

DECEMBER 2025



*And she shall bring forth
A SON,
and thou shalt call his name*

JESUS:

*for he shall save his people
from their sins.*

Matthew 1:21 KJV

Top-BibleVerses.com

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday, Dec. 21st

9:00 am Sunday School

10:15 am Worship Service

Wednesday, Dec. 24th 6:00 pm Christmas Eve

FROM THE PREACHER'S PEN

We know that God's design for marriage is that the two become one flesh. This isn't always the easiest design to accomplish, and we know that this is not an instantaneous accomplishment. In fact, couples who have been married for many years still strive for this goal.

It reminds me of a couple who had been married for quite a while. As an elderly man lay dying in his bed, death's agony was suddenly pushed aside as he smelled the aroma of his favorite homemade chocolate chip cookies drifting up the stairs. Gathering his remaining strength, he lifted himself from the bed. Leaning against the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom and, with intense concentration, supported himself down the stairs, gripping the railing with both hands. In labored breath, he leaned against the doorframe, gazing wide-eyed into the kitchen. There, spread upon the newspapers on the kitchen table, were literally HUNDREDS of his favorite chocolate chip cookies! Was I in heaven? Or was it one final act of heroic love from his devoted wife, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man? Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself toward the table, landing on his knees in a rumped posture, one hand on the edge of the table. The aged and withering hand made its way to a cookie near the edge of the table; feeling the warm, soft dough actually made the pain of his bones subside for a moment. His parched lips parted; the wondrous taste of cookies was already in his mouth, seemingly bringing him back to life! He reached for yet another cookie. But suddenly, there was a sudden stinging that caused his hand to recoil! What in the world was it? He looked to see his angry wife, still holding a spatula she had just used to smack his hand. She was screaming: "I told you to stay out of those chocolate chip cookies!" said the sweet little wife, "THEY'RE FOR YOUR FUNERAL!"

Yet God's design is that all things come under the headship of Jesus Christ. In the book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul begins in verse 10 of chapter one proclaiming God's design is to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. Things in heaven and things on the earth. As far as heaven is concerned, the righteous angels who did not join in Satan's rebellion were always under the headship of Jesus since eternity, but only have been stated to do so after Jesus's resurrection and ascension. In fact, the entire letter of Ephesians is written under the theme of everything in all creation submitting itself to Christ's Lordship.

The first entity that Paul addresses that has come and is coming under the harmony of One Ruler is the church. Paul commands Christians to strive for unity, to work hard to come to a consensus on the major doctrines of the Christian faith, so

FROM THE PREACHER'S PEN (con't.)

that the Church is a witness to the harmony that comes from being under Christ. He pictures the church as a body. A body works in spectacular unison to one end, that is, so that the body and soul might thrive in life. We recognize when one part of the body is not acting in accord with the rest of the body, that something is wrong. We don't assume that each body part is free to do its own thing; we recognize that when the body is not operating according to its original design, there is a problem.

The same is true of the church when the church is not operating in unity; something is out of place. Ephesians tells us that we have the same foundation, the same Spirit, the same faith, we undergo the same baptism, and serve the same Lord; all of this is a witness to the unity God is accomplishing under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The next set of relationships that the apostle Paul addresses that fall under the headship of Christ is that of marriage. Paul commands the woman to be subject to her husband. At first glance, this looks as if it were subjugating women, but one just needs to continue to read. The duties of the husband are to love his wife sacrificially, to serve her, and to honor her. I do not know one lady who, after hearing about the husband's responsibilities who would not be willing to submit to this type of husband.

The last set of relationships that Paul pleads for unity and harmony within is the family relationship. Children are commanded to obey their parents. Parents, especially dads, are told not to provoke their children to anger. When we rightfully obey all of these commands, it serves as a powerful witness to the peace and harmony that is supposed to exist among God's people and every subsequent relationship they have.

