

Puckety Presbyterian Church
1009 Puckety Church Road
Lower Burrell, PA 15068

(Return Service Requested)

REMINDER:

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Zoom/video at pucketychurch.org



Puckety Church

*We are determined to be
the heart, voice, and
hands of God, making a
lasting difference in your
life, our community, and
the world!*

Post-Scripts
a monthly publication



Puckety Presbyterian Church

*At Puckety we personally and collectively Honor God, Grow in Faith,
and Improve our Community and World.*

December 2023

Pastor's Corner

Post-Scripts
a monthly publication

I'd like to actually use a portion of a fellow pastor's article (many of you know Doug Marshall) from their church newsletter:

"The nation was floundering. It was a wandering wasteland of sin and corruption. Its leaders were weak, confused and afraid. Selfishness and injustice pervaded the whole country. People claimed to be religious, but followed their own desires and did whatever felt good to them. At the sight of the country and lack of spirituality, God's heart was broken."

[At this point, I could tell where Doug, cleverly, was going]

Though this could easily describe the current situation in the culture of our nation (admit it, you thought the same), it's actually a description of ancient Israel. I knew that's where Rev. Marshall was going, but my thought was, "Oh, I can tell that's Israel, but *when?*" I thought, most likely, he was referring to the time of the Judges (after Joshua but before the kings), where everyone "did what was right in their own eyes" (old time relativistic individualism). Maybe you thought he was thinking of a different period (he was). But then I thought, "Hmm, God actually sent a lot of prophets – to both the northern and southern kingdoms – many times over generations, when this kind of injustice and godlessness was spreading.

You might be thinking, "What kind of Advent/Christmas message is this?" Glad 'you' asked – a very fitting one actually. Why? Because again and again, when God's people were wandering away in idolatry and self-absorption, with the prophets who called them back to faith, he would also give glimpses of His ultimate solution, in the form of messianic prophecies – like that in Isaiah about the one who would come from a virgin ... "to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders." Or maybe the one about the shoot that would come from the stump of Jesse (the true Davidic king) ... or the one in Micah 5 saying, "You, O Bethlehem, although you seem too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me, one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming is from of old – the ancient of days." I could go on and on, and that's the point: God consistently included this word of hope, this promise of grace in with his judgments and stern calls to repentance. And this is the spirit of Advent – we have the same call to repentance ... and we have the same hope, fulfilled in the promises of the One.

Just as he sent prophets to the forgetful people of his unfaithful nation, with a message, he extends a very similar message to us. What the Lord wants most from us is our hearts. As he did with David ... as he did with Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1), as he did with John the Baptist, God will use whatever gifts, talents, and energy we have, but what he wants most from us is our hearts. God doesn't need super talented people to create a super-church (David was the youngest and scrawniest, Zechariah & Elizabeth were too old to have children, the Baptist was eccentric to the extreme). What God needs is people who have completely given their hearts to Him.

If we want the "Christmas spirit" to spread, and make a difference in the new year, what we need is to have hearts that have been "*tuned*" by the message of Advent, and "*pruned*" by the Messiah of Christmas (John 15). Let me end by quoting the last bit of Pastor Marshall's article: "We need to let God touch our heart and our hurts with His wonderful grace and love and power. If we give God control of our hearts and our lives [*let the Ruler from Bethlehem rule*], then we will become the people that we were intended to be and live in His love.

“And his name shall be called: *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* Of the increase of his government there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.” (Isaiah 9:6-7)

May he rule, over you, over me, over all,
Pastor Brian

Remember to check Puckety's website and social media!

Website: www.pucketychurch.org Like and Follow on Facebook: Puckety Presbyterian Church
Follow us on Instagram: Puckety Church Follow us on Twitter: @churchpuckety



There are different ways to give to the mission of the church. If you choose to give electronically, click the button on our website or you can also make it even easier by using the Vanco Faith App! (*search Vanco App in the App Store or Google Play*). When you search for our church, put in "Puckety Presbyterian Church" For more information on how to use Vanco Faith click the link on pucketychurch.org. Thank you for your generosity!

