parish

Thursday, December 6

5:30pm Holy Cross †Lester Dittmer

First Friday, December 7

9:00am St. Mary †Victoria Becker

Saturday, December 8

9:00am St. Mary †Leo & Rosemary Overmohle

~ Holy Day of Obligation Mass

5:00pm St. Mary †Cecelia Morton

Sunday, December 9

8:00am Holy Cross For the Parish

10:00am St. Mary †Mike Lacey

Welcome to Our Parish Family!



Tessa Simpson and children Abby, Ellie and Jay, who live in Bondurant

Stephanie Clute and daughter Lily, from Bondurant

Shirley Robertson, who lives in Ankeny

Are You New To Our Parish?

We welcome you to our family of St. Mary-Holy Cross and invite you to become a member of our Parish! Please fill out a registration card found in the vestibule of St. Mary and Holy Cross or on our website. We are glad you are here!

Pastoral Assistance

Please contact Fr. Andrew, 515-367-2685, or Deacon Terry, 515-669-6158, for pastoral assistance or if a family member is in a care facility, home-bound, or hospitalized, and they wish a visit.

The Snow Will Be Coming!!



We are looking for volunteers to shovel the walks and steps at St. Mary. It would be for a two-week shift now through mid April. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Drew Hanlon, 515-367-3367 / dlhanlon@windstream.net. Thank you.

Ladies Christmas Party



Join us Wednesday for 6:00pm Mass followed by a meal and time together. You are welcome to bring a side dish or a dessert. Sandwiches and drinks provided. We will be collecting personal care items to donate to local Food Pantries. We would love RSVP's to the parish office by Sunday, December 2; but come even without a RSVP!

Breakfast For Our Senior Citizens



Senior Citizens of our Parish are invited to breakfast this Friday. We gather in the Social Hall for food and fellowship following 9:00am Mass. RSVPs appreciated by Tuesday to the Office; but please join us even without and RSVP!

Christmas Eve Masses

5:00pm, St. Mary

7:00pm, Holy Cross

Christmas Day Mass

9:00am, St. Mary



Join us to commemorate the birth
of our Savior!

Regular weekend Mass schedule on Dec. 22/23

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Tuesdays, Dec. 4, 11 & 18, 6:30pm, St. Mary (following Mass)

Thursday, December 20, 7:00pm, St. Mary

RCIA Gathering

Sundays, Dec. 2 (Ed Center), 9, 16 & 23 (Hall), 11am-12:30pm

Cross Ministry

Meeting: Tuesday, January 22, 6:30-8:00pm, Social Hall

Finance Council

Meeting: Tuesday, January 15, 7:00pm, Social Hall

Stewardship Committee

Meeting: Tuesday, December 11, 6:00pm, Office Area

Friends of St. Francis

Meeting: date and time to be decided

Knights of Columbus

Meeting: Sunday, Dec. 16, 7:00pm, Social Hall

Funeral Luncheon Call Leaders, Team 5

Mary Cory, Kelly Muth

Upcoming Events

✚ **Work of Our Hands Festival this weekend:** after 5:00pm

Mass until 7:00pm and after 10am Mass until 12:30pm, Hall

✚ **Adult Choir practice:** Sundays, Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23

11:00am-12:30pm, St. Mary Church

✚ **Ladies Christmas Party:** Wednesday, Dec. 5 beginning with 6:00pm Mass, St. Mary

✚ **Good News Singers practice:** Wednesdays, Dec. 5 & 12, 6:00-6:45pm & Dec. 19, 5:30-6:30pm, St. Mary Church

✚ **Senior Citizen Breakfast:** Friday, Dec. 7 after 9:00am Mass, St. Mary

✚ **Blessing for Mothers-To-Be:** During Masses Dec. 8 & 9

✚ **Stations of the Nativity:** Practice Dec. 9 after 8am Mass, with performance Dec. 16 after 8am Mass at Holy Cross

✚ **Advent Reconciliation Service:** Sunday, Dec. 9, 2pm, SM

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mass for this Holy Day of Obligation is Saturday, December 8, **9:00am** at St. Mary. Please join us to celebrate Mary and her important role in the celebration of our Faith!

