



ST. PETER'S  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH

302 MERCHANTS AVE.  
FORT ATKINSON, WI 920-563-3889



## ST. PETER'S CHRISTMAS VISITATIONS

COME SEE THE DECORATED CHURCH, RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION,  
AND HAVE TIME FOR PRIVATE DEVOTIONS

### VISITATION HOURS

CHRISTMAS EVE— Thursday, December 24, 2020 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
CHRISTMAS DAY— Friday, December 25, 2020 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

**You must RSVP** and will be assigned a time.

RSVP to visit the church indicating how many will be visiting, whether you want to visit Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, or both. We will respond with your appointed time and work to make sure the time works for you as much as possible. Your household will be the only household in the church during your time. If you wish to receive communion, Mother Mindy will have it ready and will be at least 8 feet from you.

Please enter through the office doors and exit through the double red doors. (Excepting those with physical limitation.) Please wear your mask at all times, except when consuming the sacrament.

Email [office@stpetersfort.org](mailto:office@stpetersfort.org), call 920-563-3889, or fill out the form on our website, [www.stpetersfort.org](http://www.stpetersfort.org)

Our Christmas Eve Service will premiere on our YouTube channel December 24 at 5:00 PM.  
You can access the service anytime afterwards.

**WISHING YOU A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

FROM MOTHER MINDY VALENTINE DAVIS  
BARBARA WERNER, PARISH ADMINISTRATOR  
THE VESTRY OF SAINT PETER'S



## ADVENT IV: LOVE

Beginning four Sundays before Christmas, Advent is a time of preparation and expectant waiting for the promised Savior. Each Sunday of Advent focuses on a particular liturgical theme. In our first article, we talked about [Advent hope](#), in the second article, we explored [Advent peace](#), in the third article, we reflected on [Advent joy](#). This article considers the fourth and final theme, Advent love.

On the last Sunday of Advent, churches will light a fourth candle as a symbol of Advent **love**. Believers will reflect on scriptures from the Old and New Testaments about God's love for us. God's love undergirds the whole story of the Bible: creation, fall, redemption, and the ongoing process of restoration. Let's delve into the bigness of Advent love.

### GOD'S LOVE FROM THE BEGINNING

It might seem a little odd to begin our reflection on Advent love all the way back in Genesis 1, but we need to remember that God's loving plan for us started with his very first act of creation. Out of nothing, God called forth light. He separated land from the sea, created the sun, moon, and stars, and all the creatures of earth, but the pinnacle of his creation was humanity. He created us in his own image and made us to love and be loved ([Genesis 1:26-30](#)). However, the first humans doubted the truth of God's love for them and rebelled. But even in humanity's fall into sin, we find God's loving mercy. God did not destroy Eve and Adam, and even as they began to experience the serious consequences of their sin, God made his first promise of future redemption: that Eve's own offspring would one day crush the head of the serpent once and for all time ([Genesis 3:15](#)).

### GOD'S LOVING PROMISE

As we trace the story of God's people through the Old Testament, we see God's loving plan unfold. God promised Abraham that he would make his descendants a people who would bless all people. God foretold of the One, born of a virgin, who would free the captives, bear our transgressions, suffer in our place, redeem God's people, and usher in a peace unlike anything ever known. Isaiah prophesied the words of the Lord, "For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," ([Isaiah 54:10](#)).

And though God's plan took time, he lovingly walked with his people through their suffering, temptation, loss, and trial. Hearing their cry under the yoke of slavery, he led them out of Egypt ([Exodus 3:18](#)). When God's people faced exile from the land, he declared, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior" ([Isaiah 43:1-3](#)). Generation after generation, God remained faithful to his people even when they doubted him, questioned him, and turned away from him. Witnesses of God's loving faithfulness, like Nehemiah, testified "You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love..." ([Nehemiah 9:17](#)).

