

(1992)

ADVENT SUNDAY / ADVENT BANNER AND WREATH

ADVENT SUNDAY

Today is Advent Sunday...the beginning of a new Church year....the Sunday that ushers in the Christmas Season. I like to think that from here on, it's OK to sing Christmas carols and to send out our Christmas cards.

Advent Sunday is special for us and that's why the children are down here.....to help us light the first candle on our Advent wreath.

We have the first of our red Advent banners hanging over here on the wall. As you may remember from past years, each Sunday in Advent (and there are four Sundays)....has a special word or a special emphasis. Today is HOPE and this is our HOPE banner.

Our thanks to Mrs. D'Ambrosio for her careful and loving work in making these banners for us last year. They are special as she is special.

WREATH

Now we're going to light the first candle on our Advent wreath. This candle speaks to us of HOPE. Jesus always brings hope into our lives.

Allegra Johnson is going to light the candle for us.

May I invite all of the boys and girls to gather on the steps here around the candle...and then following the lighting of the candle we'll have a prayer together and then join in **singing** one of my favorite carols,

"No. 216 - "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

PRAYER

"We thank you, O God, for the light that came into our world in the birth of Jesus...and for the hope that He always brings.

We thank you for the red banner on the wall that reminds us that He continues to be the HOPE of our world. For these touches of red and green that remind us that Christmas is coming, we thank you. In the name and spirit of the Christ Child, we pray."

Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER: November 29, 1992

LORD, that we are alive,
that the ground is firm beneath our feet,
that rest can compensate for toil,
that food is plentiful and delicious to our taste,
that earth might be fair and all her sons be blest,

THY NAME BE PRAISED!

LORD, we thank You for dear friends who really care,
for ways that open when doors seem shut,
for the reality of forgiveness - human and divine,
for major purposes that make life's minor
irritations bearable,
for the assurance that more things are wrought by
prayer than this world dreams.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOURSELF

The ground and source of every good, and especially for
Your love that no resistance can diminish, and
no need exhaust.

With all your people in every corner of creation, we count
it joy to praise YOUR name, and
to give YOU thanks for the many blessings of life

WE PRAY this day for those who are finding life to be hard.

Make us sensitive to those who feel pain,
who know stress and deep anguish,
knowing that it is a matter of grace and not merit that
we ourselves are not there.

WE PRAY for ourselves, ashamed that we have done so little with so much
yet struggling to offer YOU a more obedient service.

Give us keener self-understanding - as keen as we can bear
at one sitting, lest we think of ourselves more highly,
or lowly than we ought to think.

Give us a sense of what is truly important in life, lest we
squander our time and waste our energies and money on
the tinsel of life.

Give us a due regard for our unity with all people, lest we
think in small patterns and exclusive ways and forget
that You are the Lord of all the earth, Lord of all
the people.

WE ASK FOR OURSELVES the most meaningful ADVENT SEASON we have ever had.

Drive us to our knees,
to the Book,
to an awareness of our sin,
to a careful searching of our virtues,
to a serious examination of words and terms so
glibly sung or spoken.

AND GRANT that when Christmas morning breaks for us this year,

We may have something more to show for our much
running about than tired feet, wrapped presents,
grumpy spirits, empty pocketbooks and regrets for
cards not sent and gifts not given.

All this we ask in the name and spirit of Jesus
Christ, born in the manger of Bethlehem.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Sunday, November 29, 1992

GREETING / VISITORS

- A. We take this opportunity to greet the visitors....hope that we shall have the opportunity to greet you in a more personal way....
- B. Be free in the sharing of your name. Sign a guest book or fill out a visitor card. Come, worship with us...come, work with us...
- C. You worship in a church whose roots are deep....doing the Lord's work here since 1837....we like to say that we minister here in the name of Christ and it is....
- D. Members: wear your name tags...make some new friends...
"no strangers here...only friends who have not yet met!"

PARISH CONCERNS

- A. Parish concerns are listed in the bulletin...review them on your own noting the various gatherings and meetings "in the works" in the days of this week. "Hounds". Aldersgate Class.
- B. Volunteers are needed for both an AIDS support group and also the Saturday Feeding program.
- C. Envelopes for Christmas flowers and decorations is in the pew... The amount received determines what we can do in the weeks ahead in terms of Christmas decorations in and around our church building.
- D. Financial Canvass. We'd like to "wrap it up" in the next week or two...off to a tremendous start and I've asked Jim Perkins to tell us how it's going...where we are in comparison to last year.
- E. December approaches. Busy month ahead. New members to be received into membership next Sunday. We have between 12 and 15 people moving in that direction....there may be others interested in joining this church. Share word of your interest with me...

POST-FAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. One or two "post-fair" announcements that need to be made....
 1. Christmas card orders still being taken...
downstairs....December 6th - last Sunday.
 2. Holiday pecans. Still available....

(over)

- B. And "thanks again" - to all who shared in our Fair of a week ago....great Fair and we are grateful to all of you!

PASTORAL CONCERNS

- A. Rose on the Altar...in honor of Bjorn Victor Swarting, infant son of Susan and Finn Swarting, born on November 17th....
- B. Note the word regarding the Memorial Service to celebrate the life of Robert Smith....this Saturday at noon...St. Michael's, 99th and Amsterdam Avenue.
- C. Both Eric de Freitas and Clelus Van Raalte are "home" from the hospital....Mrs. Van Raalte returned home on her 85th birthday, November 24th. Eric is here today. Louise O'Neill celebrated her 80th on Friday of this week!

OFFERING

- A. Thanksgiving appeal is "down" a bit from last year....but that doesn't mean we're any less thankful...still time to make a special "love" gift....checks for that Thanksgiving appeal should carry that designation on the check.
- B. Jesus said: "More blessed to give than it is to receive".

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