Stations of the Nativity



The children of our parish will be performing *Stations of the Nativity* at Holy Cross. Practice is Sunday, Dec. 9 after 8am Mass for the performance on Sunday, December 16 following 8:00am Mass. All children are invited to take part. Please contact Michele Hand with names/ages of children wanting to participate, at handjm06@msn.com or 515-387-1417.

Jesus Is The Only Reason For Every Season!

Religious Education PreK-6

Stacie Hergenreter, Catechetical Leader
shergenreter@saintmaryhc.org, 515-491-3876

Knights of Columbus Poster Contest - Posters were handed out in class last Wednesday. Pre-K & Kindergarten students were given a sheet to color. 1st - 6th graders were given a blank sheet of paper to put their creations on. They are due back December 12. The theme is *Keep Christ in Christmas*. Awards will be granted to the winners. We are hoping for all to participate this year!!!

Key Up Coming Dates

Dec. 5 - No Class

Dec. 12 - Class

Dec. 19 - Birthday Party for Jesus, 6:30-7:30pm, with EDGE
No class - Dec. 26 and Jan. 2

Jan. 9 - Class

Service Projects: Thank you to all who donated clothing to the clothing drive in November, we ended up with a very large amount of clothing to donate!!!! December's service project is food donations for local food pantries. Donations can be placed in the Ed Center. Lets see if we can have as strong of a level of giving as we did in November.

S.T.O.R.M. Report

Grades 7-12 Youth Coordinators

Melissa Kahler, mkahler@saintmaryhc.org, 515-290-2830

Andrea Fisher, afisher@saintmaryhc.org, 515-240-5059

Grades 9 & 10, Confirmation Coordinator

Nicole Cory, ncory@saintmaryhc.org, 515-313-3014

EDGE (7th/8th) Sessions: 6:00-7:30pm, Social Hall

Dec. 5: No EDGE

Dec. 12: *Hail Mary Full of Grace* and Party Planning

Dec. 19: EDGE team & kids will set up and host Birthday Party for Jesus

Dec. 26 & Jan. 2: No EDGE sessions

C1 & C2 (9th & 10th Grades) Sessions 6:00-7:30pm

Sunday, Dec. 9: Movie Night, 6:00pm and select Confirmation volunteers to prepare and deliver meal to Catholic Charities Family Emergency Shelter.

Thursday, Dec. 13: Confirmation Core Team Meeting, 6:30pm, Social Hall

S.T.O.R.M. (grades 7th-12th)

Ugliest Christmas Sweater or Festively Dressed Christmas Party is Sunday, December 16 from 4:00-5:30pm in the Youth Area at St. Mary. Bring your favorite Christmas goodie/snack to share and bring a friend. Prizes like Casey's cards, movie tickets, t-shirts, Starbucks, to name a few! Prizes will be awarded to the best dressed, ugliest sweater, most festive, MVP etc!

Attention all 9th-12th graders: We are looking for teens to help plan, lead and work the 8th grade Retreat at St. Mary on Sunday, February 24. Please check your calendars and save the date NOW! Call/text Melissa or Andrea if you are interested in helping with this amazing experience!

Retreat Team Meetings (Youth Area/Ed Center)

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE HOURS!

-Sundays, Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10, 4:00-6:00pm

-Wednesdays, Jan. 30, Feb. 20, 6:00-8:30pm

-Wednesday/Thursday, Feb. 21/22, 6:00-8:00pm (if needed)

-Friday, Feb. 22, 6:00-9:00pm, Dress Rehearsal & Pizza

-Saturday, Feb. 23, Time TBA. Retreat/Environment prep

-Sunday, Feb. 24, RETREAT. Meet at 9:15am in Ed

Center; attend Mass as a team. We will wrap up by 6pm.

