

Presbyterian Church
OF ORONOCO

DECEMBER
2018

Christmas Eve Worship Service

December 24th @ 5:30

Join us on Christmas Eve as we worship and pray, sing and celebrate communion. Join us as we hear again the age-old tale of Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, a stable and a star, and a blessed baby Savior, Emmanuel, God With Us.



December Scripture Readings

Sun., Dec. 2 – Jeremiah 33:14-16; Luke 21:25-36

1st Sun. of Advent

Sun., Dec. 9 – Isaiah 11:1-9; Luke 1:68-79

2nd Sun. of Advent

Sun., Dec. 16 – Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 9:6-12

3rd Sun. of Advent

Sun., Dec. 23 – Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:26-38

4th Sun. of Advent

Sun., Dec. 30 – *various readings*

Celebrating the Year Behind and the Year Ahead

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson
Secretary: Brianna Clement
Organist: Katha Johnson

Church Leadership

Kim Stanton, Treasurer
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ron Peterson-Rucker, Ruling Elder

Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Linda Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ellen Simon, Deacon

Joanne Schenck, Deacon
Karen Peterson-Rucker, Deacon
Jenny Rand, Deacon
Gail Rucker, Deacon





FROM THE PASTOR ...

*It's beginning to look a lot
like Christmas*

Everywhere you go!

It's beginning to look like Christmas, yes. It's also beginning to sound a lot like Christmas. I don't know about you all, but I started hearing Christmas music piped through in-store sound systems weeks ago: "Jingle Bells" (pick a version), "I'll Be Home for Christmas," and the smoothest croonings of the Alvin and the Chipmunks classic "Christmas Song (Christmas Don't Be Late)." (You're singing it in your head now, aren't you? You're welcome! J) Even as we were decorating the sanctuary and the fellowship area this morning after worship, we were listening to various versions of Christmas favorites.

And with all the Christmas music playing all around us, every year I have people asking me why we aren't singing the Christmas hymns yet. There are so many wonderful Christmas hymns. Why not start now? Why wait? We're in the Christmas season, aren't we?

But really, we're not.

We're in the season of Advent.

ad·vent

/ˈad,vent/ noun

the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.

the first season of the Christian church year, leading up to Christmas and including the four preceding Sundays.

the coming or second coming of Christ.

We're in the Time of Waiting ... the Time of Watching ... the Time of Anticipating ... the Time of Hoping. It is a time of uncertainty. It is a time of a light that dawns slowly and gradually like the rising of the sun, not instantly like a lightbulb switched on. Yes, we know the birth of the Savior is coming. But we still wait.

Think about it this way: When I was a kid, I used to read the last page of books first. Every book. Every time. I'd read a few pages to get the gist of the characters and the plot, and then I'd flip to the back and read the last page. I'm pretty sure it's an inherited habit because my mom still does it. (Yup ... it's true. Ask her!) Then one day, I read the last page of a book, and it ruined the entire story for me. I can't remember the name of the book or really even what it was about, but the ending basically revealed that the entire book was a dream. Or something like that. Rushing to the end without wading my way through the story ruined not just the end but the whole story for me. I never read the end of a book first again.

I'm not saying that we can ruin celebrating the coming of the Savior. Thank God, we are not that powerful! But neither can we rush the coming of the Savior any more than we can rush the coming of the sun in the morning or the coming of spring after winter's chill. That waiting is important. It lets us anticipate as Elizabeth anticipated. It lets us ponder as Mary pondered. It lets us hope as the people who walked in darkness hoped for light:

*The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light.
On those living in a pitch-dark land,
light has dawned.*

- Isaiah 9:2

Light has **dawned** ... gradually and warmly, bit by bit, mote by mote, gentle ray by gentle ray. Giving the people time to adjust, time to think, time to react, time to rejoice.

So as the season of Advent falls upon us and the season of Christmas approaches, let us sit in that time of holy waiting, not trying to bypass that waiting or rush ahead but truly sitting ... waiting ... praying ... hoping. We just might learning something about our faith and about ourselves.

*A child is born to us,
a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

- Isaiah 9:6

Pastor Lisa

Winter Weather Procedure

As the winter months are once again upon us, just a reminder that occasionally, we do have to close church due to weather and road conditions. The following are our procedures when this happens:

- Pastor Lisa and the session member assigned to open and close the church for the month will make the decision
- Pastor Lisa will send out an all-church email alerting people of the closing. It will also be posted to our Facebook page (Presbyterian Church of Oronoco) and our website
- Session members will call people to let them know of the closing using set calling lists that we have established



Please be sure we have your accurate contact information in case of a weather-related closing. We want to be sure everyone remains safe during this frigid season.

