**December, 2024-January, 2025** **Bascom Community Church**

“Reaching People with the Love of Christ”

**Worship on Sunday morning at 10:30**

**Adult Sunday School 9:30**



**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE**

**4:30 p.m.**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Bascom Community Church

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**THE SEASON OF JOY**

“I have got to have some peace in my life.” Approximately 26 years ago, goodness gracious but I am getting old lol, Danene was channel surfing when she heard Joyce Meyer speak these words. From that day on we have both been regularly fed by Joyce’s television programs, cassettes, and Podcasts. Danene responded to that call for peace by starting to listen to Joyce’s teachings. My response was to the paraphrased, “I have got to have some joy in my life” because that was where I felt the deepest void in my life. For the record, this was before we came back to Christ lol.

Have you ever grabbed a handful of sand and tried to hang on to as much of it as possible, only to watch it slip through your fingers? Joy, for me, can be kind of like that. It can be elusive. I know God has it for me in levels I cannot begin to imagine. I know that it is a great day to be alive. I know that I should follow Jesus’ advice to focus on today (Matthew 6:34: “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself”). And I know that as a Christian, I should be able to exhibit joy with all my heart no matter what my life circumstances are. It is a “fruit of the Spirit,” after all. Therefore, I should have a well full of it from which I can daily fill my bucket.

And yet, too many times in my life, I have experienced exactly the opposite. I struggle, I’ve had times of darkness. Times of feeling empty. Moments of uncertainty. Seasons of pain. And yes, seasons of victory. And like the sand in my grasp, joy can be present in all those experiences, yet it drains away at the same time. As Christians, joy is an emotion we need to wrestle with. Sure, we are great at cheering at the football game, taking pride in the work we do with our hands, and making our lives look good on the outside. But that is a temporary happiness, not joy, which has been defined as “a sense of extreme happiness and well-being related in Scripture to knowing God and God’s actions and love, specifically in Jesus Christ” (The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms).

The Advent (Christmas) Season also is referred to as “The Season of Joy.” And I believe our joy may be well expressed as a part of the Nativity story. Have you ever wondered why God sent His messenger to a group of men in the dark? Picture yourself there. It’s night. The sheep are bleating calmly. The watchmen keep an eye on the surroundings while the rest of the men stay warm by the fire. Suddenly, SHAZAM! The sky lights up, and you see a vision that speaks and delivers an announcement filled with promises of good news and great joy.

The promise God gives to the men in the dark is the promise of “good news that will cause great joy…” I find it interesting that God chose to send His angel to men. He could have used anyone such as when He chose women to carry news of the resurrection, but He chose poor shepherds, at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Then He chooses to do it in the dark. Some may think it was to get the shepherds’ attention, but I don’t think so.

I think the men and the dark were chosen so God’s bright Promise could stand out against the darkness of the culture the people were in. Israel was under Roman rule and Bethlehem was full of people forced to travel there due to the census. A census that was a reminder to the Jews where their taxes went, that their freedom was not their own, and even their very lives could be upended at the whim of Rome.

And the people could do nothing about it. In other words, it was a dark time for them. Yet God had a promise for them. A promise of “great joy for all the people.” But that joy was not just “a” word—it was “The” Word. And what did the men do with that promised joy? They went to find Him. Then, they spread the news to everyone they saw.

Christmas indeed can be a dark time for many people. But maybe it is just the right time for God’s Promise of great joy to show up in your life. Go find Him. Then, share Him with someone. They might just need to hear all about Him and why this is the Season of Joy.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people” Luke 2:10 (NIV)

God Bless & Joyful Christmas

Pastor Dean



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 **Rudolph—That Amazing Reindeer**

On a December night in Chicago several years ago, a little girl climbed onto her father’s lap and asked a question.  It was a simple question asked in a child’s curiosity, yet it had a heart-rending effect on Robert May.

“Daddy,” four-year-old Barbara asked, “Why isn’t my mommy just like everybody else’s mommy?”

Bob May stole a glance across his shabby two-room apartment.  On a couch lay his young wife, Evelyn, racked with cancer.  For two years she had been bed-ridden; for two years all Bob’s income and smaller savings had gone to pay for treatments and medicines.

The terrible ordeal had shattered two adult lives.  Now Bob suddenly realized the happiness of his growing daughter was also in jeopardy.  As he ran his fingers through Barbara’s hair, he prayed for some satisfactory answer to her question.

