



DECEMBER



# PeacePress

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST [www.peaceucc.com](http://www.peaceucc.com)

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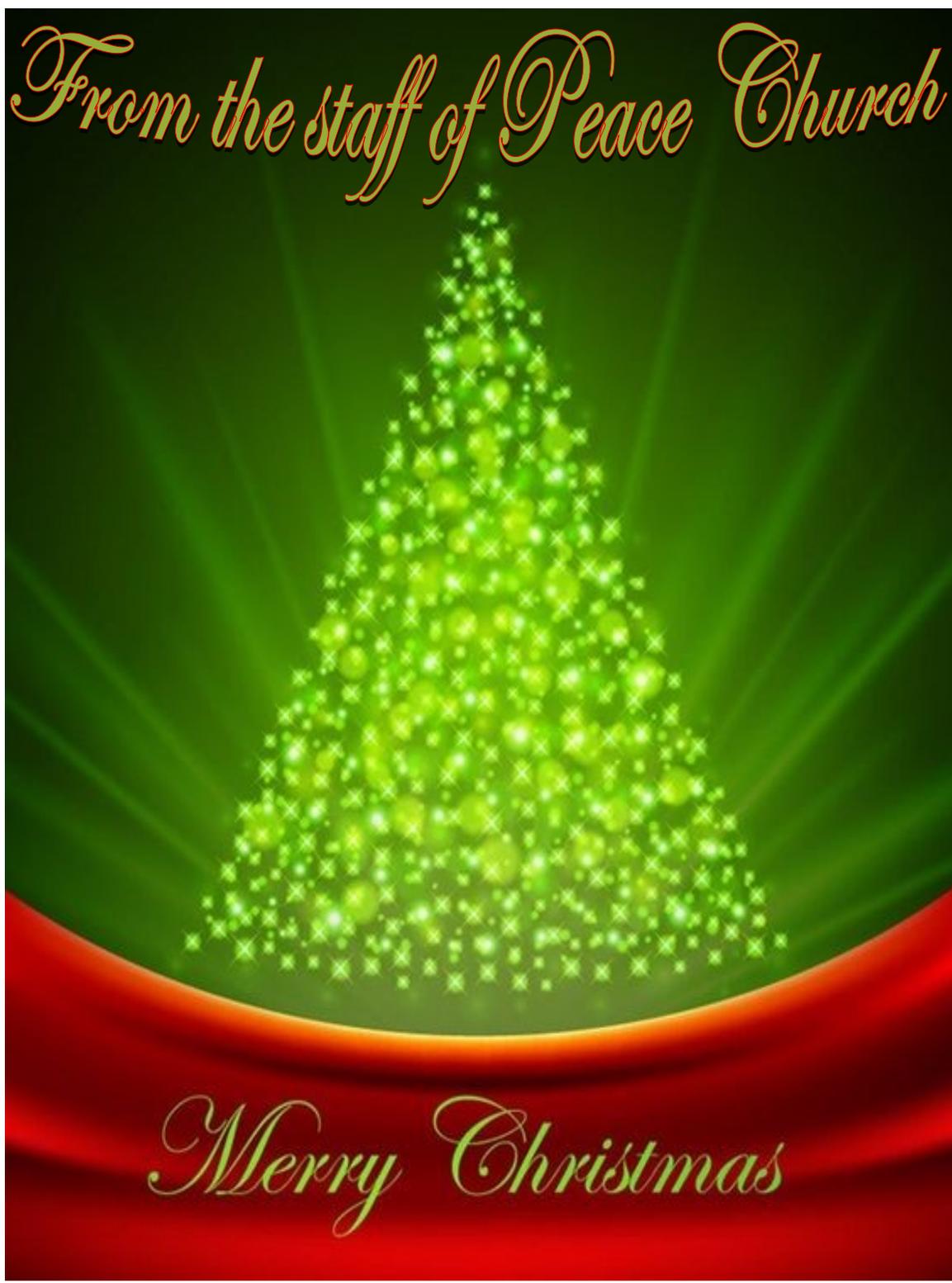
Volume 32, Issue 12

A Global Mission Church

December, 2019

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The mission of Peace United Church of Christ is to reach our community for Christ, develop disciples, and empower all people for ministry.



