



The Fellowship Journal

Rooted in Grace, Growing in Love

339 LWE, Chambersburg, PA, (717) 504-8789

Volume 8, Issue 12

December 2016

During This Christmas Season



From Chuck Lawless

The Christmas Season is a time to focus on the truth of Christ's coming to earth. What so often happens, though, is that the message gets lost in the busyness of the season. Consequently, we miss opportunities to evangelize during a time when some folks are actually thinking about spiritual matters. Here are some ways to do evangelism during this busy season.

1. **Use your Christmas letter to tell the story of Jesus.** Most of us receive numbers of holiday letters, and we learn what people have been doing through the last year. What we don't learn, though, is what God has been doing in their lives. This year, focus your Christmas letter on Christ and His blessings more than on yourself.
2. **Be up front about offering the greatest gift ever given.** Sometimes we struggle directing a conversation toward the gospel. Rather than wrestle with that issue, just be up front. Contact a loved one, and say: "This Christmas I'd love to take ten minutes to tell you what Jesus, the greatest gift ever given, means to me. Would you allow me that privilege?" Somebody might give you that opportunity.
3. **Give simple gospel gifts to your unchurched family members or neighbors.** You never know what God might do through a bag of homemade cookies and a simple tract of gospel truth. Give a filled stocking to your neighbors, and include a simple book about the truth of Christmas. Don't overwhelm your unchurched neighbors, but get the gospel in their hands.
4. **Do servant evangelism during this season.** Servant evangelism is doing good deeds in Jesus' name, with the hope of gaining an opportunity to share the gospel. Shovel a friend's driveway for no charge. Scrape the ice from a car windshield. Offer to shop for a non-believing elderly friend or family member. As a small group, volunteer to wrap gifts at a local mall. Always watch for open doors to talk about Jesus.

Church Office Hours
Mon-Fri 9AM-1PM

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The Church office will
be closed December 26,
for Christmas.

5. **Work with local social services or schools to assist an impoverished family.** Provide food and gifts. Show them the love of God through your actions, and ask permission to explain why you're doing what you do: because Jesus came to earth and died on our behalf.
6. **Throw a neighborhood birthday party for Jesus.** Invite your neighbors and their kids. Have a great time, being sure to take the time to tell the Christmas story. Trust that God's Word never comes back empty (Isaiah 55:11).
7. **Invite to your home a local family that does not celebrate a Christian Christmas.** Get to know neighbors, co-workers, international university students, or local business owners who follow other world faiths. Invite them to your home for an evening, and introduce them to your family's Christmas traditions – including celebrating Jesus!



In the United States and in many places around the world, it's will be Christmas Eve soon – the day before we celebrate the birth of God's Son in Bethlehem centuries ago. The day is often filled with last minute shopping, families traveling, and children eagerly anticipating tomorrow.

I suspect, though, that our business gets in the way of our taking time to pray. May I challenge you to take at least 15 minutes on Christmas Eve, step aside from the chaos, and pray? You might even invite your family to join you in these prayers:

1. **Thank God that the first Christmas Eve was, in fact, an “eve.”** An “eve” is the day before a special day or event. On that first Christmas Eve, God knew that history was about to change. The world would never be the same after the Savior was born.
2. **Pray for churches holding Christmas Eve services.** Many pastors and staff will be leading services around the world on Christmas Eve. Pray that God will give them focus, clarity, and Holy Spirit unction as they tell the Christmas story. If your church has a service, pray especially for your pastor.
3. **Pray for non-believers attending Christmas Eve services.** Some folks who don't know Jesus personally, and who often don't attend church at any other time during the year, will gather with believers tonight. Ask God to open their hearts to the truth.
4. **Pray for someone who knows the name of Jesus, but for whom this night has nothing to do with God.** You probably know somebody that fits this description. A neighbor. A co-worker. A fellow student. Even a family member. He or she might celebrate this holiday, but it's more a time to hang out with family and friends than a time to worship God.
5. **Pray for the billions of people around the world who've never heard of Jesus.** With all the attention Americans give to Christmas (even beginning to think about it commercially as early as October), we forget that more than 2 billion people don't even know that Jesus exists. Many of them will, in fact, die today and tomorrow, destined for eternal judgment. Pray today that *somebody around the world will meet Jesus* this Christmas.
6. **Pray for missionaries serving away from families this Christmas.** They do so willingly so others might know Jesus, but the holidays are often still difficult. As you gather with your family, pray for those who are giving their lives so non-believers might join the family of God.