A LIFE THAT MATTERS

Christmas is fast approaching, and watching Christmas movies will be something everyone will be doing soon if they can find the time! I know that is a challenge... Many of you know my favorite Christmas film is A Charlie Brown Christmas, truly you can't beat it! However, shortly I want to talk about my second favorite Christmas movie of all time, and that will soon be revealed. First though, I want to talk about a TV series that came out in recent years.

In 2021 a documentary series entitled Welcome to Earth debuted on Disney+. In the show, Will Smith is our tour guide around the globe. Welcome to Earth, "shows The Fresh Prince scaling volcanoes and glaciers, traveling in a submarine 3,000 feet below the sea, witnessing animal swarms, exploring deserts, scuba diving and kayaking through various bodies of water." (Ralph)

"I'm throwing myself into the unknown," Smith says in the trailer. "There's a new breed of explorers taking me to the ends of the Earth to discover hidden worlds that sit beyond our senses. Once you decode the mysteries, you can find crucial information about the world around us." (Ralph)

As interesting and intriguing as this new docuseries looks, I believe it also sends a message. I think it's saying something like this: "In order for life to have real purpose you have to see the ends of the earth. You have to explore, you have to get out there and discover the world and the secrets that lie within it. And since you obviously can't do that on your own, we will let you watch someone on TV that can..."

This is just one example of this that the media throws at us all the time. We live boring lives with no real purpose and if you don't own the greatest car or the biggest mansion or go on the most expensive adventures you're not really living!

This makes me think of a guy named George Bailey. You remember George Bailey played by Jimmy Stewart, right? Now we get to the second greatest Christmas movie of all time, It's a Wonderful Life. George wanted to see the world. At the beginning of the movie it's all he talks about! Building skyscrapers, traveling, getting away from Minerva, or excuse me, Bedford Falls... All George has ever wanted was to go to college, move away from home and not take on his father's business of the Bailey Building and Loan. But when his father suddenly passes away and he has to take his father's business, everyone else in his life seems to move on, but George is stuck in his crummy hometown, doing exactly what he never wanted to do.

No exploring the depths of the sea for George Bailey. Nope. No discovering the world's secrets with Will Smith for him. Not going to happen. There isn't any "decoding of mystery" that George will be participating in...or so he thinks...

continued

A LIFE THAT MATTERS (CON'T.)

For those of us who have seen the movie we know that George does eventually decode a mystery, the mystery of life. George discovers that the numerous people he has helped along his "crummy" life have helped change his whole town and his whole world for the better. He has a wife and kids, a brother who he saved when he was just a kid who would grow up to save people in the war, and a man who without him would have been the town laughing stock because of a mistake in what medicine to give to a patient. These were just a few things that George had that the angel Clarence had to make him realize how great all of it was by taking it away... But George does in fact remember why, even though he never left Bedford Falls, he still has a wonderful life.