*From the staff of Peace Church*

Peace United Church of Christ  
2714 W. Market St.  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
Phone 336-299-8663  
Fax 336-299-9730  
[www.peaceucc.com](http://www.peaceucc.com)

Church Email:  
[peaceucc2714@gmail.com](mailto:peaceucc2714@gmail.com)

### STAFF

**Rev. Tom Warren**

Pastor  
Direct Line 336-553-9730  
Email:  
[reverendtom65@gmail.com](mailto:reverendtom65@gmail.com)

**Ms. Elisabeth Penry**

Minister of Music  
and Organist

**Mrs. Sherri Vestal**

Office Manager

**Mr. Ted Wilkinson**

Youth Director

**Ms. Rachel Johnson**

Nursery Attendant

**Ms. Jeanne Bryan**

Consistory President

*Merry Christmas*

# Pastor's Perspective

## Advent

*A Season of Hope  
& Expectation*

Dear Peace Church Family,

It is once again the time of year (our 7<sup>th</sup> together!) when we prepare for the coming of the Christ-child. It is a season of promise and joy, a time for us to remember that Jesus came into the world in the quiet of the night, yet with a historic impact that would quickly shatter the silence. Jesus came into this world almost without notice, a birth that cannot be ignored even to this very day.

The story of Christ's birth reminds us not only of what God did in the Christ-event, but that God comes into history at the margins; when and where very few are looking. God comes to us, as Jesus did, at odd moments in strange places. While not many people in that first century understood the power of Christ's life and witness, a few did, and they followed. We, as Peace Church, continue the tradition of the few.

This year my family looks forward to having all of you at our home on Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> from 3:00-5:00pm. Come to eat, sing, fellowship, and enjoy the Christmas spirit. There will be a warm, roaring fire in the fireplace, so have no fear of cold temps!

As the year winds down, I want to thank everyone for the faith and work that I see each and every day at Peace Church. As David Murray likes to say, "We're small, but mighty!" Indeed, we witness to the gospel in some powerful ways, and the world is a better place because of it.

Blessings upon you during this Christmas season and may the coming year truly be one of hope, peace, love, and joy for you, your family, and our Peace Church family. Hope to see you all on the 21<sup>st</sup>!

~ *Pastor Tom, Kim, Daniel, and Abigail*



## CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE @ MILLER-WARREN HOME!!

The entire Peace Church Family is invited to a Christmas Open House Party on Saturday, December 21st from 3:00-5:00pm at Pastor Tom & Kim's home located at 5411 Chatfield Square in Greensboro. Please come for fellowship, Christmas snacks, a warm fire in the fireplace, and a Christmas carol sing in the Miller-Warren living room! Mark your calendars now.



**Directions:** Take Bryan Boulevard toward the airport and take the Fleming Road exit (go right at light); take Fleming Road 1.9 miles up to Pondfield Drive (turn right); take quick left onto Windlestraw Lane and look for white fence on the right and park on the street.



**Saturday, December 14th, 6:00 p.m.**

This will be the 8th annual "Running of the Balls". This night run/walk on a 5K(ish) course through Sunset Hills

takes participants through the largest neighborhood light display in the United States. Started years ago, the residents of this neighborhood decorate their 50-foot tall trees with enormous "Lighted Christmas Balls."

Now the third largest race in Greensboro, its 3,500 runners annually raise more than \$50,000 for Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC. Adding to the ambiance of the race, the course is filled has 7 stages of music, homeowners enjoying the event with friends caroling by campfire and hot chocolate and cookies in the Start/Finish area.

For more information visit their website at [www.TheRunningoftheBalls.com](http://www.TheRunningoftheBalls.com).



A  
Note from  
Elisabeth

We arrive again at December and the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Each year we expect certain words to be said and events to happen, but each year Christmas can also be new as we open our hearts to what God wants to reveal to each of us. Such beauty and wonder in how God could give His Son to die for us and bring us to salvation and in the example of the obedience of Mary and Joseph.

