



## December Newsletter

### Advent 2023 - Come Home for Christmas



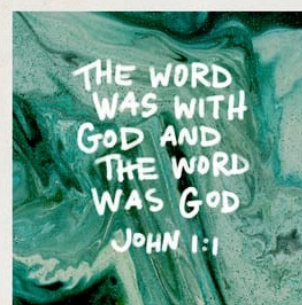
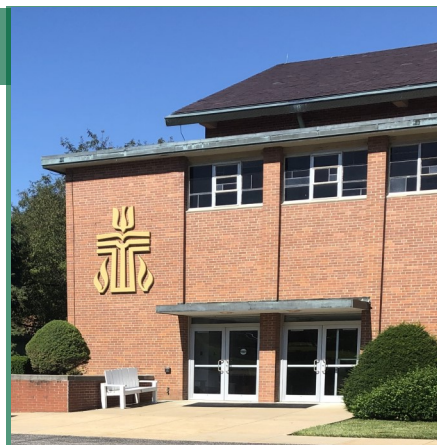
Advent is an invitation. For many, it is the invitation to get into that Christmas spirit, to count down the days to the grand celebration, and let the holiday transform everything around us.

But there is a deeper and more profound invitation being offered in the season of Advent. The invitation is to remember that we are heading for home. Or if we're not, if we've forgotten that there is a home toward which to head, it is the invitation to long for the home we call

the kin-dom of God. It is where family resides, where peace resides, where justice abides, and hope will rise. Advent reminds us that we shouldn't be complacent about the way things are – not that we want to become angrily attuned to every perceived failing in those around us or the world at large; but that we want to be those who look forward to something greater, something more that is just on the horizon. Advent is the call to come home.

This year our Advent Worship Theme is called "Come Home for Christmas". Yes, I know it's not called "Come Home for Advent", but what I pray and hope, during these four weeks of Advent, as we worship and join together at the Smith's for weekly Advent Devotions, is that Advent preparation is not all about Christmas, "**the holiday**"! We aren't about December 25 with all the jingle bells and tinsel. We are about Christmas, the celebration of the Incarnate one who comes to remind us that we are not alone, and God is with us. We are about the longing for the coming kin-dom, where we will study war no more, where people will walk in the light, where joy will be found, and love will be the tie that binds us together. That's the home for which we long. That's the invitation this Advent season to your church and the world: "Come home for Christmas." So, I pray you will "Come Home"!

Pastor Ronnie



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Stewardship Theme...	2
In Loving Memory.....	2
New & Noteworthy ....	3
Deacon's Corner .....	4
Hearts & Hands to	
Others.....	5
Pastor Transition Task	
Force Update.....	6
November Birthdays...	7
Being an Acolyte.....	8
Christmas Greetings...	8



# CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



## Follow Christ's Lead This Advent Season

Every year, society expects us to celebrate the holiday season even bigger and better than years before. This year, coming together to reclaim Advent and Christmas can be both humbling and fulfilling. As we excitedly await the birth of Christ, it's important to remember the reason for the season: the newborn Servant of All, the perfect gift.

With Christ at the center this holiday season, we can follow in his example of servant leadership by serving our brothers and sisters in faith. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we are able to support those in our community and give them the gift of hope.

Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering help the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions provide critical financial assistance to eligible church workers and retired pastors and their families in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Christmas Joy Offering also supports the education and development of our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. These schools are dedicated to creating opportunities and environments for students built on a foundation of Christian values. The Offering benefits Menaul School and Presbyterian Pan American School, two secondary schools that ready students for a path of higher learning, as well as Stillman College, where graduates are prepared for lives of leadership and service.

By supporting the Christmas Joy Offering, you share in the hope of Christ and celebrate his leadership by providing support to our church workers, racial ethnic young people, and their families.

