

# THE WITNESS

## Circleville First Church

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December 2025

Issue 313

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## 21 Days of Prayer

As we prepare for Christmas, we will be hosting 21 days of prayer in the church sanctuary.



On Monday thru Saturday,  
beginning December 1 to  
December 24 at 6 am.

Let's prepare our hearts as  
we celebrate the gift of  
Jesus this season.

The word "Advent"  
originates from the  
Latin, meaning  
"arrival" or  
"coming". For  
Christians, it  
signifies the  
"coming" of Jesus at Christmas as well as anticipation of his  
"second coming".



Advent marks the anticipation and preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth that occurs during the four weeks leading up to Christmas. It is a time to reflect on and anticipate Christ's second coming. It begins on the first Sunday closest to November 30 and lasts through Christmas Eve.

Each Sunday's theme of Advent is hope, peace, joy and love. It is a time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ.

## Children's Christmas program

"The Sounding Joy", this year's  
Children's Christmas Program will be  
held on December 14 at 10:45 am.



## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

8 pm

## Looking forward...

Circleville First Church as we look at the year behind and look forward to the year ahead there is much to Thank God for. He has helped us in many ways and brought us to a wonderful place in His grace.

Starting January 6<sup>th</sup>, one of the ministries that we as a church will step into this year is the partnership with Crossroads Christian Academy (CCA). We will be housing and participating in the Middle school, High school at our church. I want to address the first thing that I believe has been circulating that somehow this is just ministry Pastor Jay wants to do. That is wrong this is something I am involved in but very much believe is  
(continued on page 2)

## Looking forward...(con't from page 1)

what God would have US to do. These are students who live right around our church area who need an education but also need to know that Jesus loves them. One young man from near the church lives with his grandparents and simply needs a dose of confidence and character of Christ. Another wants to know that adults love him without those adults being told to do so. I had one student, a young lady, who wants to be a mother, a fine Godly pursuit. She desperately needs Godly women to show the right sequence of events in pursuing that calling. You can be a light house in these young lives. You say pastor, "how can I help"? Maybe it's helping serve lunch which will be needed on daily basis, maybe it's coming to chapel and worshiping and being apart.

I would like to see Growth groups who take classes and pray for them by name each week and take opportunities to let the students know you are caring. Maybe it's by sponsoring a student so they can go to Creation Museum and learn more of God's design for them. I would love to have men and women who go down and pray through the hall and lockers each day for the students before the day begins asking for His touch on their lives spiritually.

What I don't want to hear is talk about CCA ministry and negative talk about the kids or their involvement at our church. If you have concern, speak to me or a board member, but never negative to the students. They have enough against them we won't be another negative voice.

There will be some logistics that will need to change for us to have this ministry in our building.

- One, you will no longer Mon-Fri be able to just come in the back double doors whether you have key or not, EVERYONE will come to the front double doors during the week. This is for safety of all.
- Second, you will need to park on the street when you come or by the fellowship hall if it's during drop off and pick up times.  
Drop off 8:30-8:40, Pick up 3:00-3:15
- Please make sure, as ministry leaders, you check the church calendar before planning and promoting church functions.

I am excited for us to invest in the next generation this way and look forward to many exciting updates together.

submitted by **Pastor Jay Neff**

## Operation Christmas Child



I would like to thank everyone who was willing to come out and help setup and pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We packed 205 boxes this year. There will be 205 more children receiving gifts, (which may be their first gift ever received), but most importantly, these children and families' lives are being impacted eternally by spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ and we (Circleville First Church) had a hand in making this happen.

Again, I would like to say thank you to my church family for all your support and the opportunity to lead this ministry. It has truly been a blessing taking this on and I am so excited to see what the Lord has in store for CFC and this ministry in the years to come. Please continue to pray for this ministry as a whole, for all the folks involved, the children's lives it will continue to impact for eternity and building God's kingdom.

Boxes will be available year-round beginning in January. Please see Brittany Gaul for more details and with any questions.

**Items for December: hats, gloves, mittens & socks**

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you!  
**Brittany Gaul**



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Calling all men...

## Men's Prayer Meeting

Saturdays 8 am

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Hey, you guys!!!