Please be sure you have made plans to worship with the choir on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, as we sing the cantata *Together for Christmas* by Pepper Choplin. This is a new cantata for the choir and Peace Church and includes some congregational participation. It is designed to be a complete worship experience, and there are places for you to greet one another and also sing-along. Come, and let's experience the beauty of Christ's birth "together!"



I do want to say a huge "Thank you" to all who will be singing in the choir on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Listening and practice began during the summer. Their dedication and faithfulness is such a gift and a blessing.

And... remember December 29<sup>th</sup> is a fifth Sunday. We will be having our fifth Sunday hymn sing during the anthem time, and it will be Christmas Carols. Be ready to suggest your favorite carol, and we will sing together proclaiming Jesus's birth – perhaps even hearing a carol in a new and spiritually meaningful way this year!

The singing of the *Messiah* this year was in November, but when we receive word of any other community Christmas events, we try to have them posted on the bulletin board. Here are a couple of events coming soon.

- *West Market Street UMC* sent word that on Tuesdays from noon – 12:30p.m. on December 3, 10, 17, and 24 there will be Advent Organ Meditations for the season.
- Also, on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. and December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m., they are presenting "Bending Towards the Light...a jazz nativity" with the Marketbell Ringers having a concert one hour prior.
- If you like handbell music, the Raleigh Ringers have concerts at the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts in Raleigh on Saturday, December 21, at 4:00p.m. and Sunday, December 22, at 4:00p.m. There will be a letter on the bulletin board with more information about purchasing tickets.



Hey Peace Family! I hope everyone is getting excited for the Christmas Season which is (at the time of writing this) fast approaching! In November we wrapped up the lessons on Bad Days and How God Made Them Better with stories about Paul and Lazarus. In the case of Paul we learned about his conversion on the road to Damascus. As you can see in this photo with **Brooklyn and Dominic Hittepole**, we tried to understand what Paul went through by trying to draw blindfolded. Coming up in December we will be starting our Advent events where each Sunday we will be creating something new and learning about a different part of the Christmas Story. I hope we will see you there!

God Bless,  
**Ted Wilkinson**, Youth Director

In all of the rush of the Christmas season, let's all pray for and listen to God's personal revelation to us through His Holy Word and show the same obedience to what He has to say as was shown by Mary and Joseph.

~ **Elisabeth Penry**

Peace United Church of Christ

## MISSION OF THE MONTH

### HEIFER INTERNATIONAL LIVING GIFT MARKET

#### Make the Holidays More Meaningful!

This Christmas, give a life-changing gift to Heifer International in honor of friends or family. It is a gift that brings promise to hungry families and the opportunity for a better life to the less fortunate. For each \$10 toward the purchase of an animal, you will receive a card to send to those on your gift list showing that a gift was made in their honor. Every family who receives livestock agrees to pass on one or more of its animal's offspring to another neighbor in need. Gifts of chicks, cows, sheep, llamas, water buffaloes, honey bees, fish, goats, rabbits, pigs, or tree seedlings provide milk, cheese, eggs, wool, fruit, nuts, firewood, or fertilizer to help families generate income as well as provide for their own nutrition.



**On the First Sunday of Advent, following the worship service,** we opened our Living Gift Market, where Heifer Honor Cards may be purchased in the Narthex. Gifts to Heifer International will accepted through the end of December.



As a tribute to **Sue Smith**, who died in October, the Missions Committee dedicated this year's Living Gift Market in honor of Sue Smith, long time Missions Committee member, whose vision, organizational skills and tireless effort initiated Peace Church's first Living Gift Market in 2006. The Ark Awards on display in the Narthex attest to Sue's leadership in organizing an event that involved all church members.

Children performed in a play, the Women's Fellowship prepared a simple meal, each group in the church sponsored a booth to sell various animal honor cards, talented members sold their arts and crafts and baked goods at the silent auction, and a visit from Santa delighted the small children. An Ark Award represents a gift of at least \$5000 to Heifer International.

Our purchase of Heifer Honor Cards will provide food and supplies for those in need as well as honor Sue Smith.