From the Hearts & Hands of Session

Projector Project Update – before we tell you the good news about the timeline, let us first give you just a glimpse of how God moved. Putting it very succinctly, we received the estimate of \$8,992 for all projector, switcher, wiring, other material and labor. Most of us had sticker shock, but we went to prayer, and before some of our jaws had come back up, God started to answer them. In the course of a week from the invoiced amount – keep in mind we hadn’t communicated an amount to be raised – but within a week, we received 3 anonymous donations totaling roughly \$4,200. Add to that the amount generously given from the Fellowship & Care team (the majority of the money they raised from the Apple Dumpling Sale, which they redirected in light of the need), along with the remaining funds in the AV Team budget, it came to the amount needed (almost to the dollar!). Join us in giving glory to God, for He is the One who makes a way and moves our hearts walk in it!

The devices and materials were procured by the installer shortly thereafter (mid-November), and installation was scheduled to begin on Monday, Nov. 27th. By the time you read this, we expect the project to be well underway. The *anticipation* (perfectly in line with the idea of Advent) is for the system to be utilized between Dec. 3rd & Dec. 10th. Please note, if you see some “empty space” at the very top or bottom of the screen once we start using, that is normal and expected based on the picture ratio of all new projectors. We believe it will be easy enough for us all to adjust since the image (though slightly smaller) will be visibly better and sharper. We thank Jenn McKay, N’Stuff Music, and all others who helped in the project. *Soli Deo Gloria.*



We want to thank everyone who packed shoeboxes for *Operation Christmas Child*. We also thank the Deacons for paying half the cost of shipping and for delivering the boxes to the drop-off site. In total, 38 boxes were packed and dedicated – may the Lord bless many children and bring them closer to Himself.



A reminder to all to please take a tag or two from the TryLife Angel Tree, and please be sure to bring back the specified gift NO LATER than the morning of December 17th (in a bag is better than wrapped) with the matching angel tag securely attached. If possible, please bring back by Sun. December 10th, so we can make sure that the gifts get to all the families that TryLife is seeking to minister to. Thank you for your support.

LADIES OF PUCKETY

and female guests!

We would like to invite you to our
Annual Ladies Advent Tea!

The theme this year is:

“Born to Move Mountains: A Baby Shower for Mary”

Join us for brunch and fellowship immediately following Worship on December 3rd! Please consider bringing a donation of unwrapped diapers size 4 through 7 for the babies or new and unopened personal care gifts like sugar scrubs, face masks, perfumes, lotions, etc. for the mothers that the TryLife Center supports.





- 03 Vince Appleman
- 10 Jenn McKay
- 17 Beth Dober
- 24(AM) Sophia Earhart
- 24(PM) Maria Schafer
- 31 Michelle Gordon

Your Deacons:

- Sandra Ankney
- Pat Fish
- John McAllister
- Cecil McCutcheon
- Brandy Roland
- Mira Whalen
- Kim Soulcheck
- Sandy Appleman
- Fran Kapelewski
- Nita Serene
- Brenda McAllister
- Rodney Schafer

Corporate Officers:

- President:** Jennifer McKay
- Vice-Pres.:** Cliff McKay, Sr.
- Secretary:** Debra Artman
- Treasurer:** Jolene Kostelansky

The Burrell School Fall Play (*Treasure Island*) is around the corner (literally a flip of the calendar page). A group from Puckety will be going Friday, December 1st. We will meet at the doors at 7:10pm. Please ask Matt Wehrle (724-396-6775) for more information.

Your Session:
 Deb Artman – Clerk
 Jolene Kostelansky
 Jennifer McKay
 Cliff McKay
 Kelly Kapelewski
 Marilyn Crumley
 Helen Crissman
 Maria Schafer
 Sandy Schafer



Offering counters:

- 03: Helen Crissman & Marilyn Crumley
- 10: Deb Artman, Janet Karan & Jolene Kostelansky
- 17: Chuck & Judy West
- 24: Jolene Kostelansky, Sophia Earhart & Matt Wehrle
- 31: Helen Crissman & Marilyn Crumley

ATTENTION ALL SESSION MEMBERS, DEACONS, AND TEAM LEADERS:



Please be sure to check your mail slots in the metal cabinet at the top of the stairs often. You may receive correspondence or announcements that need your attention in a timely manner!

