



## Christmas is Not Always Merry

This is the time when we are very often wishing people a Merry Christmas. I just did it this morning when I dropped off a defunct lawn tractor at a salvage yard. It is a true hope that we impart to others. Many will have a merry Christmas, while others will try, but may not always succeed. Many people at Christmas time are mourning and grieving many things. What follows is a scenario that has circulated Facebook.

**The year my dad- who was a pastor at the time- was caught in his addiction. The Church leadership asked him and my mom to not attend the Christmas Eve service. The investigation was ongoing and they wanted him to step back while it happened.**

**What they didn't count on, I don't think, was for me to show up at the service. I have a deep commitment to tradition so when my parents said we weren't going to the service, I resolved to go by myself. Under the weight of uncertainty and the fear of what I had suspected might just be a true accusation, I showed up to the candlelight service.**

Someone you know is  
preparing for their first Christmas  
without their husband, wife, mother,  
father, brother, sister, daughter or son.  
Others are preparing for their last.

Regardless of the specifics,  
remember that this season of joy is  
oftentimes a season of sorrow for many.  
Be kind, be generous, give love, give help;  
if nothing else, just don't give  
people a hard time.

Unknown

[tinybuddha.com](http://tinybuddha.com)

**Families were there to celebrate, it was Christmas after all. I found my usual spot at the front and as the first carols rang out, my tears began to fall. I felt like an imposter. I was a cloud of grief and darkness amidst a cheerful celebration. I felt guilty for dampening the time of rejoicing.**

**As I sat I found myself talking to Jesus. "I'm ruining your party," I told him. It was his response in that moment that changed Christmas for me forever. He told me, "Cassie, I came to that manger as a baby not for**

**those in celebration, but for those in mourning. I came for you. In this moment, right here." For the first time in my relatively easy life, I was tasting heartache. And it was there that Jesus showed me the heart of Christmas. Jesus stepped down to pursue the broken and the hurting and the lost.**

**"Those who walk in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in spaces of deepest darkness a light has dawned." - Isaiah 9:2**

I hope that those of you who are grieving and mourning for whatever reason will find the light of Christ at this time of the year even in the midst of your dark time and that he will fill you with the "joy of the Lord" in your spirit as you celebrate the birth of our only hope. May the rest of us be patient, kind, loving, understanding and helpful to those who mourn.

In Christ Alone

## Prayer & Praises

- Carol McKinley called with a praise report that Mary Stover's heart stint operation was successful and she will be coming home today from UPMC Harrisburg. Pray for continued recovery.
- Sandy Hengst requested prayer for her aunt who fell at home and crushed her knee and had to have emergency surgery on Tuesday morning. Also pray for Joe Martin.
- Please Pray for Bruce & Robin Terrell (friends/neighbors of Deb Zipfel) who had a house fire on Saturday night with severe damage.
- Please pray for Kathy McWilliams. She has cellulitis and an infection at the site of her leg surgery. Pray for healing.
- Please pray for Vicki Miller (Brett Miller's Stepmother) who developed a blood clot in her back and had to have emergency surgery for recovery, healing, and rest.
- Dave & Mary Titzell requested prayer for their neighbor Annie Flanigan who has had 2 major strokes in the past week, possibly some mini strokes. She is in the hospital under observation. Also, keep her husband Richard in your prayers.
- Pray for Christina Betts family for peace after her passing.
- Keep Gianna Harvey in your prayers. She is starting chemo for 25 weeks and started with 2 weeks of radiation on Monday.
- Pray for the Austin Family (neighbors of Gary & Linda's son Chris) whose 6-year-old son choked on something and passed away last week.
- Pray for Victor Riddle who was at the emergency room on Monday for trouble he was having with his hip and leg.



### Ongoing Health Concern Prayers

- |                                 |                          |                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| *Kathy McWilliams               | *Sarah Sabold (Smeltzer) | *Ken Warren     | *Mary Fisher    |
| *Alyssa Leakway                 | *Gloria Gerber           | *Missy Braden   | *Bryce Baublitz |
| *Julie Waggoner                 | *Bill Barley             | *Brandon Little | *Derek Meck     |
| *Josh (Bonnie Tyson's Grandson) | *Ruth Cook               | *Victor Riddle  | *Mark Lipsitz   |

### Cancer Special Prayers

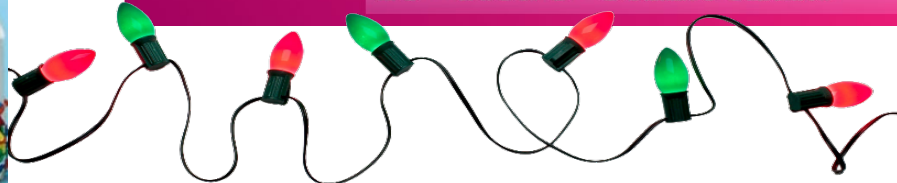
- |  |                      |                          |  |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| *Julia McCartney                         | *Greg & Sandy George | *Butch Warren's brother  | *Ted Erb (Traci Kauffman family)           |
| *Kathy McWilliams brother-in-law Phillip | *Tom Kimmel          | *Bob (Ron Engle, friend) |  |
| *Sandy Harlacker                         | *Ellie Basko         | *Mark Yonker             | *Keith Kauffman (Kerry Kauffman's brother) |
| *Jean Beck                               | *Donald Moore        | *Butch Warren            |  |

### **CBC and CBC Region 3 Prayer Requests**

Pray for those who are battling addiction to drugs or alcohol. Pray for them to receive the victory of deliverance and freedom through Jesus Christ. Pray for our CBC Churches and members to reach out with love and healing in Jesus' Name.