Filling Busy Bags

- We are continuing to collect items for the Ronald McDonald House busy bags – small toys, games, arts & crafts supplies, stickers, etc. Joanne Schenck has already made all the busy bags themselves. This year, we have decided to wait until after the holiday season to fill and distribute the busy bags. There are boxes and bins in the fellowship area to start collecting donations. Thanks for your support!

Advent Sermon Series

Throughout our Advent sermon series this year, we're going to be following along with a story – *The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree* by Gloria Houston. In it, we will be Ruthie, a little girl who's waiting for her daddy to come home from the Great War (WWI) and trying to make the best of Christmas with her momma in his absence. Like we did with the story of Jonathan Toomey a few years ago, we will be reading a little bit of Ruthie's story every Sunday, then talking about how, like Ruthie, we wait. Advent is that time of waiting ... of anticipating ... of hoping ... of preparing. So, as we prepare our hearts and our minds for the coming Savior, we'll walk alongside Ruthie as she and Momma prepare their home for Christmas with the perfect tree ... and so much more.

Food Shelf Hours

Our food shelf provides individuals and families with a variety of nutritional foods and the opportunity to stretch limited household budgets. The food shelf is sustained by donations of dollars, food and personal care items, and volunteer hours. Your support in whatever way you can give it is greatly appreciated.

Please Note: The Food Shelf will be open from 4:00-6:00 p.m. November 14th– March to accommodate those who have difficulty driving in the dark.



December Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Alyssa Luhman– December 13

Don Ottman– December 18

Kim and Rachel Stanton– December 18



Update from Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather

Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are the missionaries serving in South Sudan and Uganda who we are support with our 2nd Sunday Spare Change Sunday funds. Shelvis, Nancy, Jordan, and Adalyn welcomed another daughter/sister into their lives in October – baby Nicole. If you would like an update on the incredible work that Shelvis and Nancy are doing with RECONCILE International and how their family is doing, you can either check out the Mission Connect newsletter on the information board at church or go to <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/shelvis-and-nancy-smith-mather/>. In the top right portion of the screen you will find a box with a link to their 10 most recent update letters. Also on this page, you can find links to contact both Shelvis and Nancy as well as information on how to contribute financially as an individual to their mission.



Stewardship Giving Tree

First, I want to thank all of you who have contributed above and beyond your usual giving with our yellow Giving Tree envelopes. We've been at this for about a year now, and so far, we've raised around \$5900 to help keep this church that we love up and running.

That is amazing!!!

Thank you, thank you, thank you for our incredible generosity!!



Merry Christmas

"Coffee & Conversation"

Sunday mornings starting at 9:00(ish), we are continuing our "Coffee & Conversation" time- an opportunity for us to discuss faith, life, and everything in between. No pre-reading or prior knowledge required.

We are still working on studying the gospel of Mark. We've been on hold for the fall, but we'll be resuming our gathering and discussion on Sunday, January 6, 2019. Come join us!



Communion Sign-up

The 2018-2019 Communion Sign-Up sheet is up in the deacon's closet in the office. If you are a deacon, please take some time to look at the schedule and sign up for any Sundays you know you're available.

Note:

We are currently covered through Christmas Eve, but the schedule is blank after that.

Thank you.



Holiday Market

On Thursday, December 6, Zumbrota Health Services is having a Holiday Market from 12-6 p.m. They will have a variety of wonderful items like baked goods and handmade items. You will also be able to help people in need with the American Red Cross Blood Drive!

Call 1-800-733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org and enter zumbrotamn to schedule an appointment to donate blood.

Border Battle Results

On Sun., Nov. 25, we held our 2nd Border Battle to raise donations for the Oronoco Food Shelf. The results are as follows:

Vikings fans: 520.5 lbs.

Packers fans: 364.5 lbs.

We also received a donation of 288 lbs. of drinking water in gallon jugs last week which raises the Border Battle total to 1173 lbs.!!! THANK YOU for your wonderful generosity!

And well done, Vikings fans!



Nominating Committee

We're coming up on that time of year when the nominating committee will be contacting people to fill some of our open positions in church leadership for next year. We will be looking for session members, deacons, members for a few committees for next year (budget, audit, and, of course, nominating committee).

In addition, we are seeking someone who would be willing to alternate the Clerk of Session position with Mike Rand. Mike has served as our clerk for 6 years now, and while he enjoys this position, he is hoping to find someone who could give him a bit of a break for a while. Alternating positions has worked well for our Treasurer/Asst. Treasurer for a number of years. It allows for accountability as well as a bit of a break to keep one person from burning out. Note: In order to fill this position, you do have to be an ordained ruling elder, but you do not have to be currently serving on session.

Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to help serve and lead this congregation that we love so much.

