
KOINONIA

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship (Koinonia) of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

2 Corinthians 13:14

NORWIN ALLIANCE CHURCH

DECEMBER 2024



Each year it's almost cliché to talk about the “real meaning of Christmas.” In Genesis 3:15 we see the first prophecy concerning Jesus at the fall: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” It would have been very curious to and not normal to refer to Eve or her offspring rather than the offspring on Adam in that patriarchal culture. Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit and birth to the virgin Mary is the beginning of the fulfilment of the promise for Eve's offspring. Jesus is God with us.

Colossians 1:15-17 says, “He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” The one who is before all things and through whom everything has been created came to earth fully God and fully man. He would fulfil the law perfectly and be the permanent atoning sacrifice that the Old Testament sacrificial system foreshadowed. He would rise again, conquering death and ascend to heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us. Yet he sent his Holy Spirit to indwell his believers until his return.

All of us who have called on Jesus for salvation have access to the indwelling presence of the third person of the trinity and have the life of Jesus himself at work in us. Therefore, Jesus' human birth

is part of what we celebrate as believers. Our Christmas traditions, including the religious and secular, may give us warm feelings, nostalgia, and hope. However, outside of the reality of Jesus, God with us, those feelings are a mirage and fade as soon as January 1st rolls around and the Christmas festivities fade. But the hope of Jesus, God with us, doesn't begin when it begins to look a lot like Christmas. Whether we are a “Christmas person” or one that would prefer a simpler and shorter holiday season, we have the true hope and joy of Jesus available to us all year long.

So let us enjoy our Christmas traditions and the memories and nostalgia they bring. We can enjoy our favorite Christmas movies and cookies. We can find the perfect gift for those we want to bless. We can join in all the traditional religious activities of the Christmas holiday. But we can also daily celebrate the abiding presence of Jesus today with or without those things and we don't need to stop when the blur of this season passes. We need not be troubled about the supposed war on Christmas. Even before believers began celebrating Jesus' birth as a holiday in the fourth century, believers first had the true hope of Jesus' abiding presence. That cannot be taken from us no matter how many cashiers wish us a happy holiday!





DECEMBER PRAYER TIMES

Wednesday, December 4

7:00 pm

and

Thursday, Thursday 5

11:00 am

Join us on the first Wednesday and first Thursday of each month for a time to pray for: one another; our church family; the mission, purpose, staff, and leaders of Norwin Alliance Church; the church universal; our community; our nation; and the world. If you have a specific prayer request, please join us for this time of prayer, or if you cannot attend, please contact the church office with your prayer request. We pray that this special time of monthly prayer together will help us see what God wants us to do as a church and build unity in and through our church members.

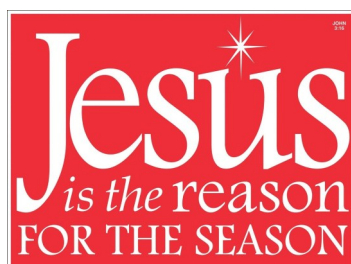
“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

- Matthew 18:19-20

*“When she held her Child,
She held the King of kings;
God’s only Son, the Holy One of
whom the angels sing.*

*And when she spoke His name,
the host of heaven smiled;
The hope of man was in her hands
When she held her Child.”*

From “The Story of Christmas ”



EVENTS

- Dec. 1 First Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 7 Christmas Cantata ~ "JOY! HE SHALL REIGN" ~ 6:30 pm
- Dec. 8 Second Sunday of Advent
NO 8:30 service
Christmas Cantata ~ "JOY! HE SHALL REIGN" ~ 10:45am
- Dec. 15 Third Sunday of Advent
Advent Luncheon ~ Noon
- Dec. 18 AWANA Family Christmas ~ 6:45 pm
- Dec. 19 Keen-Agers Christmas Catered Meal
11:00 am (by RSVP)
- Dec. 22 4th Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service ~
6:00 pm
- Dec. 25 Merry Christmas!

