

## *An Advent Explanation*

The Western Church Year is structured around the two great celebrations of the Christian Church—**Easter** and **Christmas**. Easter, based on the Jewish Passover, is determined by the phase of the moon. It is a “moveable” date. Christmas, on the other hand, is a fixed date determined in the 4<sup>th</sup> century to coincide with the pagan observance of the winter solstice, which at that time fell on December 25.

In the early church there was much diversity in regard to rites and calendars. Local churches were not always in sync with one another. Even today there is not uniformity in the observances of the Church Year, especially between the Western Church and the Eastern Church.

In 2006 **The Advent Project** ([theadventproject.org](http://theadventproject.org)) began as a continuing seminar of the *North American Academy of Liturgy*. This ecumenical project proposes to expand the observance of Advent from 4 Sundays to 7 Sundays in order to reclaim Advent “...*as the time of preparation for the coming of Christ at the end of time even as we welcome his appearance in our weekly assembly and in the world to which we are sent.*” This expansion of Advent to 7 Sundays is an attempt to enable the Church to focus once again on the **full manifestation of the reign of God**.

**The Advent Project** does not change any of the assigned readings in the Revised Common Lectionary. The majority of the readings in November already have an end-time focus. The final three Sundays of the 2015 Church Year (8, 15, 22 November) are simply given an Advent overlay.

This proposal has great attractiveness for us at Calvary by the Sea because our current Advent Worship observances are curtailed by the Honolulu Marathon and by **PAC Sunday**. Thus, in expanding Advent to 7 Sundays we are able as a community of faith to explore more fully and completely what it means to “long for the Lord’s coming.”

This is the first season that Calvary joins **The Advent Project** as we all strive to follow Jesus more closely both as a community of faith and as individual disciples.