



December 2013

Crossroads Connections



A church in the crossroads of life

Preparing for Advent

Inside this issue:

Preparing for Advent	1
A Moment with Pastor Mike	3
Elders Corner	3
Prayers	4
Worship Leaders	5
Calendar	6
Christmas Offering 2013	7

Over much of the month of December, you'll be getting ready for the Holidays, with baking, buying, rushing, wrapping, decorating, greeting, meeting, and eating. In the midst of all that, be sure to seek the true meaning of the season, here at Crossroads Christian Church. Here's some of what's on schedule:

Saturday, November 30, 9 am. Decorating the sanctuary for Advent. Coffee and doughnuts will be served.

Sundays, December 1-15. *Introducing Jesus*. A short-term study in Pat McAllister's class, led by Pastor Mike (see related article on page 3)

Sunday, December 1. Hanging of the Greenery. We will symbolically decorate our sanctuary and explore the meanings of the symbols around us, and light the first Advent candle. Scriptures: Isaiah 2:1-5; Luke 21:25-32.

Saturday, December 7, 5pm Christmas Party.

Sunday, December 8. Lighting of the 2nd Advent Candle. The message: Ready, Set, Stop. Scriptures: Isaiah 11:1-10; Matthew 3:1-12.

Sunday, December 15. Lighting of the 3rd Advent Candle. Crossroads Players present the message: Joseph, Mary, Bethlehem, a Manger, Angels, and All That. Scriptures: Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 1:46-55.

At 3 pm, Metro East Community Chorale program at the Shrine.

Sunday, December 22. Lighting of the 4th Advent Candle. The message: Naming the Baby. Scriptures: Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 1:18-25.

Tuesday, December 24. Christmas Eve Service at 6 pm. The message: Joy to the World. Scriptures: Isaiah 52:7-10; Luke 2:1-20.

Sunday, December 29. Bell Sunday. We'll ring out the old year and ring in the new. Bring a bell to ring and be part of the fun. The message: A Partridge in a Pear Tree. Scriptures: Psalm 148; Matthew 2:1-12



Worship times:

Sunday School at 9:30 am.

Worship at 10:45 am.

Church Women United

Church Women United met at Crossroads Christian Church on November 1 to install officers for the 2014 year, and to enjoy lunch and a World Community Day program. New officers are:

President—Terry Schuchman

Secretary—Annie Washington

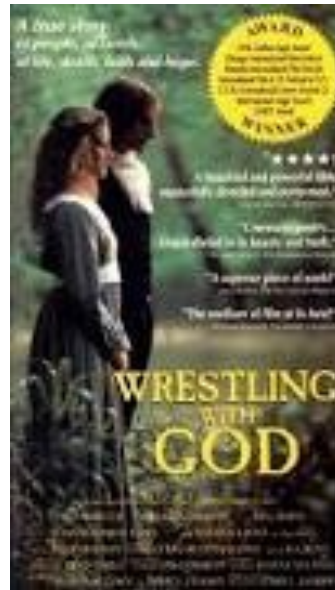
Treasurer—Laurie Brown

Nominating Committee—Grace Moon, Edith Beach & Elsie Hall

Outgoing officers are Marie Reichling as President and Margaret Sutton as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

Wrestling with God

Beginning Wednesday, January 8, 2014, the Dinner/Video/Discussion group (DVD) will view



the film *Wrestling with God*. This 1990 independent film is a dramatic account of the life of Alexander Campbell, one of the forerunners of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Please come and join us for food, fellowship and fun!

Forgiveness

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.—Mahatma Gandhi

Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.—Mark Twain

People can be more forgiving than you can imagine. But you have to forgive yourself. Let go of what's bitter and move on.—Bill Cosby

The glory of Christianity is to conquer by forgiveness.—William Blake

New Address

Jo Jones

58 Frank Scott Parkway East

Apt. 225

Swansea, IL 62226

Welcome to the World!