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

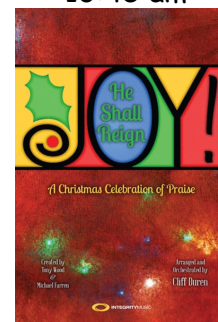
Saturday, December 7th

6:30 pm

AND

Sunday, December 8th

10:45 am



Please invite your family, friends, and neighbors to hear our Adult Choir as they present their Christmas Cantata, "JOY! HE SHALL REIGN" on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. May the music touch your hearts, and may the message fill you with hope, joy, and the blessing of Christmas.

YEAR END REPORTS

ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS.....from KEEN-AGERS, DMC, LEAD ELDER, LEAD TRUSTEE, TREASURER, ASST. TREASURER, YOUTH...your End-of-Year reports are due to Cindy Barnhart no later than Sunday, January 12th. Please make sure that your report includes a financial report (if applicable).

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a meeting of the congregation on Sunday, January 26th at 11:30 AM.

Even though only members are permitted to vote, everyone is invited to attend the meeting.

Come hear how NAC did in 2024.

SENIOR ADULTS Keen-Agers
MINISTRY

For all those in the community
50 years of age and older



Thursday, December 19, 2024

11:00 am

Keen-Agers will meet two weeks early in December.

This is a catered meal by reservation only. Please see Cindy Barnhart if you would like to attend but have not reserved your spot.

Steve Tori will be our special program for the day.

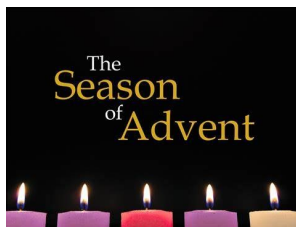
Officers for 2025 were elected at our November meeting and will be installed at our December meeting. The 2025 Officers are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| President | Cindy Barnhart |
| Vice President | Harold Lawhorne |
| Corresponding Secretary | Joan Patterson |
| Treasurer | Georgia Conley |
| Asst. Treasurer | Bill Swope |
| Kitchen Head | Lori Deliman |

CHRISTMAS CARDS



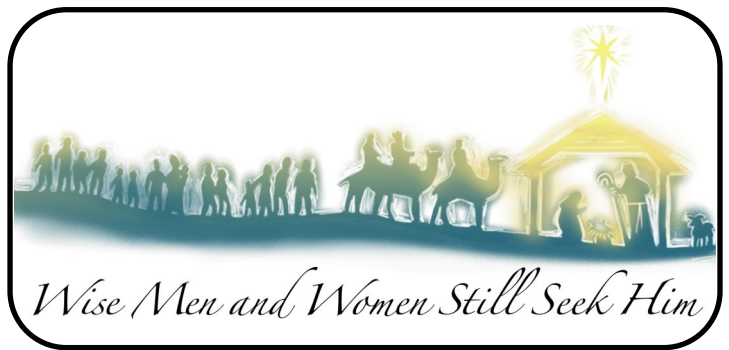
The window in the small narthex will be covered with paper so you can display Christmas cards to the congregation. You may sign one card to the entire church family and tape it to the "window".



On Sunday, December 15th, the DMC will host our annual Advent Luncheon following the 10:45 service. Your entire family is invited to attend. Ethel's Edibles will cater the luncheon. You must sign the sheet in the narthex, with the number attending, by December 8th so that an accurate count can be given to the caterer.

Menu: breaded chicken, ham, potato salad, rigatoni, salad, rolls/butter and dessert.

Be sure to sign-up. We look forward to seeing you for the lunch on December 15th.



Each month the preschool children collect specific food items for the Irwin Area Food Pantry. If you would like to contribute, a box is available in the narthex. December's collection item: **CANNED PASTAS** (SPAGHETTI O'S, RAVIOLI, BEEFARONI, SPAGHETTI and MEATBALLS etc.)

Thank you so much for any contributions you can make.