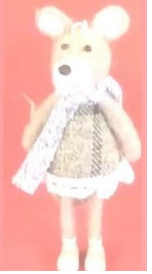




The Peoples Weekly Mini Mouse



Manse Cat Weekly: Musings from Pastor Leia / her cat

Volume 1, Issue 34

During Advent, the words of Isaiah and the words of John the Baptist call us to "prepare the way." Throughout my life, the countdown to Christmas has always been a whirlwind of preparation, whether it was preparing for final exams, preparing holiday cookies, preparing decorations, preparing gifts, or, more recently, preparing liturgies and spreadsheets and bulletins and painstakingly edited music videos...but while I'm sure that even Isaiah and John would be tempted by the smells of my baking projects, I don't think that any of these endeavors of holiday preparation were what they meant when they instructed us to "prepare the way of the Lord."

This Christmas season isn't going to look anything like any Christmas season that any of us have ever known, but throughout two thousand years of Christian history, most Christmas seasons have looked wildly different from any that we have ever known. The first Christmas was very simple, after all, followed by three centuries in which, as far as we can tell, Christmas wasn't celebrated at all (the first record of it isn't until the year 336!!!). Since then, Christmas has meant fasting, or maybe feasting; Christmas trees, or maybe nativity scenes; a day of work, or maybe a day of rest; decked out with singing or chanting or praying or scripture reading and symbols and traditions of all kinds. But at its very heart, the point of Christmas isn't a date or a candlelit rendition of Silent Night or any kind of celebration at all or even a big family

gathering: the point is the miracle, that God chose to put on flesh and live among us.

Christmas in 2020 won't be a big production (except for those of us who have already started filming and editing special services). We won't be traveling, or worrying about meals with extended family, or hosting events (except over screens). It won't be the same, and it won't be anything that any of us wanted. But maybe, just maybe, once the zoom calls and services have been ended, the worship at home materials have been distributed, the videos have premiered, and the live streams have concluded, maybe, in the lonely, silent night, we can remember that God is with us, even if no one else can be, and maybe, at least for now, that can be enough.

Leia



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Special points of interest:

- Senior Pictures
 - Advent
 - AIM Adopt a Family
-

Happening This Week

Tuesday, December 15, 8pm: Bible study on Facebook Live
(the history of Christmas, c. 1800-1900)

Wednesday, December 16, 8pm: evening prayer service on
Facebook Live

Thursday, December 17, 1-3pm: virtual knitting group on zoom
<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/hats-for-cancer-2020-12-17/>

Thursday, December 17, 5pm: virtual fellowship on zoom
<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-cocktail-hour-2020-12-17/>

Sunday, December 20, 10am: Fourth Sunday of Advent
worship on Facebook Live followed by virtual fellowship on zoom
<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-coffee-hour-2020-12-20/>

Monday, December 21, 8pm: Longest Night service on Facebook
Live

Tuesday, December 22, 8pm: Bible study on Facebook Live
(the history of Christmas, c. 1900-present)

Wednesday, December 23, noon: holiday service for Milan senior
center on Facebook Live

Wednesday, December 23, 8pm: evening prayer service on Facebook Live

Thursday, December 24, 5pm: virtual fellowship on zoom
<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-cocktail-hour-2020-12-24/>

Thursday, December 24, 7pm: Christmas Eve service on Facebook Live

Friday, December 25, 7pm: Christmas service on Facebook Live



THOSE
WHO *sow joy*
DREAM
3rd Sunday in Advent


Sun, 12/13: worship; 10am on Facebook Live
virtual coffee hour; 10:45am on zoom

Tue, 12/15: Bible study; 8pm on Facebook Live

Wed, 12/16: evening prayer on Facebook Live

Thur, 12/17: virtual knitting group; 1-3pm on zoom
virtual cocktail hour; 5pm on zoom

www.peoplespresbyterian.org

A circular wreath made of pine branches, red berries, and pinecones. The wreath is composed of several branches with green pine needles, clusters of bright red berries, and a few brown pinecones. The branches are arranged in a circular pattern, creating a festive holiday decoration.