Pastor:

Reverend Brian Kilbert

Administrative Secretary:

Kelly Kapelewski

Bookkeeper:

Debra Artman

Choir Director:

Lorraine Menk

Organist/Pianist:

Jesse Oddis

Housekeeper:

Irene Nelson

Financial Secretary:

Judy West

PRAYER REQUESTS!

If you are not on our prayer chain, please consider signing up for it. It only takes a minute to lift someone who may need your prayers! Call or email the office. We have an email prayer chain as well as a phone call prayer chain.

THE DEACONS ARE ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF ANY NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS FOR THE DEACON'S PANTRY. PLACE YOUR ITEMS OUTSIDE THE METAL CABINET BESIDE THE LIBRARY DOOR. THANK YOU!



The Bible readings are from "Book of Common Worship"

December 3:

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Cor 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

December 10:

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 17:

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
Luke 1:46b-55
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24:

2 Sam 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Luke 1:26-38

December 31:

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Gal 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40



Crafternoon in December will be Sunday the 10th in the conference room. This group is open to any crafters and we hope to see more of you at this gathering. If you want to try your hand at crocheting please let Wiebke know and we can use that time to get you started.

Please join us in Welcoming the first Grandchild of Jenn & Cliff McKay – Clare Louise Motosicky!
11/23 @ 1:36pm
6#11oz 19" long



- 3 Donovan Cosentino
- 8 Mark Benish
- 9 Debbie Fotheringham
- 10 Nita Serene
- 12 Bernanrd Adams
- 13 Karen Tkach
- 14 Jeffrey Burtner
- 17 Emma Hough
- Pastor Brian Kilbert
- 20 Becky Cosentino
- 21 Julia McAllister
- 23 Bill Dailey
- 24 Amanda Schirato
- 27 Linda Zurenski
- 29 Joyce Ewing
- Tim Fritz
- 30 George Tkach
- 31 Jack Guyer



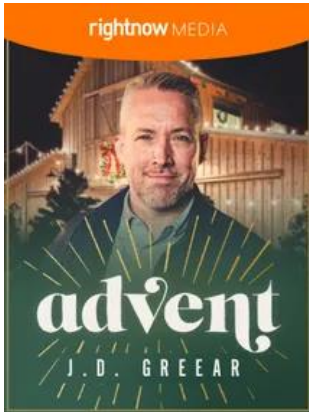
Join us for Puckety Church family Christmas dinner following worship on December 17! We will be serving roast beef, potatoes, carrots, coleslaw, rolls and beverages. Please bring a dessert to share.



RightNow! - Puckety Church has purchased a great resource to invest in all of you! We have unlimited access to RightNow Media—the world’s largest streaming library of video Bible study resources (the “Netflix of video Bible studies”). For both our members and friends of the congregation, RightNow Media has a free app that’s available on all major streaming devices so you and your family can access content anywhere, anytime. To get started, simply use the QR code below, create your free account, and start browsing more than 20,000 inspiring videos. Please help us spread this news to everyone. We pray that RightNow Media will be a blessing to you and your family!

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/pucketychurch>

Or you can text the code **PUCKETYCHURCH** to the number 49775 and you will receive a text back, welcoming you to RightNow Media and providing you with the invite link to register.



"Advent" - a new video study available with RightNow Media (you can find it in the Pastor's Picks or by a general search). The Christmas story is more than a sentimental myth or a quiet manger scene we use to decorate our living rooms. The Christmas story starts earlier with Advent - the news of God entering into our darkness. Join J.D. Greear in this four-session series as he takes a deeper look at Jesus as Emmanuel, our Wonderful Counselor, the Everlasting Father, and the great I Am. When you know Jesus, you will realize Christmas is more than a nice story—the arrival of Jesus changes everything.