## Men's Prayer Breakfast

December 20

8 am

FC Hall

speaker: Pastor Jay Neff

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## Bible study

Wednesdays at 1 pm     Ferguson/Clark Hall

## Verse of the month

"The Savior -yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David." Luke 2:11 NLT

submitted by **John Adams**



## Community cupboard needs

**cereal, cereal bars, powdered milk**

a tote is located in the overflow for donations

## Thank you for serving our country...

Please pray for our country, our leaders and all of our military and their families as they serve but especially **Sean Baldwin, Bob Byerly, Sgt. Travis Cotton, Ryan Dean, Zachary Haddox, Oscar Knece, Brittany Mozingo, Tim Sauers, Andrew Williams and Tanner Wilson.**



Trunk or Treat was held on October 25. There were approximately 12 trunks passing out candy to 150-200 children of our community. Thank you to all who participated in this ministry, reaching out to our community.

## Penny March – December 7

Operation Christmas Child

## Items of the month



**Hats**



**Gloves**



**Mittens**

**Socks**



## Stories from Elizabeth's Hope

### Tough Decisions

Recently I've had a couple of clients who have come in for an ultrasound but ultimately, they were seeking to end their pregnancies. They were talking about ordering the abortion pill online. They were feeling scared and trapped and like they had no other choice. The pills come in a package in the mail containing a small bottle, a few pills and simple instructions, but there is no doctor, no ultrasound and no one involved to talk about what will be the silent death of a preborn baby.

That's where Elizabeth's Hope comes into the picture. We slow things down. We take the time to listen to her and help her start to see beyond her immediate crisis to look toward the future potential. We let her know she is not alone. We let her know she is stronger than she thinks she is and that she can do this. We give her a free ultrasound and allow her to see her baby within her, pointing out the small features of head, face, chest, bottom and of course heartbeat. And sometimes, that moment—seeing the flicker of a heartbeat, hearing someone say "you're not alone"—is enough to shift everything. She may still be scared. The road ahead may still be hard. But now, she has hope. Elizabeth's Hope doesn't make the decision for her. We simply offer her the space to breathe, to reflect and to rediscover her strength. We believe every woman deserves to know that her life—and the life within her—matters.

Please pray along with us as we counsel our clients as they are navigating through tough decisions.

**Kristie Steck BSN, RN**

Mobile Nurse Manager at Elizabeth's Hope

## SABBATH

## McGuire home

The McGuire Home, a home purchased by Circleville First Church in March 2025 to provide housing for missionaries on furlough, raising funds to continue their ministry is undergoing renovations and updates.

**Seth George**, who oversees this project, said that plumbing is completed. **Josh Singleton** is providing the electrical work and will be completed very soon. The next project will be drywall which will be hired out.

If you would like to monetarily help, donations are always welcomed and appreciated.

## Church extension

This is from: **The Churches of Christ in Christian Union**

Dear Friends,

The General Missionary Department is seeking to assist CCCU Missionaries Seth and Veronica Porter in forming a mission team to serve in Papua New Guinea in January 2026—and we would love for you to be part of it!

This short-term team will come alongside our missionaries to complete much needed projects at Christian Union Bible College in Mt. Hagen, Papua New Guinea. Team members will help with construction and maintenance projects and experience God's work among the people of Papua New Guinea while growing spiritually and building lifelong relationships.

Trip Details:

Dates: Mid-January 2026 (exact dates TBD)  
Location: Papua New Guinea  
Ministry Focus: Christian Union Bible College

Please share this opportunity with your church and those in your sphere of influence. If you sense God leading you to serve, or would like to learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact our office at [missions@cccuhq.org](mailto:missions@cccuhq.org).

For the Kingdom,  
Rev. Michael Tipton  
General Missionary Superintendent

submitted by **Cathy Marck**, Church Extension President

## TRANSFORMATION

## Youth Missions Trip

Dominican Republic  
June 23-30



The work team will be building a house

This work team is geared towards youth but OPEN to EVERYONE

A team is forming now, but is still open for anyone interested.

Contact Seth George

"Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."  
Romans 12: 1-2



## Summit

March 13, 14 & 15

speaker: Ryan VanArsdalen

Lunch provided by youth group

New members were inducted on November 9. Added to our church membership are **Eli Adkins**, **Sarah Delozier**, **Andrew Hottinger** (transferred), **Megan Hottinger** (transferred), **Tim Martindale**, **Ruby Miller**, **Sierra Myers**, **Tyler Myers** and **Mason Spencer**.