## Heifer's Mission to End Hunger

### Heifer envisions...

A world of communities living together in peace and equitably sharing the resources of a healthy planet.

### Heifer's mission is...

To work with communities to end hunger and poverty and to care for the earth.

### Heifer's strategy is...

To "pass on the gift." As people share their animals' offspring with others – along with their knowledge, resources, and skills – an expanding network of hope, dignity, and self-reliance is created that reaches around the globe.

### Heifer's History...

This simple idea of giving families a source of food rather than short-term relief caught on and has continued for over 60 years. Today, millions of families in 128 countries have been given the gifts of self-reliance and hope.



We have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through our participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist retired pastors who may be struggling financially, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and provide Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to low-income retirees.

Gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is an opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

Please give generously to The Christmas Fund offering on Sunday, December 22nd.



*"I'll Stand By You"  
2019 Honor Card*

GUM Honor Cards will be available in the Narthex after service on Sundays through December 15th.

Cards are \$5.00 each.



## Advent & Church Christmas Events

**First Sunday of Advent (December 1st)** our Heifer International Living Gift Market (honoring and remembering Sue Smith) officially opened and will remain open throughout the month of December. (More information can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.) We lit the candle of **HOPE**.

**Second Sunday of Advent (December 8th)** we will light the candle of **PEACE**. The Heifer Living Gift Market continues, and Greensboro Urban Ministry Honor Cards are available.

**Saturday, December 14th, 6:00 p.m.**, is the "Running of the Balls" Sunset Hills 5K Run/Walk.

**Third Sunday of Advent (December 15th)** the choir will present their Christmas cantata, "Together for Christmas" in the morning worship service. We will continue offering Heifer Project "gift animals" for purchase, and this will be the last day to purchase GUM Honor Cards. We will light the candle of **LOVE**.

**Saturday, December 21st, 3:00 p.m.**, all are invited to the Miller-Warren Christmas Open House. (See article on page 2)

**Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 22nd)** We will light the candle of **JOY** in our regular morning worship service. The Heifer Living Gift Market continues through December 31.

**December 24th, Christmas Eve** worship service will begin at **6:00 p.m.** We will light all the candles of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy with a special lighting of the **CHRIST CANDLE**. All members and friends of Peace Church are invited to be a part of this special candlelight service. Join us!!

**Christian condolences are extended to the family of Mrs. Gertrude Hall Radford**, 103, who passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 9, 2019 at Whitestone Care Center.



She was born June 3, 1916 in Rockingham County to Grover and Elsie Hall. She moved to Greensboro in 1934. She married Osborne Bennett Radford (Rad) in 1937. She ran Radford's Beauty Shop from that time until 2008, when she moved to Whitestone Masonic and Eastern Star Retirement Center. Gertrude was a longtime, active member of Peace United Church of Christ.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her loving husband of 56 years; her sisters, Mildred Hall James and Lois Hall Bailiff, and her brother, A. W. Hall. She is survived by her nieces, Gloria Hall Williams of Lexington, NC and Donna James Cooper of Tarboro, NC; and her brother-in-law, Jack Zinc Bailiff of Greensboro.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, November 13th at 2:00 p.m. at Hanes Lineberry Sedgfield Chapel with the burial following at Guilford Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro, 2500 Summit Ave., Greensboro, NC 27405.



*Jean Morgan* would like to say thank you to Pastor Warren, Theo Scott, and other friends for all the cards, phone calls, prayers and good wishes during her recent setback. I am so thankful for you all.

Peace Church has an ongoing commitment to supply oatmeal to the Greensboro Urban Ministry Food Pantry on a monthly basis. The first Sunday of each month is designated Oatmeal Sunday when everyone is encouraged to bring a one pound box of oatmeal or to donate \$1.00 to purchase oatmeal. Donations are welcome at any time and can be placed in the basket under the bulletin board in the Narthex. There is an oatmeal box for monetary donations in the same location or your weekly offering envelopes can be used.