Devotional for You – Read Isaiah 6:1-7 & 7:14

Of all the Advent signs and symbols (blue & purple paraments, calendars that count the days – *my favorite are ones with accompanying chocolates* – hymns, and songs, and Scriptures rife with poignant images and stirring prophecies), of all the signs and symbols, perhaps none is more vivid than the Advent wreath. I think it’s the ever-increasing light – candles growing steadily shorter, but the light growing steadily brighter – that mirrors our anticipation and heralds the ever nearer presence of Christ, our LIGHT.

It seems that the Advent Wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A Lutheran minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed 20 small red candles and 4 large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays, and the white candles were lit on Sundays ... Well, it’s not hard for us to imagine over the years how it came to be covered in evergreens (long-used symbol of eternal life even amidst the dark and death of winter). The circle reminds us of God’s unending love for us, and how it makes our eternal life possible. More time passes. Holly and berries are added (for the thorns in Christ’s crown and the blood on his brow) – pointing to Christ’s sacrifice and death. More Christmases pass to let the meaning deepen. Pinecones sometimes now symbolize a new life that Jesus brings through his resurrection, but his victory over the grave is most illustrated by the central white candle, that stands above the rest.

Now, in many churches in the Reformed tradition, the separate candles each have a successive meaning:

1st purple candle is the **“Prophecy”** or **“Hope” Candle**. It urges us to *listen* – so it’s often accompanied by the voice of John the Baptist, Zechariah, or one of the earlier prophets. “Hear the word of the Lord,” the prophets of old thundered – that’s the message of the Prophecy Candle – “listen & prepare.”

2nd candle of Advent (purple) is the **“Bethlehem”** or **“Peace” Candle**. In the prophecy of Micah 5:2-5, it tells us that Bethlehem was humble (tiny to the point of almost not being considered for great things), but it was the

birthplace of David. It's a good place to be the second candle ... still a small amount of light, but it's growing to something much bigger. Micah foresaw another ruler coming from Bethlehem, one who would be greater than David, and in that coming the promise of peace in all its fullness – the kind of peace the very angels of the Lord would proclaim on those same sheep-filled hills, surrounded by heavenly light.

3rd candle (the ever-tricky pink one) is the *Shepherds'* or *"Joy" Candle*. As the light progresses, we move from the trembling parts of the prophets' call to watch and prepare, to the reason for joy. Like the shepherds! Like Isaiah of old, they were frightened at first by the vision of the angels (seriously, go read how the cherubim and seraphim are described in parts of the Bible with lots of wings and eyes all over them – I'd be scared), but after their fears are assuaged, they began to *feel* the "news of great joy," and then ran off to *see* it with their own eyes (Luke 2:9-16). What is the opposite of fear? Joy.

4th candle (last purple) is the *Angels'* or *"Love" Candle*. The wreath is now fully encircled with light. The message is approaching its climax. God himself is coming among us (Emmanuel). And how exactly will this be "God-with-us"? ... In judgment for our sins (which we deserve) ... in the fiery majesty of separated holiness? ... No, in love; as a Savior. "Unto *you*, is born this day, a *Savior*, who is Christ, the Lord." The angel who keeps popping up (Gabriel) has told Joseph to name God's Son, "Jesus" – which means, "He saves" – for he will save his people from their sins. The 5th (center) Candle is ... well, I have to save something for later, right? Can't ruin the anticipation ... So, as you watch the light grow progressively brighter, and warmer, week by week, allow them to bring the Savior into sharper view; let the message of God's wondrous love grow brighter ... and brighter. *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

In, *hope, peace, joy and love,*

Pastor Brian



The Deacons will be filling Christmas Food Baskets again this year. Please fill out the information below and place it in the offering plate or on Kelly's desk before December 10th. The baskets will be ready for pick-up on December 16th @ 9:30am.

SPONSOR'S NAME _____

SPONSOR'S PHONE NUMBER _____

FAMILY'S NAME _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

NUMBER OF ADULTS _____ NUMBER OF CHILDREN _____

The Ladies Bible Study Group (formerly Bracken Bible Study) has resumed meeting at 1:00pm in the conference room on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Please join us!