Bob May knew only too well what it meant to be “different.”  As a child, he had been weak and delicate.  With the innocent cruelty of children, his playmates had continually goaded the stunted, skinny lad to tears.  Later, at Dartmouth from which he had graduated in 1926, Bob May was so small that he was always being mistaken for someone’s little brother.

Nor was his adult life much happier.  Unlike many of his classmates who floated from college into plush jobs, Bob became a lowly copywriter for Montgomery Ward, the big Chicago mail-order house.  Now at 33 Bob was deep in debt, depressed, and sad.

Although Bob didn’t know it at the time, the answer he gave his tousled-haired child on his lap was to bring him to fame and fortune.  It was also to bring joy to countless thousands of children like his own Barbara.   On that December night in the shabby Chicago apartment, Bob cradled his little girl’s head against his shoulder and began to tell a story:

*Once upon a time there was a reindeer named Rudolph, the only reindeer in the world that had a big red nose.  Naturally, people called him Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.”*  As Bob went on to tell about Rudolph, he tried desperately to communicate to Barbara the knowledge that even though some creatures of God are strange and different, they often enjoy the miraculous power to make others happy.

*“Rudolph,”* Bob explained, *“Was terribly embarrassed by his unique nose.  Other reindeer laughed at him; his mother, father and sister were mortified, too.  Even Rudolph wallowed in self-pity.”*

*“Why was I born with such a terrible nose?”* he cried.

*“Well,”* continued Bob, *“One Christmas Eve Santa Claus got his team of husky reindeer—Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, and Vixen—ready for their yearly trip around the world.  The entire reindeer community assembled to cheer these great heroes on their way.  But a terrible fog engulfed the earth that evening, and Santa knew that the mist was so thick he wouldn’t be able to find the chimneys.*

*“Suddenly, Rudolph appeared—his red nose glowing brighter than ever.  Santa sensed at once that here was the answer to his perplexing problem.  He led Rudolph to the front of the sleigh, fastened the harness, and climbed in.  They were off!  Rudolph guided Santa to every chimney that night.  Rain and fog, snow and sleet, nothing bothered Rudolph, for his bright nose penetrated the mist like a beacon.*

*“And so it was that Rudolph became the most famous and beloved of all the reindeer.  The huge red nose he once hid in shame was now the envy of every buck and doe in the reindeer world.  Santa Claus told everyone that Rudolph had saved the day; and from that Christmas, Rudolph has been living serenely happy.”*

Little Barbara laughed with glee when her father finished.  Every night she begged him to repeat the tale until finally Bob could rattle it off in his sleep.  Then at Christmas time he decided to make the story into a poem like “The Night Before Christmas” and prepared it in book form with crude pictures for Barbara’s personal gift.

Night after night Bob worked on the verses after Barbara had gone to bed as he was determined his daughter should have a worthwhile gift, even though he could not afford to buy one.

Then as Bob was about to put the finishing touches on Rudolph, tragedy struck.  Evelyn May died.  Bob, his hopes crushed, turned to Barbara as his chief comfort.  Yet, despite his grief, he sat at his desk in the quiet, now lonely, apartment and worked on Rudolph with tears in his eyes.

Shortly after, Barbara had cried with joy over his handmade gift on Christmas morning. Bob was asked to an employee’s holiday party at Montgomery Ward.  He didn’t want to go, but his office associates insisted.  When Bob finally agreed, he took with him the poem and read it to the crowd.  At first the noisy throng listened in laughter and gaiety.  Then they became silent and at the end broke into spontaneous applause.  That was in 1938.

By Christmas 1947, some 6,000,000 copies of the booklet had been given away or sold, making Rudolph one of the most widely distributed books in the world.  The demand of Rudolph-sponsored products increased so much in variety and number that educators and historians predicted Rudolph would come to occupy a permanent niche in the Christmas legend.

Through the years of unhappiness, the tragedy of his wife’s death, and his ultimate success with Rudolph, Bob May has captured a sense of serenity.  As each Christmas rolls around, he recalled with thankfulness the night when his daughter Barbara’s question inspired him to write the story.



