

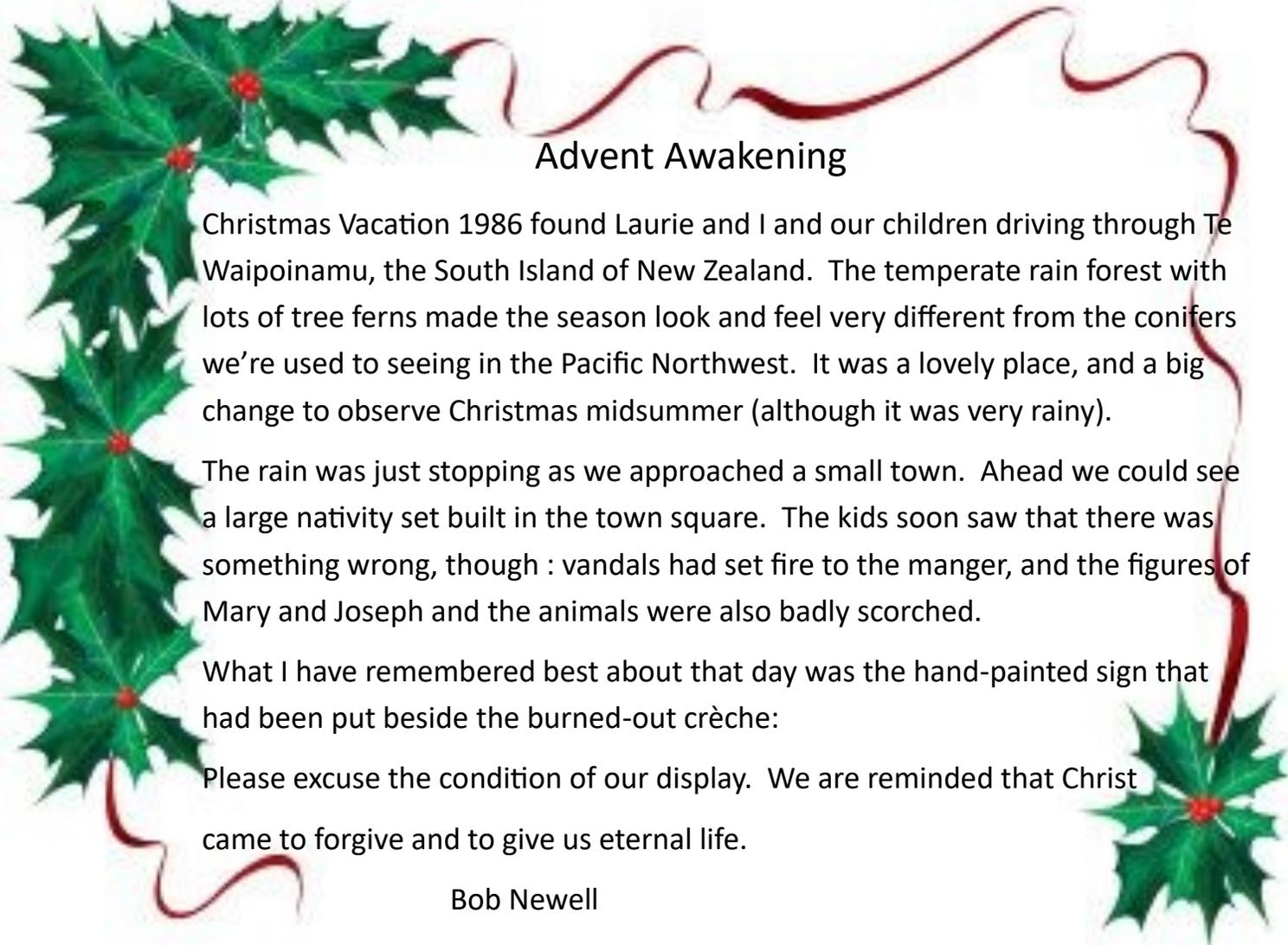


Fowler Advent Flashes

This year we wanted to do something different and unique just for us. So for the Advent Season we are sending you a weekly 'Flashes'. Each week we will include 2 different stories from our staff. Each story will be about Advent/Christmas, past or present. We really hope that you will enjoy this.

