

ADVENT WEEK 1: GOT YER STOLLEN ELECTION RIGHT HERE, BUB

[NB: check the byline, thanks. /~Rayne]

We're already deep into the holiday season, barreling toward the winter solstice and the darkest part of the night for the northern hemisphere.

Some of us observed Diwali, the five-day Hindu festival of lights which began on November 12.

Some of us observed Thanksgiving a week ago this past Thursday – and before that, in Canada on Monday, October 9.

Ahead of us lies Hanukkah beginning this coming Thursday, December 7, the last candle to be lighted on December 15.

Christmas falls on Monday, December 25 with the winter solstice before it on December 21.

Boxing Day on the 26th coincides with the beginning of Kwanzaa, the end of which coincides with New Year's Day – seven days, seven candles marking the principles of Kwanzaa in between.

Busy, busy, busy between now and the end of the year setting things alight to stave off the darkness.

This year's Christian observation of Advent – the four Sundays marking the time until Christmas – will be very short since Christmas is observed the Monday immediately following the last Sunday of Advent. As a child my Catholic family observed Advent with calendars marking down the days and a candle-decked wreath lit each night at dinner as one of us kids would recite an Advent prayer.

A short advent like this meant my youngest sibling would get the full benefit of the shortest week. They'd only have to recite their prayer once whereas the other three siblings

would have to do the entire week at dinner each night, lighting a respective number of candles on the wreath counting down the weeks.

I disliked being first as the oldest child because it meant the first candle lit would be the shortest by Christmas. If only life was as simple as that, if my only annoyance was a stubby guttering candle.

If I'd known more then about all the holidays during which candles and lamps were lighted, I would have committed to bonfires from the end of October to New Year's Day.

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Speaking of burnt offerings, I'm going to turn up the heat.

I'm sick and tired, utterly fed up with that orange-tinted fiberglass-haired scofflaw's continued Big Lie about the 2020 election.

It's been more than three years since Donald Trump lost the popular vote and weeks shy of three years since he and his conspirators whipped up an insurrection to obstruct the House's electoral vote count.

And yet he just won't stop cramming his Big Lie in every too-willing journalistic orifice he can reach. As recently as this past Tuesday by way of his feckless lawyers on a fishing expedition he demanded materials from active criminal investigations to support his Big Lie.

Less than three weeks ago Trump's Big Lie bullshit was amplified by that hack House Speaker Mike Johnson who tossed his Christian beliefs aside to kneel and kiss the ring of his GOP gift master:

Asked about Trump's efforts to challenge his loss in 2020 – including recent reporting in which his former allies said Trump planned to refuse to leave his office – Johnson was unwavering.

"It can't be about personalities, it's

got to be about policies and principles,” Johnson said, arguing that Trump’s were superior to Biden’s.

Asked again about Trump’s frequent, false claims that the election was stolen through widespread fraud, Johnson said, “I take him at his word, I do believe that he believes that.”

Pressed on Trump’s well-documented airing of lies and misleading statements, Johnson said, “There are a lot of people in Washington who say things that are not accurate all the time.”

But he maintained that Trump’s views about the 2020 election results are “deep in his heart.”

“He just felt like he was cheated in that election,” Johnson said, “and I think that’s a core conviction of his.”

That’s not how this works. That’s not how any of this works in a democracy. Johnson is wholly unqualified to represent his constituents because he thinks the outcome of voting is voided by a single man’s “policies and principles” – which in Trump’s case are jokes because he has no principles or policies except propping up his ego and assets.

If it’s the season to bring light to darkness and make the season bright, let’s torch his Big Lie.

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To that end we’re going to have a stollen election this Advent season – a start on Festivus for the Rest of Us who reject the Big Lie and enjoy baked goods.

Your challenge should you choose to accept it:

– Find a baked holiday bread or cake which must include dried or candied fruit in the

dough/batter. By find I mean locate a recipe;

- Share the recipe you want to see made, or are going to make in this month's Advent posts;

- Find a baked holiday bread or cake containing dried or candied fruit which you have bought in the past or are going to buy this year to enjoy at home or share as a gift with friends;

- Share details about the source or the baker from whom you've purchased this baked treat;

- Tell us about any background behind this baked good whether you've made it, are going to make it, are going to buy it, have bought it in the past.

Links to photos and recipes are greatly appreciated though you should note that links may take time to clear moderation.

The last weekend of Advent we'll revisit these panettone, babka, fruit cake, panetón, christopsomo, pan de natale – whatever your cultural heritage calls it – we'll vote on one which sounds the most delicious and appealing.

Let's light a candle and let the stollen election begin!

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This is an open thread.