**Super Bowl Subs**

At the time of printing this newsletter, plans have not been finalized. Tentatively, we are planning to make Super Bowl subs on Saturday morning, February 8, 2025 (weather permitting.) Details of the project, such as sub items, deadline dates and cost will be shared shortly after Christmas. Information will be included in the Sunday church announcements and on the church website.

If questions, please contact Ron Lutz at 419-448-8675 or [rlutz8@woh.rr.com](mailto:rlutz8@woh.rr.com).

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**December 2024-January, 2025 Events**

December 6 Mommy & Me

December 7 Men’s breakfast at Dell’s in Fostoria 9:00 a.m.

December 8 Communion Sunday

December 10 Admin. Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.

December 24 Christmas Eve Worship Service 4:30 p.m.

December 25 Christmas Day

December 31 New Year’s Eve

January 1 New Year’s Day

January 4 Men’s breakfast TBA 9:00 a.m.

January 5 Communion Sunday & taking down the greens after worship

January 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 29 Good Shepherd worship service 6:00 p.m.

Following are the Scriptures that go along with the pastor’s sermons for the months of December, 2024-January, 2025:

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| *Sunday* **1 Dec 2024**    C 1 ADVENT [Jeremiah 33:14-16](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH++33:14-16) [Psalm 25:1-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++25:1-10) [1 Thessalonians 3:9-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+THESSALONIANS++3:9-13) [Luke 21:25-36](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++21:25-36) |
| *Monday* **2 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Malachi 3:1-4](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MALACHI+3:1-4) [Luke 1:68-79](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1:68-79) [Philippians 1:3-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+1:3-11) [Luke 3:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+3:1-6) | *Tuesday* **3 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Malachi 2:17-3:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MALACHI+2:17-3:5) [*(Psalm 77)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+77) | *Wednesday* **4 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Luke 1](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1) [*(Psalm 78)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+78) | *Thursday* **5 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Philippians 1:3-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS++1:3-11) [Zephaniah 1](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH+1) | *Friday* **6 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Luke 3:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++3:1-6) [Zephaniah 2](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH+2) | *Saturday* **7 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Malachi 3:1-4](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MALACHI++3:1-4) [Luke 1:68-79](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++1:68-79) [Philippians 1:3-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+++1:3-11) [Luke 3:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+++3:1-6) | *Sunday* **8 Dec 2024**    C 2 ADVENT [Malachi 3:1-4](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MALACHI+++3:1-4) [Luke 1:68-79](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+++1:68-79) [Philippians 1:3-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS++++1:3-11) [Luke 3:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++++3:1-6) |
| *Monday* **9 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Zephaniah 3:14-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH+3:14-20) [Isaiah 12:2-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+12:2-6) [Philippians 4:4-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+4:4-7) [Luke 3:7-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+3:7-18) | *Tuesday* **10 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Zephaniah 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH+3) [Micah 1](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+1) | *Wednesday* **11 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Isaiah 12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+12) [Micah 2](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+2) | *Thursday* **12 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Philippians 4:2-9](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+4:2-9) [Micah 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+3) | *Friday* **13 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Luke 3:7-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+3:7-20) [Micah 4](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+4) | *Saturday* **14 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Zephaniah 3:14-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH++3:14-20) [Isaiah 12:2-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH++12:2-6) [Philippians 4:4-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS++4:4-7) [Luke 3:7-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++3:7-18) | *Sunday* **15 Dec 2024**    C 3 ADVENT [Zephaniah 3:14-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ZEPHANIAH+++3:14-20) [Isaiah 12:2-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+++12:2-6) [Philippians 4:4-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+++4:4-7) [Luke 3:7-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+++3:7-18) |
