

*A monthly publication of Christian Church of Mountain Home in the interest of promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and goodwill among His people, our friends.*

**In this issue . . .**

**P. 2**

- ◆ Preacher's Pen
- ◆ Notes

**P. 3**

- ◆ Present Your Gift to the Christ Child

**P. 4**

**Chief Shepherd**

Jesus Christ

**Pastors**

Gordon Addington

David Benedict      Rick Schmeski  
Don Truitt            Bruce Wolf

**Ministry Managers**

Forrest Cotter

David Benedict      Don Truitt  
Jason Schmeski      Joey Peglar  
LaDonna Mendleski      Ted Bankes  
Louise Addington      Jim Darr

**Preacher**

Gene McCoy

**Youth Ministers**

Eric Dwyer

Vanessa Peglar

**Extended Ministries**

Steve & Rhonda Hayward

Papua New Guinea

Brad & Linda Berg, Mexico

Saleem & Naylah Massey

Pakistan

Jay & Romola Henry, India

Ernest & Numreta

McFarland, India

Stephen & Alyssa Walton,

Ireland

Central Christian College of the Bible

Ozark Christian College

Show-Me Christian Youth Home

Christ on Campus

Mtn. Home Christian Academy

## Holiday Happenings



**Ladies' Christmas Dinner Party**  
Thursday, December 5  
6:00 p.m.



**Holiday Dinner**  
Sun., Dec. 8  
5:00 p.m.

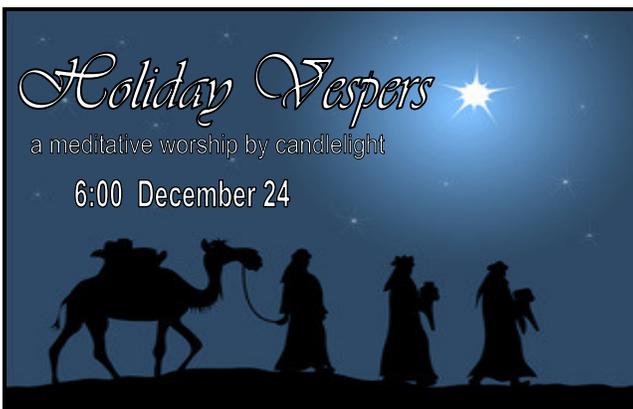
A delightful menu and interesting program will combine with fun fellowship to make this annual event a nice memory for our ladies and their guests from the community.

The Family Life Ministry Team hosts this combined celebration of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Enjoy the fellowship and food with friends. Details relating to the menu will be communicated at church.




*Two For Noel*  
a Christmas dessert theatre  
Friday, Saturday & Sunday,  
December 13, 14 & 15

Two dramatic presentations focusing attention on the birth of Christ will delight the audience, as will the specialty holiday desserts that will be served between the two. Becky McCoy will provide nice piano renditions of favorite Christmas music while we enjoy desserts and beverages. Several volunteers are needed for various non-performing aspects of the program. Please make your service available by signing up at the table in the Worship Center. Invite community friends and family members to be your table guests.



*Holiday Vespers*  
a meditative worship by candlelight  
6:00 December 24

The hour-long vespers by candlelight has become a holiday tradition that has attracted many from the community, as well as out-of-town guests. Scriptures and music are utilized to focus attention on the meaning of Jesus' birth. Vespers is another holiday gift our congregation offers to the community, so please extend your invitation to associates.



## Preacher's Pen by Gene McCoy

For other articles and information about our congregation, go online [www.ccmhar.com](http://www.ccmhar.com)

### Announcement

Contributions collected at the Ingathering Worship for Mountain Home Food Basket amounted to \$473.00

### Gratitude

Dear Friends at CCMH:  
Thank you so very much to all of you who sent cards to me at the passing of my sister, Arlene.

Several of you also attended the visitation and/or service. It was much appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Fern Frazier

We wish to thank everyone at CCMH for making us feel so at home here!

Dave & Trisha  
Keller

As a result of their rebellion and failure to keep the covenant with God, His people were taken captive by the Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians and others. But because of His covenant love, characterized by faithfulness and forgiveness, God delivered them from exile and returned them to their homeland. Psalm 107 contains a familiar exhortation to "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever." This is the refrain that is to be on the lips of all the redeemed (2).

Like the ancient people of God, we have experienced exile due to rebellion or negligence to keep our covenant with God. The covenant is broken through idolatry, loyalty to pagan governments and engagement in pagan practices. But it is also broken through sheer negligence, carelessness, and disregard.

