



## Overland Park Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ) 

7600 West 75th Street, Overland Park, KS 66204  
913-677-4646

### Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Sunday Services

**“Middlers” Adult Christian Education Class** — 9:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall  
**“Growing In God’s Love” Children’s Sunday School** — 9:30 a.m. in Room 32  
**Traditional/Blended Worship** — 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary  
Nursery care available for children through 3 years old

**Sunday Worship is Live-Streamed on our Website and Facebook Page**

[www.opccdoc.org](http://www.opccdoc.org) • @opccdoc (Twitter & Instagram) • [www.facebook.com/opccdoc](https://www.facebook.com/opccdoc)

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## How does a weary world rejoice?

An Advent series in  
Luke's Gospel

While the rest of the world seems to jump into Christmas celebrations the day after Thanksgiving, or even on November 1, in the life of the church we attempt to distinguish this lead up to Christmas, and the Christmas season in separate ways.

*Advent* is the traditional season of the church year in which Christians around the world spend the Sundays prior to Christmas preparing for birth of God into our world, yet not only as a tiny-babe. While we are certainly remembering that amazing event of God coming as a human being, we also remember the ways that God’s people were waiting with anticipation, wonder, and yes, weariness, as they waited for God’s messiah to come as salvation for a broken world, some 2000 years ago. As we too are looking for God’s presence in our world, we remember the ways that it has sometimes felt missing, or absent, perhaps leaving us weary.

These first weeks of Advent we’ve been pondering an answer to this question, “How does a weary world rejoice,” knowing that we will rejoice when we celebrate God’s incarnation on Christmas day. How did the world celebrate Christ’s coming the first time, despite such brokenness and weariness? How can we too, rejoice, at seeing God’s presence in the world, again despite such brokenness and weariness?

We hope you will travel with us these remaining weeks of Advent before we *begin* the Christmas season December 25 – January 6, and join in worship, prayer and study. I look forward to continuing being with you either in person or online as we welcome the Christ child into our hearts and homes on Christmas morning, and beyond.

*Jana*



# Advent and Christmas at OPCC



## Devotions and Calendars During Advent

TWO in-depth and interactive Advent devotionals, and TWO Advent calendars are available at OPCC for all of us to “dig deeper” into “the reason for the season” as we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming Christ. You can choose all four of these resources, or just one, taking as many copies as you need for yourself or to share, as we can always print more of each of these resources.

**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.

## Christmas Eve Worship

OPCC will 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.

- \* At 10:30am we will offer a Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship with scripture, hymns, and readings as we welcome the Christ Child with one another. We will join with Broadway Church (DOC) in the sanctuary as we welcome the Christ Child, *together*.
- \* From 4:00pm – 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. This year we've added a NEW prayer journey suitable for all ages that can take as much or as little time as you have. Come and go as your schedule allows from 4pm – 6pm.

Please join us for either or both of these opportunities for worship to celebrate the coming of Christ.

## Advent Book Study The First Advent in Palestine

As members of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), when we approach scripture, “we are called to study and read scripture for ourselves. Rather than having tests of faith and creedal statements, we critically and thoughtfully study scripture, taking into account the history and background - the context - in which it was written.” (Taken from the Identity Statement on the disciples.org website)

This Advent as we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of God, we will seek to understand the context of those who experienced the first advent of God-in-Christ — those who “had to travel through great darkness to reach the hope that the shining star announced.”

Using the book “The First Advent in Palestine” by Kelley Nikondeha, there will be two opportunities to return to this context of the first advent. Both gatherings will use the same material for study and conversation. You DO NOT have to purchase the book, though are invited to do so. OPCC can also assist in this purchase for anyone, if needed. Come on Tuesdays at 6:30pm in the Fireside Room, OR virtually on Thursdays at 12:00pm by Zoom.

## Music Department Update

Our Christmas Eve Service will be on Sunday morning this year and will feature our OPCC musicians (RBC, CCC, and song leaders) along with Broadway musicians to make for an extra special worship experience. Please be sure to join us at 10:30am on December 24 as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and sing all the favorite hymns you love to sing.

With this being the last newsletter of 2023, I would like to thank everyone who has served in Reverberations Bell Choir and Chalice Chancel Choir. Our musicians have been so faithful to bless us by serving OPCC with their musical gifts. I also want to give a special shoutout to Julie Dean who not only serves faithfully every Sunday and Wednesday, but also fills in as the director when I am out for illness or travel. I would be remiss if I did not also pay special thanks to Lois Wimpey and Sue Elliott for also filling in as a leader when needed. If you see one of our musicians, please be sure to thank them for their dedicated service.

Blessings,  
Mary Beth



**Note time change!**

**Sunday, December 10  
2:00pm**

OPCC and Broadway Church are invited to join *together* for Christmas caroling on December 10!

It isn't so much about making angelic music, but more about the smiles and warmth we will bring to those who are in assisted living facilities. Meet in the OPCC Fellowship Hall at **2:00pm**. We will go visit some church shut-ins, returning in time to catch the Chiefs kick-off!