Notes from the Choir Director: At this special time of year, I want to express appreciation to the choir members of Puckety Church. Listed from left to right as they stand in the chancel: Top Row: Irene Nelson, Sophie Earhart, Marti Rugh, Nita Serene, Chuck West, Bruce Sproull, Brandi Roland and Jennifer McKay. Lower Row: Beth Dober, Janet Karan, Mira Whalen, Violet Adamsky, Mick Dober, Pastor Brian Kilbert, Barb Sprinkle, Sandra Ankney, and Lisa Wilson. Also a special thanks to our organist and accompanist, Jesse Oddis. Thank you for your time, talent, heart and soul that you give freely. Lorraine Menk



Youth group was awesome in November – we added a few new students (averaging 17 now). We had 18 go to Skyzone on 11/19 (what a blast!). We’re discussing ‘God’s Heart’ (RightNow Media) using a video study with Francis Chan on Exodus 33–35. We have room for more. We’re going caroling on Dec. 10 – contact Pastor Brian if you’d like to come sing with us!



A Friendly Reminder from Upkeep

Upkeep is always happy to have the supportive of individuals who are willing to make efforts to enhance the beauty and functionality of our church buildings and grounds. We appreciate your interests and hard work on behalf of our church and its mission.

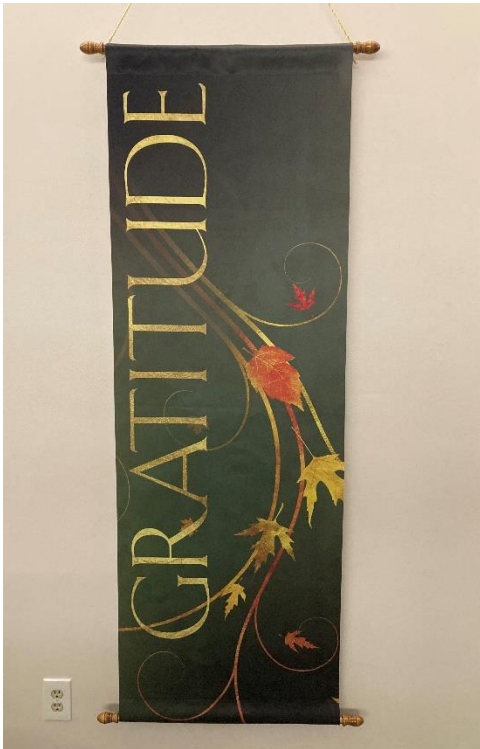
We also would like to make a kindly reminder that physical changes, adaptations and improvements need to have the approval of the Upkeep Committee before any action is taken. Communication with the Upkeep Committee helps eliminate misunderstandings and issues that may come at cross purposes to Upkeep's operational plans. We understand that such occurrences are nearly always innocent by their very nature and are a very rare occurrence.

The Upkeep Committee welcomes your suggestions and help. We all have the same goal to move our church forward and to be pleasing in the eyes of our God.

In summary, any ideas for changes for the grounds and buildings need to be presented to the full committee for approval. Upon thorough consideration, followed by approval by Upkeep, the changes can then be undertaken or implemented.

Thank all of you for both your continued financial support and spiritual support as we move forward together.

The Puckety Upkeep Committee



The banner currently on display ("Gratitude" against a green field) is donated by Mary Wilds in loving memory of Donna Bracken for her kindness and compassion.

The current banner on display (Autumn Tree) has been donated by Garrett Baker and Family in loving memory of wife, mother, and grandmother, Patricia Baker, who loved being outdoors in God's creation.



The offering envelopes are in alphabetical order on the front pew of the Sanctuary. Please take yours as soon as possible. If you want envelopes and you don't see Yours, please see Judy West. Thank you!