# The simple act of choosing love



*In his Christmas message, United Church of Christ General Minister and President the Rev. John C. Dorhauer invites the wider church to ground our spirits in God's love.*

“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”

(I John 4.7)

As we enter another Christmas season, I invite us to ground our spirits in this love.



Like all early Christians, John wanted to understand what the coming of the Christ-child meant for those who worshiped God through Jesus. He came to see that to be a disciple one must love. He focused his theological worldview on one core fundament: God is love.

That Jesus was born of God had become, by the time of John, a core belief of the early Church. That being born of God meant essentially that one was born to love was a particular distillation of John's theology.

The stories of Jesus were being collected and told over and over again. In a world dominated by powers that oppressed and marginalized, Jesus' power was unique in that it was offered precisely to those whose power the world neglected.

Jesus used love as his ethic, a love that recognized God in every human he encountered. Jesus saw dignity and worth in the stranger, the orphan, the widow, the leper, the prisoner, the poor, the tax collector, the sinner, the gentile, the enemy. Any one of these were seen by the powers of his time as expendable.

Law and mores of any time conspire to place limits on those whom we were required to love.

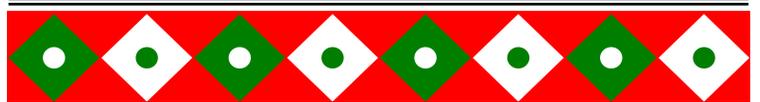
Into such a world a child would be born of God who knew love as the only thing the law would recognize.

It has been more than 2,000 years since the child born of love came to us. His disciples still recognize him and the incarnation of a God we know as love - and the world still struggles to love each other. Democrats despise Republicans. Muslims are terrorists and Mexicans are murderers. The rich demonize the poor. The prisoner is forgotten. The stranger, alien and immigrant are walled away.

Come Christmas, celebrate not just the coming of baby Jesus - but the incarnation of a child born of the God we know as love. All who love are born of God. We become the Christ-child in the simple act of choosing love.



Brunswick Stew Crew: (L-R) Bill Kluttz, Trish Larimer, Mick McGrogan, Linda Forotan, Nathan Vanden Heuvel, Sue Brittain, Roy Smith, David Murray, and Pastor Tom behind the camera. We sold out in one day! Always a great event for Peace Church.



A joyful day! We rejoice with **Chris and Kathryn Virgilio** at the baptism of their baby daughter, **Cassandra Grace Virgilio** on Sunday, November 17th. Big brother **Aaron** also looked on.



# CUBA

## UCC Cuba Study Seminar

### UCC CUBA STUDY SEMINAR 2020 AN ENCOUNTER WITH SANCTIONS

The United Church of Christ Cuba Study Seminar 2020 is ready to go. This year's group includes 25 UCC members from churches as near as Raleigh and as far away as St. Louis, Connecticut, and Texas. In addition to UCC members, this year's program will feature the Rev. Dr. Clint McCann, Professor of Old Testament at Eden Theological Seminary, who will lead us in daily Bible study and reflection. This is my fifth year of leading the trip, and while it promises to be a deeply moving and enlightening trip, this year may also turn out to be a little sad.

Unlike recent years when there were positive diplomatic openings between Cuba and the U. S., Cuba is now suffering the consequences of a recently strengthened economic embargo. While this embargo has been in place for 60 years, in the past three years it has been expanded and tightened in an effort to bring the



Cuban government to its knees. The impacts can be seen across the island in fuel shortages, food shortages, and shortages of vital medicines (see photos). While the United Nations and much of the world has repeatedly condemned this embargo, it remains in place to the detriment of the common Cuban citizen. Our friends the Revs. Elmer and Gisela Lavastida say they haven't seen it this bad in Cuba since the Soviet Union fell apart and pulled out in the early 1990's. With limited fuel,



medicine, and foodstuffs, the ministry of the Lavastida Center is needed more than ever, but their work has been hampered quite significantly by these shortages.