Please give generously:

Through your congregation

Text CHRISTMASJOY to 91999

[presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy](http://presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy)

### Links

Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions | <http://www.pensions.org/PlansAndPrograms/AssistanceProgram/Pages/default.aspx>

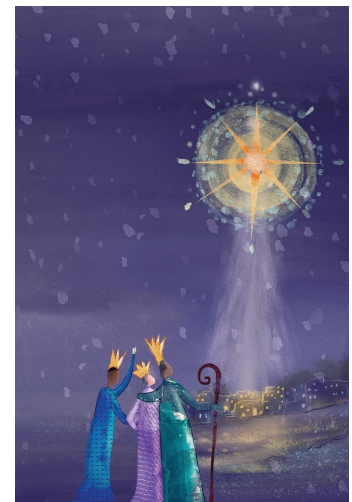
Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges | <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/resc/>

Menaul School | [www.menaulschool.com](http://www.menaulschool.com)

Presbyterian Pan American School | <http://www.ppas.org>

Stillman College | <http://www.stillman.edu>

**The Christmas JOY Offering will be taken on Dec. 24.  
Envelopes are available on the table in the Narthex for  
your convenience.**



## NEW & NOTEWORTHY



Thank you to the Worship & Arts Committee and all of the volunteers who helped with the hanging of the greens. Our sanctuary looks beautiful and is helpful in preparing our hearts and spirits for the Advent and Christmas seasons.



To my dear Church Family,

Thank you for your many expressions of sympathy following the death of my mother. The phone calls, texts, cards, and visits at the office have sustained me through this difficult time. I feel loved and supported and I appreciate all of you!

Christ's Peace to each one of you during this season,

Love, Kenda Carey



Please have your orders in by December 17th. You can find order forms on the bulletin table in the Narthex. The poinsettias will be white this year and the cost is \$15.00.



We greatly appreciate our Tuesday Tinkers and all of the hard work they do throughout the year to keep our building looking good and operating well. Please give them a big thank you!



**MARY HAUSER**

**March 9, 1943–November 23, 2023**

Mary Louise Hauser, of St. Charles, MO, passed away Thursday, November 23, 2023, at the age of 80. Beloved wife of 61 years to Ron Hauser; cherished daughter of the late Artie and Mary Jean Hartwell; devoted mother of Dana (Tim) Luley, Julia (Patrick) Miller, and the late Ronald Eric Hauser; loving "MiMi" of Melissa Luley-Gingrich, Clayton (Melanie) Luley, Kala (Jake) Wilson, and the late Christian James Miller; precious great grandmother of Max Gingrich, Luna Gingrich, Ellie Luley, and James Wilson; dear sister of the late Ricky Hartwell.

Mary found joy in various activities, including gardening, shopping, and, most importantly, spending quality time with her family. Her passion extended to traveling and adorning her home with festive decorations for every holiday season. As she was a very sentimental woman, Mary adorned her living space with cherished memories. She held a special fondness for Shel Silverstein's "The Giving Tree" as well as other special favorites that she dedicated to her grandchildren and great grandchildren. Engaged in numerous organizations, Mary was a member of P.E.O. Chapter KQ, Daughters of the American Revolution, and Jamestown Society. With an enduring dedication to education, she pursued a teaching career that spanned over 52 years. Mary's impact was profound, and her absence leaves a void that will be keenly felt by all who had the privilege of knowing and loving her.

Visitation: Tuesday, December 5, 2023, 4:00 - 8:00 pm  
(Central time), Baue Funeral Home - Cave  
Springs, 3950 W Clay, St Charles, MO 63301

Funeral Service: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 - 1:30pm  
Baue Funeral Home - Cave Springs, 3950  
W Clay, St Charles, MO 63301

Memorials may be made in Mary's name to Stray Rescue,  
American Diabetes Association, or American Veterans.







"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " Acts 20:35

Take a look at all of the ways our Deacon Board has been preparing for this Advent season. There is information on ways for you to support them and give back to our community.

