

The Bridge

***10:00 a.m. each Sunday: Intergenerational Devotional**

***10:10 a.m. Religious Education for all ages**

*** The adults are studying the Old Testament.**

December 4: "Veiled in Darkness Judah Lay" - Reverend Justin Lapoint - After discussing the political realities in Judea at the time of Jesus' birth, Justin will talk about faith and hope in troubling times such as ours.

December 11: "Christmas Past: Look Upon Me" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost - Our journey through Christmas past, present and future with Charles Dickens' classic story *A Christmas Carol*, brings us face to face with Scrooge and the reality of the world. Looking upon the world, let's explore the power of compassion to crack open those in need of transformation.

December 11: Love Feast "Hearts Cracked Open" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost - This being the third Sunday of Advent (Love) it's a perfect time to pause on our journey through Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. How can the tradition of Love Feast help us capture some of the magic of Christmas? Let's prepare ourselves for the busy, happy, crazy, beautiful and sometimes lonely but highly anticipated celebration of the year. Join us in this candlelight service as we open our hearts to the spirit and life of the season.

December 18: "Hope of Christmas Future: Death Defying Acts" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost - Fear of the future is something we all probably have in varying degrees. Fear of the unknown can affect our behavior, our relationships, generosity, and our ability to experience the joy of life. Through Scrooge's journey with the *Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come* he learns he has the power to change. Like Scrooge, let's look at ways we can defy death- like attitudes and reawaken to life this Christmas season.

December 25: No Activities

Dates to Remember

December 1: 10:00 a.m.
Decorate the church for Christmas.

December 11: Love Feast:
5:30 p.m. Covered-dish supper; 6:30 p.m. Candle Lighting Service

December 20: 2:00 p.m.
AUW Christmas party at Linda Jones'; bring a wrapped book (new or read) to gift.

December 24: 6:30 p.m.
Christmas Eve Vespers and Party: "The Redemption of Scrooge: Keeping Christmas Well"-Reverend Claudia M. Frost-Candlelight Vespers in the Sanctuary followed by a Christmas party.



Claudia's Comments

As I write this note, *Black Friday* and *Cyber Monday* are behind us...then *Giving Tuesday* according to the internet. For me, the fun days lay ahead as we prepare for celebrating Christmas well with family and friends.

I'm excited about our Christmas series this year based on the classic tale by Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*. You may remember the story explores the character transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge, a cold and miserly businessman who catches glimpses of his own life through the appearances of three ghostly spirits: the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. His transformative visions cause him to change his life and release him from the shackles of his spiritual bondage.

This will be a time to proclaim a living economy of grace and justice which is the antithesis to addictions to money, success, exclusion and self-absorption that seems to characterize so much of secular rhetoric and ways of being in today's world. If you don't recall Dickens' story, or just haven't seen it in a while, I recommend watching one of the film's adaptations to recall the story. You can find a streaming version of the Disney version on Amazon or YouTube.

Every year Christmas comes into our lives as a wakeup call. As the clock tower chimed to call Scrooge to wake up and change his miserly life, we too could use a call to transformation. Scrooge saw a future that frightened him. Turning from a life of resentment, fear and isolation, he let go of his spiritual baggage and learned how to *Keep Christmas Well*.

I hope you can join us for this December worship series and the Love Feast on December 11th as we celebrate advent and prepare ourselves for transformation, redemption and learning to *Keep Christmas Well*.



Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With Love, Hope & Joy,

Reverend Claudia