ADVENT 2026:

A Journey of Growth

A paperwhite bulb doesn't look like much at first. Tucked into the soil, it asks for a little water, a little light, and a little patience as roots begin reaching where we cannot see. That feels a lot like Advent to us. So this year, we're inviting everyone into the journey. At the beginning of Advent, each household will receive a paperwhite bulb and an Advent calendar to take home. As the scattered church, we'll tend our bulbs, follow the calendar, and watch for signs of hope, peace, joy, and love taking shape in our own lives. And as the gathered church, we'll come back together each Sunday to share the journey: Hope takes ***ROOT***. Peace begins to ***RISE***. Joy is ***REVEALED***. Love comes into ***BLOOM***. There is room in this season for all of us: for children and grown-ups; for longtime Millbrookers and brand-new neighbors; for those full of Christmas spirit, and those still searching. Come watch and wait with us. Come sing, wonder, make room, and see what might grow. And on Christmas Eve, we'll gather once more for the simplest invitation of all: ***BEHOLD***. Come and see.



GIVE THANKS

Monday, November 23, 7:00 PM
North Raleigh Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
North Raleigh's faith communities will gather to give thanks together. This year's service is hosted by Beth Meyer Synagogue, 504 Newton Road, Raleigh. A reception will follow. A special offering will benefit the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina.

PREPARE

Tuesday, November 24, 10:00 AM
Advent Decorating Day
Come help us prepare the sanctuary and hallways for the Advent season. All volunteers are welcome! Stay for lunch afterward.

GATHER

Sunday, December 13, Following Worship
Community Potluck and Service Project
After enjoying our Christmas Cantata, Millbrookers will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a shared meal. Bring your favorite main dish, side dish, or dessert. Kid-friendly lunches will be provided. We'll also begin packing items for Carolyn's Baskets, our annual mission project to support the AIDS Alliance.

Wednesday, December 16, Noon • Fellowship Lunch
Gather with friends for a midweek meetup. We'll enjoy a light lunch, Christmas-themed devotion, and complete packing items for Carolyn's Baskets.

Sunday, December 20, Following Worship • Time of Fellowship
Following worship, we'll move across the way to the Fellowship Hall where we will enjoy warm drinks, time to connect with friends, and sing our favorite carols.

Monday, December 21, 2:00 PM
The Fourth Craziest Christmas Pageant Ever
Join us in the sanctuary for our craziest Millbrook tradition, The Craziest Christmas Pageant Ever. Our children and youth will perform a joyful rendition of the Christmas story, complete with memorable characters, original lines, and a chance to sing your favorite carols. Stay afterwards for refreshments in the Fellowship Hall.

ADVENT WORSHIP

HOPE | ROOT

Sunday, November 29 at 11:00 AM • Hanging of the Greens

Advent begins with hope, often before there is much to see. Come help us welcome the season as we green our sanctuary with garlands and light, and trust, together, that beneath all our watching and waiting, something good is already taking root.

PEACE | RISE

Sunday, December 6 at 11:00 AM • Children's Choir & Handbells

What begins beneath the surface doesn't stay there forever. With music from our children's and handbell choirs, we'll listen for the ways peace is beginning to rise among us. And we will imagine, together, how we might help give that peace a little more room to grow.

JOY | REVEAL

Sunday, December 13 at 11:00 AM • Christmas Cantata

Sometimes joy arrives with a little music! Our Chancel Choir will offer *The Light Has Come!*, a Christmas cantata filled with the sounds and stories of the season. We'll celebrate the joy that keeps revealing itself in unexpected places. And afterwards, we'll share in a community potluck.

LOVE | BLOOM

Sunday, December 20 at 11:00 AM • Advent Stories and Songs

Christmas is close, but we're not quite there yet. Through scripture and familiar carols, we'll stay awhile with Mary, Joseph, and the promises that brought them this far, making room for mystery, and trusting that love is already beginning to bloom. Stay afterwards for warm drinks and carols in the Fellowship Hall.

CHRISTMAS EVE | BEHOLD

Thursday, December 24 at 5:00 PM • Family-Friendly Christmas Eve

After all our watching and waiting, Christmas Eve offers one wonderfully simple invitation: Behold. Come and see. We'll sing, hear the Christmas story, and share Communion before carrying our candlelight outside to an illuminated labyrinth, then linger for hot chocolate, coffee, and a little Christmas together.

ADVENT GIVING

Carolyn's Baskets

MBC will continue its Carolyn's Baskets mission in 2026 by supporting the AIDS Alliance during November and December. These Christmas baskets provide a warm touch for neighbors in need. A list of needed items is posted in the vestibule. Millbrookers will assemble the baskets in two shifts: one following the potluck lunch on Sunday, December 13, and the other after the Fellowship Lunch on Wednesday, December 16. Donated items may be deposited on the table in the rear of the Fellowship Hall.

Warmth of Giving

Each year, Millbrook collects warmth items to support families served by Helping Hands Missions. This year's most needed items are: blankets, coats, winter caps, gloves, and socks. During the four Sundays of Advent and Christmas Eve, there will be an opportunity in worship for Millbrookers to place these items under our Chrismon Tree. Donations via cash/check may be notated: Warmth of Giving.

Virtual Poinsettia Offering

Poinsettias and lilies have long been associated with Christmas and Easter. It's been a tradition at Millbrook and other churches to purchase sanctuary flowers as an honorarium or memorial for special loved ones and friends. This year, we're asking Millbrookers to consider purchasing a "living" poinsettia. In lieu of buying flowers, consider donating $15 (the cost of a poinsettia) to support the needs of students at Millbrook Elementary School. All proceeds will be used to procure winter clothing and essential hygiene items for students in need. All honorariums and memorials received by Tuesday, December 22 will be listed in the worship guides for our Christmas Eve Service. Printed forms are available in the vestibule and church office. Thanks for your consideration.