**Congratulations!!**

**Mark you calendars!** **Ladies Luncheons** will be held on **Tuesday, December 2** at Ohio Christian University at 11 am and on **Tuesday, January 6** at Pizza Cottage at 11 am. We meet at 11 am to avoid the rush and stay as long as we are enjoying ourselves.

Lunch at OCU is very reasonable and plenty of choices and Pizza Cottage has a good lunch special and the party room has been reserved. If you have any questions or need a ride, call Diana 740.497.4042

submitted by **Diana Moore**

## Jokes of the month

- \*They call them heated seats...because rear defroster was already taken.
- \*I am often mistaken for an adult because of my age.
- \*There's safety in Numbers but I prefer Deuteronomy.
- \*What is the computer's first sign of old age? Loss of memory!
- \*I stayed up all night, wondering where the sun went...then it dawned on me.



submitted by **Bobby Dollison**

## Kitchen delights

I found the following recipe in a book I have from the Depression Era.

### Water Pie

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (9-inch) deep-dish pie crust, unbaked
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 5 tablespoons butter, cut into 5 pieces
- whipped cream, to taste, for serving

#### Directions:

- Step 1 -Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
- Step 2 -Set the empty pie crust on a baking sheet.
- Step 3 -Pour the water into the pie crust.
- Step 4 -In a small bowl, stir the flour and the sugar together.
- Step 5 -Evenly sprinkle the sugar mixture over the water in the crust. Do not stir.
- Step 6 -Drizzle the vanilla over the water and top with the pieces of butter.
- Step 7 -Bake the pie for 30 minutes.
- Step 8 -Lower the heat to 375 degrees F and carefully cover the sides of the crust with foil, if needed, to prevent burning.
- Step 9 -Cook the pie for 30 minutes, then allow it to completely cool. The pie will be watery when you take it out of the oven, but it will gel as it cools.
- Step 10 -Cover the pie and chill in the fridge until ready to serve.
- Step 11 -Slice and serve with the whipped cream

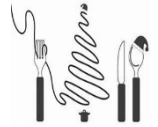
submitted by **Nancy Johnson**

## JOY Ministry Christmas Dinner

December 13

5:30 pm

Ferguson/Clark Hall



Carry-in dinner, please bring a covered dish

This will not be like in the past, but a time to enjoy good fellowship and good food

Watch the church bulletin for more information



**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6  
5:30 PM**

**SINGLE PERFORMANCE - LIMITED SEATING!**

**RESERVE YOUR SEATS TODAY! [PURPLEPASS.COM/OCUCHRISTMAS](http://PURPLEPASS.COM/OCUCHRISTMAS)**

❖ TICKETS ARE FREE BUT REQUIRED FOR ADMITTANCE

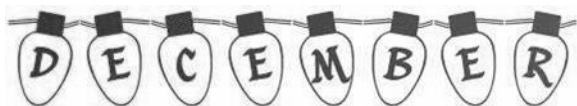
❖ ARRIVE EARLY FOR A CHRISTMAS REFRESHMENT FUNDRAISER

❖ WE ARE COLLECTING TOYS FOR THE PICCA TOY DRIVE



MINISTRY & PERFORMING ARTS CENTER  
1476 LANCASTER PIKE, CIRCLEVILLE, OH 43113 | [OHIOCHRISTIAN.EDU](http://OHIOCHRISTIAN.EDU)

Contact Sue Knece or Don Brown for questions



12 – 1 **21 Days of Prayer** begins (Monday – Saturday) til  
December 24 at 6 am in the sanctuary

12 – 2 **Ladies' Lunch** 11 am at Ohio Christian University  
**Decorating Church**

