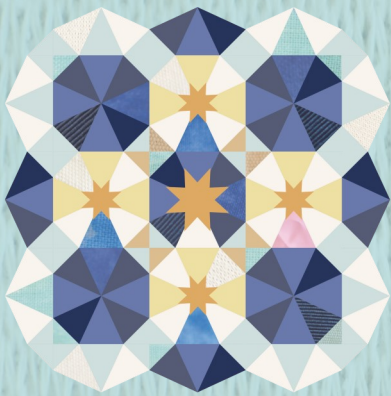




# OVERLAND PARK CHRISTIAN CHURCH

7600 West 75th Street, Overland Park, KS 66204

## THE OPCC SCENE HOLIDAY 2024 NEWSLETTER



**WORDS**  
FOR THE **BEGINNING**

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year rushes in. Christ's birth ushers us into *new ways of living and loving* — and yet, we feel the weight of many things coming to an end.

It's in this spirit of beginnings and endings that we enter these next several weeks with **MANY** beginnings and endings. In this Advent/Christmas edition of the OPCC Scene, please check out important information about many new beginnings and endings of which we hope you are a part, here at Overland Park Christian Church!

### DEVOTIONALS AND CALENDARS FOR ADVENT

TWO in-depth and interactive Advent devotionals, *and* TWO Advent calendars will be provided for all of us to "dig deeper" into "the reason for the season" as we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming Christ. All four of these resources are available now on the entry way counter at the church. You can choose all, or just one, taking as many copies as you need, as we can always print more of each of these resources. Contact the church office if you would like any of these items to be mailed to you.



#### \* **Advent Devotionals**

You are invited to pray individually, but together as a community. Each devotional provides a daily activity to read, or respond, to scripture, poetry prayers, visual art, reflections, and meditative prompts for this season of waiting (perhaps in weariness). Take either version of these devotionals for yourself and your family, or whoever might like to participate in this special time.

#### \* **Advent Calendars**

Take one, or both, of these family-friendly Advent calendars for a map of action prompts to guide your family through this season of waiting, through the month of December.





**Hope for the Endings and Beginnings**  
**“HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS” WORSHIP**  
**Sunday, November 24, 5:00 pm, Fireside Room**

As the year comes to a close, and we observe a variety of holidays, we want to accommodate the full range of emotions that we might feel in these closing months of the calendar. As we approach the last few weeks of 2024, some of us will come to church anticipating a busy season full of events and joy, seeking a moment of calm before the chaos. Some of us will gather at church, taking a deep breath before we get out of the car, because we feel an ache of loneliness and sorrow.

Whether you come to church longing with anticipation for a season in which everyone seems a little more loving, or dreading the weeks that are to come, know that you are welcome, and there is a place for you here.

To honor the fullness of this holiday season, and the wideness of our community we will gather for a special worship service on Sunday evening, November 24th, to remember that no matter what, there is hope for each of these holidays coming up.

We will gather together, though different, as one people before God, focused on where, and who we are this day. All are welcome at 5:00pm on Sunday, November 24th, in the Fireside Room for a “Hope for the Holidays” worship service.

**New Fiscal Year**  
**CONGREGATIONAL**  
**MEETING & VOTE**



Sunday, November 24  
10:30am  
OPCC Sanctuary

As one “fiscal year” comes to an end on December 31, 2024, our congregation members need to approve the budget for the 2025 fiscal year. Though our board prepares the budget and makes budget recommendations, the entire budget is presented to the congregation for approval by way of a congregational meeting. Whether you typically worship at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary, or at 11:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room, if you are an OPCC member, please plan to be present for the 10:30 a.m. Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 24 in the Sanctuary.

**FAMILY**  
**ADVENT KICK-OFF**  
**Monday, November 25**  
**5:30-8:00pm**  
**in the Fireside Room**

Families - let's welcome the Advent season together with "Words for the Beginning" on Monday, November 25th, 5:30pm - 8:00pm in the Fireside Room! We will gather around a simple meal (taco dinner provided), decorate the church for Advent, and share in family Advent activities. Families will also be provided with materials for their Family Faith Boxes, resources for at-home activities during the Advent season.

So that we may know how many to prepare for, send your RSVP to Mollie, 512-644-4520.



# ADVENT & CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

As we begin this new *church year*, with the beginning of Advent on December 1, the world as we know it spins madly on. So as we try to live by a *liturgical timeline* of beginnings and endings, what are the reminders we will need in order to move faithfully through this threshold?