| *Monday* **16 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Micah 5:2-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+5:2-5) [Psalm 80:1-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+80:1-7) [Hebrews 10:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=HEBREWS+10:5-10) [Luke 1:39-55](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1:39-55) | *Tuesday* **17 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Micah 5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+5) [*(Psalm 79)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+79) | *Wednesday* **18 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Psalm 80](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+80) [Micah 6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+6) | *Thursday* **19 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Hebrews 10:1-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=HEBREWS+10:1-18) [Micah 7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+7) | *Friday* **20 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Luke 1:39-56](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1:39-56) [Titus 1](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=TITUS+1) | *Saturday* **21 Dec 2024**    ADVENT [Micah 5:2-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH++5:2-5) [Psalm 80:1-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++80:1-7) [Hebrews 10:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=HEBREWS++10:5-10) [Luke 1:39-55](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++1:39-55) | *Sunday* **22 Dec 2024**    C 4 ADVENT [Micah 5:2-5a](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MICAH+++5:2-5) [*Either* Luke 1:46-55](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1:46-55) [*or* Psalm 80:1-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++80:1-7) [Hebrews 10:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=HEBREWS+++10:5-10) [Luke 1:39-45,*(46-55)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+1:39-45,46-55) |
| *Monday* **23 Dec 2024**    NATIVITY 1 [Isaiah 9:2-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+9:2-7) [Psalm 96](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+96) [Titus 2:11-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=TITUS+2:11-14) [Luke 2:1-14,*(15-20)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+2:1-14,15-20) | *Tuesday* **24 Dec 2024**    NATIVITY 2 [Isaiah 62:6-12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+62:6-12) [Psalm 97](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+97) [Titus 3:4-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=TITUS+3:4-7) [Luke 2:*(1-7)*,8-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+2:1-7,8-20) | *Wednesday* **25 Dec 2024**    NATIVITY 3 [Isaiah 52:7-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+52:7-10) [Psalm 98](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+98) [Hebrews 1:1-4,*(5-12)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=HEBREWS+1:1-4,5-12) [John 1:1-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN+1:1-14) | *Thursday* **26 Dec 2024**    CHRISTMAS [1 Samuel 2:18-20,26](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+SAMUEL+2:18-20,26) [Psalm 148](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+148) [Colossians 3:12-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=COLOSSIANS+3:12-17) [Luke 2:41-52](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+2:41-52) | *Friday* **27 Dec 2024**    CHRISTMAS [1 Samuel 2:12-26](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+SAMUEL+2:12-26) [Psalm 148](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++148) [Titus 2](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=TITUS+2) | *Saturday* **28 Dec 2024**    CHRISTMAS [Colossians 3:1-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=COLOSSIANS+3:1-17) [Luke 2:41-52](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++2:41-52) [Titus 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=TITUS+3) | *Sunday* **29 Dec 2024**    C 1 CHRISTMAS [1 Samuel 2:18-20,26](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+SAMUEL++2:18-20,26) [Psalm 148](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++148) [Colossians 3:12-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=COLOSSIANS++3:12-17) [Luke 2:41-52](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+++2:41-52) |
| *Monday* **30 Dec 2024**    CHRISTMAS [Numbers 6:22-27](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NUMBERS+6:22-27) [Galatians 3:26-4:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=GALATIANS+3:26-4:7) [Philippians 2:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+2:1-11) [Luke 2:15-52](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+2:15-52) | *Tuesday* **31 Dec 2024**    CHRISTMAS [Ecclesiastes 3:1-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ECCLESIASTES+3:1-13) [Psalm 8](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+8) [Revelation 21:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=REVELATION+21:1-6) [Matthew 25:31-46](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MATTHEW+25:31-46) | *Wednesday* **1 Jan 2025**    HOLY NAME OF JESUS [Numbers 6:22-27](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NUMBERS++6:22-27) [Psalm 8](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++8) [*Either* Galatians 4:4-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=GALATIANS+4:4-7) [*or* Philippians 2:5-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PHILIPPIANS+2:5-13) [Luke 2:15-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+2:15-21)    NEW YEAR [Ecclesiastes 3:1-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ECCLESIASTES++3:1-13) [Psalm 8](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++8) [Revelation 21:1-6a](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=REVELATION++21:1-6) [Matthew 25:31-46](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MATTHEW++25:31-46) | *Thursday* **2 Jan 2025**    CHRISTMAS [Jeremiah 31:7-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH+31:7-14) [Psalm 147:12-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+147:12-20) [Ephesians 1:3-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=EPHESIANS+1:3-14) [John 1:*(1-9)*,10-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN+1:1-9,10-18) | *Friday* **3 Jan 2025**    CHRISTMAS [Jeremiah 30 & 31](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH+30;31) [Psalm 147](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+147) | *Saturday* **4 Jan 2025**    CHRISTMAS [Ephesians 1:3-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=EPHESIANS++1:3-14) [John 1:1-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN+1:1-18) | *Sunday* **5 Jan 2025**    C 2 CHRISTMAS [Jeremiah 31:7-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH++31:7-14) [Psalm 147:12-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++147:12-20) [Ephesians 1:3-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=EPHESIANS+++1:3-14) [John 1:*(1-9)*,10-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN++1:1-9,10-18) |