7. **Pray for military chaplains serving among those who strive to preserve our liberty so we can worship freely.** Regardless of your thoughts about military force, men and women around the world are serving as Christian leaders among military personnel who put their lives on the line every day. Pray for all of them this Christmas Eve.
8. **Pray that this Christmas Eve might be a special “eve” in some other way in your life.** Only God knows what He has planned for your life tomorrow. Perhaps someone you love will become a Christian. Your wayward child might return home like the prodigal son of Luke 15. Reconciliation of your broken marriage might begin. You might live a day of victory on Christmas Day over a sin that has haunted you for years. God may unexpectedly and powerfully answer a long-stated prayer. If God grants you life, it’s possible that He might be preparing you today for His mighty work tomorrow.

For The Kids of Chambersburg



December 1 & 2, 2016 – “For the Kids of Chambersburg” will be attending Brethren Fellowship’s “Christmas Bazaar” with a fundraising table—selling “Jeff’s Jam’s & Salsa’s”—from Howard, PA. All Homemade, 100% natural & Gluten free. 1 pint jars of different Salsa & Jams Cost is \$6.00. Many selections: Cash & Carry. We can also take orders. Remember Christmas is approaching fast—what nicer gift for a hostess, family, friends or to serve at your own Christmas party. We will have some tasting of jam and Salsa with crackers at the table too. Gift baskets with jelly, salsa and crackers will be available for purchase.

December 11, 2016—Sunday – We will be participating in the Hoss’s Community Day/Night event. This is an easy fundraiser. You come to Hoss’s in Chambersburg on Sunday Dec. 11. You present your flyer to your waitress after you place your order. After you pay for your meal—For the Kids of Chambersburg will receive 20-25 % of your total pre-tax bill. Flyers will be available at church on Dec. 1. Get as many as you need. It’s an all day event—so eat lunch and supper???? Let’s fill the restaurant!

Remember proceeds made from all these fundraisers go to “For the Kids of Chambersburg” —who gives to non-profit agencies in Chambersburg that help needy children.

“For the Kids of Chambersburg” meets the 2nd Monday of each month at Perkins Restaurant. If you have a heart for children—please come join us!



The Matthew 25: Ministry—Helping Knows No Borders

Collection of pill bottles for the *Matthew 25 Ministry* will continue through December. Please remove any adhesive and prescription information from the bottle. More than 17 pounds of bottles have already been sent to the ministry, keep up the good work. A box is located in the lobby. Check out Matthew25: Ministry’s website at: <http://m25m.org/>

Total Offering to date: \$ 274,649.81

Total Special Offerings to date: \$ 19,186.10

“Steady plodding brings prosperity; hasty speculation brings poverty.”

Proverbs 21:5

Happening During the Christmas Season



Christmas Ensemble Choir Performing in December



Christmas Ensemble Choir

Our Christmas Ensemble Choir will be singing during the Christmas Season and possibly Christmas Day. If you would like to join the Choir, their rehearsals are held Sunday mornings from 8:55 to 9:30 a.m. Contact Gary Rebok or Jan Diaz if you have any questions. All are welcome to join the Choir as we celebrate our Lord's birth!

WWJD Christmas Pageant

WWJD Christmas Pageant will be held on December 18 at 9:00 a.m. The children in the play will need to be in the gym by 8:30 a.m. The WWJD will meet every Sunday until the pageant for rehearsal. On December 4 and 11 children will need to stay after worship for rehearsals in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions please contact Amanda Rhone or Tiffany Myers.



The Christmas Bazaar



The Christmas Bazaar will be held on December 1, 2, and 3 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We hope you will attend, and invite your friends and family to attend. There will be baked goods, plus many other Christmas items. Food will be served until 3:00 p.m. each day.

