



# The HARVESTER Newsletter

A Publication of Southwest Church of Christ

December 2023

Dear Southwest Family,

On Thursday evening, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1965, families around our nation witnessed the single greatest 25 minutes of television ever produced. At 7:30 pm Eastern Standard Time, over 15 million homes tuned in to their local CBS affiliate and saw a picturesque scene of snow falling and children skating on a frozen pond. They were welcomed by the gentle sound of a piano and a children's choir singing the words, "Christmas time is here..." They watched as a patchwork group of kids played and frolicked, and a little beagle pup caused mischief among them. That's right, 58 years ago *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was broadcast for the first time.

Okay, so it may not have been the single greatest bit of television ever produced – but in my book it's up there. Who could forget the famous dance scene? And that soundtrack?! I mean it was added to the Music Registry of the Library of Congress in 2011. I digress.

Most of us will remember the pivotal scene that transforms the entire show. Having looked to his peers for the meaning of Christmas, and having received an array of answers, Charlie Brown cries out, "Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?"

For his sister, Sally, Christmas was all about cold hard cash. For Lucy Van Pelt, it was all about a big shiny pink Christmas tree made from aluminum. For Snoopy, Christmas was all about the Neighborhood Christmas Lights and Display Contest. I think we can begin to see why Charlie Brown cried out in despair.

And then a meek little boy standing next to Charlie Brown, blanket in hand, turns and says, "Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about."

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" Luke 2:8-14 King James Version.

Having recited from memory Luke's account of the birth of the Savior, Linus proudly turns to Charlie Brown and proclaims: "And that's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

The big lesson I take away from *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is this: *the meaning* of Christmas can be obscured by *the holiday* of Christmas. Don't we see that in the world around us? We, as believers, know the meaning of Christmas - that Jesus came to give us the gift of eternal life, not a holiday. But does the world truly know why Jesus came to earth? Perhaps *that* is the greatest gift we can give this Christmas.

Merry Christmas, one and all!

Mike Hawkins

## Events & Information

### Monthly Figures

#### In- Service Attendance:

10/29	11/5	11/12	11/19
93	102	83	94

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). Thank you for your faithfulness, church! We continue to have several folks watching online each week. Please continue to pray for our church family – both those in corporate worship and those being reached by our online ministry.

We are continually blessed by the generosity of God's people. Thank you for your continued financial support so that we may meet the needs of our ministry staff, missionaries, benevolence ministry, and the general ministry of the church. For your convenience, we would like to remind you that online giving is available through our secure internet portal at <https://swccbarberton.com/giving>.

Thank you, church family, for your ongoing support of Southwest Church of Christ!

**Weekly Need:**                      **Weekly Need:**  
General: \$3,600                      Missions: \$442

#### **Deacon's List:**

Chair: Open  
Audio/Visual: Jared Friedrichsen  
Secretary: Mike Bunn  
Parsonage: Open  
Maintenance: Lynn Hounshel  
Special Projects: TBD, Lynn, and Phil Friedrichsen  
Benevolence: Tony Storad  
Church (Building): Lynn Hounshel

**The Elders would like to wish everyone involved with Southwest Church of Christ a very joyous, safe, and healthy Christmas season!**

**Akron Pregnancy Services (APS) Giving Tree:** Located in the foyer. If you would like to bless a local child or mother this Christmas, here is what you will do: remove a gift-tag, sign your name next to the number on your tag, shop, wrap and **return it by December 6th**. Questions, contact Cindy at 330-825-7263. Thank you!

**Ministry Leaders:** If you are a ministry leader who has information that should be added to the bulletin, on the screen before service, or announced at the beginning of service, please provide detailed information to the church office before 1 pm on Thursdays.

**B.A.C.M. Food Pantry item:** Peanut Butter. Place items in the BACM box in the kitchen.

**Soup Kitchen:** Southwest members will be serving on Tuesday, 1/30. Please see Terry Trump for details. Thank you for your continued willingness to serve for Christ's kingdom!