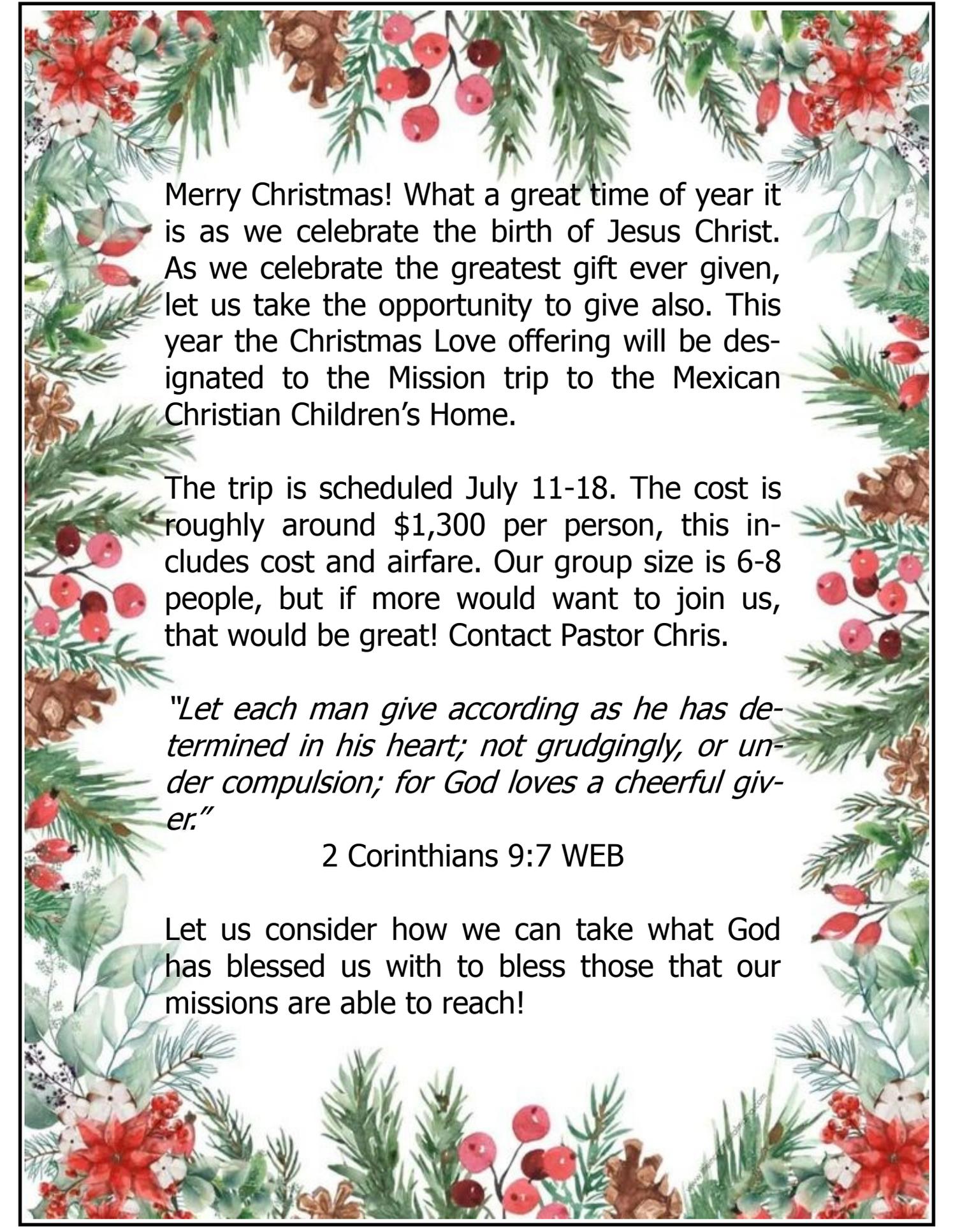
And Church, it's the same for us. Many of us will never make it overseas, many of us may never make it south of Cincinnati! But, that doesn't mean that our life doesn't have great purpose and great meaning. God can use you wherever you are, to impact the people around you for the good. But we have to ask ourselves, are we a positive influence to those around us? Do we put others before ourselves like Jesus calls us to? Are we truly the light of the world, a city set on a hill? If we were taken away from our lives, like George Bailey was, would it make a difference?

During this Christmas season, remember George Bailey and the wonderful life he had, that it wasn't about where he went, what he owned, or the adventures he went on, it was about the people he helped, the life he lived, and the purpose God had given him, even if it may have not been the purpose he wanted. But above all, remember Jesus. Remember the throne in Heaven He stepped off of in order to become a little baby boy who would grow up to save us from eternity apart from the Lord. Remember what Christmas is really all about:

Romans 5:6-8: For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person---though perhaps for a good person one would dare to die---but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Merry Christmas, Minerva FCC!
Zach Long
BeRomans12
Because of the ONE

Ralph, Pat. "Will Smith to Go on Global Adventure in New Natgeo Series 'Welcome to Earth'." ph, Pat. "Will Smith to Go on Global Adventure in New Natgeo Series 'Welcome to Earth'." PhillyVoice, 15 Nov. 2021, <https://www.phillyvoice.com/welcome-to-earth-will-smith-national-geographic-disney-plus/>.



Merry Christmas! What a great time of year it is as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. As we celebrate the greatest gift ever given, let us take the opportunity to give also. This year the Christmas Love offering will be designated to the Mission trip to the Mexican Christian Children's Home.