A huge thank you to the congregation! We raised \$605 for the Aid in Milan Christmas Adopted Family. Our donation will be split between 3 families this year! Thank you for continuing to support those in need in our community.

Advent Goodies!



Presbyterian Today magazine online are streaming daily Advent devotionals and lighting of the candles! You can follow along and stay connected with the link below:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/advent2020/>

Three Wise Women

Do you know what would have happened if there had been

three wise women instead of three wise men?

- they would have asked directions
- arrived on time
- helped deliver the baby
- cleaned the stable
- made a casserole and
- brought practical gifts

The Older I Get

The simpler my holiday preparations become . . .

The closer I feel to old friends as I write my Christmas cards . . .

The more I cherish the oldest ornaments . . .

The more fondly I remember Christmases past . . .

The longer I hold on to a holiday hug . . .

The more I realize Christmas is a matter of the heart . . .

The tighter my throat gets when I sing, "Silent Night" . . .

The more I enjoy giving than receiving . . .

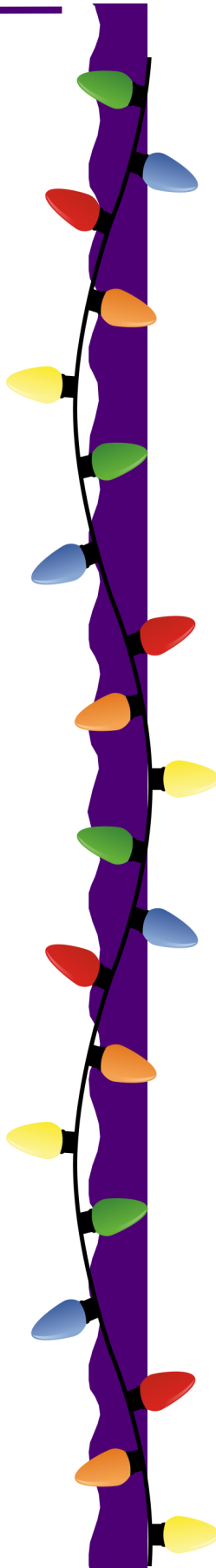
The more I try to see Christmas through the eyes of a child . . .

The longer I sit at night in the glow of the Christmas tree . . .

The more wondrously beautiful the Christmas Story is . . .

The deeper my awe at God's infinite love . . .

THE MORE I LOVE CHRISTMAS!!



A Christmas Reflection from Diane London

1 CORINTHIANS 13 -- A CHRISTMAS VERSION --

Author Unknown

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights
and shiny balls, but do not show love,

I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing
gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do
not show love,

I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I
have to charity, but do not show love,
it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes,
attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not
focus on Christ,

I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to
kiss the husband. Love is kind, though harried and tired.

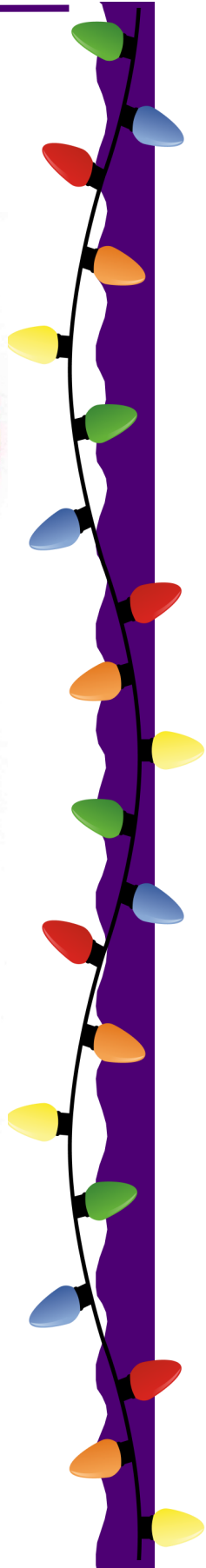
Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and
table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are
there to be in the way.