Nolan Michael Kernan (great-grandson to Jan Evans)

Wyatt James Clark (great-grandson to Jim & Patty Buckhannon)

Introducing Jesus

In our heads, in our carols, in our manger scenes, and in the media, we usually see a mashed-together Christmas story. Did you realize that each Gospel introduces its main character, Jesus Christ, in a very different way? And we can learn something important for our faith from each one of them.

Pastor Mike will be leading us through this at 9:30 am Sunday mornings, December 1-15, in Pat McAllister's Sunday school class, now located in the north wing.



Here's the schedule:

December 1. "The Baptist's Cry" and "In the Beginning." (Mark and John)

December 8: "A Promise Fulfilled" (Matthew)

December 15: "Good News of Great Joy" (Luke)

Whether or not you normally come to Sunday school, you are welcome to share in this fascinating Bible study.

Elder's Corner

At last, the father came home from Afghanistan. He had been gone for over a year, and sorely missed by his wife and children. The children, a boy and a girl, were well into their teens, both honor students, were very mature for their ages. The mother of course missed her husband, but very competently managed her family, keeping things as close to normal as possible.

They are, and always have been, a family of deep and abiding faith. The mother made sure that their practice of saying grace before a meal did not change just because the father was gone. They prayed aloud thusly:

Come Lord Jesus, be our Guest
Let these gifts from you be blessed. Amen.

A Moment with Pastor Mike

Advent.

Hushed expectation.

A look inside our own hearts,
Wondering, "Am I ready? Am I ready for
Christ to enter here, to be born here?"

Reflection.

Candles, bringing light in darkness.

Prophets and dreamers.

Counting down days.

Prayer.

Family.

Singing, but sometimes in a minor key.
Prayers for peace, in the world and in our
own little worlds.

How long? How long yet?

Christ is coming.

Wait. Be ready.

God will come.

God promised.

We can trust God's promise.

Some things can't be rushed.

And so we wait.

Advent.

May this Advent season be a time for you to
grow closer to the Christ, the one we wait
for, yet the one who is with us right now.

Grace and peace,
—Mike

Such a short and beautiful practice, but with the father's voice missing, it was just not the same. One or the other of them would bring it up nearly every day. They prayed daily for his safety, counting the days toward his homecoming.

When they got home from the airport, they all pitched in to prepare his favorite meal. He marveled at how much they had grown, and so forth. But when they said grace all together, the father said to his family, "Now, with all four voices giving thanks, I truly feel that I am home."

—Jan Evans

Prayers

- Mike Cornwell (friend of Bob G.) battling cancer
- June (mother of Kim H.) continued prayers for recovery
- Hedy M. having vision and health problems
- Jenny & Nick (daughter and son-in-law of Pat H.) court appearance
- Sue Ann (daughter of Kim H.) recovering after being bit and attacked by a cat
- Birth of Nolan Michael Kernan (great-grandson of Jan)
- Birth of Wyatt James Clark (great-grandson of Jim & Patty)
- Larry (son-in-law of Virginia) slow recovery from recent back surgery and breathing problems
- Clyde (friend of Wayne & Marie) battling cancer
- Marie upcoming medical tests
- Victims of Typhoon Haiyan
- Death of Onnie Wargo's sister
- Victims of recent tornados in the Midwest
- Eric (brother of Jennifer) at a life changing crossroads
- Mildred (sister of Mary Moss) in need of comforting prayers
- Margaret Sutton recovering after a recent fall

Week of Compassion Update

A swath of tornados struck the Midwestern United States on Sunday, November 17, 2013 causing significant damage across the region. Media outlets are reporting that 68 tornados were spotted, leaving thousands without power, destroying hundreds of homes, and killing 6 people in Illinois.