The trip is scheduled July 11-18. The cost is roughly around \$1,300 per person, this includes cost and airfare. Our group size is 6-8 people, but if more would want to join us, that would be great! Contact Pastor Chris.

"Let each man give according as he has determined in his heart; not grudgingly, or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7 WEB

Let us consider how we can take what God has blessed us with to bless those that our missions are able to reach!

SHUT INS

Mrs. Connie Morris
c/o Canton Christian Home
2550 Cleveland Ave. NW
Canton, OH 44709

Mrs. Dorothy Birney
c/o St. Luke's
4301 Woodale Ave. SE
Room 101
Minerva, OH 44657

Mr. George Horvath
c/o St. Luke's
4301 Woodale SE
Room 114
Minerva, OH 44657

Mrs. Allie Swank
c/o St. Luke's
4301 Woodale SE
Minerva, OH 44657

Mrs. Betty McIntosh
16621 Lisbon St. NE
Minerva, OH 44657

Mr. Gary Schotts
c/o Aultcare of Louisville
7187 St Francis St NE
Louisville, OH 44641



FAMILY MATTERS

We send our sympathies . . . to Dan, Herb & Pat Lowery with the passing of his wife and their daughter-in-law, Sondra. Her celebration of life was held on November 15th.

Also to . . . Marilyn Hoopes and her family with the passing of her great-grandson, Boone. There are no services at this time.

Congratulations to . . . Kaleb & Kathryn George upon the birth of their daughter, Della Opal. She is the granddaughter of John & Lisa George and Great Granddaughter of Carol George. God's Blessings!

ANGEL TREE



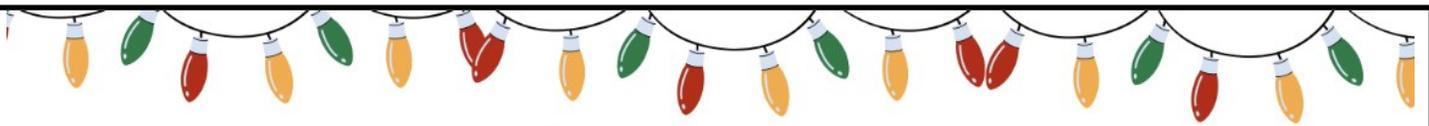
We have the privilege to partner with the Salvation Army to make Christmas happier for some local children. There are tags on the Christmas Tree in the lobby, if you would like to take one and bring the gift back. The gifts do not have to be wrapped. The tags have a paper on the back with suggestions for the children - they are not asking you to purchase everything on the lists. Please have the gifts to the church by Sunday, Dec. 7th.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, DEC. 20th
8:00 AM @ MFCC



Join us for
Donuts & Devotion



UPCOMING EVENTS [AT] MFCC

Upper Room
Christmas Party

Wednesday

December 10th
6:30-8:30pm

[6th-12th grade
\$5 WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT
EXCHANGE
CHRISTMAS GAMES PRIZES]

Jesus' Birthday
Party!

Friday

December 12th
5-7pm

[K-6th Grade
PIZZA
CUPCAKES
GAMES
PRIZES]

Candlelight
Christmas Eve
Service

Wednesday

December 24th
6pm



Sort of a New Year's ALL NIGHTER!



@ Perry Christian Church

Friday, Jan. 2nd @ 9pm -
Saturday, Jan. 3rd @ 7am

FREE!

 **CHOPPED** (Van leaving MFCC @ 8:15pm!)



Pizza, games, NERF war, cooking
contest, dodgeball tournament,
movie, and more!

6th - 12th Grades

MINERVA AREA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Merry Christmas!



As we enter this blessed season, we rejoice in the gift of Christ and the warmth of fellowship that surrounds our school and church family. May this month be filled with joy, gratitude, and anticipation as we celebrate our Savior's birth.