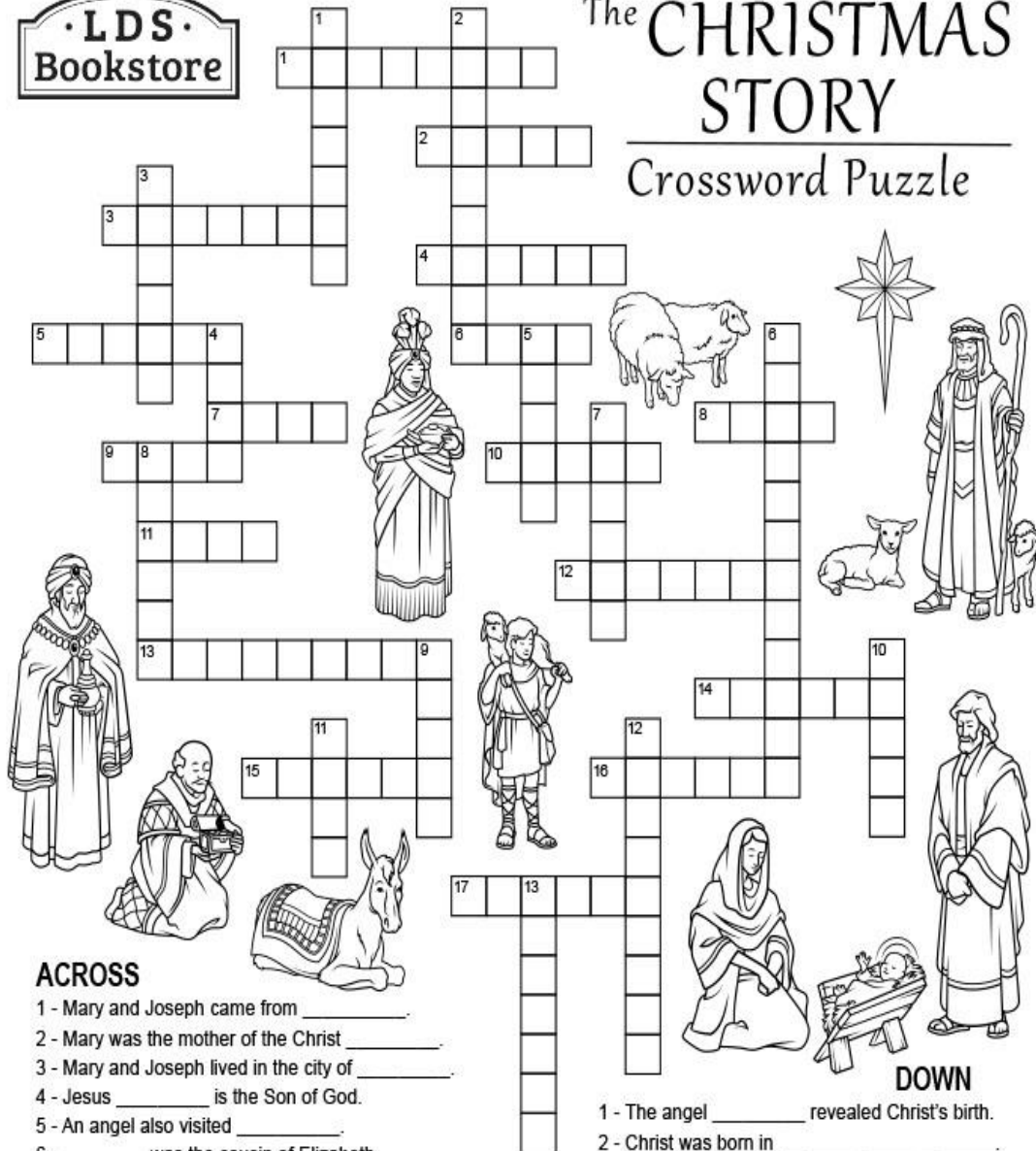


December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10:00am Worship	27 Meals on Wheels 10:00am Men's Group Meeting 10:30am Card Ministry 8:00pm Scouts: God & Church	28 1:00pm VBV Group Meeting 2:00pm Directory Design Meeting 5:00pm Worship Team Meeting 5:30pm Girl Scouts 46799 6:15pm Daisy Troop 8:00pm N.A. meeting	29 Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Girl Scouts 23087 6:30pm Pastor Brian Small Group Meeting	30 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	1 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 10:00am Worship  11:30am Advent Ladies Christmas Tea 6:00pm Youth Group	4 Meals on Wheels 10:00am Men's Group Meeting 6:00pm Upkeep Team Meeting	5 2:00pm Directory Design Meeting 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 20130 5:30pm Girl Scouts 46799 6:30pm Outreach Team Meeting 8:00pm N.A. meeting	6 Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Deacons Meeting 6:30pm Pastor Brian Small Group Meeting	7 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	8 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	9 Snow Family Reunion
10 10:00am Worship  11:30am Crafternoon 6:00pm Youth Group Christmas Caroling	11 Meals on Wheels 10:00am Men's Group Meeting 5:30pm MS Group Meeting 7:00pm Seneca Service Unit Leader Meeting 8:00pm Scouts: God & Church	12 1:00pm Ladies Bible Study 5:00pm Try-Life Outreach 6:00pm Session Meeting 6:15pm Daisy Troop 8:00pm N.A. meeting	13 Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Girl Scouts 23087 6:30pm Pastor Brian Small Group Meeting	14 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	15 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	16
17 10:00am Worship  11:00am Congregational Meeting 11:30am Church Christmas Dinner  Christmas Dinner 6:00pm Youth Group Christmas Party	18 Meals on Wheels 10:00am Men's Group Meeting 4:30pm Discipleship Team Meeting	19 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 20130 5:30pm Girl Scouts 46799 7:00pm Sewing Guild 8:00pm N.A. meeting	20 Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Pastor Brian Small Group Meeting	21 5:30pm Girl Scouts 26234 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	22 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED  First Day of Winter	23 Miller Family Christmas