## 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 reasons to make a purchase one of these two "gifts" this Advent season.

If you would like to purchase a turkey / ham 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 16. 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 worship space during the worship services closest to Christmas. Your gift will help us adorn our spaces, 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.



### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we gather to discover friendship and faith in summer camps

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we welcome a new pastor to our congregation

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we nurture one who feels called to serve you in ministry

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we seek to break down barriers of race, gender, and sexual identity

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we hold one another accountable and ethical

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we engage in mission together

### **ABIDE WITH US**

when we gather for assemblies and celebrations

## **"OH, COME TO US, ABIDE WITH US, OUR LORD EMMANUEL."**


Each Christmas season when we sing this prayer in the last verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem," we ask God-in-Christ to live among us, to be with us as we serve in our homes, our communities, and our fragmented world. Jesus always welcomed ordinary people to participate in his extraordinary work wherever he performed his life-giving ministries. We have all received this invitation from Jesus to do the same here and now, and the Greater Kansas City region of the Christian Church (DOC) helps us to participate in this extraordinary work together!

Each year around this time we receive a Christmas Special offering to support the ways that our region "abides with us," as we share in Christ's work, together.

Your generous gifts make a difference in our shared ministries as Disciples in Greater Kansas City.

The Christmas Special Offering will be received in our worship services on December 17 and 24.

We hope you will consider making a gift towards the ways the region "abides-with-us" and blesses the ministries of our Region carried out through the Disciples congregations of Greater Kansas City.



## Church Office Closings

In observance of Christmas and New Year's holidays, the church offices will be closed:  
Monday, December 25; Tuesday, December 26;  
and Monday, January 1.

# CYF MIDWINTER

## "Growing In Faith"



January 5-7th  
@Tall Oaks Conference Center


Registration Cost: \$185.00  
Registration deadline: December 22

Midwinter is a weekend retreat for youth in grades 9 through 12. Come and enjoy small groups, fun fellowship activities, worship, and GREAT food. It's always great to spend time at Tall Oaks!

register at: [www.kcdisciplescamps.org/cyf-camp](http://www.kcdisciplescamps.org/cyf-camp)

Be sure to register ASAP.  
OPCC has scholarships available — if you want to go, we will make sure it happens!


For more info about Children and Youth Ministries at OPCC, contact Rev. Chuck Pickrel at [chuck@opccdoc.org](mailto:chuck@opccdoc.org) or ext. 228.



### 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. A list of memorials and honorariums will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Poinsettias may be taken home following the evening Christmas Eve service.*

## Care & Share

All are invited to join for lunch, laughter, good food, fellowship, and support on the following dates with our Care And Share Support Group. We meet at the designated restaurants on the at 11:30 a.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Even if you have not been part of this group before, you are cordially invited to join us, and feel free to bring a friend or guest.

\* Wednesday, December 13, 11:30 a.m. — Paulo and Bill located at 16501 Midland Drive in Shawnee. If you plan to go, RSVP to Peggy Moore by email or phone by December 10.

## Middlers Sunday Morning Christian Education Class

**Sundays, 9:00 – 10:10 am  
NW Section Fellowship Hall**

**Please note: Middlers will NOT meet on Sunday morning, December 24**

The Middlers' Adult Bible Study meets Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the Northwest section of Fellowship Hall. Middlers is open for all persons to join in fellowship and grow in faith as we study scripture utilizing the Feasting on the Word curriculum.

Contact Peggy Moore at [wpmoore63@gmail.com](mailto:wpmoore63@gmail.com) or 913-592-0179, for more information.

## Girlfriends

The Girlfriends group will NOT meet on Wednesdays in December, but are invited to join the Tuesday evening Advent study at 6:30 in the Fireside Room. We will resume regular Wednesday meetings on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us!

Contact Peggy Moore for more information at [wpmoore63@gmail.com](mailto:wpmoore63@gmail.com) or 913-592-0179.

## Men's Fellowship Group

All men are invited to the Men's Fellowship Group on the first Saturday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room for coffee, study, and fellowship. The Men's group is currently reviewing "The Chosen" video series.

Contact: Emerson Hartzler, 913-422-1378

## Prayer List

### Prayers of Concern

- ♥ Bill Anthony
- ♥ Marian Bilyea
- ♥ Nancy Corbin
- ♥ Chuck Elliott
- ♥ Cassy & Bob Evans
- ♥ Alan Felton
- ♥ Pam Felton
- ♥ Nicole Finley (Sally Withers' niece)
- ♥ Ruth Fletcher
- ♥ Pat Gilling
- ♥ Gordon Harkness
- ♥ Perri Kolars
- ♥ Audrey Lavelly
- ♥ Sue Mallery and family (Cassy Evans' sister)
- ♥ Eileen McIntyre
- ♥ Mike McLain
- ♥ Bryce Moore
- ♥ Roy Nickum
- ♥ Julie Norman (Lisa Engelken's sister-in-law)
- ♥ Pat Owsley
- ♥ Jimmy Reynolds
- ♥ Bette Scafe
- ♥ Mike Shankel (Sharon & Bob Shankel's son)
- ♥ Tony Shankel (Sharon & Bob Shankel's son)
- ♥ Barbara Sheldon
- ♥ Earl Sheldon
- ♥ Amanda Sprinkle (Lee & Jan Sprinkle's granddaughter)
- ♥ Mary Sprinkle (Lee Sprinkle's sister-in-law)
- ♥ Larry Stouse
- ♥ Chuck Warner
- ♥ Mike Williams (Coleen Thigpen's friend)
- ♥ Jim Withers