Baked Goods for the Christmas Bazaar

For the Christmas Bazaar baked items needed are Cakes, Pies, Cookies and Cupcakes. You can place baked goods in the kitchen and label for the bazaar. Items are needed by Nov. 30th.



Church Council Meeting Notes from November 13

Ron Keener opened the meeting at 11:28 a.m. with a devotion and prayer.

Ron Adams presided over the meeting, Matt Kramer had another commitment and could not lead the meeting.

The agenda for the meeting and minutes from the July 26, 2016 Council meeting were approved.

Gina Myers discussed the **Financial Report**, the vote was unanimous to approve the report.

Don Wenger discussed the **Phase I** of the remodeling project and steps currently being done for **Phase II** of the construction. Everyone who helped with the construction was thanked by all attending the meeting.

Mr. Lynn Rotz led the discussion about the **2017 Budget**. The **Budget for 2017** was passed, with a vote by ballots.

Ballots for the **Slate for 2017** were handed out. Any additional names were requested to add to the Slate or questions about the names on the Slate, with no response. The vote by hands was unanimous for approval of the 2017 Slate.

Affiliation with Converge World Wide was brought before members for a vote. Any questions were answered, ballots were handed out for members to vote and counted privately by Deacons. Due to a stipulation by the Leadership Team a 90% positive vote of attending members at the meeting, must be held for the church to become part of Converge World Wide. 80% of votes counted were for becoming part of Converge World Wide; 20% against. Due to the vote, the church will currently not become part of Converge World Wide.

Pastor Gary discussed his work for the past year which is great, currently the Youth Group has become mostly younger children. He is in full swing preparing for UPWARD Basketball. This summer he will have several resident camps with St. Johns. They will have an Ark Encounter; plus going to Creation, a great summer is planned.

Pastor Manny stated some things that have happened to the church in the last 8 years: We have had over 34 deaths, and currently some folks have serious health issues. We have people praying for the church; prayer before the Youth Group; Monthly All Prayer time; We are having a Thanksgiving meal for the Headstart families, giving them bags of items for their homes; the church has a very positive view in the community, allowing non-profit groups to use our facilities; We also have new families attending.

Pastor Manny **closed the meeting** with prayer at 12:30 p.m.

Yoga Continuing with Tricia Murray

Monday evenings, 6:30 p.m. Through December 19

Yoga can be a great tool to improve your health and stretch your body but also quiet the distractions of your mind and open your heart for God. Join us Monday evenings from Nov.7-Dec. 19 to see how you can use yoga as another way to worship. We'll use slow movements linking breath with motion and focus on reliance on God through devotions and meditation. Class will be slow enough for all levels while giving the most advanced student the opportunity for growth, cost is by donation.

Check out Converge World Wide

Converge World Wide Website: <https://www.converge.org/>

To connect to their current news updates go to: <https://www.converge.org/newsline>

To email Dan Peterson with any questions his email is: dan@convergemitatlantic.com

“Seasoned to Serve”

DECEMBER 17: Christmas Dinner Show at Antietam Recreation’s Center. Show: *The Christmas Experience*. Cost is \$42 per person, includes the show, bus and lunch. The group will leave the church parking lot at 11:00 a.m. A signup sheet is on the bulletin board.

Contact Reid and Linda Pletcher for information or sign-up for events: Phone 423-5288 or email: reidlnda@hotmail.com

Our Church Family



December Birthday’s

Sally Appleby
Terrye Armstrong
Sarah Bierbower
Linda Brunner
Diane Christman
Carol Clugston
Dorsey Collins
Karen Diller
Eric Eiker
Tucker Eiker

Peggy Faust
Bette Rae Gallagher
Roger Henneberger
Mary Kimmel
Bill Kuhn
Linda Logsdon
Darian Miller
Betsy Poe
Brandon Pryor
Meagan Pryor

Molli Ann Rhone
Mackenzie Secrest
Lucy Sellers
Matt Sites
Eden Sites
Micah Statler
Brenda Summers
Emily Vanpelt
Julian West
Geraldine Witter

December Anniversaries

Steve and Annie Dunn
Eric and Linda Eiker
Frank and Mary Sue Keath
Rich and Cindy Pryor
Robert and Beulah Secrest



Changes to Your Information

If your address, telephone number, cell phone number or email has changed please let the church office know so we can keep in touch with you. You can email Mona at brethrenfel@hotmail.com or place a note in the church mailbox. If you haven’t received a birthday card or anniversary card, please let us know the correct dates for our records.