24 10:00am Worship  7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Service  CHRISTMAS EVE Service	25  Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED Painter Christmas Party	26 OFFICE CLOSED 1:00pm Ladies Bible Study 6:15pm Daisy Troop 8:00pm N.A. meeting	27 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED 6:30pm Girl Scouts 23087	28 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30am Card Ministry 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	29 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	30
31 10:00am Worship  New Year's Eve	1 OFFICE CLOSED  New Year's Day Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	2 6:30pm Outreach Team Meeting 8:00pm N.A. meeting	3 Meals on Wheels	4 6:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	5 Meals on Wheels OFFICE CLOSED	6

The CHRISTMAS STORY

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 1 - Mary and Joseph came from _____.
- 2 - Mary was the mother of the Christ _____.
- 3 - Mary and Joseph lived in the city of _____.
- 4 - Jesus _____ is the Son of God.
- 5 - An angel also visited _____.
- 6 - _____ was the cousin of Elizabeth.
- 7 - Jesus would be know as the _____ of God.
- 8 - A new _____ was a sign of Christ's birth.
- 9 - The King of Kings came to Earth as a _____.
- 10 - Jesus was a descendant of Kind _____.
- 11 - A precious gift given by the wisemen.
- 12 - These men followed a star to find Jesus.
- 13 - _____ saw angels outside the city.
- 14 - Mary rode a _____ to Bethlehem.
- 15 - The only place Joseph could find for Mary.
- 16 - At the _____ Simeon met the Christ child.
- 17 - The wisemen travelled on _____.

DOWN

- 1 - The angel _____ revealed Christ's birth.
- 2 - Christ was born in _____.
- 3 - Away in a _____, no crib froma bed...
- 4 - The _____ One of Israel.
- 5 - Bethlehem was _____ David's city.
- 6 - _____ was one of the wisemen's gifts.
- 7 - The Christ child would be born to a _____.
- 8 - _____ appeared to the shepherds.
- 9 - A shepherds job is to care for his _____.
- 10 - Jesus was a descendant of Kind _____.
- 11 - Another gift from the three wisemen.
- 12 - _____ was the capital city.
- 13 - The House of Israel awaited their _____.

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