Communities from Washington, IL to Kokomo, IN, have been impacted. Week of Compassion is currently monitoring the situation and working with regional offices to assess needs. We have been in touch with Regional Ministers and local church pastors and will continue to respond as needed. As always, Week of Compassion and our partners are committed to Long Term Recovery in communities affected by disasters and plan to respond in the days to come.

We give thanks to the God who calls us to respond to chaos with hope, peace, and compassion, and we give thanks for all of you who partner with us to minister to those affected. Please consider putting your Compassion into Action by responding to needs in Illinois and Indiana.

Dear Crossroads Family,

Thank you so much for the recent celebration luncheon and parting gift given in my honor. I rejoice and am very thankful for the many years we have been together, as well as your continuing friendship and support.

Grace and Peace,

—Lisa Cripe

Our Homebound

Pat Beyer

Ray Doctorman

Rollie & Jodie Hoehn

Vera Hudson

Nelson Rodriguez-Arté



THE POWER OF
PRAY



Lay Worship Leaders—December 2013


	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 29
Worship Leader	Dan Upton	Patty Buckhannon	Pat McAllister	Ken Holmes	Mike Thompson
Elder	Bob Green	Mona McAllister	Ken Holmes	Pat McAllister	Jan Evans
Deacons Prepare	Marie Reichling Pat Killian	Carol Brookshier Mary Weygandt	Shirley Holmes Pat Killian	Marie Reichling Shirley Holmes	Pat Killian Betty Allen
Deacons Serve	Carole Thompson Mike Thompson David Kennedy Jr. Shirley Holmes	Jessie Hull Curt Sutton Meredith Moder Patty Buckhannon	Mike Thompson Carole Thompson David Kennedy Jr. Curt Sutton	Jim Buckhannon Patty Buckhannon Patty Peterman Meredith Moder	Curt Sutton Jessie Hull Mary Weygandt David Kennedy Jr.
Deacons Candles	Pat Hayes	N/A	Pat Hayes	N/A	Pat Hayes
Deacons Sanctuary	Marie Reichling	Pat Killian	Shirley Holmes	Susan Johnasen-Smith	Mary Weygandt
Greeter	Curt Sutton	Marie Reichling	Pat Killian	Curt Sutton	Marie Reichling
Audio-Visual	Kay Marshall	Pat McAllister	Kay Marshall	David Kennedy Jr.	Pat McAllister



December 2013

SEGA Prayers for the Month

12/1 -12/7 First Christian Church, Chaffee, MO
 12/8-12/14 ECHO, Gateways, Inc and Gateway Accessible Housing
 12/15-12/21 First Christian Church, Bonne Terre, MO
 12/22-12/28 First Christian Church, St. Peters, MO
 12/29-1/4 Centennial Plaza Apartments & Hylton Point Apartments

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat												
1 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	2	3	4 5:15 Dinner/Video 7:00 Choir Practice	5	6	7 5:00 Church Christmas Party												
8 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	9	10	11 5:15 Dinner/Video 7:00 Choir Practice	12	13	14												
15 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:00 Board Meeting	16	17 12:00 Lunch Bunch at Eckert's	18 5:15 Dinner/Video 7:00 Choir Practice	19	20	21												
22 No Sunday School 10:45 Worship	23	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 6:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 	26	27	28												
29 No Sunday School 10:45 Worship	30	31	<div data-bbox="259 907 552 2016" data-label="Text"> <p style="text-align: center;">Happy Birthdays!</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">1 Shirley Holmes</td> <td style="width: 33%;">21 Lori Burgess</td> <td style="width: 33%;">30 Patty Buckhannon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 James Elfrink</td> <td>Mona McAllister</td> <td>Lauren Dueland</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13 Jennifer Houk</td> <td>26 Wayne Reichling Jr.</td> <td>Mary Weygandt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 Betty Allen</td> <td>27 Stacey Schneider</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div>				1 Shirley Holmes	21 Lori Burgess	30 Patty Buckhannon	12 James Elfrink	Mona McAllister	Lauren Dueland	13 Jennifer Houk	26 Wayne Reichling Jr.	Mary Weygandt	16 Betty Allen	27 Stacey Schneider	
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16 Betty Allen	27 Stacey Schneider																	

Happy Anniversary!!

