



Special points of interest:

Sunday Worship
10:00 AM Facebook Live

Academy Chapel
Every Tuesday, 2:15 PM

Rejoicing Spirits
6:00 PM (2nd & 4th
Thursday via Zoom)

815-399-5013

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From Pastor's Desk:

Monday, December 7, 2020

Volume 47, Issue 24

Waiting for Christmas

Waiting is hard. No one likes to wait. Over and over our culture has taught that time is money, and your personal time is a precious commodity that you need to protect and use wisely. From this stems the deep emotions of impatience and ingratitude whenever our time is wasted. It is almost if we somehow feel violated if someone dares to impose on our time in a way that is unworthy of us. This fear of waiting combined with the yearning to receive cool gifts has made us wish for Christmas sooner and sooner each year. The pandemic seems to exacerbate this even more.

Advent is all about waiting. It reminds us what it was like for God's people before Jesus came the very first time. There was much that was wrong with their country. The violence was out of hand. In mass, people were turning away from God to embrace a way of living that worshiped hedonism. And the value of human life was dwindling away. Does this sound familiar? It seems like the world we face today is very similar. In the midst of this the people were waiting. They were waiting for God to answer their cries. To do something. To fix their lives, country, and world. They were waiting for the Messiah to save them.

During Advent, God calls us to not only remember how anxiously God's people waited before Christ's birth - but to wait faithfully in our own time. Just like them, we are waiting for the coming of the Messiah. And just like them, we often struggle with the waiting. "Is Jesus really coming?" I know this is what was promised, but since it has been over two thousand years it is easy to doubt and to forget. As one blog writer put it *"The same questions that must have plagued God's people before Christmas continues to pursue us after. Advent helps me see that I'm not alone when the waiting gets difficult and the questions loom."*

When we skip Advent, we forget to ask and wonder about Jesus' return. We forget that we are supposed to wait and wrestle with our doubts. Instead we tend to ignore our doubts, pretend that they are not there and allow them to slowly eat away at our faith.

But when we take time to celebrate Advent we are reminded that the people in the Christmas story (Mary, Joseph, Wise men, Angels, Shepherds, Elizabeth, and Zachariah) all understood that their stories were wrapped up in God's large story of promise and hope. The events happening around them were not really about them, but about God's answer to a broken world. Celebrating Advent helps to prepare us so that we are not caught up in the "this is all about me" mentality of Christmas. The celebration is not about what gifts I give or receive, what others think about how I decorated my house, or what parties I have been invited to. Christmas is the story of God's promise to redeem a lost world. Advent reminds us that we are still living in the light of those promises.

BY THE NUMBERS

11/15/20 Online Views	131	11/22/20 Online views	57	11/29/20 Online views	62
Rejoicing Spirits	39	Thanksgiving Online Views	40	11/29/20 Online Views	61

Required total receipts weekly.....**\$8,215.67**

Gen Fund 11/15/20	\$3,020.00	Gen Fund 11/22/20	\$7,833.00	Gen Fund 11/29/20	\$2,185.00
Forward in Faith	\$658.00	Forward in Faith	\$675.00	Forward in Faith	\$1,080.00
Surplus/Deficit	- \$4,537.67	Surplus/Deficit	+ \$297.33	Surplus/Deficit	- \$4,950.67
Festival	\$170.00	53 rd /54 th week	\$1,130.00	Unexpected Blessings	\$10,500.00

Surplus/Deficit YTD..... - \$41,254.60 (10/31/20)



Pray for Alpine members:

Pat Anderson, Linda Becker, Vince Bertolotto, Tim Beynon, Rick Bried, Cindy Bulthaus, Tim & JoAnn Christiansen, Pat Christiansen, Scott Christiansen, Ernest & Mary DeNale, Doris Fransen, Marybeth Gillette, Louise Hemenway, Rich & Jan Hill, Jim Hill, Peggy Lillegaard, Norma Lucas, Marguerite Lusth, Valerie Miller, Ron & Jan Pauly, Marge Pearson, Steve Shoudy, JR Stropes, Melissa (Bukowski) Stucky & family, Karen Bateman Swanson, Gyla Tomlinson, Pat Turmo and Darold & Sharron Walker.

