

## December Events

**Advent Services:** The schedule for the weekly Wednesday night Advent dinner/service is as follows:

**Dec. 4:** Immanuel, Pr. Arnold Perry preaching

**Dec. 11,** South Miami, Pr. Larry Boudon preaching

**Dec. 18,** St. James, Pr. Joe Combs preaching

As always, dinner (soup/salad) is at 6:30pm, followed by the service at 7:15pm.

**Dec. 15:** 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Messiah Sing-In, 4:00pm, Old Cutler Presbyterian Church, 14401 Old Cutler Rd, Palmetto Bay.

**Dec. 20:** Holiday Concert with the Coral Gables Senior High School Choir, 7:00pm.

**Dec. 24:** Christmas Eve Service, 7:00pm



**St. James Lutheran Church**

**Newsletter**

**Vol. 1, No. 4**

**December 2013**

---

**St. James worships every Sunday at 10:30am, with a bilingual service mostly in English but with some Spanish.** The entire liturgy is presented in both languages on the screen above the altar, so that one may follow along in the language one prefers. Pastor Boudon preaches the sermon in English, followed by a brief summary in Spanish.

**GREEN FAITH.** St. James is participating in a two-year certification program with Green Faith, which will provide the church with a holistic, well-supported and structured program to “green” our worship, education, facilities and outreach. The program will include ecology-focused activities and will showcase the Garden of Our Lord. When completed, St. James will be the first green church in Miami.

**Sunday School.** St. James offers a full Sunday School program for adults and children at 9:30am every Sunday morning before worship. There is Bible study for adults and Christian education for children.

**Monthly Healing.** St. James offers a healing liturgy as a part of our normal worship service on the third Sunday of the month, replacing the Prayers of Intercession.

## From the Pastor

Advent may be the most misunderstood season of the church year. For many people, Christians included, it is the time of preparation for Christmas, something that is reinforced by the secular focus on the Holiday Season. One hears Christmas music in the shopping malls, sees Christmas decorations and lights on homes and businesses, and some people even go through an “Advent Calendar” starting on December 1 and ending on the 24<sup>th</sup>. All of this is not entirely wrong, for in part Advent does anticipate the first coming of our Lord.

The primary focus of Advent, however, is the second coming of Christ when, as we profess in the Apostle’s Creed, “he will come to judge the living and the dead.” Advent is, in fact, the beginning and not the end of the church year. As such, it essentially comes full circle, pointing both to the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day and warning us to be alert to his return at a time known only to God (Mark 13:32). For these reasons Advent in some ways resembles Lent and, until recently, purple was the liturgical color of both seasons. Many churches now prefer blue as it represents hope. As in Lent, we hold midweek services during Advent and serve simple meals of soup and salad, reminding us of our need to fast and be ready. And while Christmas music may be heard in the malls, we sing hymns such as “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” during Advent, reserving the actual Christmas hymnody until the season of Christmas, which begins on Christmas Eve and last until January 6. So during this season of Advent, focus on the hope of things to come: the birth of Jesus but particularly his return, at which time the kingdom of God will be complete.

## Eco-tip of the Month

**General:** The U.S. has 5% of the world's population but uses 25% of its natural resources (Source: US EPA). How many earths would be needed if everyone on the planet used the same amount of resources as you? Find out by taking an ecological footprint quiz: [www.myfootprint.org](http://www.myfootprint.org)

### **Children Seek Help in Letters to God**

Each Christmas the U.S. Postal Service receives thousands of letters addressed to Santa, but some are addressed to God. Here is an excerpt from one written in Florida as reported by Time News Feed.

*“Dear God, life is good here since you have made the World. There were some bad things like plane crashes, robberies, people killing 1 another, and child abuse. God those things scare me. I mean what if those things would happen to me? Thank you God ... Love, Abby.”*

Last year Lutheran Services Florida brought healing, hope, and help to more than 40,000 children in Florida .... some of whom are named Abby. With your prayers and support we can reach out to more and more abused and neglected children to dry their tears, calm their fears, and bring them comfort in the name of Jesus Christ.

Learn more about our ministries at [www.lsfnet.org](http://www.lsfnet.org).