Blessings,

Your Fowler Staff



Advent Awakening

Christmas Vacation 1986 found Laurie and I and our children driving through Te Waipoinamu, the South Island of New Zealand. The temperate rain forest with lots of tree ferns made the season look and feel very different from the conifers we're used to seeing in the Pacific Northwest. It was a lovely place, and a big change to observe Christmas midsummer (although it was very rainy).

The rain was just stopping as we approached a small town. Ahead we could see a large nativity set built in the town square. The kids soon saw that there was something wrong, though : vandals had set fire to the manger, and the figures of Mary and Joseph and the animals were also badly scorched.

What I have remembered best about that day was the hand-painted sign that had been put beside the burned-out crèche:

Please excuse the condition of our display. We are reminded that Christ came to forgive and to give us eternal life.

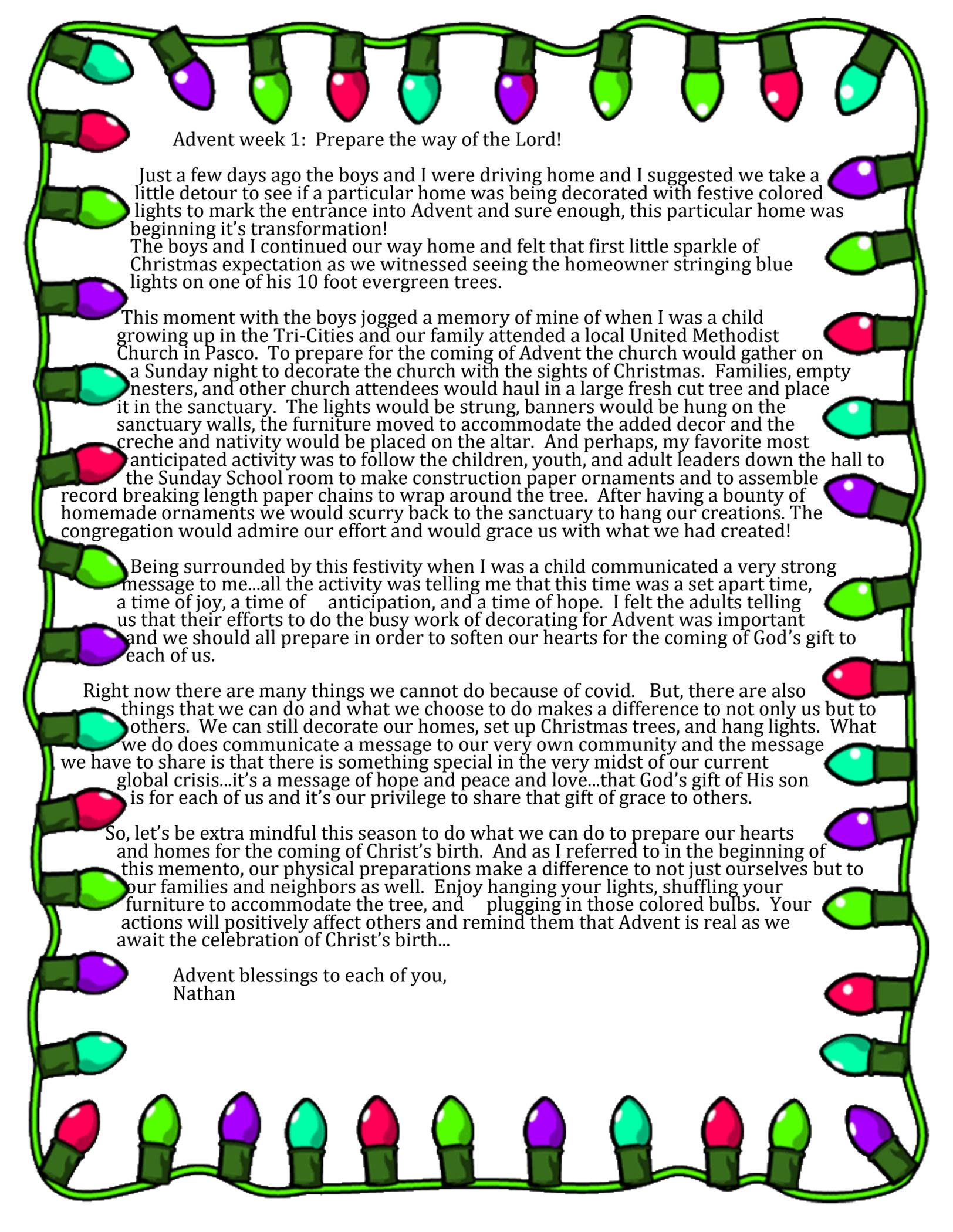
Bob Newell

**December Birthdays
& Anniversaries**

1st - Pam Doyon
Othman Mohamad
3rd - Wayne Rau
8th - Larry Price
9th - Rick lockert
12th - Jeni Sherman
Sally Schafhirt
13th - Enya LaFrance
14th - Alexa Knutson
18th - Carol Vrolson
19th - Robert Hammer
23rd - Ron & Carol Ring
Kergen Boone
24th - Sarah Briggs
28th John & Bev Parott
John & Dotie Godley
Christelle Mwange
29th - Janet Abernathy
30th - Mable Pangle & Nader
Habashy

**December Calander
Worship Online Sunday at 8am**

8th - 10am Prayer Group
10:30 Staff Meeting
11am- Koinonia
1pm - Koinonia Bible Study
9th - 11am Favorite Bible Verse
10th - Noon -Lunch and Life Lessons
15th - 10am Prayer Group
11am- Koinonia
1pm - Koinonia Bible Study
16th- 11am Favorite Bible Verse
17th - 11 am Call Group Meeting
Noon -Lunch and Life Lessons
22nd - 10am Prayer Group
10:30 Staff Meeting
11am- Koinonia
1pm - Koinonia Bible Study
24th - Christmas Eve Office Closed
25th - Christmas Day Office Closed
29th- 10am Prayer Group
11am- Koinonia
1pm - Koinonia Bible Study
31st - Happy New Years Eve!



Advent week 1: Prepare the way of the Lord!

Just a few days ago the boys and I were driving home and I suggested we take a little detour to see if a particular home was being decorated with festive colored lights to mark the entrance into Advent and sure enough, this particular home was beginning its transformation!

The boys and I continued our way home and felt that first little sparkle of Christmas expectation as we witnessed seeing the homeowner stringing blue lights on one of his 10 foot evergreen trees.