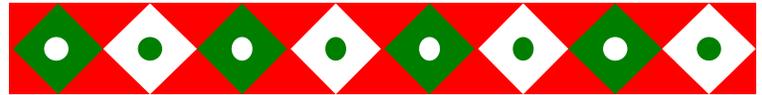


The *UCC Cuba Study Seminar* will be in Cuba from January 31st to February 9th this year. While there we will learn about Cuban life, history, and the work of the Cuban church. We will study with, worship with, and embrace our brothers and sisters in Christ. Yet unlike previous years, we will also encounter a new level of suffering among our friends. So we will try to support our brothers and sisters



with prayer, our presence, and any other material support (our Mission of the Month in January will be the Lavastida Center) we can offer. We will report back upon our return. Please remain in prayer for the *UCC Cuba Study Seminar*, and especially, for the people of Cuba.

~ *Pastor Tom and Kim Miller*



## Peace Church Recipe Corner

### CRANBERRY BRIE BITES

- 1 (8-oz.) tube crescent dough
- Cooking spray, for pan
- Flour, for surface
- 1 (8-oz.) wheel of brie
- 1/2 cup whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans



Preheat oven to 375°. Grease a mini muffin tin with cooking spray. On a lightly floured surface, roll out crescent dough, and pinch together seams. Cut into 24 squares. Place squares into muffin tin slots. Cut brie into small pieces and place inside the crescent dough. Top with a spoonful of cranberry sauce, and a few chopped pecans. Bake until the crescent pastry is golden, about 15 minutes.

# Peace Church & NAI Thanksgiving Feasts



*grateful*

We are *grateful* that we had our second Congregational Thanksgiving Dinner.

We are *grateful* that the Fellowship Hall was beautifully decorated and welcoming.

We are *grateful* that our walls had lovely fall wreaths.

We are *grateful* that we indulged in amazing, delicious food.

We are *grateful* for those who helped in any way.

We are *grateful* that 54 people attended.

We are *grateful* that the Spirit came.

Yes, we are *grateful!!*



*Ava Chambers and Theo Scott*

***Please keep these members of our church family in your thoughts and prayers:***

Lois Bell; Dot Benshoff; Bertie Bowman; Nan Buchanan; David Fesperman; Iris Haislip; Lucille Hege; Glen Hutchinson; Buddy Lippard; Sylvia Lippard; Carol MacDonald; Sally McGrogan; Abigail Miller-Warren; Sharon Mitchell; Jean Morgan; Jack & Marcy Neal; Femi Quakenbush; Jean Scott; Roy Smith; Dale Starr; Lucille Waynick; Don Wheeling; Doris Yeattes.

***Remember these wider church family and friends:***

Lyn Ann Bailey (niece of Harold Poffenbaugh); Chris Barnes (nephew of Harold Poffenbaugh); Katie Bowen (daughter-in-law of Cynthia Bowen); Eric Chapman (nephew of Jane Ford); Joan Cressman (mother of Ken Cressman); Janet Faucette (sister-in-law of Yvonne Smothers); David Kaynor (nephew of Debbie Kaynor); Betty Larimer (aunt of Trish Larimer); Beatrice Rosenthal (mother of David Dole); Annette Sarty (sister of Yvonne Poffenbaugh); Tom & Rhoda Taylor (niece & her husband of Harold Poffenbaugh); Glynda Whittington (mother-in-law of Sherri Vestal).

**ATTENDANCE & OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER**

DATE	SUNDAY SCHOOL	WORSHIP	REGULAR OFFERING	OTHER OFFERING	OTHER RECEIPTS
November 3	12	68	\$2,787	\$404	\$350
November 10	11	51	\$2,152	\$ 50	\$112
November 17	11	68	\$7,205	\$145	\$255
November 24	13	69	\$1,309	\$370	—

**PEACE CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY**

*(Through October 31, 2019)*

	Current Month	Year to Date	YTD Budget	Amount Over (Under) Budget
Contributions from Members & Friends, Plus Other Receipts	14,531	160,692	164,627	(3,935)
Disbursed in Support of Ministries, Programs & Facilities	19,829	176,307	168,035	8,272
Neighbors In Need	573			