**Please pray for the following congregations and pastors:**

- Victory Congregation in Tanzania, Africa and Pastor Isaak Kasomo
- Zion Hill Congregation in Columbiana, WV and Pastor Scott McPeck



# Important Dates and INFORMATION

## This week

### **Wednesday 12/13**

\*Sisters Bible Study 9 am

\*Life Group 6:30 pm

### **Saturday 12/16**

\*Men's Bible Study Breakfast 7 am

### **Sunday 12/17**

\*9 am Come Worship!

\*Joanne Miller Candy Sale

## Next Week

### **Wednesday 12/20**

\*Life Group 6:30 pm

### **Sunday 12/24**

\*9 am Come Worship!

\*5:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

\*7 pm Christmas Eve Service

@ Altland Meetinghouse

\*10 pm Christmas Eve Service

@Altland Meetinghouse

## You are Invited!

Women's Fellowship will be visiting with the Fruitbelt Farmworkers

**Tuesday, January 30th at 5:30.**

We will be taking them a small gift to take home to their wives and or moms or children. We will have a time of sharing, perhaps Bible study or having a message as well as some singing hopefully. We will be sharing dinner and dessert with them.

This group of workers will be returning to Honduras in March. We would love for more people men and women to come and join us! We do need to know however if you will be joining us. We will carpool from the church at 4:30. A signup sheet will be posted on the bulletin board. **RSVP by January 21.** Thank you for your consideration!

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023**

**REGULAR 9 AM CELEBRATION WORSHIP SERVICE**

**5:30 PM – BERMUDIAN CHURCH**

**EAST BERLIN**

**7:00 PM – ALTLAND MEETINGHOUSE**

**(THOMASVILLE)**

**10:00 PM – ALTLAND MEETINGHOUSE**

**(THOMASVILLE)**

*Christmas Eve*

**CANDLELIGHT SERVICES**

**Holiday Dinner**

**Saturday**

**January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Forms for sign-up will be in your bulletin  
in the coming weeks!

Catering by Hughes

Turkey/Ham – Stuffing/Gravy – Mashed

Potatoes – Corn – Green Beans –

Cranberry Relish – Desserts

Whispering Creek Bluegrass Band

Joanne Miller is having a candy sale on December 17th to raise money for her 2024 IMO medical mission trip. All items will be on sale before and after church and are available by donation only. Please see Joanne with any special requests.

**MEN'S  
BREAKFAST**

**NEXT MEETING**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month**

**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 7 am**

**Dover Valley Restaurant**

# WANTED

## POWERPOINT PERSON FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Pastor Gary is looking for someone who will be willing to run the PowerPoint at the 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Celebration. It will all be set up and there will be an easy-to-follow instruction sheet to guide you as you simply press the down button at the appropriate time. Please see Pastor Gary if you are willing to help out in this time of celebration.

## SERVANT OUTREACH TEAM

In the sermons this past October and November we spent some time focusing on how we can outflow, overflow the marvelous blessings of God in Christ to those around us. As we closed that series I gave an invitation to the congregation to be a part of a team who would brainstorm ways that we could reach out to our community with the love of Christ. After some brainstorming, the team would then make the plans, solicit helpers, and then implement the outreach ministry. The hope is that this will be an ongoing ministry. We hope many of you will be interested. We will be setting two dates in January for people to gather to begin to organize around this ministry. There will be a daytime offering and an evening offering. A sign-up sheet will go up in the coming weeks for individuals to sign up for one or both of those times. On the sign-up, there will also be a place for those who don't want to be on the team per se but will be willing to be called on to help. Please, begin now to pray for

### Prayer Shawl Ministry

#### Next Meeting

There will be no prayer shawl in December  
See you in January (weather permitting)

### Ladies Choir

#### Attention All Ladies

If you enjoy singing, consider joining Ladies Choir.

*New voices are welcome!*

Next Practices will be on Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm.  
See Betty Engle if you have questions

### Commission Meeting at 6 Pm Board Meeting at 7 Pm

#### JANUARY 9TH



Wednesdays  
December 13<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  
with Pastor Gary

## Life Group

Studying:  
The Book of Revelation

Wednesdays  
January 10<sup>th</sup> & January 24<sup>th</sup>  
All the ladies are invited at  
9 am in Shepherd's Hall

## Sisters

A Bible Study for Women

### Ruth's Harvest

a cooperative ministry with the Abbottstown-East Berlin Food Pantry and Bermudian Springs School

Furnishing food items for children with inadequate nutrition at home. December 20th



### COLLECTING AGAIN

Thank You for your faithful giving!

Julie will be out of the office on Wednesday, December 13th. I will work remotely. You can email me and I will take care of it the next day if it needs to be printed or done in the office.

You can also text  
717-578-3408.



### Widow and Widowers Luncheon

Sunday  
January 14<sup>th</sup>  
At Noon

At  
Dover Valley  
Restaurant

Please See Nancy  
Smith to RSVP