| *Monday* **6 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY DAY [Isaiah 60:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+60:1-6) [Psalm 72:1-7,10-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+72:1-7,10-14) [Ephesians 3:1-12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=EPHESIANS+3:1-12) [Matthew 2:1-12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=MATTHEW+2:1-12) | *Tuesday* **7 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Isaiah 43:1-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+43:1-7) [Psalm 29](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+29) [Acts 8:14-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ACTS+8:14-17) [Luke 3:15-17,21-22](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+3:15-17,21-22) | *Wednesday* **8 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Isaiah 43:1-12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+43:1-12) [*(Psalm 81)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+81) | *Thursday* **9 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Psalm 29](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++29) [Nehemiah 1](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+1) | *Friday* **10 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Ephesians 3:1-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=EPHESIANS+3:1-13) [Nehemiah 2](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+2) | *Saturday* **11 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Luke 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+3) [Nehemiah 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+3) | *Sunday* **12 Jan 2025**    C BAPTISM    1 EPIPHANY [Isaiah 43:1-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH++43:1-7) [Psalm 29](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++29) [Acts 8:14-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ACTS++8:14-17) [Luke 3:15-17,21-22](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++3:15-17,21-22) |
| *Monday* **13 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Isaiah 62:1-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+62:1-5) [Psalm 36:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+36:5-10) [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+12:1-11) [John 2:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN+2:1-11) | *Tuesday* **14 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Isaiah 62](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+62) [Nehemiah 4](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+4) | *Wednesday* **15 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Psalm 36](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+36) [Nehemiah 5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+5) | *Thursday* **16 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS++12:1-11) [Nehemiah 6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+6) | *Friday* **17 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [John 2:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN++2:1-11) [Nehemiah 7](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+7) | *Saturday* **18 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Isaiah 62:1-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH++62:1-5) [Psalm 36:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++36:5-10) [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+++12:1-11) [John 2:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN+++2:1-11) | *Sunday* **19 Jan 2025**    C 2 EPIPHANY [Isaiah 62:1-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=ISAIAH+++62:1-5) [Psalm 36:5-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++36:5-10) [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS++++12:1-11) [John 2:1-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JOHN++++2:1-11) |
| *Monday* **20 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+8:1-3,5-6,8-10) [Psalm 19](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+19) [1 Corinthians 12:12-31](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+12:12-31) [Luke 4:14-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+4:14-21) | *Tuesday* **21 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Nehemiah 8](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+8) | *Wednesday* **22 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Psalm 19](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++19) [Nehemiah 9](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+9) | *Thursday* **23 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [1 Corinthians 12:12-31](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS++12:12-31) [Nehemiah 10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+10) | *Friday* **24 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Luke 4:1-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+4:1-21) [Nehemiah 11](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+11) | *Saturday* **25 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH++8:1-3,5-6,8-10) [Psalm 19](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+++19) [1 Corinthians 12:12-31a](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+++12:12-31) [Luke 4:14-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE++4:14-21) | *Sunday* **26 Jan 2025**    C 3 EPIPHANY [Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+++8:1-3,5-6,8-10) [Psalm 19](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM++++19) [1 Corinthians 12:12-31a](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS++++12:12-31) [Luke 4:14-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+++4:14-21) |
| *Monday* **27 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Jeremiah 1:4-10](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH+1:4-10) [Psalm 71:1-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+71:1-6) [1 Corinthians 13:1-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+13:1-13) [Luke 4:21-30](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+4:21-30) | *Tuesday* **28 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Jeremiah 1:4-19](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=JEREMIAH+1:4-19) [Nehemiah 12](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+12) | *Wednesday* **29 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Psalm 71](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+71) [Nehemiah 13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=NEHEMIAH+13) | *Thursday* **30 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [1 Corinthians 13](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=1+CORINTHIANS+13) [*(Psalm 82)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+82) | *Friday* **31 Jan 2025**    EPIPHANY [Luke 4:21-44](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=LUKE+4:21-44) [*(Psalm 83)*](http://www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=PSALM+83) |  |  |