***December Birthdays***



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Tommy Haithcock	4	5 Rosina Whitfield	6 Laurie Baker	7
8	9 Ian Myers	10	11	12 David Dole	13 John Patterson	14 Tripp Vockel
15	16	17	18 Ramona Griffin Daniel Warren	19 Landis Vockel	20	21
22 Alexa Dole	23 Toni Tagert	24	25	26 Russ Haver Olivia Jolliff Laura Small	27	28 Don Wheeling
29	30 Jimmy Norred Evan York	31 Debbie Shiner				



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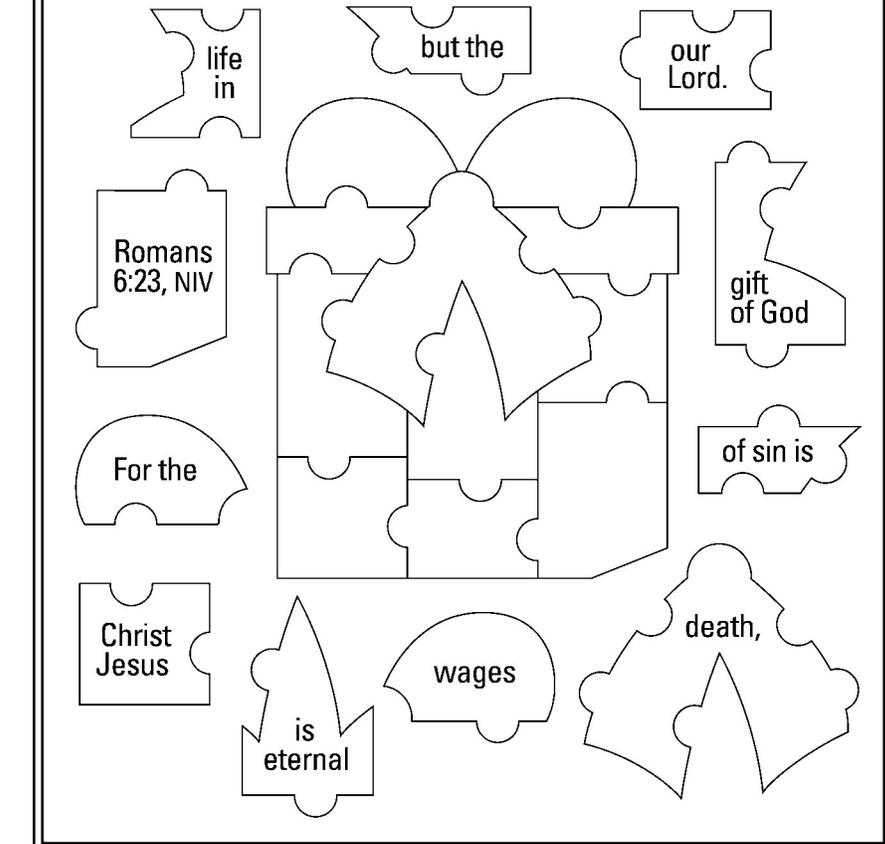
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# The greatest gift

Gift-giving is a fun Christmas tradition.  
What very special gift has God given to you?

**Directions:** Write the words from each puzzle piece on the matching blank piece of the gift-shaped puzzle.



## SAVIOR ORNAMENT

This Christmas, celebrate Jesus' birthday by making this keepsake ornament.

### What you need:

- Wooden clothespin with round end
- Black permanent marker
- White cloth or felt
- Small wooden star (available at craft stores)
- Yellow paint
- Paintbrush
- Gold glitter (optional)
- Glue gun (and an adult)
- Straw-colored raffia
- Palm-size wicker wreath (available at craft stores)
- Ribbon

### What you do:

1. On the clothespin's round knob, draw two dots for eyes.
2. Wrap the white cloth around the clothespin, like a swaddled baby.
3. Paint the star yellow; add glitter, if desired.
4. With the glue gun and adult supervision, glue the raffia to the bottom inside of the wreath. Then glue the swaddled clothespin atop the raffia and glue the gold star atop the wreath.
5. Tie a ribbon around the top, near the star.
6. Hang the ornament on your Christmas tree or tie it on a gift.

Answer: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23, NIV