6 Rollie & Jodie Hoehn
 17 Lori & Willie Burgess
 26 Leroy & Hedy Madison
 27 Dan & Kathy Upton

Christmas Offering 2013—What Gifts Shall We Bring?

Matthew's story of the Wise Men who come seeking the newborn King is a familiar one, re-enacted in countless Christmas pageants every year. Amidst the costumes, animals, shepherds and mangers crowded into most depictions of the Nativity, the gifts they bring often are seen as just props for the Magi to carry. Yet they are far more than that.

Scholars believe the Wise Men came from ancient Persia (modern day Iran), and early Christian art often depicts them in Persian clothing. If so, their journey was long and arduous—and even as it neared its end finding “the one who has been born king” was not easy. He was not to be found in Jerusalem, the Holy City, as they expected, but in the tiny village of Bethlehem; even there they had to search for him. Yet when they found the Child, they were prepared. Bowing down, they worshiped him. “Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense [frankincense] and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:11), gifts that they had carried with them all the way from Persia, extravagant gifts fit for a King.

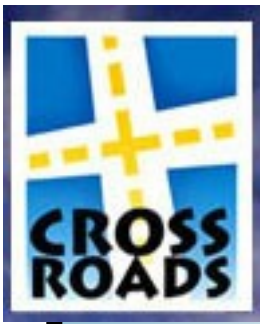
We may think ourselves incapable of giving such gifts until we remember that the good news of Jesus' birth also came to common folk like the shepherds, and that extravagance comes in many forms. For the shepherds, it came in the form of praising God. For you, maybe it will be in doing mission together in response to a disaster or on an immersion trip to learn about another culture. Your extravagant gift to the Christmas offering, whether large or small, supports the many ways Disciples across your region discover and share their gifts of ministry. Whatever gift you bring, give it joyfully; that's the kind of giving that makes God smile, and therein lies the secret of its extravagance.

As we celebrate anew the Good News of God-with-us, the coming of our Lord, what gifts shall we bring? Whatever it is, may we present them in humble thanksgiving and with joyful extravagance!



2013 Christmas Offering for Regional Ministries

Received by many
congregations on
December 15 & 22.



Christian Church

2415 North 89th Street
Caseyville, IL 62232
(618)398-1587

Interim Pastor - Rev. Michael Dixon
medixon2@earthlink.net

Office Manager - Patrick McAllister
crossroadsdisciple@sbcglobal.net

Hours: M,T,W,Th 8-12

Music Director - Carol Brookshier
clbrookshier@charter.net

Nursery - Connie McAllister

Custodian - Richard Reichling

**We're Disciples: a movement for
wholeness in a fragmented world**

Upcoming Events

Lunch Bunch

On Tuesday, December 17, the Lunch Bunch will meet at Eckert's Country Restaurant in Belleville at noon. Sign-up sheet is in fellowship hall.



Christmas Concerts

The Eden Theological Seminary Choir will present its Christmas Concert on December 4, 2013 in Wehrli Chapel in the Press Building at 10am. All are invited to join in this joyous musical expression of Christmas!

The Masterworks Chorale group will perform Handel's Messiah pt. I along with other Christmas carols during two concerts:

December 7 at St. Paul UCC in Belleville

December 8 at St. Claire Catholic Church in O'Fallon.

Both concerts begin at 7:30pm. The concert on December 7 is free, and tickets for the December 8 concert can be purchased from Lisa Cripe who sings with the chorale.

The Metro East Community Choral will hold its annual Christmas concert at The Church at The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows on Sunday, December 15 at 3pm. This is a free concert with a free will donation accepted. Many members of Crossroads are members of this group.