November was a month of gratitude and community at MACS. Our fall fundraiser brought in over \$1,300 to support student activities—thank you for your continued generosity! We also shared in the Thanksgiving Feast on November 21, a schoolwide meal and devotion that beautifully capped a week of learning about the Christian roots of Thanksgiving.

December offer many opportunities to celebrate together, and we invite you to attend and participate in all that's happening this month:

- **Giving Tuesday - December 2** Our annual digital fundraiser takes place on Giving Tuesday. It's a wonderful opportunity to support the mission of MACS and help us continue to grow.
- **Family Movie Night - Friday, December 5 (5:00-8:30 pm)** Join us for a festive evening open to the whole community! Tour themed, decorated classrooms enjoy home-made Christmas desserts, popcorn, and candy; and watch The Best Christmas Pageant Ever in the Sanctuary. We warmly invite all church families to attend and share in the fellowship.
- **TashMade Ornament Fundraiser - through December 5** Our custom ornament campaign continues through Family Movie Night. This long-standing tradition combines community outreach with family fellowship.
- **Christmas Programs** Students are joyfully preparing to share the story of Christ's birth through music and performance.
 - **Preschool Program - Wednesday, December 17 @ 6 pm**
 - **K-8 Program - Thursday, December 18 @ 6:30 pm** We extend a heartfelt invitation to the entire church family to attend these programs and celebrate the season with us.
- **Christmas Break - December 22 to January 5** School will recess for the holidays, giving families time to rest, rejoice, and celebrate together.

As we look forward to these special events, we give thanks for the blessings of our school and church community. May the love of Christ shine brightly in your homes this Christmas season, and my His peace fill your hearts.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

- Dec. 1 - Christmas Drama Practice 6:30 pm
Dec. 2 - Choir Practice 7:00 pm
Dec. 3 - FLIP (grades 4-6) 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Dec. 3 - Upper Room 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Dec. 4 - ASX 3:15 - 5:30 pm
Dec. 4 - MS Basketball 5:30 - 7:00 pm
Dec. 5 - Red Cross Blood Mobile 11 - 5
Dec. 5 - Christmas Movie 6 - 8:30 pm
Dec. 7 - AWANA 5:00 - 6:30 pm
Dec. 7 - Evening Bible Study 5:30 pm
Dec. 7 - Choir Christmas Practice 6:30 pm
Dec. 8 - Christmas Drama Practice 7:00 pm
Dec. 9 - Home Dept. Meeting 1:00 pm
Dec. 9 - Choir Practice 7:00 pm
Dec. 10 - Upper Room Christmas Party
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Dec. 11 - MS Basketball 5:30 - 7:00 PM
Dec. 12 - Jesus' Birthday Party 5 - 7 pm
Dec. 13 - AWANA 5:00 - 6:30 pm
Dec. 13 - Evening Bible Study 5:30 pm
Dec. 14 - Choir Christmas Practice 6:30 pm
Dec. 15 - Christmas Drama Practice 6:30 pm
Dec. 16 - Choir Practice 7:00 pm
Dec. 17 - MACS Pre-K Christmas Program
6:00 pm
Dec. 18 - Deacons Pantry 9 - 10:30 am
Dec. 18 - MACS K-8 Christmas Program
6:30 pm
Dec. 20 - Men's Breakfast 8:00 am
Dec. 21 - Christmas Cantata 6 pm
Dec. 22 - Jan. 4 — No School
Dec. 24 - Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
6:00 pm

**NO GENERAL BOARD
MEETING IN DECEMBER**

ERIC PROWE IS TURNING 60!

60

ERIC IS
TURNING SIXTY

join us to celebrate

12

SATURDAY
DEC 6TH
3-7 PM

*St John's Villa Gathering Room
701 Crest St NW
Carrollton, Ohio 44615
RSVP to Christa at
(330)760-4540 by
November 25th
DJ and food provided*

DEACONS PANTRY



Each month our Deacon's Pantry distributes food and some paper products to 12 - 15 families. If you are able to pick up a few non-perishable items to donate it would be greatly appreciated. Some of the items we need are: tuna, soups, canned vegetables, fruit, ramen, peanut butter, mac & cheese, pasta & sauce, saltine crackers. Monetary donations are always welcome. We will be making our distribution on **Thurs., Dec. 18th**, if you are able to help see Jay Harsh.

