



Brookfield-Immanuel  
United Methodist Charge

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Dear Family and Friends in Christ,

We are now entering into a sacred and holy time, the season of Advent. The word advent means "arrival." Arrival...that means someone is coming. What do we do when we expect company?

To start, we clean house, shop for good food and delicious treats. We dust off the old cookbooks and begin preparing the best meals we can possibly manage for our guest. We invite family, friends, and neighbors to join us.

When we look forward to having a guest, we want that person to be comfortable, and we hope that they will enjoy spending time with us. To do any less for a guest would be disrespectful and rude. We would not think of doing anything except our best. So, we take time to make our homes, and our hearts ready, to show hospitality to our guest.

If the word Advent means "arrival," that means we are expecting a guest. Who are we expecting? The baby Jesus in Bethlehem? We certainly remember the birth of the baby Jesus, however, Jesus was born over two thousand years ago! Is that all Christmas is—remembering something from the past?

While we remember his birth, Jesus also made a promise to his disciples—he sent the Holy Spirit to be with us now, equipping and guiding us to be holy and to live lives according to the gospel.

In addition, Jesus made another promise to all believers who came after him, which, by the way, includes us! Jesus said that he would return to claim them, and us, his church. Jesus told his disciples to always be ready, because no one knows the day of the hour of his arrival.

This is the Advent, the "arrival" for which we are called to prepare. The return of the risen Christ!

Do we expect Christ to come again? Do we live as if we do? Do we look forward to Christ's arrival? How are we preparing for the arrival of this Holy Guest?

Advent is holy time, a time set apart from the rest of the calendar year, when we remember all the promises of God in Christ. It is a time for us to make all things ready, to clean our spiritual houses, dust off our bibles, and prepare our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits to offer our very best hospitality. We remember and prepare to welcome the Risen Christ who is our long-expected Guest.

I pray that each of you will take time to prepare. How do we prepare? We prepare for Christ's arrival by renewing our faith through the practice of spiritual disciplines: worship, prayer, reading and study of scripture, generous giving, service to neighbor and partaking of the sacraments.

I hope you will make space for quiet time each day in the midst of all the busy-ness to pray, reflect and joyfully give thanks for the amazing gift given us by God.

We celebrate a Savior who has walked in our shoes who understands our pain and wants us to be with him forever. Thanks be to God. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!

PBJ, (peace blessings and joy)

Pastor Marianne