Next Presbytery mtg.

Saturday,
January 26th

9:00 a.m.

First Presbyterian
Church- South St. Paul

Next Session mtg.

Wednesday,
December 5th



About Per Capita

As 2018 comes to a close, I wanted to give you a reminder about per capita payments. Here's a brief rundown of what per capita is and how it works.

"One of the great strengths of our denomination is its connectionism. Presbyterians in Minnesota and Wisconsin are tied to the larger church in ministry. One concrete form of that connection is through our per-capita. Every Presbyterian church in the country is required to pay a certain amount for each active member on its rolls. This money goes to support the work and ministry of our church throughout the country."

- from the website of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

This year's per capita payment is \$34.50 per member. Of that \$34.50, the largest portion (66%) is used by our presbytery while the rest is shared equally (17% each) between our synod (the Synod of Lakes and Prairies) and the General Assembly (national office).

It is and has been the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco to pay our per capita by the end of every year, whether individual members have contributed their apportionment or not. If you haven't paid your per capita for this year, please consider doing so. You can make a check out to the O church and simply write "per capita" in the memo. If you're not sure whether you've paid your per capita this year, please contact Kim Stanton or Hadley Thompson.

And, since the new year is right around the corner, here is the per capita for 2018: \$37.50.

New Office Administrator

Brianna Clement is very excited to join our family as our new Office Administrator. She currently is a student at the University of Winona State and is studying Business Administration and Management Information Systems.

Feel free to say "Hi" if you see her around!



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
 ORONOCO
 E-MAIL ADDRESS:
oronocopc@bevecomm.net
www.oronocochurch.org

December 2018
 Lisa Johnson, Pastor
 507-995-7310
 Email: pastorlisaaj@gmail.com

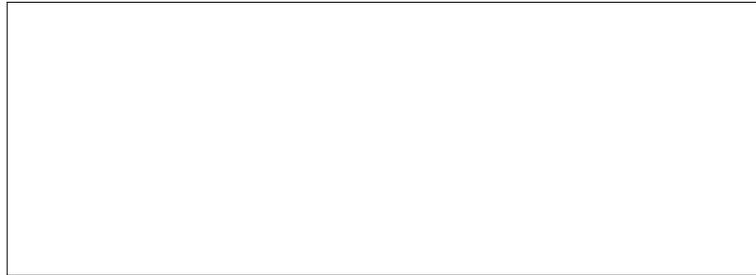
P.O. Box 118
 20 3rd St SW
 Oronoco, MN 55960
 507-367-4711

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Anniversaries 12/18 Kim & Rachel Stanton						1
2 WORSHIP 10:00am 1st Sunday of Advent Communion Food Shelf Sunday Decorate following 10:00 worship Bake Sale 11am	3 	4	5 Session Mtg 6:30pm	6	7	8 
9 WORSHIP 10:00am Confirmation 11:30a	10	11	12 Food Shelf 4-6pm	13 Food Shelf Delivery and Restocking of Shelves 9:15am Alyssa Luhman's Birthday	14	15
16 WORSHIP 10:00am Filling busy bags following worship	17 	18 Don Ottoman's Birthday	19	20	21	22 
23 WORSHIP 10:00am NO CONFIRMATIONS	24 Christmas Eve Worship Service 4:00pm	25 	26 Food Shelf 4-6pm	27	28	29
30 WORSHIP 10:00am	31 New Year's Eve					

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

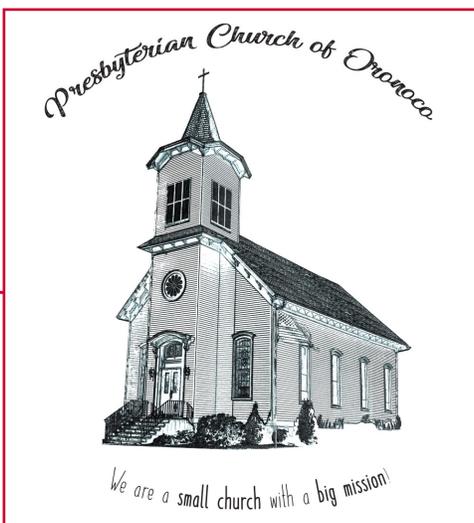
P.O. Box 118

Oronoco, MN 55960



Website: <http://www.oronocochurch.org>

Facebook: Presbyterian Church of Oronoco



Worship—10:00 a.m.

Communion—1st Sunday of the month

Fellowship hour following worship

Sunday School—2nd & 4th Sundays

Rev. Lisa Johnson—contact information:

Cell: 507-995-7310

Email: PastorLisaJ@gmail.com

Blog: <http://pastorlisaj.wordpress.com>