### Continued Prayers

- ♥ Maurica Campbell
- ♥ Lawana Degraffenreid
- ♥ Laurel Elliott
- ♥ Pat Gray
- ♥ Donna & Marshall Howard
- ♥ Betty King
- ♥ Calvin McBride
- ♥ Christina, Jeff, Scott, & Jenny Packard (Sharon & Bob Shankel's daughter & family)
- ♥ Randy Phillips (Laura Phillips' father)
- ♥ Ann Sandler
- ♥ JoLynn Sloan
- ♥ Bernice Stouse
- ♥ Sandy Teeple
- ♥ Sally Withers

### Military Prayer List

- ✪ PV2 Rachael Dawson (Fran Dawson's granddaughter), Ft. Campbell, KY
- ✪ Cameron McDonough (Cathy Wilson's son)

## Property Commission

Activities for the last month:

1. Received the final bill from Freedom Electric for the new LED light fixtures and three-way switch in Bell Choir Room.
2. Quarterly HVAC water treatment was completed.
3. Cintas completed the annual certification of the 23 fire extinguishers, re-charged 2, and replaced 2 valve stems. They also checked all the exit signs throughout the building and provided a list of those needing light bulbs replaced. Lee went to Watts UP, purchased the light bulbs needed and replaced light bulbs in 8 exit signs.

Property commission members wish all of you the very best for Christmas. Please join in the many activities OPCC is providing throughout the Season.

Submitted by  
Lee Sprinkle, Property Chair

## Updated Records

If you have moved, dropped your landline, changed your email address, or more, please contact Cody in the church office at 913-677-4646 or [office@opccdoc.org](mailto:office@opccdoc.org) so that we can update our records.

## Digital Liturgists

We continue to need volunteers who will share some of the elements of worship, and are especially open to you doing so virtually! If you are willing to read scripture, or share in the Invitation to Worship, or other elements, in-person OR by recording a video in advance to be included in the worship, please let Rev. Laura know. She can guide you through how to do this, and would love to welcome you into worship virtually! We would love to welcome you into worship no matter how you join!

## Budget Update

We are fast approaching the end of 2023. As we prepare for the arrival of Jesus, we are also preparing for the next church year. You may remember we had a congregational meeting on Sunday, December 3 to vote upon the 2024 OPCC Budget; it *was affirmed* by congregational vote. This allows our leadership to begin preparations for this next year both within our own congregation, and outside the church walls into our community. We are hopeful that with God's guiding hands we can continue doing the ministry of the church and grow the presence of OPCC inside and outside the walls of the church. Thank you for all you do as an important part of this church!

### Your OPCC Staff

913-677-4646

[info@opccdoc.org](mailto:info@opccdoc.org)

(general church e-mail address)

Senior Pastor .....Laura Ann Phillips  
[laura@opccdoc.org](mailto:laura@opccdoc.org) ext. 222

Associate Pastor .....Chuck Pickrel  
[chuck@opccdoc.org](mailto:chuck@opccdoc.org) ext. 228

Pastor of Sacred Spaces .....Lisa Engelken  
[lengelken@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:lengelken@dhm.disciples.org)

Receptionist .....Cody Kreutzer  
[office@opccdoc.org](mailto:office@opccdoc.org) ext. 221

Communications Coordinator/  
Bookkeeper ..... Michelle Reiter  
[michelle@opccdoc.org](mailto:michelle@opccdoc.org) ext. 223

Music Director .....Mary Beth Boucher  
[marybeth@opccdoc.org](mailto:marybeth@opccdoc.org) ext. 229

Accompanist .....Julie Dean  
[missjupes@gmail.com](mailto:missjupes@gmail.com)

Building & Grounds .....Lee Sprinkle  
[lee@opccdoc.org](mailto:lee@opccdoc.org) ext. 237

Nursery Director .....Kourtney Leibman

### Your 2023-2024 OPCC Board of Directors

Roger Claar .....Chair

Katherine Ann Haggard .....Vice Chair

Teresa Phillips .....Secretary

Richard Owens .....Treasurer

Alan Felton .....Commission Liaison

Jody Cash .....Leadership Development

**The OPCC Scene is generally published the first Thursday of each month, except in July.**

**Copy deadline for next issue is  
January 9 for January 11 mailing.**

**Help us reduce paper and postage costs!**

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list or to receive this publication by e-mail, please contact Michelle Reiter at 913-677-4646, ext. 223, or [michelle@opccdoc.org](mailto:michelle@opccdoc.org)