Baptism Sunday

December 18, Baptisms will be offered to those wishing to be baptized. Contact Pastor Manny if interested.

December 2016 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 8:00a-3:00p- Christmas Bazaar 5:30p-Discipleship	2 8:00a-3:00p- Christmas Bazaar	3 8:00a-3:00p- Christmas Bazaar
4 9:00a-Sunday School Dedication of Children 10:00a-Worship Service 11:00a Children's Pageant rehearsal	5 5:30p-HCP 6:30p-Yoga-Chapel 6:30p-Property	6 12p-CTC 12:30p-HOG Yoga	7 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	8 8:00a-EFCV 5:00-9:00p-UPWARD Basketball Evaluations	9 5:00-9:00p - UPWARD Basketball Evaluations	10 9:00a-1:00p- UPWARD Basketball Evaluations
11 9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service 11:00a Children's Pageant rehearsal	12 5:30p-HCP 6:30p-Yoga-Chapel Newsletter Articles due for January 2017	13 12:30p-HOG Yoga 6:30p-Worship and Music Team 6:30p-All Leadership Teams	14 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	15	16	17 11:00a-Leave for STS- Dinner and show at Antietam Rec Center
18 Baptism Sunday 9:00a-Sunday School & Children's Pageant 10:00a-Worship Service 3-8:00p-Gym reserved	19 5:30p-HCP 6:30p-Yoga-Chapel	20 12:30p-HOG Yoga 6:00p-Finance Team 6:30p-Deacons 6:35p-Outreach	21 6:15p-Prayer Time 6:30p-Youth 6:30p-Bible Study	22	23	24 7:00p-Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas Day 9:00a-Sunday School 10:00a-Worship Service	26 The Church Office will be closed	27	28 No Youth Group 6:30p-All Church Prayer Time	29	30	31

a=A.M.

p=P.M.

Weekly Pray Time is held downstairs

All Church Prayer Time is held in the Chapel

STS-Seasoned to Serve

All Yoga classes are held in the Chapel

Christmas Season

E L C E D C D S T Y E Y P O V I K E F S
 K E N A N V E O H O M L O B Q S E I L D
 A I R D R A B S T E Z L I N O E G V E R
 C R E E E O C E Y L P O N E Y M G S R A
 T B G H G C L Y P O S H S E L D N A C C
 I A N G C T O S D N T J E V C E O J W G
 U G A M S Y U R O N O S T R C G G S R N
 R N M I O G H W A E A E T N D U W T E I
 F X M J C R F W Z T E C I A U S S O A T
 M M E H E L H T E B I K A S B E I C T E
 R O R N A M E N T S N O U U L L G K H E
 S U E K S N O W M A N S N C E V E I J R
 Z D E H C T T H R E E W I S E M E N Y G
 S S N C M C F F M J J C N P I S R G F M
 Z T A E S L E I G H I S L L E B T A A F
 F K H N I C H Y G T X O K T A C M R U E
 G X J G T R H P E S O J A N S I Y P O H
 O Z C I I A F L G D X K G T L M Y R R H
 L P J Q C L A K B L S E F Y L M Y R I A
 D S K H C D P S C N L O T M R A T S C W

ANGEL
 BELLS
 BETHLEHEM
 CANDLES
 CANDY CANE
 CAROLS
 DECORATIONS
 EGGNOG
 FAMILY
 FRANKINCENSE
 FRIENDS

FRUITCAKE
 GABRIEL
 GIFTS
 GOLD
 GREETING CARDS
 HOLLY
 ICICLES
 JESUS
 JOSEPH
 LIGHTS
 MANGER

MARY
 MISTLETOE
 MYRRH,
 ORNAMENTS
 POINSETTIA
 SANTA
 SHEPHERDS
 SKATES
 SLEIGH
 SNOWFLAKES
 SNOWMAN

STABLE
 STAR
 STOCKING
 THREE WISE MEN
 TOBOGGAN
 TOYS
 TREE
 WREATH