 **Sweet Potato Pie Bars**

Yields: **9 – 12** Prep Time: **20** mins Total Time: **3** hrs

**Ingredients**

* Cooking spray
* **2** **lb.** sweet potatoes
* **56** Ritz crackers
* **1/2** **c.** (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened, plus 6 Tbsp. melted
* **1** **1/3** **c.** (267 g.) plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, divided
* **1** large egg
* **3** large egg yolks
* **1/2** **c.** heavy cream
* **1** **Tbsp.** ground cinnamon
* **1** **tsp.** ground nutmeg
* **2** **1/4** **tsp.**pure vanilla extract, divided
* **3** large egg whites
* **1/4** **tsp.** cream of tartar

**Directions**

* 1. Preheat oven to 400°. Grease an 8" x 8" baking dish with cooking spray, then line with parchment, leaving an overhang on all sides.
  2. Using a fork, poke holes all over potatoes and arrange on a baking sheet. Roast until tender, 45 to 60 minutes. Let cool slightly.
  3. Meanwhile, in a food processor, pulse crackers until fine crumbs form. Add 6 Tbsp. melted butter and 2 Tbsp. sugar. Pulse until combined and mixture starts to stick together. Press cracker mixture into prepared dish in an even layer. Wipe out food processor.
  4. Peel potatoes with your hands—the skin will be easy to remove. Transfer flesh to food processor. Add egg, egg yolks, cream, cinnamon, nutmeg, 1 c. sugar, 1/2 c. softened butter, and 2 tsp. vanilla and pulse until smooth.
  5. Reduce oven temperature to 350°. Bake crust until fragrant and darkened in color, about 10 minutes. Let cool slightly.
  6. Pour potato mixture into crust. Bake bar until center is set and slightly wobbly, 45 to 60 minutes. Let cool in pan.
  7. Meanwhile, in the large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and remaining 1/2 tsp. vanilla on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. With the motor running, slowly pour in remaining 1/3 c. granulated sugar and beat until meringue is shiny and glossy.
  8. Spread meringue over bar in a swirling pattern. Continue to bake until meringue is set, about 5 minutes more. Turn on broiler. Broil, watching closely, until top is golden brown, 2 to 4 minutes.
  9. Using parchment overhang, lift out bar and transfer to a cutting board. Cut into squares.

 **GRATITUDE CHANGES EVERYTHING**

Gratitude takes effort. Resentment is effortless. We are negative by nature. That’s why we needed a Savior. The process of conversion takes us from the realm of negative thinking to the Kingdom of hope. Gratitude is the atmosphere of hope.

Even the medical world has taken note. A Harvard Medical study said, “Recent research has pointed to gratitude's myriad positive health effects, including greater emotional and social well-being, better sleep quality, lower depression risks, and favorable markers of cardiovascular health. Now, new data from the long-term Nurses' Health Study shows that it may extend lives.”

Paul said this to the church in Corinth, “And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2:6-7 NLT). Deep roots produce overflowing thankfulness. Shallow living breeds resentment. And thankfulness builds a healthy heart … deeply rooted.

Make the effort. Do the work. Lift your head. Make a gratitude list. Be thankful.

Grace and Peace,

Paul Louis Cole

"I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds" Psalm 9:1

Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for. - Zig Ziglar



**Adult Sunday School**

The Adult Sunday School Class plans to spend December learning more about Advent and Christmas. The Class has had a wonderful year, studying subjects such as Bible characters, parables, truth, and getting older (and wiser.) Frequently, the Class (we never get off subject) shares about life and the things each of us deals with, whether happy times or concerning times. It is uplifting to see and hear classmates supporting each other in whatever comes our way in life.

We wish you all a joyous holiday season and a very Merry Christmas. What are we going to study in the coming year? You’ll have to join us to find out!!!!



**October, 2024 Administrative Board Meeting.Minutes**

**October 6, 2024**

Present: Carol Reisner, Bob Manz, Deb Lutz, Marcia Abbott, Ed Smith, Jeanne VanBuskirk, Pastor Dean, Helen Emerine, Lori Clay, Mike Prosser Not present: Carolyn Thallman

Minutes taken by Lori Clay

Pastor Dean opened with prayer.

Regarding the church building, American Fire and Safety Services completed their final inspection on September 24th. No extinguishers needed to be replaced, and we are in compliance.