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Garrett McClain - 515-685-2314 -Alleman- gjmccclain69@gmail.com
Sheri Olson - 515-967-5663 - Bondurant - lowasher@gmail.com
Cory Schoening - 515-964-7403 - Ankeny-cschoeni@nationwide.com
Mark Schmidt -515-402-9949-Ankeny-mark1.schmidt@centurylink.net

FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Shaun Magill, *Co-President*-515-205-3934-shaunkrismagill@gmail.com
Dave Pottebaum, *Co-President*-515-710-8932-pottebaum5@msn.com
Doug Jones - 515-367-4402 - Elkhart - djones@bossard.com
Laurie Phelan - 515-201-6111- Maxwell - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com
Rita McClain - 515-249-6841 - Bondurant - mcclainrj@hotmail.com
Sue Tollefson - 515 208-0536 - Cambridge - suet@iowacubs.com

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Arlene Anderson - 515-967-6770 - arlene@4andersons.com
Nicole Cory - 515-313-3014 - ncory@saintmaryhc.org
Paula Garoutte - 515-306-6633 - paulasongbird@msn.com
Beth Hart - 515-515-306-4916 - mrsmatthart@gmail.com
Kelly Hoffmeier - 515-975-7865 - nkhoff@msn.com
Tammi McClain - 515-290-3904 - tammimccclain71@gmail.com
Sue White - 515-967-2996 - charylmyron@q.com
John Zidon - 515-967-3367 - jzidon@msn.com

CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - 515-201-6111 - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com
Karen Bellis - 515-360-1465 - puzzlenuts@aol.com
Pat Bishop - 515-387-1391 - pjbishop@midiaowa.net
Lowell Crouse - 515-387-9530 - l3jl@windstream.net
John Freeman - 641-363-4462 - johnfmingo@hotmail.com
Tracy Irwin - 515-771-3071 - sammyjack@partnercom.net
Lynn Schreurs - 515-577-8147 - lschreurs@msn.com
Larry Shaw - 515-720-3587 - lshaw@tru-test.com
Mike and Mary Winders - 641-227-3346 - Mwinde59@yahoo.com

PARISH TRUSTEES

Anne Davis - 515-967-7477 - annedavis06@gmail.com
Doug Jones - 515-367-4402 - djones@bossard.com

PARISH AMBASSADOR TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Anne Davis - 515-321-7558 - annedavis06@gmail.com

Weekly Collection Financial Update

Nov. 24/25 Week 22

	Received	Budget
Tithes/Plate/Youth/Guests	\$ 2,945	\$5,157

Year-to-Date

	Received	Budget	Last Year
Tithes/Plate/Youth/Guests	\$116,526	\$113,448	\$110,225

Human Development Collection: \$130

Annual Diocesan Appeal

Parish Goal	Pledge Total	Payments	Balance Due
\$53,806	\$46,275	\$43,849.25	\$9,956.75

Pledge cards are in the vestibule and can be returned in the collection basket at Mass, to the Parish Office, or you may donate on the Diocesan website: www.dmdiocese.org/ada-online-giving-instructions.cfm.

Everyone's participation is needed! Thank you.

Tithing

Thank you to those who have recently signed up for ACH and to those who have increased their monthly amount!! If you don't use this type of tithing, please consider it. You designate a monthly dollar amount to be withdrawn from your account on a pre-determined date. Questions? Contact Peter Relyea, prelyea@saintmaryhc.org/515-367-2685.

Advent Reflection Resources

Below are descriptions of the booklets available in the vestibule. This is a time of looking forward and waiting for the commemoration of Christ's birth, and His second coming.

Prepare the Way of the Lord: Advent isn't an isolated season, God is with us 365 days a year.

Peace on Earth: Guide your family to foster love with each other and encouraging peace in the world. Let us open our hearts to receive the peace that only Jesus can provide for us.

Jesus, Open Our Hearts! Children can prepare for Jesus' coming by coloring ornaments on a Christmas tree as they complete the prayerful and caring activities each day.

Little Blue Book: Six-minute reflections from the Gospel of Luke, and various thoughts about the Advent and Christmas seasons, feasts, and various traditions and customs.

The Word Among Us: Daily meditations and inspirational stories with theme "Journeying Through Advent With Mary", and features about John the Baptist and St. Francis of Assisi.

Advent Reconciliation Service

You are invited to celebrate God's love and forgiveness at our Advent Reconciliation Service next Sunday, December 9, 2:00pm at St. Mary. We will have additional priests here to assist with individual confession.

Work of Our Hands Festival and Ethical Trade Goods This Weekend

Enjoy a fun, relaxing time sampling food and finding out more about the goods and services provided by our parishioners at our Festival after 5:00pm Mass until 7:00pm and after 10:00am Mass until 12:30pm. Maybe you will find that perfect gift!!