12 – 3 **Decorating Church**

12 – 7 **Penny March**  
**Christmas Wreath Silent Auction begins**



12 – 11 **Ladies' Night** 6:30 pm FC Hall

12 – 14 **Children's Christmas Program- *The Sounding Joy***  
10:45 am

**Christmas Wreath Silent Auction**—final day for  
bidding

**Christmas Church Fellowship-carry-in**  
6 pm FC Hall

12 – 17 **Baby Shower** for Sierra Payne 7 pm



12 -21 **Evening Service**—dismissed

12 – 24 **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** 8 pm

12 – 25 **Merry Christmas!!**

12 – 28 **Evening Service**—dismissed

12 – 31 **Office-closed**  
**Bible Study**—dismissed



1 -1

**Happy New Year!!!**  
**Office-closed**

1 -5 **Crossroads Christian Academy**  
**Open House** 6:30 pm

1 -6 **First day of Crossroads Christian Academy**

**Congratulations! Eli Adkins received his local license!**

**ECL fundraising lunch dates**

**December 28** – noodles and mashed potatoes

**January 25 & February 22**

Follow us on Instagram

Like us on Facebook



**December 2 - Ladies Luncheon** at 11 am  
at Ohio Christian University

**December 11 – Ladies Christmas evening** at 6:30 pm in the  
FC Hall, bring a friend and snack to share. We will have a  
**White Elephant gift exchange.**

**What is a White Elephant gift?** It is something you have around your house that is still useful, but you no longer need or want and would like to gift someone else with it. You know, a half-burnt candle that just isn't your scent, but may be someone else's. Some old fabric you have been holding on for someday, but you know that someday is not coming for you anytime present, what about some partial used hand cream you just loved in the store but when you brought it home...Expect to come and have fun!



**January 6 - Ladies Luncheon** at Pizza Cottage at 11 am

**January 22 - Ladies Night** at 6:30 pm in the FC Hall, bring a friend and snack to share.

**February 17 - Ladies Night** at 6:30 pm in the FC Hall, bring a friend and snack to share.

**March 20-21 – Ladies SCD – I Am** - conference held at Deer Creek –registration and cost involved – Information, brochure and forms found in Welcome Center. Let's get at least 30 ladies to attend this year, we had an awesome time last year.

**April 25 – Crossroads Ladies Conference** – Joy of the Journey- registration needed, \$25.00 if early bird registration is met, T-shirts will be available.



submitted by **Joellen Byerly** and **Diana Moore**

**Thank you** to everyone who participated in the work day on November 8 at the McGuire Home! You are appreciated!!

## Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack



On November 22 a few of our congregation members travelled to Nelsonville-York High School for Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack Event.

**Carson Blackford, Brittany Gaul, Christy Gillespie, Kelly Hedrick, Cathy Marck and Trent Morrison** served from 9 – 11 and **Carly Atwood, and Lydia Colahan** served from 12 – 2.

The morning session included 116 volunteers packing 145 boxes (36 manna packs per box) which is 31,320 meals feeding 85 children for a year!

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”  
Matthew 25:40 NIV

submitted by **Cathy Marck & Brittany Gaul**

## Silent auction

The Growth Groups will be holding a silent auction. The participating classes: the children’s classes and the young adult class will be decorating a wreath.



The wreaths will be on display for **bidding beginning December 7. Final bidding will be accepted until December 14.**

So come and bid on your favorite wreath.

submitted by **Kim Buchanan**



## Help Needed:

**November 30** immediately after the morning service-- we will need help bringing up the Christmas decorations from the basement.

We will be decorating on **December 2 & December 3**. Please come and help if you are all available. Many hands make light work.

**Evening Service**—dismissed

December 21  
December 28

## CFC kids



The Growth Groups will be holding a silent auction. The participating classes: the children’s classes and the young adult class will be decorating a wreath.

**Bidding begins on December 7 with final bidding on December 14.**

The **Children’s Christmas program**, “The Sounding Joy”, will be held on December 14.

CFC Kids will have a Christmas party on December 21.

submitted by **Kim Buchanan**

December 31--**Bible Study**—dismissed

## Church Office-closed

December 31  
January 1

## Crossroads Christian Academy

January 5 – Open House 6:30 pm

January 6 - First Day of Class



## Christmas Church Fellowship Carry-In



December 14

6 pm FC Hall

We will be having a **Baby Shower for Sierra Payne** on Wednesday, December, 17 at 7 pm. You can drop your kiddos off at the church for the regular Kids Church and they will join you afterwards.





"The Savior -yes, the Messiah, the Lord  
- has been born today in Bethlehem,  
the city of David." Luke 2:11 NLT

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[Redacted]

Local License—  
Tom Byerly???

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Try a Growth Group class at 9:45 am,  
stay where you fit in and feel comfortable

[Redacted]

## The story behind the song

submitted by **Mark Agin**

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]