Pray for our friends and family of Alpine:

Sally Atkinson, Kim Braun, Linda Carter, Linda Conness, Linda Fry, Jerome Gill, Daniel Hendrickson, Debra Johnson, Kathleen Lovins, Todd McDonald, Sharon Mund, Judy Osiwalla, Tom Rogers, Bob Schult, Jeremy Sturges, Don Tennant, Penny Wendling, all those on the front line and those affected with Covid-19.

All in the Family

Birthday thanks came in from **Carla Phillips, Rick Bried, Ed Lorenzen, Irv Johnson, and Chris Christiansen**. Our love and sympathy goes out to **Teresa Bastian** and family. Teresa's mother died December 1st. **Janet Gentry** sent her thanks for the many prayers and support given to her over the past few weeks.

Worship Schedule :

Sunday Worship:

8:00 AM Traditional Worship (suspended)
10:00 AM Praise Worship/ Facebook Live (in-person suspended)

*Children's Church on hiatus, monthly Grab & Go packets will be available when we return to in-person worship

Academy Chapel: 2:15 PM every Tuesday

Rejoicing Spirits: Every 2nd & 4th Thursday, via Zoom, 6:00 PM (This service is for those with developmental disabilities, their families, caregivers, and others.)

Our in person **Worship, Bible Studies, Women's Circles, Adult Forums & Men's Breakfasts** will be on hold during the Covid-19 Phase 4 until further notice.

Wednesday Evening Prayer meeting: Facebook Live at 7 PM



To reach Pastor Dan after office hours, you may call 815-399-5487. Please leave a message and he will respond as soon as possible.



Praying weekly for Alpine's membership has had a very positive effect on our church! We have had many positive and thankful responses from those we have been praying for. The benefits are so great that we have decided to make this an ongoing part of Alpine's church life. Some comments we've received are "power of prayer - it works!", "just what we needed", and loads of thanks! Even though we are praying for a few families each week, please call Pastor Dan whenever the need arises for extra prayers you may have.

**Together we worship, together we pray,
together we love.**

December 13th—**Edwin & Nancy Lorenzen; Irv Johnson; Mark Christine, Holly & Renee Stohle; and Rick & Christie Bried.**

December 20th—**John McCue; Corey, Brianna, Brandon & Brett Williams; and Richard Ewert.**



Saturday, December 12th—Altar Guild, 9 AM
Sunday, December 13th—Facebook Live Worship, 10 AM
Thursday, December 17th—Academy Christmas Program, Facebook Live, 6 PM
Thursday, December 17th—Church Council, 7 PM
Sunday, December 20th—Facebook Live Worship with Cantata, 10 AM
Thursday, December 24th—Christmas Eve Drive-In Worship, 3 & 5 PM
Thursday, December 24th—Christmas Eve Facebook Live Worship, 7 PM

As the end of the year approaches, Alpine has much to be thankful for. We especially thank you for your commitment to Alpine's ministries both spiritually and financially. The end of the year is also the time to review your stewardship commitment to ensure you are current with your pledge. If you have any questions about where you are at with your giving, please call Lynn in the church office. We will be closing our books for 2020 December 31st. (Al Geeser)

With the recent changes to the Covid-19 mandates, the executive committee has decided to suspend in-person worship for the next few Sundays. We know that this is hard for many of us but we need to keep all of our members and staff safe. Please be patient as we all navigate this trying time together. We will resume as soon as we are able to do so safely. Please watch your email or online on our Facebook page for any changes to our worship services.

The **Church Council** of Alpine Lutheran has started a collection for a **2020 Christmas bonus** for our full-time staff; Pastor Dan, Lynn Valentine, Tim Babcock, and Richard Dowling. If you would like to contribute, all donations can be placed in the offering marked Staff Christmas or dropped off at the office. We will be collecting through January. We thank them for all they do for Alpine all year long! (Scott Dabson)

This year's Advent devotional is **"It's a Wonderful Life in Christ"** by Michael Hoy. Rediscover the joy and blessings of daily life with this devotional booklet centered around the beloved film, *It's a Wonderful Life*. Copies will be handed out at our in-person communion on Sunday, November 22nd as well as in the bin outside door "F" and from Lynn in the office.