PRAYER LIST

Reagan Abner
 Jennifer Allen
 Alice Archer
 Kassadee Archer
 Shawn Archer
 Bill Becknell
 Dorothy Birney
 Arlene Brown
 Shirley Catlett
 Don Clapper
 Lora Crabtree
 Donna Long Dyer
 (past Church
 Secretary)
 Barbara Dunlevy
 John George
 Mary Jo Hardman
 Larry Hartshorn
 Todd Hetherington
 Dave Hoopes
 Evelyn Hopkins
 George Horvath
 Lee Iden
 Rory & Nancy King
 Herb & Pat Lowery
 Dan Lowery
 Scoo & Dolores
 M^cCully
 Jean Miller
 Shea Mitchell
 Lynn Morgan
 Connie Morris
 Sheila Murray
 Emily Owens
 Barbara Palmer
 Tim Parker
 Eric Prowe
 John & Sandy
 Russell
 Gene Schmucker
 Kathy Schmucker
 Gary Schotts
 Kathy Shaw



CHRISTMAS CANTATA & DRAMA

Sunday, December 21, 2025
6:00 pm

ATTENDANCE

	<u>Nov. 2</u>	<u>Nov. 9</u>	<u>Nov. 16</u>	<u>Nov. 23</u>	<u>Nov. 30</u>
Worship	132	138	144	138	
Bible School	80	71	75	77	

Sally Shaw
 Joan Shotwell
 Allie Swank
 Carol Thomas
 Jeremiah Ward
 Marge Warrick



MILITARY

Military: CSS Jesse Clark; Sgt. Kurt Warrick, Staff Sgt. E6 Michael Derrick, John William Mozz. **Please let us know about Military updates/corrections.**



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 300 West Lincoln Way
 Minerva, Ohio 44657

November 26, 2025

Church Services
 minervafcc@hotmail.com
 Celebration 10:15 am
 Sunday School 9:00 am

OFFICE HOURS
 Monday-Friday
 8:00 am- 4:00 pm

Minerva First Christian Church
MinervaFCC.com



Staff

Mr. Chris Sanford
Lead Minister
 502-218-9081
 csanford155@gmail.com

Zach Long
Associate/Youth Minister
 330-417-4834
 zlong7@yahoo.com

MFCC Office
 330-868-4151
 minervafcc@hotmail.com

Minerva Area Christian School
 330-868-5728
 fccmacs@hotmail.com

MACS Administrator
 Mr. Chris Stoffer
 330-936-5723
 cstoffer@minervaareachristianschool.org

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2 Shawn Dennis | 20 Nancy Tarbet |
| 3 Carlee George
Jacob George
Kaleb George | 21 Boyd & Mary Ann Dowell
53 years |
| 4 Eric Prowe | 22 Alex Lowery |
| 5 Nate Oberly | 23 Ed & Sue Barr 47 years |
| 6 Mary Ann Dowell
Harold Smith
Sandi Unkefer | 25 Happy Birthday, Jesus |
| 7 Ed Barr | 26 Emma Vert |
| 9 Zach & McKayla Long
8 years | 28 Gary Schotts |
| 12 John Bowman | 29 Charlotte Russell |
| 17 Julie Brown | 30 Rebekah Sanford |
| | 31 Allie Swank |



SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS!

	Dec. 7	Dec. 14	Dec. 21	Dec. 28
Comm. Meditation	Bruce Doppelheuer	Nate Oberly	Jordan Vert	Dave Bush
Ushers	Bob Palmer	Mike Fountain	Chip Smye & John Bowman	Bill Shaw
Deaconess	Debbie Harsh	Debbie Harsh	Debbie Harsh	Debbie Harsh
Shut-In Teams	Nate Oberly & Brad Snyder	Bruce Doppelheuer & Bob Palmer	Zach Long & Kenny Hoopes	Jordan Vert & Mike Fountain