



December 2023

Leadership

Lead Usher
Hope Morris

Audio/Visual
*Lynn McDonald,
& Jill Hauswirth*

Offering Counter
*Sue Chappell
& Hope Morris*

Kingdom Kids
Volunteer Needed

Transportation
Volunteer Needed



**Please be in prayer
for the following:**

General Prayer Requests

Family of Norman Bolin
Dale Scott

Cancer Treatment

*Chris Atkinson
Matt Thomas*

Health and Healing

*Bill Jones
Nick Tate
Jim Greene
Jean McDonald*

Military

*Staff Sergeant Jim Weter
Nathan Harralson*

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(417) 466-2459



*You're
Invited!*

December Events

December 3: Cash for Backpacks
Advent Begins
Christmas Party and Potluck after Worship
December 5: Women of the Word at 6 pm
December 24: Christmas Eve Service at 9 am
December 25: Merry Christmas - Office Closed

Upcoming Events

January 1: Happy New Year!
Office Closed

Wednesday Activities

Come to the Table at 5:30 pm
Family Kids Club
from 5:30-7:30 pm
December 6, 13 only

**NOW
OPEN**

10:30 am - 4:30 pm
Monday - Thursday
Lynn McDonald
Administrative Assistant

A note from

PASTOR DONNIE

Dear Church Family,

I love the following articles. I hope you do, too. I pray you have a blessed Christmas month! -Pastor Donnie

Lord of the Messy Manger
by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

If you think your life is an utter disaster, that God could never use a life as messed up as yours, think again. Let me point you to some familiar Bible stories.

- Joseph's brothers hate him so much that they sell him as a slave and make their father believe he has been devoured by animals, but "but God meant it for good" to save thousands from starvation.¹
- Sampson lusts after a Philistine girl -- not the nice Jewish girl his parents wanted for him. But the Bible says, "his father and mother did not know that this was from the Lord."²
- King Solomon's son makes a disastrous decision that loses him half the kingdom. What a mess! But God says, "This thing is from me."³
- Jacob is a liar and a cheat and has to flee for his life. He sleeps out in the open with only a rock for a pillow. But when he wakes with a vision of angels, he says, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."⁴

Your life may appear well-ordered on the surface, but underneath there may be disarray.

Brokenness, pain, shame. Things you seem utterly incapable of fixing. The good news, my friend, is that God is bigger than your messy life. He is not impotent. He is not confined by your boundaries. He is God! And he is unafraid of working in messy situations. In fact, he gets a kick out of surprising us with his amazing grace. What are your points of pain? What is the mess that you are struggling with? Maybe, just maybe, God is able to take your mess, and out of it bring blessing.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

How bad can it get? A girl gets pregnant. Her parents are utterly shamed. Her fiancé -- not the father -- is ready to dump her. And then he is told, "Do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."⁵

How bad can it get? The girl is in labor, far from home with only a cave-barn where she can lie down and have her baby. The only place to put her newborn is a manger. A cattle trough. We imagine it with fresh, fragrant straw plucked from a bale of hay. But I doubt that the cave was stocked with neat bales stacked against the wall. The straw that night was neither fresh nor fragrant. Life was a mess -- but God was in it. God sees Mary with her tiny infant and sends a host of angels to announce the birth.

"Behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."⁶

The messy manger is itself a sign from God. Is your life a mess? Then let this be a sign to you.

Your very good news is that the God of the messy manger, the resurrected Christ of the cruel cross, and the Holy Spirit, in whom you live and move and have your being, are able to break through in your life, begin to clean up your mess, bless you too. And that -- like the messy manger -- will be a wonder all its own.

¹ Genesis 50:20.

² Judges 14:4.

³ 1 Kings 12:24.

⁴ Genesis 28:16.

⁵ Matthew 1:20.

⁶ Luke 2:10-12

CAPS FOR KIDS

Caps for Kids is a ministry in which we make all cotton surgical caps for kids. They are donated to Mercy Kids in Springfield.

There are jobs for all levels from cutting circles, cut elastic, run the elastic, and sewing the caps.

Caps For Kids will meet on an as needed basis Marion Belanger will let you know when Caps will meet.

Mustard Seeds

Planting seeds in faith

The Mustard Seeds are doing a study titled:
"Jesus Calling: Putting Jesus First" by Sarah Young

"This Jesus Calling Bible study is designed to help individuals and groups meditate on the words of Scripture and hear them not just as words said to people long ago but as words said to us today in the here and now. The goal is to help the heart open up and respond to what the mind reads - to encounter the living God as He speaks through the Scriptures." Sarah Young

The Mustard Seeds can be found after Sunday morning Worship in Room 103. It's a casual, multigenerational small group.

Walk-ins welcome!!

Women Of The Word!

Women of the Word started the study: "Revelation: extravagant hope" by Margaret Feinberg.

"Revelation is a survival guide for the suffering, a book of promises for the persecuted, a banner of hope for the Beaten down. Not just for John in his time and his age, but for every church in every age, including you and me." Margaret Feinberg

Our last meeting this year will be December 5th. Stay tuned to what we are doing next.

Family of Christ Women

TO: ALL LADIES of the CHURCH:

Our November meeting had 10 ladies at the Panda House. Our business included giving to the Food Pantry and continuing to help at the Come To The Table meals. We are discussing how we can help the Veterans and the 2 nursing places. Martha had the devotion with the theme "praying for others"

Our December meeting will be

Tuesday, December 12th at 11 am at the Panda House.

Sue Chappell will be the hostess and have the devotion.

Have a Merry Christmas!

We would love to have you join if you can; we have plenty of room and a choice of many delicious items on the menu.

FAMILY OF CHRIST WOMEN



Thank you for your generosity with our
“Cash For Backpacks” collections.
Our October “Cash For Backpacks” collection brought in \$86.33.

Our next Cash for Backpacks collection is
Sunday, December 3rd.

You can also bring your donation anytime to the Church office.

We will continue the Cash for Backpacks collections on the first
Sunday of every month. We need your help to make this a
successful ministry.

Happy
BIRTHDAY

5 Hunter McKinzie
10 Esther Perryman
Amanda Campbell
11 Les Crider
14 Kitty Crider
23 Shelley Mosley

HAPPY
Anniversary

15 Donnie & Annette Hudson
29 Jim & Shirley Greene

Our annual Christmas Party and Pot Luck will be Sunday, December 3rd right after Worship.

After Worship we will have a breakfast potluck.

So bring your favorite breakfast food or pastry

Then we have fun games planned and the arrival of a very special guest!! Be ready for great fun and fellowship as we kick off the Christmas season.



We will also have the Christmas card box in the foyer. Please feel free to send your Church family friends a Christmas card and save postage. Please only sent to those who attend. The Church will not mail them for you.



DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 \$ for Backpacks Christmas Party/Potluck After Worship	4	5 Women of the Word at 6 pm	6 Come To The Table at 5:30 Family Kids Club until 7:30	7	8	9
10 Praise Team 8 am Mustard Seeds after Worship	11	12 <i>Family of Christ Women</i> 11 am at the Panda House	13 Sewing Club 9am- 4pm Come To The Table at 5:30 Family Kids Club until 7:30	14	15	16
17 Praise Team 8 am Mustard Seeds after Worship	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Praise Team 8 am Christmas Eve Service at 9 am	25 <i>Merry Christmas</i> Office Closed	26	27 Sewing Club 9am- 4pm	28	29	30
31 Praise Team 8 am Mustard Seeds after Worship	1 <i>Happy New Year</i> Office Closed	2	3	4	5	6