



Beloved Community,

The theme for Advent this year at St. Matthew's is summed up with these words.

*When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts. Close to Home acknowledges the "already but not yet" tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God's promised day—our everlasting home—is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us. The Advent and Christmas scriptures are rich with home metaphors and imagery. John the Baptist prophesies about the One who is to come, but reminds us that we are still wandering far from God's promised day; his message hits close to home, especially for those experiencing inequality and oppression. (Sanctified Art)*

You are invited to deepen your Advent journey by participating in our sacred rhythm of worship, prayer and waiting for God. This year, we will be offering a hybrid Advent experience for you to experience Christ's coming in meaningful ways. Please prayerfully consider how you are called to enter this season with intentionality and hope. We will be offering devotional items for you to use at home, Advent prayer stations at each Sunday worship service and **weekly midweek worships** and **bible study** offered in-person and online. May your Advent and Christmas season be filled with the assurance that Christ is close to the home of your heart and our world. We are not alone. God is with us.

### **CELEBRATION of ADVENT** | Sunday, November 28 after both services

On the first Sunday of Advent between services you are invited to pick up an Advent devotional, candle, Advent calendar and coloring pages. Refreshments, coffee and hot chocolate will be available for our time of connection.

### **MID-WEEK ADVENT WORSHIP and HOMECOMING BIBLE STUDY**

**Wednesday, December 1, 2021** | **Holden Evening Prayer** from 7:00-7:30 PM in the sanctuary and streaming online, followed by an in-person and zoom bible study from 7:30-8 PM.

Meeting ID: 992 7955 9546 Passcode: ADVENT

**Wednesday, December 8 and December 15 2021 | Advent Candle-light Worship** from 7:00-7:30 PM in the sanctuary and streaming online, followed by an in-person and zoom bible study from 7:30-8 PM. Meeting ID: 992 7955 9546 Passcode: ADVENT

## **COMMUNITY WATCH PARTY | Friday, December 10, 2021 at 6PM**

National Lutheran Choir Christmas Concert in the St. Matthew's Sanctuary!

## **ADVENT MINI-RETREAT | Saturday, December 11, 2021 from 10 - 1PM**

The Christmas season can be stressful. To-Do Lists can be extremely long. It is time for you to treat yourself with an Advent gift. You are invited to a simple, relaxing Advent retreat. The retreat will be filled with holy conversation, connection, contemplation, prayer and joy! Cost is \$10 for the retreat, lunch will be included. Feel free to sign-up by calling the church office or following the link on the website. [www.stmatthewsrenton.org](http://www.stmatthewsrenton.org).

## **LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP | Tuesday, December 21 at 7 PM**

You are invited to gather for a worship on the longest night of the year. We will explore the ways God is present in the luminous darkness offering protection and rest. The worship is perfect for those who are wanting a worship experience that is contemplative, thoughtful and hopeful. You are invited to bring a candle from home to add to the Communion Table.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP | Friday, December 24**

**5:00 PM | Family Service** in the sanctuary and streaming online

**9:00 PM | Traditional Candlelight Service** in the sanctuary and streaming online

**11:00 PM | Traditional Candlelight Service** in the sanctuary and streaming online

A poster for Christmas Eve at St. Matthew's. The background is a dark blue night sky with stars and silhouettes of evergreen trees. The text is white and centered. The main title 'CHRISTMAS EVE' is in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, 'at St. Matthew's' is written in a white cursive script. At the bottom, there are two columns of text: 'FAMILY SERVICE 5:00 PM' on the left and 'TRADITIONAL SERVICE 9:00 & 11:00 PM' on the right. At the very bottom, the website 'www.stmatthewsrenton.org' is written in a white sans-serif font.

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
*at St. Matthew's*

**FAMILY SERVICE**  
**5:00 PM**

**TRADITIONAL SERVICE**  
**9:00 & 11:00 PM**

[www.stmatthewsrenton.org](http://www.stmatthewsrenton.org)