Social Ministries is collecting for the **Holiday Food Baskets**. This year we will be collecting items every Wednesday in the barrel which will be placed outside door "C" as we did for our summer collections. Here is a list of items needed: instant mashed potatoes, Stove Top Stuffing, canned green beans, canned corn, dry gravy packets or canned gravy, canned cranberry sauce, canned fruit, and Jell-O. Additional items that can be donated for the families are: cereal, macaroni & cheese or other dry pastas, canned soups, canned ravioli/spaghetti, canned meats—tuna, Ramen Noodles, and other non-perishable non-expired foods. As always, money to purchase the foods can also be donated. Please make a notation for the baskets on your check. We thank you again for your generosity in helping others. (John Linde)

You are invited to attend the **Alpine Academy Christmas Program on Facebook Live Thursday, December 17th, at 6:00 PM**. Show your support to our Academy students as they prepare for this blessed season.



You are invited **Sunday, December 20th**, to our special **Christmas Cantata** presentation, "Joy, Unspeakable Joy" arranged by Lynn Valentine. This year, with the Covid restrictions, the cantata will be pre-recorded and presented during the 10 AM Facebook Live worship service. Enjoy music and scripture as we prepare for the coming of our Lord and Savior. Please invite your friends, family and neighbors to watch this wonderful musical celebration. We hope this can bring a small sense of "normal" to your Advent season.

From the SCRIP Desk:

Script is your one stop shopping "store". No need to go out to stores fighting crowds and risk getting sick, call the office, place an order, schedule a time for pickup. It is that simple. We have extra inventory on the following SCRIP cards Game Stop, Ihop, iTunes, Office Depot, Noodles & Company, Old Chicago, and Ross Dress for less. If you have family members that live near a Granite City restaurant, we still have some gift cards left. These cards will make a great Christmas presents or even a thank you if you are staying at their home for the holidays. THE LAST DAY TO ORDER SCRIP CARDS AND ENSURE THEY WILL BE HERE FOR CHRISTMAS IS DECEMBER 13. We will have cards on hand but quantities will be limited. (Deb Geeser)

KEEP CALM...SHOP SCRIP

Celebrating Joy: We continue to collect pledges for the 2021 giving. As we gather these financial pledges we are able to begin the process of planning finances for 2021. Please prayerfully consider your giving to Alpine. We thank you for your support of Alpine both financially and spiritually.



Children's Church will be on hiatus until later this year. We will evaluate our safety situation as time passes and update everyone.

With the recent mandates in place, our Grab-n-Go bags are available in the office as well as an Advent calendar.

We hope to see you soon.



Christmas Eve Worship
3 PM, 5 PM & 7 PM

2020 has brought us many challenges and we have had to become very creative in coming up with ways to worship and remain connected to Alpine. Our **Christmas Eve Services** have been especially difficult to navigate. We have come up with 2 options for you: **#1** we will continue with a Facebook Live service at 7 PM; and **#2** a choice of 2 drive-in style services.

Join us for a **drive-in Christmas Eve worship**, Thursday, December 24th. There will be 2 worship times at 3 PM and 5 PM. This will be a bit different than the drive-in services that we have had in the past in that we will be transmitting the service with a FM transmitter. What this means is that you will stay in your vehicle, nice and warm, for the service and be able to hear everything through your radio in your car. We will even have battery operated candles for the singing of Silent Night along with a service of Holy Communion.

Join us on **Facebook Live for a Christmas Eve worship** at 7 PM on Thursday, December 24th. We will have a service of Holy Communion along with our traditional music and message. You can find us by searching Alpine Lutheran Church of Rockford. The service will be posted on our app and YouTube as well.



Alpine Academy
of Rockford
Faith • Family • Future

At the Academy preparations for Christmas are in full swing. Students are preparing for our program, hallways are beginning to fill with Christmas artwork and you can hear Christmas music playing in school offices and classrooms during the day. What a fun time to be a part of the Academy and an exciting time to be a part of the Alpine Family. We can't wait for upcoming events, even though so many have moved online, it is this time of year where Joy wins!

I'd like to thank everyone who helped us to make last weeks #GivingTuesday a success. Your donations will greatly impact the lives of our students and their families. It is through the kindness and generosity of all of our Alpine Family that our Academy see success. Whether it be time and talent or financial gifts we appreciate your partnership in this mission.

Our Christmas program this year will be available Live on YouTube this year. Simply search "Alpine Academy of Rockford" on YouTube.com to watch Live. We will also share the link to the program on Facebook that evening. The program will be Live on YouTube Thursday Dec. 17th at 6:00pm. Please consider subscribing to our channel on YouTube. I look forward to seeing and hearing our students perform.