It has been 2 years (10/25/2022) since last service call on our boiler. Pastor Dean has contacted Craig Illig to schedule a preventative maintenance checkup.

Becky Hall (Heather Kreh’s mom) has stated that she is going to start attending worship, and she will have her dog Izzy, who has been certified as a support dog.

Regarding the parsonage, a new electric meter has been installed during the last full week in September.

Ray Lopez has purchased the drum set for $300.00 as well as picked up the propane grill.

Attorney James Gucker has reviewed the by-laws with his graduate law class. Per Nick, there are no additions, and he will provide documentation that he has reviewed them. Regarding presentation to the church, it was decided that we will provide a copy to each family on Sunday, October 13th, which will allow the congregation two weeks to review them. On Sunday, October 20th, they can present any questions they may have on a supplied index card. The paper can also be presented this Sunday to anyone who didn’t get them on October 13th. If necessary, the Board will meet after that to review the questions and prepare answers. On October 27th after worship, we will hold a meeting to discuss and provide answers and then vote on whether or not to adopt the by-laws.

We must have a policy in place for background checks/working with children, etc in order to be able to receive insurance coverage. The term “Safe Sanctuary” is a trademarked title of the United Methodist Church, so we need to change the name of our policy. Per Pastor Dean’s research, it appears we are okay with renaming as “Safe Church Policy.” Marcia Abbott moved to change the name of the policy to “Safe Church Policy,” Mike Prosser seconded it, and all were in favor. The motion carried. The pastor is the primary point of contact for any incidents, with the Admin. Board Chair being the facilitator. If the incident involves the pastor, the Admin. Board Chair along with the co-administrator would address the issue. Therefore,, we need to set a permanent co-administrator to ensure proper management of any incidents. Upon further discussion, Carol Reisner volunteered to be the co-administrator for a 5-year term. Current Safe Church policy and forms need revised prior to the December Administrative Council meeting. At the December meeting, the policy will need to be reviewed and approved by the board. Carol Reisner will work with Pastor Dean in the evenings to prepare all this prior to the next meeting.

After paying Tri-County Sealing $2990.00 for the parking lot, the balance in the Raise the Roof fund is $495.07. With the funds raised several years ago, above the needs for the roof, we have been able to pay for $12685.00 in capital improvements/repairs instead of utilizing funds from the general operating fund. We will discuss in January if we should do another capital campaign.

Lori Clay presented the Treasurer’s Report and gave the current checkbook balance of $12,115.50. Mike Prosser motioned to accept the report, Carol Reisner seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion carried.

Lori Clay also gave a copy of names and addresses of church attendees that were given to her by Betty Park to distribute to the Board members for their review. The Board members will review and make any necessary updates or changes that they are aware of.

We found out that the Blessing Box can be moved. Helen Emerine will check with Bascom Carryout to see if they would be willing to take it to their location. We would continue to support it and provide items for it.

In new business, the Hopewell Alumni (50 years) group would like to use the double-doored room in the basement to store their baskets on a permanent basis. It was discussed and agreed that we would allow this on a yearly basis. Carol Reisner made the motion, Helen Emerine seconded it, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

The youth group donation (from several years ago) has been kept in the safe (approximately $293.00 since the time that the youth group disbanded). Bob Manz stated that this needs to be put in the books as income. We can take the money from there for “community outreach” as needed. Helen Emerine made the motion, Mike Prosser seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion carried.

The “Visitors-Please Register” sign in the narthex will be removed as it was determined to not be warm and inviting. The problem of contacting visitors without having any contact information was discussed. Bob Manz made the motion, Marcia Abbott seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion carried.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. We will have a potluck on October 27th after the by-law’s meeting to celebrate. We will announce this next Sunday. Drinks and table settings will be provided. Lori Clay and Marcia Abbott will purchase gift certificates from the church for Dean and Danene.

The meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be December 10th at 6:00 p.m.



[**Ten Heavenly Recipes for a Peaceful Christmas Season**](https://www.christiancounselingcenters.org/ten-heavenly-recipes-for-a-peaceful-christmas-season/)

by [Peggy Burns](http://christiancounselingcenters.us10.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=953f1953fd6cdd423f0d21622&id=b59a55f203&e=b0c7dfe3f4), LMFT | Director of CCC San Francisco

Christmas is a beautiful time of year as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. If you find yourself struggling with anxiety try one or more of the following recipes to reduce stress and regain a sense of the joy of the season.