This Advent season we will look at many different blessings, the words we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. Together we will imagine the words Mary would speak to her newborn son, wondering together, what scriptures and stories would she impart to him? What lessons would she teach him as he grew? And so, our weekly foci might feel like the lessons we teach to children, but in reality, these are lessons we continue to learn and relearn as adults. They might sound like the messages or homilies we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies or sacred rituals, including scriptures that may be frequently used in weddings, ordination services, and baptisms. We can enter this Advent season as if we are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster us for the journey ahead!

In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings — large and small, personal and political. Still, Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new.

As we also move through new personal and political chapters, may these *words for the beginning* renew us and remind us of the ways we are called to live out our faith. No matter what you're facing, no matter what this new day brings, let love be your beginning.



## Sunday, December 1 - *First Sunday of Advent*

9:30am & 11:00am - Worship: **YOU ARE A BLESSING**  
Luke 1:26-38 & Isaiah 43:1-7



## Sunday, December 8 - *Second Sunday of Advent*

9:30am & 11:00am - Worship: **WE CAN'T GO ALONE**  
Ruth 1 & Ecclesiastes 4:9-12  
Chalice Chancel Choir



## Sunday, December 15 - *Third Sunday of Advent* - Consecration Sunday

9:30am & 11:00am - Worship: **DO THE GOOD THAT IS YOURS TO DO**  
Luke 3:7-16 & Isaiah 58:9b-12  
Reverberations Bell Choir  
3:00pm - Christmas Caroling to OPCC Shut-Ins



## Sunday, December 22 - *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

9:30am & 11:00am - Worship: **HOPE IS WORTH THE RISK**  
Matthew 1:18-25 & Luke 1:46-55  
Guest Musician Emily Boedeker



## Tuesday, December 24 - *Christmas Eve*

4:30pm - 6:00pm - Come & Go Communion (Prayer Stations)  
7:00pm - Christmas Eve Worship: **LOVE KNOWS YOUR NAME**  
Chalice Chancel Choir, Guest Musician Grace Cross (Harpist)



## Sunday, December 29 - *Sunday After Christmas*

10:30am - One Combined Worship: **DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH**  
scripture selections on joy



## Sunday, January 5 - *Epiphany*

9:30am & 11:00am - Worship: **THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT**  
Matthew 2:1-12 & Isaiah 43:16-21

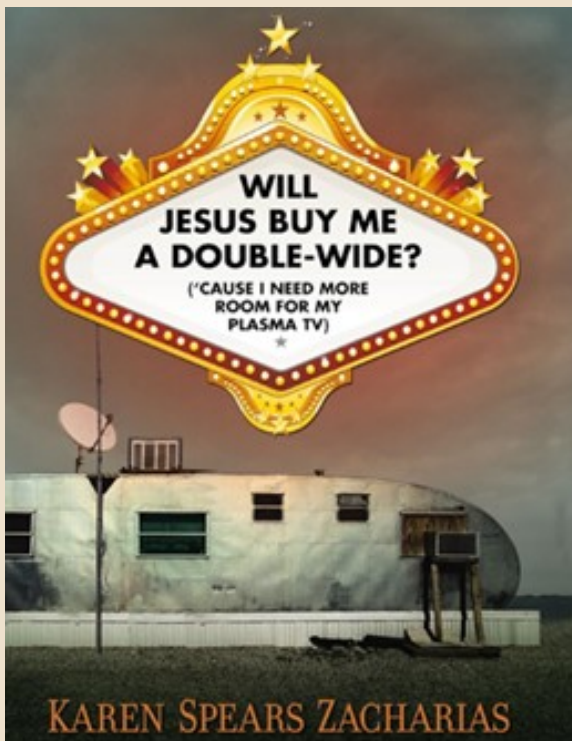
## ADVENT BOOK/BIBLE STUDY

**Wednesdays, 7pm, Fireside Room**

Throughout the month of December, worship focus will of course prepare us for the birth of the Christ child that we will celebrate on December 25th. We will also consider the ways that we bless others, and are blessed, as we too end and begin particular parts of our lives. *Words for the Beginning* encourages us to not only look at the words of blessing that we offer through all these transitions in life, but also invites us to look at what we consider a "blessing," to be.

What does it mean when someone says, "I am so blessed," or "you are so blessed"? How can we embrace the blessings of God when we also feel overwhelmed by the parts of the world that don't feel blessed at all?

Join us Wednesdays, December 4, 11, & 18 at 7pm in the Fireside Room as we discuss the book *Will Jesus Buy Me a Double-Wide?* by Karen Spears Zacharias. Karen and the scripture of Advent will help guide this conversation as we remember all the ways we are indeed blessed by God.