As we continue through Advent we are asking for help. Each Monday we will have a whiteboard located outside the entrance to the school (Door A). The whiteboard will have a question on the top. We would love to have you drive through and grab a marker to write your answer to that weeks question. This will be used as we journey through Advent at Chapel each Tuesday at 2:15p. You may join us on YouTube Live for Chapel each week. We'd love to have you!

So much going on and I can wait to share more about this season at Alpine Academy with you. We hope you begin to make plans to join together as one family for the Luminary Walk on Jan. 2nd. What a great opportunity for our Alpine Family!

Merry Christmas

Scott Dabson
Operations Director
Alpine Academy

***With the ever changing mandates it is important that you receive our emails or notices on Facebook to know the most up to date information. If you would like to add your email to our list please notify Lynn in the office. You may find us on Facebook by searching Alpine Lutheran Church of Rockford. Like the page and then turn on notifications for new posts.**

We have a few extra **Advent calendars** that were ordered for the children's Church. If you would like to pick one up, they are in the box outside door "F".

During our **Live Facebook** worship services, you may make **prayer requests** in the comment section. These requests will be collected and given to Pastor Dan to pray during the Prayers of the Church. We hope to get to all of the requests each service.

A **2021 Altar Flower and Eternal Candle** chart will be up soon. Remember loved ones passed or celebrate a special event. Each sponsorship helps to defray the cost of our flowers every year and we thank everyone for contributing to this ministry. Since we are not currently worshipping in-person, you may call either Laurel, 815-980-5326, or Lynn in the office, 815-399-5013, to sign-up.



As a part of our Christmas celebration, we would like you to submit a **photo of your family** around your Christmas tree or outside decorations to be included in one of our services or devotions. Please send your photo to office@alpinelutheran.com by **Monday, December 21st**.

The December edition of the **Living Lutheran** is now available for you to pick up. Copies will be in the box outside of door "F" or from Lynn in the office. The lead article this month, "Living in Mary's time" was written by Karoline M. Lewis. In this article she discusses how the timing of events surrounding the first Christmas story relate to our very own Christmas story now.



Family Blessing Luminary Walk 2021



Our Alpine Family will hold a **Family Blessing Luminary Walk** on **Saturday, January 2, 2021 from 5-7 PM**. Dedicate a luminary bag in memory or honor of your loved one for a suggested \$15 donation per luminary. This is open to both church and school families. Please note who your donation should benefit on the form below. We will then put your dedication on a luminary that will be placed around the outside of the church. You may walk or drive through the parking area where we will have the luminaries set up. We are hoping to have music playing during the walk for your enjoyment. At the end of the walk, Pastor Dan will be blessing each family as we normally do the first Sunday of the year. The luminary is yours to keep and will be available to pick-up the following week.

Donor name

(Please print name)

In memory of/ In honor of (circle one)

(Please print name)

Will take _____ Cash/Check # _____

Please give my donation to the church or school.
(circle one or both to split)



Alpine Lutheran Church
5001 Forest View Ave. Rockford, IL 61108
alpinelutheran@comcast.net
www.alpinelutheran.com

Non-profit org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rockford, IL
Permit #2653

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sun. Worship Times
8:00 & 10:00 AM



See what Alpine has to
offer you on the Web!
alpinelutheran.com

THOSE WHO SERVE :

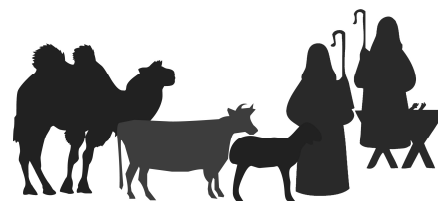
***Please note: In-Person Worship is suspended until further notice. Please watch your email or look for a post on Facebook as to when in-person worship will return.**

Facebook Live 10:00 AM
Sunday, December 13 , 2020

Remote Lector: Lynn Valentine
Praise Singer: Jaime Doubek

Facebook Live 10:00 AM
Sunday, December 20, 2020

Remote Lector: Chuck Valentine
Praise Singer: Chuck & Lynn Valentine



Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, December 24th

3:00 PM—Drive-In Worship

5:00 PM—Drive-In Worship

7:00 PM—Facebook Live Worship