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Ethical Trade goods will be displayed for purchase. These products were created by artisans in developing countries and the proceeds of their sale is returned to the artisans. CRS' vetting process ensures that the business practices of the cooperatives with which they partner are not in conflict with Catholic social teachings. View these beautiful, high quality products and support the families that produce them; visit <https://ethicaltrade.crs.org>. We'll also have Honduran El Zapote Coffee for tasting and purchase. St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Ames, sold nearly two tons of this coffee this year with proceeds going directly to the growers association in Honduras. For more visit <https://staparish.net/social-justice/honduras-ministry>.

Winter Weather Cancellations

Whenever North Polk School is cancelled, dismissed early, or evening school activities are cancelled due to weather, classes, meetings and activities here at the Parish will be cancelled as well. In most instances, Masses - both daily & weekend - will not be cancelled, so please use your own judgment. If the need to cancel weekend activities arises, this information will be on the three major TV networks & WHO radio.

Movie Reviews: www.catholicnews.com/movies.cfm

Thoughts From Me & My House

Advent is upon us once again and while most of us have a general understanding of what Advent is, it's a celebration worth talking about! The first thing I want to make sure that everyone knows is that Advent is not a penitential season like Lent. The very definition of Advent is the "arrival of a notable person, thing, or event." It also marks the beginning of the liturgical year of the Catholic Church. Advent serves to remind us of two very important things: to prepare our hearts to celebrate Christmas when we remember the First Coming of Christ and this remembrance directs our minds and hearts to await the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time.

The color violet or purple is used for almost the entirety of Advent except for the third Sunday, known as Gaudete Sunday. On the third Sunday we see pink or rose. The third Sunday represents something like a turning point of joy. While the happiness we get from friends, family and an overflowing plate is wonderful; it is not the same joy we receive when Christ comes.

Happiness and joy are both marvelous feelings, but they are different from each other. Happiness often comes from our circumstances. We are happy when we get to see our loved ones around the holidays. We are happy watching a child's face light up when they open a gift, and when things are simply going well.

Having joy means that you have a certain happiness no matter what your circumstances are. It's a sense of being content because you know that God knows your name. Having joy is making a choice to remember that God loves you. Your circumstances could be awful, and you can still choose joy by choosing to abide in His love. Advent is the devout and joyful preparation for the coming of Jesus into our lives.

If Jesus showed up today, would you have the time for him? We have shopping at our fingertips, Christmas music playing 24 hours a day, cookies and hot cocoa, Jolly Holiday Lights and don't forget to get a picture of the kids with Santa! Some of us have so many parties and gatherings to go to we lose sleep during the month of December. Our options are never ending and sometimes too much. This Advent, I challenge you to "just say no." Maybe just watch one holiday movie instead of 5. How about just 1 or 2 parties? Do you really need to spend an entire week baking cookies? Put presents in gift bags rather than spending hours wrapping them to perfection.

We don't say no to disappoint ourselves or anyone else—Advent is not a penitential season. Say no to the rushing from one place to the next and stress of being so busy we have no time for rest. When we say no, we give Christ room to enter our lives. Say no so that you can say yes to Jesus.



I look forward to hearing from you! The intention of 'Thoughts from Me & My House' is to be a collaborative column within our parish. Email me at joshua2415smhc@gmail.com with any thoughts, ideas, and opinions you have!

The Lord is My Shepherd!

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible -- Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the verse. Little Bobby was excited about the task, but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Bobby was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . and that's all I need to know!"

Liturgical Ministers

Holy Day Mass, Saturday, December 8, 9:00am, St. Mary

*Needed: Lector, 1 Cup Bearer, Host Distributor,
Altar Servers, 2 Ushers*

Cup Bearer JoAnn Meusburger

Saturday, December 8, 5:00pm, St. Mary

Announcer Sonya Staudt
Lector John Roberts
Cup Bearers John Zidon, Drew Hanlon
Host Distributor JoAnn Meusburger
Altar Server Jack & Tommy Selby,
Olivia Naragon
Ushers Mark Lengel, Jim Hudson,
Bill Schmitt, Mark Birchmier

Sunday, December 9, 8:00am, Holy Cross

Announcer Anne Davis
Lector Jackie Crouse
Cup Bearer Jon Hand
Altar Server Brock Phelan-Ruden
Ushers Dave and Char McHone