In their distress the ancients cried out to God, "Where are Your former lovingkindnesses, O Lord, which You swore to David in Your faithfulness?" (Ps. 89:49) People today question God in different words. They say, "Why are You so far away? Have You abandoned me?" Or, "Why don't You hear and answer my prayer?" It isn't that people have *forgotten* the covenant, but that they have *broken* it. What gall to remind God of the covenant He initiated and offered, as though He had forgotten about it! And, further, to imply that our predicament is due to God's unfaithfulness!

To prompt thanksgiving the Psalmist recounts God's deliverance of His people from helpless, hopeless situations, each of which characterizes our spiritual exile.

#### WANDERING IN THE DESERT (v. 4-9)

Exiled from God due to sin is like being isolated from civilization, unable to find an inhabited city. All we can see is sand in every direction; dune after dune to eventual doom. The sun bears down, radiating unbearable heat, sapping every ounce of hydration and energy. Walking slows to plodding, then to shuffling, crawling and falling. Parched, hungry, dehydrated, disoriented and distressed, we cry out to God for deliverance. In His covenant love (Hebrew: *hesed*) God delivers His people to an inhabited city, one that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Heb. 11:10). Let the redeemed of the Lord say, "Give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness . . . for He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good."

#### IMPRISONED (v. 10-16)

Being exiled from God is like being chained in a dark prison, "in the shadow of death," as the Psalmist describes it. Like Jehoiakim, king of Judah, who burned the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer. 36), people today reject the word of the Lord only to find themselves in a dark prison of their own making.

In their rebellion many people seek liberation through promiscuous devices only to become enslaved to and shackled by those very devices. Illicit behavior results in addiction, illness, poverty, debt, dependency, disease and death.

God humbles the rebel's heart with labor (v. 12) so that he cries out in desperation. God breaks their bonds, cuts the iron bars (v. 16) and delivers them from darkness and distress when the rebel renews his covenant relationship with God. Let the redeemed prisoner say, "Give thanks to the Lord for His steadfast love."

#### DEATHLY ILL (v. 17-22)

As a result of their foolish rebellion, many become so ill they nearly die. Some are so ill they refuse the nourishment food provides to sustain life. This is also true among those who are spiritually sick. Near death, they cry out to God in genuine repentance, returning to the covenant. God hears and heals.

Let them, therefore, give thanks and offer sacrifices to God, and tell of His works with joyful singing (v. 22).

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King,  
His love endures forever.  
For He is good, He is above all things,  
His love endures forever.  
With a mighty hand and outstretched arm,  
His love endures forever.  
For the life that's been reborn  
His love endures forever.  
From the rising to the setting sun  
His love endures forever.  
By the grace of God we will carry on,  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise.  
Forever God is faithful.  
Forever God is strong.  
Forever God is with us. Forever.  
Forever by Chris Tomlin CCLI 341098

#### STORM AT SEA (v. 23-32)

The great distress experienced by seafarers leaves them "at their wits' end." Literally, the Bible says "all their wisdom was swallowed up." Overcome by the wind and carried by the waves, they are helplessly lifted high and quickly dropped to the depths at the mercy of the elements. Their soul melted away, reeling

Give Thanks  
for God's



and staggering like a drunken man, the rebels cry out to the Lord for deliverance, just as Jonah did from the belly of the fish and just like the disciples did when they feared for their lives in storms on the Sea of Galilee. Responding to their appeals, the Lord calms the storm and guides His covenant people to safe harbor. This makes the people glad and eager to give thanks to the Lord.

**CONCLUSION**

This love is in a covenant relationship. While God loves all people, His promise to deliver is given to those only who are in a covenant relationship with Him.

Giving thanks is not merely a verbal exercise in which we toss to God our obligatory word of thanks as a convenient and almost thoughtless, habitual and ritualistic way to begin a prayer. The Psalmist calls it a “sacrifice (v. 22). Jeremiah 33:11 says thanksgiving is properly expressed not only with words but with an offering. The Hebrew writer adds (1:15-18), “. . . Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Obey your leaders and submit to them, . . . Pray for us. . .”

Charles Spurgeon said “[thanks] is all we can give him, and the least we can give; therefore, let us diligently render to him our thanksgiving.”

The best way to express thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love is to enter into covenant with Him.