#### Advent Boxes

Deacons prepared 13 Advent Boxes for the Special Friends members of our church that included scripture and small gifts to help them celebrate the Advent season. They received special help from Prime Time kids in making one of the gifts, a pinecone bird feeder.



Deacons collected and delivered 18 coats to FISH. Thank you!



## FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR DECEMBER

Please give what you can and remember that no donation is too small

### FISH FOOD PANTRY

Pudding  
Broth/Gravy  
Dry Pasta Noodles  
Pie Filling  
Boxed Potatoes  
Men's Deodorant  
Women's Deodorant  
Body Wash

Kleenex  
Toilet Tissue



### FT ZUMWALT EAST SNACK SHACK

Ramen bowls  
Mac 'n' Cheese  
microwaveable bowls  
Individual chip bags  
Granola bars  
Breakfast bars

Pop Tarts  
Peanut Butter crackers  
Cheese crackers  
Popcorn  
Capri Sun  
Kool-Aid Jammers



*"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."*  
Proverbs 11:25



### HOT COCOA BAR FOR SUCCESS CAMPUS



The H2O Committee will once again provide a hot cocoa bar for the 80 students at their Success Campus during finals week this month. This consists of hot cocoa and all of the add-ins to make it yummy, and other special treats. This is a favorite of the students and staff and also the H2O Committee members who participate.



## HEARTS AND HANDS TO OTHERS

...in our Community,  
nation, and world

*"Not all of us can do  
great things, but we  
can do small things  
with great love."*

Mother Teresa

*"Truly I tell you, just as  
you did it to one of the  
'least of these,' you did  
it to me."*

Matt. 25:40



**Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are I prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.**

**Hebrews 13:1-3**

## **ADVENT DESSERT & DEVOTIONAL**

**The Smith family invites you to their home on Dec. 6, Dec. 13, & Dec. 20 during Advent for dessert, fellowship, and a time of special devotion each week at 7:00 - 8:30 pm.**

**Advent candles will be lit, scripture read and time spent preparing our hearts for the coming of our Lord.**

**Kids are welcome!**

**If you would like to come but need a ride, call or text Ruth at 419-706 -8506.**

**Address is 3018 Bowman Ridge, St. Charles.**

## **Update from the Pastor Transition Task Force**

At it's November meeting the Session heard the preliminary report from the Pastor Transition Task Force on the October mission discernment exercise. There were about thirty participants in the final "gleaning" meeting of this exercise that took place on October 22. And while this is a small percentage of our total church membership, it was felt that the input received was a good representation of the congregation. There were four central and common themes that emerged from this exercise where we can focus to grow in faithfulness.

Using our Talents/Gifts more fully

Engagement with/Outreach to the Community outside our congregation

Strengthening Fellowship within our congregation

Embracing Diversity of identities and needs within our congregation

In our last update we reported that the next step in our transition to new pastoral leadership would be to take the data gathered from our October discernment exercise and write our mission report. This report is the first key step in the process of calling a pastor. After reviewing the congregation's response to this exercise, the Session has determined that more discernment and input is needed before our mission report can be created. To this end a 12-week adult education series is being organized to begin as soon as possible after the Christmas holiday season. Each of the four themes would be the topic for three weeks and each week would be guided by a reflection question:

Week #1: What are we doing well?

Week #2: What could we do better?

Week #3: What kind of leadership do we need to get there?

These sessions will be another opportunity for the congregation to engage in the transition process through reflection, by being heard, and by listening and connecting with each other.