Sunday, December 9, 10:00am, St. Mary

Announcer Tracy Kangas
Lector Kris Sturtz
Cup Bearers Tom & Jacki Ausman
Host Distributor Garrett McClain
Altar Server Sawyer Smeltzer
Ushers Dennis Schmidt, Thom Hamm,
Jackson & Tammi McClain,
Jerry McClain

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Money Counters

Dec. 2: Kathy Daup, Dawn Reynolds

Dec. 9: Carol Weber, Kathy Daup

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Christmas Memorials

We offer you the opportunity to memorialize a loved one by making a donation toward flowers that will decorate St. Mary and Holy Cross this Christmas season. A memorial list with the names of your loved ones will be printed in a future bulletin. *Flower donation envelopes are included with your tithing envelopes; additional flower envelopes are in the vestibule. Please return your donation by December 16.*

Prayer Chain

If illness or a crisis strikes your family or friends, please don't hesitate to contact us so members of our Parish may offer prayers for those in need. For requests or to participate in our prayer chain, contact Barb at bliske@saintmaryhc.org / 515-367-2685. *If the request is not for you, please ask permission of the one it is for, to be on our prayer chain.*

Steubenville 2019

It's time to sign up for this retreat which will be held on July 26-28 in St. Paul, MN. The cost this year is \$307, which includes six meals, two T-shirt's, transportation, housing and retreat fee. On the table near the cry room you will find an information flier and a registration form. To sign up to attend, please attach a \$50 nonrefundable deposit to that form and place it in the box on that table or in the collection basket at Mass. For questions please contact Andrea Fisher, 515-240-5059 / afisher@saintmaryhc.org.



Recycling one ton of plastic can save up to 2,000 gallons of gasoline.

A New Saint – Oscar Romero

The Friends of St. Francis have identified several resources on the life and legacy of St. Oscar Romero.

Romero, a 1989 film, is based on real events in the life of St. Romero. As Archbishop of San Salvador, he finds himself between 1980s El Salvador's ruling military elite and a band of Marxist guerillas as a man with simple demands: freedom and justice for all people. He did not see his calls for peaceful interaction of both factions bear fruit during his life that ended by assassination in March 1980.

Monsenor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero (DVD and Youtube). Produced in 2012, this film is in Spanish with English subtitles and narration. As one reviewer stated: "In El Salvador in the late Seventies, one man was the voice of the campesinos, the poor, the disenfranchised, and the Disappeared –all struggling under the corrupt Salvadoran government." Romero worked tirelessly and in constant personal peril until the day he was martyred.

To find out more about St. Romero, National Catholic Reporter has run a series about him over the past several months which can be accessed at: <https://www.ncronline.org/feature-series/memories-of-romero/stories>

Contact Tim Kautza or Marion Panyan for comments or questions.

Celebration of Service!

Join us today, Sunday, at OLIH in Ankeny to honor Msgr. Steven Orr. Mass celebrated at 10:30am, reception from 11:30am to 3:00pm, with a program at 2:00pm.

Sounds of the Season

Each December *Sounds of the Season* is presented at either the Elkhart Christian Church or at Faith Christian Fellowship Church of Elkhart. People from the area churches sing, read a favorite Christmas story, play an instrument, etc. This year the program is December 16, 6:00pm at the Elkhart Christian Church. To participate in the program contact Kathy Gass, k.gass@mchsi.com, by Dec. 3 to get the coordinator's contact information. You are also invited to just attend and enjoy the program followed by snacks and fellowship.

See Diocesan events and parish job openings at www.dmdiocese.org and offerings sponsored by St. Joseph Ed Center at www.sjeciowa.org

Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

First Sunday of Advent, December 2

Theme: Be on guard!

Reading I: Jeremiah 33:14-16 • A shoot shall rise up.

Reading II: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2 • Love one another and act in ways pleasing to God.

Gospel: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36 • Jesus will come again in glory; be not afraid.

For Children: What helps you to grow in your faith? Who helps you?

For Youth: Advent is the Church season when we prepare for Christ's birth at Christmas. What is one thing you can do to prepare yourself spiritually for Christmas?

For Adults: Paul exhorts us to "make greater progress" in our spiritual lives. What one step could you take to make greater progress in your own life?