**Scrapbooking & Crafters:** There will not be a meeting for the month of December. Check back next month for updates.

**“Senior Moment” Group:** Christmas Potluck on Tuesday, 12/5 at noon in the fellowship hall. All those who are 55 years and over are invited to bring a dish to share, and a canned good for BACM. Questions, see Karen Rummer.

**Wednesday Night Live:** Refreshments start at 6 pm. Then at 6:30 pm, a combined class of adults and teenagers meet in the Fellowship Hall, and a Kindergarten through 5th grade class meets in the basement. There will NOT be meetings on 12/20 or 12/27. We will resume in January.

**Men's Bible Study:** Monday evenings at 6:30 pm. Discussions focus on different books of the bible, by chapter, until completed. Hebrews is the current book being studied. All men are welcome to join.

**Tuesday Morning Ladies Study at 10 am:** We are doing a study of Philippians 4:4-8 using Max Lucado's book, *Anxious for Nothing- Finding Calm in a Chaotic World*. Let Karen R. know if you would like a book for \$15.

**Rahab Ministries:** They are a faith-based ministry devoted to rescuing and restoring victims of human trafficking. Please consider supporting this ministry financially. Checks may be sent to their **NEW** address: Rahab Ministries, 3480 W. Market Street, Suite 303, Fairlawn, OH 44333.

**Connect with your church leaders:** Mike Hawkins [seniorministerswcc@gmail.com](mailto:seniorministerswcc@gmail.com);  
Eli Blackford [youthministerswcc@gmail.com](mailto:youthministerswcc@gmail.com); and the Church Office [swccbarberton@gmail.com](mailto:swccbarberton@gmail.com)

# December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." Galatians 4:4-5</i></p>					1	2
<p><b>3</b> <i>Elder's Mtg.</i></p> <p><i>Jr. &amp; Sr. High Youth Group</i></p>	<p><b>4</b> <i>Men's Study</i></p>	<p><b>5</b> <i>Women's Bible Study</i></p> <p><b>"Senior Moment"</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> <i>WNL</i></p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>
<p><b>10</b> <i>Deacon's Mtg.</i></p> <p><i>Jr. &amp; Sr. High Youth Group</i></p>	<p><b>11</b> <i>Men's Study</i></p>	<p><b>12</b> <i>Women's Bible Study</i></p>	<p><b>13</b> <i>WNL</i></p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>
<p><b>17</b> <i>Jr. &amp; Sr. High Youth Group 5-8pm</i></p>	<p><b>18</b> <i>Men's Study</i></p>	<p><b>19</b> <i>Women's Bible Study</i></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>
<p><b>24</b> <i>Christmas Eve Service 7pm</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>31</b> <i>New Year's Eve</i></p>	<p><b>25</b> <i>Christmas</i></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b> <i>Jr. &amp; Sr. High NYE Bash 3-6pm</i></p>

## BIRTHDAYS:

12/1	Victoria Friedrichsen
12/2	Tracey Hamilton
12/3	Lisa Howe
12/4	Daniel Wilson
12/6	Mary Bradford
12/8	Meghan Sapper
12/14	Jonathan Friedrichsen
12/22	Mikayla Sapper
12/23	Sharon Weinsheimer
12/24	Jay Hershberger
12/25	Freda Brouse

## ANNIVERSARIES:

12/20	Dale & Rhonda Starcher
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Did you have a birthday or anniversary this month that we missed? Would you like to have your special day added to our calendar? Write your name, the occasion, and the date on the prayer tab in the bulletin. Place the tab in the offering plate on any Sunday. Or you may send an email to: [kdbusch15@gmail.com](mailto:kdbusch15@gmail.com), and I will gladly include your information.

**Do you know someone who would positively benefit from reading The HARVESTER? Our newsletter is available on the Southwest Church of Christ webpage under the Ministries tab.**

## Growing Your Faith

*“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14*

The bible readings for 2023 are to focus on studying the bible in chronological order. As you read each day, meditate on God’s words and His promises to us.