Come, every soul by sin oppressed,  
 There's mercy with the Lord.  
 And He will surely give you rest  
 By trusting in His word.  
 For Jesus shed His precious blood  
 Rich blessings to bestow.  
 Plunge now into the crimson flood  
 That washes white as snow.  
 Yes, Jesus is the truth, the way  
 That leads you into rest.  
 Believe in Him without delay  
 and you are fully blest.  
 Come, then, and join this holy band,  
 And on to glory go  
 To dwell in that celestial land  
 Where joys immortal flow.  
 Only trust Him. Only trust Him.  
 Only trust Him now.  
 He will save you, He will save you.  
 He will save you now.

Only Trust Him by John H. Stockton public domain

Oh, give thanks to the Lord for His steadfast, unfailing, enduring, loyal, continuing and everlasting



**Present Your Gift to the Christ Child**

We have counted our blessings and given thanks. As we celebrate the greatest gift mankind has ever received—the gift of Light, Life and Love—we consider the gift we should give to Him.

When those in the East approached a distinguished person—especially royalty—they would present something of value to show homage. We presume not to come into the presence of the Lord, therefore, without a gift. But what gift should we present?

**BRING A GIFT HE DESERVES**

Jesus’ first visitors brought appropriate gifts. It cannot be proven that the gifts carried any symbolic prophetic significance, but the value of each certainly signified the high honor and regard among the magi for the child.

If there was a prophetic significance behind the gifts, gold was given in recognition of His royalty. Gold was often given as tribute by subjects to their king. Incense was given to honor His divinity. The significance of the myrrh given to Him was in prospect of His sufferings. This substance was used in the embalming of dead bodies.

The gift Christ deserves from each of us is that which expresses the highest degree of honor, respect, homage and regard.

**BRING A GIFT HE DESIRES**

The magi first presented themselves. They approached Him in reverence, having come to worship Him Who had been born King of the Jews. The apostle Paul extols the Macedonian Christians, whose generosity in their extreme poverty was possible because the first gave themselves to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:5).

The magi then presented what they had. God does not expect us to give what we do not have (2 Cor. 8:12). Matthew Henry says, “What God favours us with, we must honour him with.”

Even after we have given all that we have, it still isn’t enough to secure what He came to give us. This truth is expressed in the lyric written by Don Aldridge wrote.

If I had all the riches  
 this world has to give;  
 all the comfort that it brings—  
 never needing anything,  
 I could search the whole earth over  
 far and wide  
 trying to buy that precious love  
 that was sent from God above.

But it wouldn’t be enough.  
 No, it wouldn’t be enough  
 to buy one splinter of the tree  
 that Jesus died on. *cont. on p. 4*

**DECEMBER MEETINGS**

- 3 Benevolence Ministry Team
- 9 Elders
- 19 Property Ministry Team



Sunday, January 19



## Present Your Gift to the Christ Child *cont. from p. 3*

And I couldn't pay the price  
for one single drop of blood  
that was shed for my salvation.  
If I had all the riches  
this world has to give  
and I gave it all away—  
every penny to name—  
to some beggar on life's  
dark and lonely street.  
All this kindness found in me  
could not win eternity.  
And it wouldn't be enough.  
No, it wouldn't be enough  
to buy one splinter of the tree  
that Jesus died on.  
And I couldn't pay the price  
for one single drop of blood  
that was shed for my salvation.  
Nothing I can do.  
No, there's nothing I could say.  
Couldn't give enough,  
nothing could repay.

What does it mean in real and practical terms to give yourself to Christ? Audrey Mieir expresses truth in her lyric, "All He Wants is You."

Something more than gold for the Master,  
Something more than gifts to appease;  
There is only one thing that you alone can bring;  
There is only one gift that will please.  
All He wants is you. No one else will do.  
Not just a part, He wants all of your heart.  
All He wants is all of you, all He wants is you.  
Nothing less than this can you offer;  
Nothing less than this can you bring.  
It is not just your songs, but for you alone He longs;  
Nothing less can you give to your King.

When we bring gifts of money and talent, we are but giving to Him a portion of that which He has first given to us. The most valuable and meaningful gift we may present to God is our self. It is what He deserves, and is, therefore, appropriate. It is what He desires, and is, therefore, what will bring Him the most joy.

— Gene McCoy



The LORD'S COMMISSION is OUR MISSION  
Matthew 28:19-20

**Meeting Schedule**  
Wednesday Evening 9:30 Supper  
Sunday Morning 11:00 Bible Classes  
6:30 Bible Classes

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

1365 Eastside Centre Court  
Mtn. Home, AR 72653 870-425-8323

Christian Church  
of Mountain Home

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