Pastor Transition Task Force,

Dave Brakeman, Travis McMaken, Angie Southard

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ad every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.--Philippians 2:5-11*

## December 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Dec. 3: 1st Sunday of Advent

Dec. 5: Book Club, meet for lunch at Fratelli's, 1:00 pm

Dec. 6: Advent Dessert & Devotion, 7:00 pm, home of Marcus & Ruth Smith

Dec. 13: PEO, 12:30-3:00, Java with Jesus area

Dec. 17: Angel Tree gifts due; Youth Group, 5-7 pm, meet at the church

Dec. 24: Christmas JOY Offering; Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 pm

Dec. 25: Merry Christmas! Church Office closed

Dec. 26: Church Office closed



### WEEKLY

Spiritual Formation, 9:30 am; Worship, 10:30 am

Tinkers, Tuesdays at 8:00 am, meet at the church

AA Groups: Tuesdays, 6:00 pm; Saturdays, 10:00 am; meet in the Parlor

*"Christmas is most truly Christmas when we celebrate it by giving the light of love to those who need it most."--Ruth Carter Stapleton*

**Book Club will meet for lunch on Dec. 5th, 1:00 pm at Fratelli's, 2061 Zumbahl Rd. Please RSVP to Lisa Brown, 636 300-7226**

**Lunch Bunch will not meet** in the month of December. Look for them to resume in the new year.



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Olivia Mitchum
- 5 Rita Beard
- 6 Dot Schubert
- 9 Joan Beckham
- 9 Zack Southard
- 12 Meredith Gnolfo
- 14 Miya Litumbe
- 15 David Wicks
- 17 Michael Eoff (Jr)
- 20 Scott Carey
- 21 Lisa Burnitt
- 22 Duane Conrad
- 22 Libby Huss
- 23 Dee Tidd
- 26 Sara Nagel
- 27 Beverly Bohanan
- 30 Aaron White
- 31 Dan Carroll



Happy Birthday to all of our beloved members born this month! May the coming year bring you joy and peace knowing the Lord loves you and your church family too!







## Mary Delores Reich

October 31, 1933 — November 28, 2023

**Mary Delores Reich** (nee. Mackey), of Saint Charles, MO, passed away Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at the age of 90. Beloved wife of the late Sylvester Reich; cherished daughter of the late John "Bud" and Edna Mackey. Devoted mother of Kathleen (Paul) McMillan, Debra "DeAnn" (Mark) Rutherford, Sharon (Frank) Tomiser, and Mary Beth (Steve) Karr; loving grandmother of Joe, Daniel, Eden, Caroline, John, and Kristina; dear sister of the late James "Jimmy" Mackey, Judy (the late George) Schreiber, John "Jeep" Mackey; host to many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Delores was strong in her faith and attended St. Charles Presbyterian Church. Her smile was infectious, and her presence lit up the room. She enjoyed knitting, playing cards, quilting, reading, baking, and being a care giver in her family. She also proudly served in the United States Army Reserves as a nurse. Delores was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

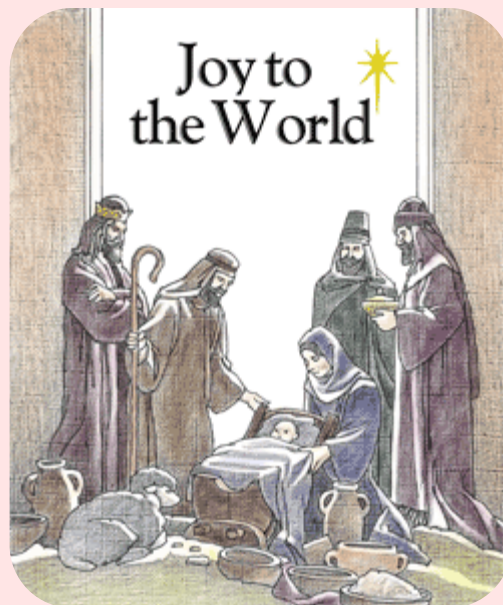
Memorials may be made in Delores' name to American Cancer Society.

Visitation: Tuesday, Dec. 5, Baue, West Clay 9:00 - 10:00 am

Funeral Service will be at the St. Charles Presbyterian Church, Dec. 5, 10:30 am



St. Charles Presbyterian  
Church  
Founded 1818



*From the Church Office Staff:*

*Rev. Ronnie Howard Kenda Bev*