- DEC 1: 1 Corinthians 9-11  
DEC 2: 1 Corinthians 12-14  
DEC 3: 1 Corinthians 15-16  
DEC 4: 2 Corinthians 1-4  
DEC 5: 2 Corinthians 5-9  
DEC 6: 2 Corinthians 10-13  
DEC 7: Acts 20:1-3; Romans 1-3  
DEC 8: Romans 4-7  
DEC 9: Romans 8-10  
DEC 10: Romans 11-13
- DEC 11: Romans 14-16  
DEC 12: Acts 20:4-38; Acts 21; Acts 22; Acts 23:1-35  
DEC 13: Acts 24-26  
DEC 14: Acts 27-28  
DEC 15: Colossians 1-4; Philemon  
DEC 16: Ephesians 1-6  
DEC 17: Philippians 1-4  
DEC 18: 1 Timothy 1-6  
DEC 19: Titus 1-3  
DEC 20: 1 Peter 1-5
- DEC 21: Hebrews 1-6  
DEC 22: Hebrews 7-10  
DEC 23: Hebrews 11-13  
DEC 24: 2 Timothy 1-4  
DEC 25: 2 Peter 1-3; Jude  
DEC 26: 1 John 1-5  
DEC 27: 2 John; 3 John  
DEC 28: Revelation 1-5  
DEC 29: Revelation 6-11  
DEC 30: Revelation 12-18  
DEC 31: Revelation 19-22

Scripture list courtesy of  
[www.biblestudytools.com/  
bible-reading-plan/chronological.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/chronological.html)

## Kids Korner



**“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Matthew 1:23**

Find the underlined words from the verse above in the word-search below.

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

For you to color:



## Connect with Us



*Love God Love People Lead People to Jesus*

Michael Hawkins, Senior Minister  
Eli Blackford, Youth Minister  
Jared Friedrichsen, Worship Minister  
Cindy Weaver, Secretary  
(330) 825-7263  
[www.swccbarberton.com](http://www.swccbarberton.com)  
[www.facebook.com/swccbarberton](http://www.facebook.com/swccbarberton)

### WEEKLY WORSHIP TIMES:

Sunday Morning:  
Sunday School 9:30 am  
Morning Worship 10:30 am

## Youth Ministry

### Message from Eli:

Hey, Southwest Family,

It's Christmas time!

This time of year, when I was in my early twenties, I wouldn't even be thinking about Christmas yet. One year I started and finished my shopping for presents on Christmas Eve. Although it was one of my most impressive accomplishments, the rush was a bit stressful. Now, I find that it's far more enjoyable to stretch the season out a little longer in order to let it really soak in.

It takes time to let things soak into my system. I am the kind of person who can easily be swept along with the hustle and bustle, running myself ragged just to keep up, never really stopping to think about what's going on *in me*. The holiday season can be one of the worst times for losing sight of what is most important. The meaning of Christmas is deeply spiritual – Jesus, the Son of God, Savior of the World, was born in the humblest of circumstances to break the curse of sin over all mankind. In order for that to hit me on the inside, in my own spirit, I will need to slow down a bit. All the external glimmer and lights of the season will try to distract me. I must not allow myself to get swept up in the distraction.

Jesus says, "I am the true vine... remain in me..." (John 15:1, 4) Many things in this world will promise to give me life, happiness, satisfaction – but these are *false* vines. If I chase after them, they will only leave me starved for the abundant life that comes by remaining content in the daily presence and grace of my Lord. Jesus is the true vine. I am to be the branch that clings to him as my source of nourishment. Only then will my life produce fruit for his glory.

May the true vine nourish you this Christmas season. Amen.

Blessed to serve with you!

### Upcoming Kids and Teen Ministry events:

**Jr Church (birth through 5<sup>th</sup> grade):** all ages will be combined for our Christmas lessons with Bobbie Browning this month. There will be **no Jr Church** on December 31<sup>st</sup> since it is the fifth Sunday of the month.

**Teens (6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade):** Normal youth group on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and December 10<sup>th</sup>.  
Christmas Party on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 5-8 pm.  
New Year's Bash on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 3-6 pm.

**No Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group on Sunday, 12/24 or 12/31.**