## CHRISTMAS EVE AT OPCC

OPCC will again offer two opportunities to worship on December 24. We hope you will make one of these services a part of your family's plans on Christmas Eve.

- ★ From 4:30pm – 6:00pm OPCC will offer "Come and Go Communion," where you will be welcomed to light a candle, receive communion, and take a few moments to spend in contemplation and prayer. Come and go as your schedule allows from 4:30pm – 6:00pm.
- ★ At 7:00pm we will offer a Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship with scripture, hymns, readings, and special music from our Chancel Choir and our guest harpist, Grace Cross, as we welcome the Christ Child with one another.

Please invite your family and friends and join us for either or both of these services to celebrate the coming of Christ.

## WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

As winter weather approaches, we want to remind you of how to find out if the church will be open! Generally, during the week, the OPCC office will follow the direction of Shawnee Mission School District. If SMSD is closed for the day, so too will the OPCC office close.

Sundays and during the week, we will post closing specifications to all four local news channels, our website, Facebook page, and Instagram account. On Sundays, we will also send a phone tree if an announcement about weather is necessary.

Please use your own judgment in choosing to attend worship or other OPCC activities when winter weather arrives. We do not want you to put yourself in danger—you know your abilities and limitations best!

## ADVENT GIFTS

Whether it is for a dearly beloved grandmother who passed away this year, a parent who has been gone for years, a neighbor who brings joy this day and more, or a friend who gives laughter and comfort - there are many beginnings and endings to celebrate with the purchase one of two "gifts" from OPCC this Advent season.

- ★ If you would like to provide for a **turkey/ham** for our Food Pantry in honor or in memory of a loved one, we will share that gift with our neighbors and clients who visit the OPCC Food Pantry on December 21st. Your gift will help us to provide for a family in need, sharing the love of Christ this season!
- ★ If you would like to purchase a **poinsettia** in honor or in memory of a loved one, we will display those poinsettias in the church during the worship services closest to Christmas. Your gift will help us adorn our space, and our hearts, for the Christmas season.

A donation of \$15 is requested for each of these gifts, and each gift will be listed in our Christmas Eve bulletin.

Thank you!

## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSINGS

In observance of the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays, the church offices will be closed:

Thursday, November 28,  
Friday, November 29;  
Wednesday, December 25,  
Thursday, December 26,  
Friday, December 27;  
Tuesday, December 31,  
Wednesday, January 1.

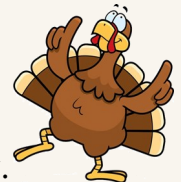
Your OPCC Staff wish blessings on each of you, your families and friends, for a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season!



## Order Your Poinsettias and/or Turkeys!

Remember a loved one or honor a special friend at Christmas by purchasing a live poinsettia to help decorate the church OR a turkey to be given to a guest at our December Food Pantry.

(If you have already donated to the Food Pantry for a turkey and would like to honor or memorialize someone with that donation, just let Michelle know.)



A donation of \$15 is requested for each of these gifts.

Your name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

I/we would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias, in **memory** of: \_\_\_\_\_

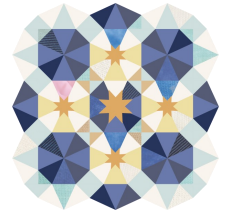
I/we would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias, in **honor** of: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ turkeys, in **memory** of: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ turkeys, in **honor** of: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to OPCC and return with this form to Michelle in the church office, or put in the collection box on Sunday morning. Poinsettias may be taken home following the evening Christmas Eve service.*

FOR THE BEGINNING  
WORDS



Overland Park Christian Church  
7600 West 75th Street  
Overland Park, KS 66204-2894

## New Beginnings in the OPCC MUSIC DEPARTMENT

As we honored one ending, with the retirement of our former music director Mary Beth Boucher, we celebrate two new beginnings as Julie Dean steps into a new role with our Reverberations Bell Choir, and as we welcome Marvin G. Byas IV to conduct the Chalice Chancel Choir.



Marvin is an accomplished Choral and Theatre Director as well as a Choreographer based in Kansas City, MO. He graduated from Oak Park High School in 2013 and studied vocal music education at NWMSU and MWSU. He has served over 5 churches and is very happy to be at OPCC.

Our music groups rehearse on Wednesdays—  
Bells 6:00-6:45pm and Choir 7:15-8:00pm.  
We would love to have **you** join us in  
making beautiful music together!

### Your OPCC Staff

913-677-4646

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(general church e-mail address)

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