

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

We are glad to have you worship with us today. We are practicing safer worship together, following COVID-19 protocols for in-person gatherings. Please observe the following.



**WEAR A
FACE MASK**



**DON'T SHAKE
HANDS**



**KEEP YOUR
DISTANCE**



**WASH YOUR
HANDS**

Childcare: All children are welcome in our service. Parents please keep your children with you or at the activity tables. A staffed nursery is available during worship for infants and children thru kindergarten.

Communion: Our communion is open to all who seek to follow in the way of Jesus. Our communion cups are filled with grape juice and the wafers are gluten free.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Nov. 28	10:45 AM	First Sunday of Advent
Nov. 30	all day	#Giving Tuesday
Nov. 30	7:00 PM	Women's study on Zoom
Nov. 30	7:00 PM	Bell Choir rehearsal
Dec. 5	10:45 AM	Second Sunday of Advent
Dec. 5	7:00 PM	Advent Film Festival discussion on Zoom

ADVENT FILM FESTIVAL

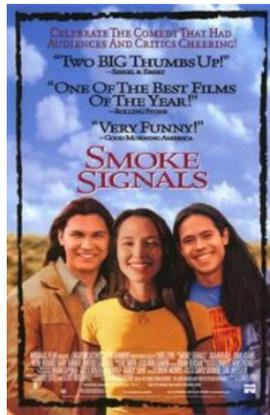
Week 1 - December 5 *Smoke Signals*
(1998, Rated PG-13)

Adapted by Sherman Alexie from his short story "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven," *Smoke Signals* explores issues of belonging, forgiveness, and what makes a home.

Available to rent on Amazon Prime.

Watch on your own time and then join our Zoom conversation on Sunday, Dec. 5 at 7PM.

Message us for a Zoom invitation.



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FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF MOREHEAD



Homesick
First Sunday of Advent

How do you describe homesickness to a child?

You don't.

They know.

Children know the feeling of being away from home.

It's fear, dipped in loneliness,
that "What if I've been forgotten?" sonnet,
or the "What if I can't go back?" refrain.

Even a healthy, scrubbed-clean,
showered-with-love child
knows the longing of home.

But if I *had* to.

If I had to describe

that aching feeling, I would say:

"Homesickness is when longing and grief
wrap themselves around you like a blanket.
It's the door to comfort thrown open.

It's an eye on the horizon for what could be
and the only way out is to keep walking,

to keep dreaming,

to keep looking

for signs that will point you back home."

And if you tell that to a child,

you just may realize

that a part of your spirit

has shoes on

and has always been walking,

always been dreaming,

always been looking

for the home that could be.

The door to comfort has been blown open.

Tell God I'm homesick.

I'm on my way.

ADVENT PHOTO-A-DAY			
ADVENT 1	ADVENT 2	ADVENT 3	ADVENT 4
11/28 - HOPE	12/5 - PEACE	12/12 - JOY	12/19 - LOVE
11/29 - HOME	12/6 - FOUNDATION	12/13 - PROCLAIM	12/20 - SANCTUARY
11/30 - AWAKE	12/7 - TENDER	12/14 - COURAGE	12/21 - EMERGE
12/1 - RESTORE	12/8 - REMEMBER	12/15 - BELONGING	12/22 - FREEDOM
12/2 - YEARN	12/9 - FAITH	12/16 - REJOICE	12/23 - CHERISH
12/3 - PROMISE	12/10 - BLUEPRINT	12/17 - ABUNDANT	12/24 - EXTRAORDINARY
12/4 - NOURISH	12/11 - SUSTAIN	12/18 - REST	12/25 - GLORY

close to home #closetohome #advent2021

Minister Nancy Gowler
Music Director:..... Genny Jenkins
Pianist: Isaiah Florence
Music Interns Caleb Fouts, Anna Grayson
Liturgist: Mary Claire Williams
Elder:..... Alana Scott
Greeter: Kaitlyn Paschal

HOLIDAY OUTREACH

Items for our Elderly and Rowan County Family Holiday projects should be brought to the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, Dec. 5th. Delivery date will be Sunday, Dec. 12th.

November 28, 2021 First Sunday of Advent

For thousands of years, First People have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the center of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Shawnee, Cherokee, and Osage people, past, present, and emerging, and we acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

CENTERING WORDS

*...with the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

—T.S. Eliot

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

Welcome Rev. Nancy Gowler

Centering Music *Celebrate Me Home* Caleb Fouts

Bell of Mindfulness

Call to Worship Mary Claire Williams

Can one be homesick for something you've never known?