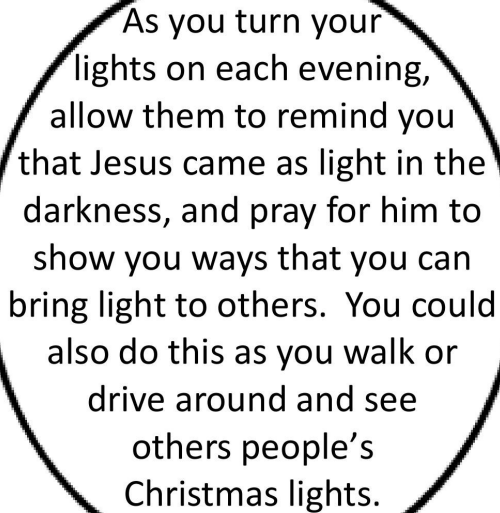
Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in
giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all
things. Love never fails.

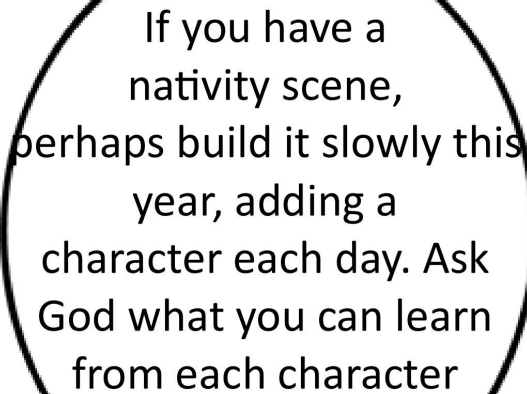
Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but
giving the gift of love will endure.



Creative Advent Prayer



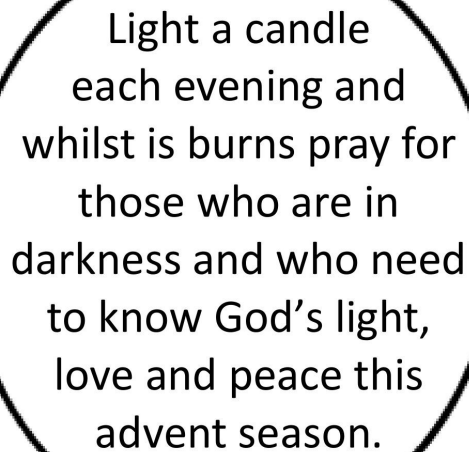
As you turn your lights on each evening, allow them to remind you that Jesus came as light in the darkness, and pray for him to show you ways that you can bring light to others. You could also do this as you walk or drive around and see others people's Christmas lights.



If you have a nativity scene, perhaps build it slowly this year, adding a character each day. Ask God what you can learn from each character



Colour in the nativity scene that we sent out to put in your window. As you colour allow your mind to meditate on the story and try to see something new in it.



Light a candle each evening and whilst it burns pray for those who are in darkness and who need to know God's light, love and peace this advent season.



Advent Activities: Answers From Last Week

Last Week's Trivia:

Name that Christmas Song. . .

1. *righteous darkness*
2. *loyal followers advance*
3. *far off in a feeder*
4. *bantam male percussionist*
5. *monarchial triad*
6. *nocturnal noiselessness*
7. *Jehovah deactivate blithe chevaliers*
8. *proceed and enlighten on the pinnacle*
9. *query regarding identity of descendant*
10. *delight for this planet*
11. *give attention to the melodious celestial beings*
12. *arrival time: 2400 hours, weather: cloudless*

Answers to "Name that Christmas Song"

1. "O Holy Night"
2. "O Come All Ye Faithful"
3. "Away in the Manger"
4. "The Little Drummer Boy"
5. "We Three Kings"
6. "Silent Night"
7. "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"
8. "Go Tell it on the Mountain"
9. "What Child is This?"
10. "Joy to the World"
11. "Angels We have Heard on High"

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Worship:

Streamed Weekly on Facebook Live

at 10:00 am every Sunday

Prayer Service:

Streamed Live each Wednesday on Facebook

Live at 8:00 pm