*"For the mountains  
may depart and the hills  
be removed, but my  
steadfast love shall not  
depart from you, and  
my covenant of peace  
shall not be removed,"  
Isaiah 54:10*



## LOVE WITH US

Revisiting the big picture of God's love for his people during Advent helps us understand the significance of that very first advent, the coming of a Savior. For this precise reason, Matthew starts his gospel with Jesus' genealogy, tracing his lineage back through King David to Abraham. Matthew wants us to understand that this major event is connected to God's bigger story of love and redemption. Love, incarnated in the form of a tiny baby, came to fulfill a promise God made centuries before. Paul explains, "he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Philippians 2:7). And he did it because "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). This is Advent love, "not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

## OUR CALL TO ADVENT LOVE

Today, we look back and remember that first advent. We see God's promise of redemption fulfilled and we know that a new era of God's restoration has been ushered in. But what are we called to do now as we wait upon the second advent of Jesus Christ? The answer is simple. We are to do what Christ does, love. When his critics tried to test him, asking which commandment is the greatest, Jesus answered "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39). And so this Advent, let us ask how we can love God and love our neighbor more fully, so that we might fulfill the call of Jesus Christ:

*"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (1 John 4:7-12).*

Written by Robin Basselin – <https://today.reframemedia.com/blog/advent-love>  
First Published November 30, 2018

*See what **Love**  
the **Father** has given us,  
that we should be called **children of God**;  
and that is **what we are**.*

*1 John 3:1*



## LOTTIE MOON - MISSIONARY IN CHINA, 1912

**Charlotte Digges "Lottie" Moon** (December 12, 1840 – December 24, 1912) was a Southern Baptist missionary to China with the Foreign Mission Board who spent nearly forty years (1873-1912) helping the Chinese. As a teacher and evangelist she laid a foundation for traditionally solid support for missions among Baptists in America.

Moon was born to affluent parents who were staunch Baptists, on the family's ancestral fifteen-hundred-acre slave-labor tobacco plantation called Viewmont, in Albemarle County, Virginia. The Moon family valued education, and at age fourteen Lottie went to school at the Baptist-affiliated Virginia Female Seminary (high school, later Hollins Institute) and Albemarle Female Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia. In 1861 Moon received one of the first Master of Arts degrees awarded to a woman by a southern institution.

She underwent a spiritual awakening at the age of 18, after a series of revival meetings on the college campus. On July 7, 1873, the Foreign Mission Board officially appointed Lottie as a missionary to China.

Lottie joined her sister Edmonia at the North China Mission Station in the treaty port of Dengzhou, and began her ministry by teaching in a girls school. (Edmonia had to return home a short time later for health reasons.) While accompanying some of the seasoned missionary wives on "country visits" to outlying villages, Lottie discovered her passion: direct evangelism. Most mission work at that time was done by married men, but the wives of China missionaries Tarleton Perry Crawford and Landrum Holmes had discovered an important reality: Only women could reach Chinese women. Lottie soon became frustrated, convinced that her talent was being wasted and could be better put to use in evangelism and church planting. Lottie wrote:

*Can we wonder at the mortal weariness and disgust, the sense of wasted powers and the conviction that her life is a failure, that comes over a woman when, instead of the ever broadening activities that she had planned, she finds herself tied down to the petty work of teaching a few girls?*

Raised in a family "of culture and means," Lottie at first thought of the Chinese as an inferior people, and insisted on wearing American clothes to maintain a degree of distance from the "heathen" people. But gradually she came to realize that the more she shed her westernized trappings and identified with the Chinese people, the more their simple curiosity about foreigners (and sometimes rejection) turned into genuine interest in the Gospel. She began wearing Chinese clothes, adopted Chinese customs, learned to be sensitive to Chinese culture, and came to respect and admire Chinese culture and learning. In turn she gained love and respect from many Chinese people.

Lottie Moon has come to personify the missionary spirit for Southern Baptists and many other Christians, as well. The annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Missions has raised a total of \$1.5 billion for missions since 1888, and finances half the entire Southern Baptist missions budget every year.





## PRAYERS

12/20/2020

- Parishioner Cycle of Prayer - Patricia Dillin
- Ministry Rotation Prayer - Meals on Wheels
- Happy Birthday Kevin Davis
- For those who are sick : Kitty Martin, Jerry Swanson, Jack Schark
- Diocesan search for next Bishop
- Prayer for difficult times (coronavirus)



This prayer was developed by the Diocesan Standing Committee to pray as the search for our next Bishop progresses:

Gracious and loving God in whom we live and move and have our being, We pray for your guidance and wisdom that we may faithfully follow your calling in our own lives and as we as the Diocese of Milwaukee discern the calling of our twelfth bishop. We give you thanks for the service of Bishop Steven Miller in the life of our diocese and for the blessings that marked his ministry among us. We also pray for his family during this time of transition. We pray for those whom you have called to serve on our Standing, Search, and Transition Committees, and we pray also for those who will respond to your call to enter into discernment with us to be our next bishop. Give us all listening and prayerful hearts for this most important task. This we ask in the name of the One who said, "Come, follow me." Amen.