**We are homesick for a just world,
for peace like rivers, for the end of suffering.**

Yes, we are homesick—

**for joy that is contagious,
for nations that feel like neighbors,
and for hospitals that run empty.**

We are homesick for the world God promises.

We are homesick, but we are on our way.

God is here. God is still creating.

Let us worship the Holy One.

Opening Prayer Mary Claire Williams

Lighting of the First Advent Candle Mary Claire & Ellie Williams

Prayers of Confession and Assurance Rev. Nancy Gowler

Centering Music *Fear Thou Not* Caleb Fouts

SACRED STORIES

Scripture Readings Jeremiah 33:14-16 Mary Claire Williams
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Listen for God's word coming to us in Scripture.

Our hearts and minds are open.

Gospel Reading Luke 21:25-36 Rev. Nancy Gowler

...God be in our listening,

God in our understanding. **Amen.**

Sermon *The Great Homecoming* Rev. Nancy Gowler

RESPONDING TO GOD'S STORY

Song of Prayer *See Fig Tree Leaves Now Sprouting* Caleb Fouts &

Isaiah Florence

Prayers of the People Mary Claire Williams

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion Rev. Nancy Gowler

Peace be with you!

And also with you!

...All are welcome at Christ's table.

Everyone is welcome at Christ's table.

Words of Institution Rev. Nancy Gowler

Communion Prayer Alana Scott

The Sharing

Carol of Hope *Comfort, Comfort You My People* Anna Grayson &

Isaiah Florence

GOING OUT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Benediction Rev. Nancy Gowler

Postlude *Home* Genny Jenkins

Liturgy adapted from Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

OUR PRAYERS

World Council of Churches prayer calendar:

Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore

For those who desire our prayers:

Ronni Gilpin, Amanda Baldwin, Tiffany Reynolds Buckner,
Latha Nixon, Charlotte Stidom, Northfork Senior Living residents,
the Paschall Family, Joy Robertson, Cate Cook, Aubrey Kautz Jr.,
Kathleen Malane, Don Whitehead & family, Elwood Caudill Sr.,
Kort Freiter, Gary Messer, Jaz Johnson, Freda Wash, Ned Breschel,
Norma & Dave Braughler, Maggie Miles, Hedy Caldwell,
Eva Johnston

For those who are celebrating birthdays:

12/1—Alta Blair, Eric Carter

12/2—Karen Ross

12.5—Neva Griffith

Prayer concerns and joys may be shared with the office.

**Concerns will be posted
for two weeks only unless otherwise requested.**



The First Sunday of Advent
HOMESICK (HOPE)*

Luke 21:25-36 | 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

ADVENT AT HOME FOR FAMILIES

READ: This is what Paul wrote to his friends in the city of Thessalonica while he was away:

"We pray that we can see you again and give you all the things you need to make your faith strong. We pray that our God and Father and our Lord Jesus will prepare the way for us to come to you. We pray that the Lord will make your love grow more and more for each other and for all people. We pray that you will love others as we love you and that your hearts will be made strong." —1 Thessalonians 3:10b-13a (ICB)

WONDER: I wonder what Paul was feeling when he wrote this letter. I wonder if you've ever felt those feelings, too. I wonder what you do when you miss someone. I wonder if you've ever missed your home. I wonder what it feels like to have to leave your home.

SAY: The good news is that God is always with us, even when we are away from home, even when we miss the people we love, and we can wait with hope for the day we get to see them again.

PRAY: Let's pray. Dear God, we pray for the people we love who are far away from us. We pray for everyone who misses their home or who can't go back home. Keep them safe until we can see them again, and make their hearts strong. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

EXTEND:

- Write a letter to or draw a picture for someone you miss seeing. Ask a grown up for help mailing it to them.
- Tell a story about a place or activity you miss. What did you love about it?
- Read *The Bear and the Piano* by David Litchfield. United Kingdom: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2016.
- Learn about the lives of refugees. Find out what organizations serve refugees in your community and learn more about how you can help.

** Note: Younger children may have never been away from home, especially with the pandemic putting a hold on many sleepaway camps, sleepovers, and vacations. The concept of "homesick" might need some extra explanation for children.*