1. **Find the true meaning of gift giving:** The holidays can be a time when we’re caught up in a flurry to buy! Buy! Buy! Many buy the most popular gifts on the market to prove their love for someone else. Instead think about making a personal investment in others’ lives. Before heading out to the shopping mall with credit card in hand consider what Jesus did to give gifts.
2. **Connect with others:** Connecting with others can be God’s way to encourage and restore you. Make plans, be bold and don’t wait to be invited by others. Isolation can compound depression and fuel the inner critic.
3. **Create new traditions:** If you are single or far away from home start your own way to celebrate the holidays. Invite others into your home and give a new meaning to the words “extended family”. Let go of past traditions that don’t bring you joy for the sake of “we have always done it this way”. Give yourself the gift of choosing life and celebrating the season.
4. **Change your lens. Don’t focus on what you don’t have but what you do have:** God has not forsaken or abandoned you. (Hebrews 13:5) Take a moment to write down three things you are grateful for in your day. This exercise will help you change from a negative lens to seeing the blessings that also exist.
5. S**et appropriate boundaries:** The holiday season can be stressful when families are chaotic. Think about how to manage your time with your family by setting appropriate boundaries. Maybe this year find a hotel if you travel to see your family. This can give you a place to gain perspective and reenergize.
6. **Seek sacred time:** Take moments during this busy season to refuel and connect with God. Begin a new chapter with God by meditating on His word, let worship music wash over you and encourage you. Set up a special place in your home where you are comfortable and can look forward to His presence.
7. **Plan a Holiday budget:** Be conscious the next time you use your credit card. Follow a budget in the holiday season. Buck the holiday system of excessive gift giving, and practice simplicity, creativity and human kindness.
8. **Take care of your temple:** (I Cor. 6:19) Eat well, drink a lot of water, exercise and then be merry. Get plenty of rest. Sleep deprivation is one of the roots of many people’s depression.
9. **Invest in another life:** The best insurance to a fulfilled holiday season is to step outside of yourself and give to others. You will find as you invest in others tremendous blessings occur. Take time to work in a soup kitchen, visit the elderly or give a gift to a family that is less fortunate than you.
10. **Give the gift of forgiveness:** Forgiveness is the salve that heals a broken heart. Be luxurious with this gift during the Christmas season. Forgive all kinds of people, those from your past, from work, your family and don’t forget to forgive yourself!

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**Down the Road:  
A Poem for the New Year**

by Katy Kauffman

I look down the road before me.

Only a few hundred feet are clear.

I don’t know what all lies ahead

As I start walking in this new year.

One crunch, two crunches, three.

My steps crack the thin ice.

Will I fall? Will I slip? Is it all

Left to chance, like throwing a pair of dice?

Then I hear a voice behind me,

“I’m with you, My child. Don’t you fear.”

I look around and see no one.

Yet I know He is here.

“God, You know what I’ve been through.

You know the pain and suffering.

Will this year be the same?

What good can it possibly bring?”

“I have adventures ahead,”

He says over my shoulder.

“I have new mercies to give

When the days grow colder.”

“There are too many who suffer alone,”

He whispers like a soothing father.

“Too many who don’t know Me yet,

People no one will bother.”

I think about my journey,

the long road left behind.

I turn around and look,

Squinting against the snow’s glary shine.

I see my crooked footprints,

Where I hobbled steadily along.

As I squint harder, I see something else.

I see the evidence of a throng.

Footprints of seen and unseen travelers.

How can it be?

What are their names

But hope, friendship, and mercy?

I wasn’t alone—God, You were there.

So were Your faithful companions.

I know it’s true—You’re with me,

And this soul You have never abandoned.

Send me where You will,

My feet, my words, my love.

Let my voice be heard across the world,

“We have help from God above!”

Speak, Lord, words of hope and strength.

Your Word will see us through.

Guide us on the difficult paths.

Remind us of the good we can do.

Help us to see others who hurt,

Those who need Your grace and truth.

Show us how to love them,

How to point them steadily to You.

I will trust You on this road,

This new chapter of adventure.

I will listen for Your voice to guide me

And to remind me that I’m Your treasure.

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**Want to make God laugh? Tell him YOUR plans!**



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