To add someone to the parish prayer list, please e-mail the office at: [office@stpetersfort.org](mailto:office@stpetersfort.org), or contact Eda Wilson, our prayer net coordinator, [edesw2@gmail.com](mailto:edesw2@gmail.com). If you someone you know and love has Covid-19 we would like to pray for them. Please email Eda and she will add their name to the prayer list.

### Pledge Card Reminder

Please remember to send in your pledge cards. ANY giving through time, talents, and treasures, are highly appreciated and will help us work toward building God's kingdom through our missions and ministries.  
THANK YOU!

**FOR**

**UNTO us a**

*Child* **is born**

**UNTO US A *Son***

**Is given; and the government**

**Shall be upon *His* shoulders**

*His* **name will be called**

*Wonderful, Counselor,*

*THE MIGHTY GOD*

**The Everlasting Father,**

*The Prince of Peace.*

**ISAIAH 9:6**







Saturday and 17 people on a historical tour were “wowed”. Mother Mindy said that we could leave it as it is, and would still be beautiful, but it would be nice to have some enhancement of what we have.

**g. Vestry Duties and Responsibilities** – Mother Mindy shared the document drawn up by her former parish, St. James, outlining Vestry Duties and expectations. Breck said that there is a similar list of duties for St. Peter’s from a distant past Vestry Meeting. We may need to see if this included in the minutes from a few years back. Bill agreed that this would be helpful. The document was sent to the Vestry for feedback.

**h. We received a \$3,000 grant** from the diocese for the Personal Care Ministry. It is on the front page of the newsletter. Mother Mindy would like to form a team to execute this ministry. It would be good to have at least 5 people. Joleen was interested, and Virginia said she would be willing to help coordinate donations. Mother Mindy is confident that the people of St. Peter’s will be super supportive of this, just like with the Cookie Cupboard.

**i. Requested help for Families at the Riverwalk Inn.** Manager has requested St. Peter’s help in buying presents for the children that live at the Riverwalk. Mother Mindy is asking permission to spend some money from Outreach to provide Christmas presents for these children. Scott made motion to allocate \$500 for this need. Discussion followed. Bill seconded the motion. . Vote was taken and passed unanimously.

#### IV. Reports

**a. Rector’s Report** -Christmas letter just went out – it includes the schedule for Christmas church visitation. People must make reservations. Reservations can be made on the website, by email, or by phone.

**b. Sr. Warden** – nothing new to report

**c. Jr. Warden** – Attended Wardens training Sessions by the Diocese, one of which was about Annual Meetings. We would need to have at least 20 people attending. Will most likely need to do it on Zoom. Put some lightbulbs (ones we don’t use anymore)on E-bay to sell. Dehumidifier has been donated. Thank you, Bev!

**d. Financial** – discussed earlier

**e. Outreach** -Website - needs to “flesh out” some areas. Mother Mindy has done a lot of writing for the Web site, but others may be authorities on certain ministries of the church...like Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry, Trudy’s Room, etc. She welcomes others to write things for the website. Website needs to include a statement letting people know that everyone is welcome, even if they are not Episcopalians.

Christmas Neighbors was phenomenal response. Virginia wrote a great letter to the editor thanking people for coming to the Cookie Cupboard.

**f. Taskforce for re-opening.** We must continue to pray for the Covid numbers to come down.

#### IV. Old Business

**Worship** – Production equipment is on its way!

**Christmas plans** - discussed earlier.

**Annual Meeting** – January 31, 2021. RSVP needed, and will send out absentee ballots.

Any questions, concerns? Mother Mindy prayed. Cole moved to adjourn, Bill seconded. All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara A. Werner



December 18, 2020 Newsletter  
**ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
302 Merchants Avenue  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Return Service Requested



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office@stpetersfort.org  
www.stpetersfort.org  
Rector: Mother Mindy  
Valentine Davis

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