This moment with the boys jogged a memory of mine of when I was a child growing up in the Tri-Cities and our family attended a local United Methodist Church in Pasco. To prepare for the coming of Advent the church would gather on a Sunday night to decorate the church with the sights of Christmas. Families, empty nesters, and other church attendees would haul in a large fresh cut tree and place it in the sanctuary. The lights would be strung, banners would be hung on the sanctuary walls, the furniture moved to accommodate the added decor and the creche and nativity would be placed on the altar. And perhaps, my favorite most anticipated activity was to follow the children, youth, and adult leaders down the hall to the Sunday School room to make construction paper ornaments and to assemble record breaking length paper chains to wrap around the tree. After having a bounty of homemade ornaments we would scurry back to the sanctuary to hang our creations. The congregation would admire our effort and would grace us with what we had created!

Being surrounded by this festivity when I was a child communicated a very strong message to me...all the activity was telling me that this time was a set apart time, a time of joy, a time of anticipation, and a time of hope. I felt the adults telling us that their efforts to do the busy work of decorating for Advent was important and we should all prepare in order to soften our hearts for the coming of God's gift to each of us.

Right now there are many things we cannot do because of covid. But, there are also things that we can do and what we choose to do makes a difference to not only us but to others. We can still decorate our homes, set up Christmas trees, and hang lights. What we do does communicate a message to our very own community and the message we have to share is that there is something special in the very midst of our current global crisis...it's a message of hope and peace and love...that God's gift of His son is for each of us and it's our privilege to share that gift of grace to others.

So, let's be extra mindful this season to do what we can do to prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of Christ's birth. And as I referred to in the beginning of this memento, our physical preparations make a difference to not just ourselves but to our families and neighbors as well. Enjoy hanging your lights, shuffling your furniture to accommodate the tree, and plugging in those colored bulbs. Your actions will positively affect others and remind them that Advent is real as we await the celebration of Christ's birth...

Advent blessings to each of you,
Nathan



UGM Christmas Donations

Please bring donations to the church by the 10th of December. Roberta will pick them up and deliver them to UGM.

The lists of needed items are below.

Thank you for your time and help. Lets help others as we can.

Men's needs: Hoodies, winter socks, gloves, and hats, underwear, jeans, shoes, boots, and coats.

Women's and children's needs: Robes and PJ's for all ages (even teen boys and girls), hoodies and warm socks and slippers.