

PFBC NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023



MISSION FOCUS

1075

TOYS FOR TOTS

One thousand seventy-five children ages newborn to eighteen. That is the number of children that were served at our Toys for Tots distribution site last year. For many of these children, the gifts that we gave to them are the only things they received for Christmas. The families that are served by the State College Food Bank, as well as any families in Centre or Mifflin Counties that aren't registered through their local food bank, can come to our site to receive a bag of toys for each child in their house. In addition to the toys that each child is given, they are each given a book, and a stuffed animal. Each family is also given a Gospel tract with a message of hope, and every child 10 years old and up gets a Life Book (a copy of either Mark or John with notes and messages by other teens). As each bag is placed in the back of the car, it is prayed over, that the family would be blessed by it, and would know Christ through the gifts they receive.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

1. First and foremost, you can pray. We ask for prayers for each child and family that visits our site. We also ask for prayers for each volunteer.
2. You can give. Toys for Tots is always looking for toy, book, and stuffed animal donations. Since COVID shut down wrapping days at the Penn Stater in 2020, we have been handing out wrapping paper to each family in need (that was over 300 rolls last year alone). We also place all gifts into 55 gallon black trash bags to keep things hidden from children that may come with their parents (over 300 bags last year). There is a donation box in the lobby for these items.
3. The last way you can give is your time. Do you have a couple hours to help distribute toys to families?

WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO:

**HELP UNLOAD THE TRUCK AND
SORT THE TOYS**

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER
13TH
FROM 6:30 – 9:00 PM**

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR HELP TO
DISTRIBUTE TOYS**

**THURSDAY DECEMBER 21ST
FROM 12:00 – 5:00 PM**

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 22ND
FROM 12:00 – 8:00 PM**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 23RD
FROM 10:00 – 6:00 PM**



PASTOR'S NOTES

Pastor Jeremy

WHAT'S YOUR PART IN THE CHRISTMAS STORY?

What's your part in the Christmas story? That sounds like I'm recruiting for a church Christmas play, but I'm not. And I don't mean anything heretical when I ask that question. I know you and I weren't a part of the original Christmas. But what I want you to think about is that you and I are still connected to the story. God sent his one and only Son, Jesus, to be born to be the Savior for the world. In the gospel of Luke, we read that there were many people that God was using, regular ordinary people who loved God and were walking with him, to play a role in the story of his Son as redeemer and Savior for our sin.

For example, we read in Luke 1:5-7,

"In the time of Herod king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But there were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old."

Put yourself in the shoes of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Two regular people, living their daily lives, going about their days and they probably didn't think too much of themselves. I'm sure they just saw themselves as 'regular folk'. Yet the Bible says there was something important about both of them,

"they were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's command and decrees blamelessly".

What was special about these two regular people? They were walking with God. Walking with him day to day. In the first century, it was not a spiritually strong time in the life of Israel, just like it isn't particularly today in our time. As Paul Chappell notes,

"True worship was under attack from the outside and from within, Herod the Great was a wicked and bloodthirsty king who was no friend to the Jewish people. He ruled the land with an iron fist and had anyone who opposed him put to death. At the same time, the Pharisees were focused only on the outward elements of the law, missing the matters of the heart and the Sadducees brought in Greek and Roman philosophy and downplayed what the Bible actually taught. Yet in that time of darkness, as the nation lay under foreign rule and many had turned away from following God, there were still people Zacharias and Elizabeth who walked with God."



Because Zacharias and Elizabeth were walking with God, He chose to use them to be a part of his salvation story. They became the parents of John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus who would preach and proclaim the way of the Lord so Israel would be ready to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. God saw two people who were walking with him that he could use in his grand narrative of the salvation story.

2000 years later, God is still at work. Do we believe this? And he is still looking for people who are walking with him that he can use in his story of salvation for the world.

Will that be you and me?

The original Christmas story of the birth of our Savior and all the people involved from the angels, the shepherds, the wise men, to Zechariah, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Joseph and Mary and others are already written in history. But what about God's part of the story that is yet to be written?

Can God use you because you are walking with him?

This Christmas season, my encouragement to us would be that we make sure that we are walking with God each day and that we be prayerful of how he would want to use us in the story he is still writing in bringing his love and salvation to the world.

Who do we know that needs to know of God's love?

How will we be ready to be someone God can use?

Who needs to hear you speak about the gospel of grace and how Jesus has loved, forgiven, and brought life to you and offers the same to them?

Who can you serve this season to be the hands and feet of Christ to make Jesus love visible?

Christmas is not just a story to remember, but as Christians we need to be asking God

What story does he want to be writing today?

Let's not leave Christmas and the birth of our Savior in the past. Let's walk with God in the present, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, and be regular people that God can use today as he continues to bring the hope of Jesus to people around us.





PFBC KIDS

Babette Manning

DECEMBER IS HERE AND CHRISTMAS IS SUCH AN EXCITING TIME OF YEAR AND BUSY, TOO.

I hope that you can enjoy the Christmas season with your family this year. Take time to relax, play some games and make fun memories.

THE CHILDREN WILL BE PERFORMING THEIR CHRISTMAS PLAY ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH.

It is titled
"THE GREATEST NEWS OF ALL".

The kids have been working hard learning their lines and we are looking forward to the performance.



DECEMBER BIBLE READING:

Matthew 1 and 2

Luke 2: 1-20



CLUB DATES FOR DECEMBER:

Wednesday, Dec 6th, 13th and 20th.

THE INDOOR PARK CHRISTMAS PARTY

WILL BE HELD ON

Tuesday, Dec 19th.

NO INDOOR PARK

Dec. 26th and 28th

NO CLUB ON DEC. 27TH.

DECEMBER CRAFT IDEA:



Make a paper chain with a Proverb written on each ring for each day of the month leading up to Christmas. Each day cut a ring, read the Proverb and discuss it with the children.

SUPPLIES:

Construction paper strips
Stapler or tape

PROVERBS (25)



Jenna's Jokes



1.) WHY DID THE CHRISTMAS TREE GO TO THE BARBER?

2.) WHAT DO YOU CALL A CAT SITTING ON THE BEACH ON CHRISTMAS EVE?

3.) WHAT IS A CHRISTMAS TREE'S FAVORITE CANDY?

Answers: 1) It needed to be trimmed! 2) Sandy Claws! 3) Orna-mints!

FROM THE YAM LEADERSHIP TEAM:

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

NOVEMBER SEEMED TO FLY BY! WE ARE VERY THANKFUL FOR THE WONDERFUL YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY WE HAVE AT PFBC!

This month featured the guys' retreat at Cody's cabin in Canton, PA. They had a great weekend with a great turnout! Some of our young adults spent an evening shopping for items to put in Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, then we packed and prayed over them!

WE PACKED 45 BOXES AND HAD A GREAT TIME TOGETHER!



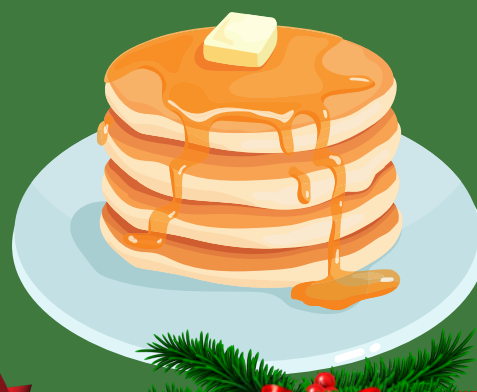
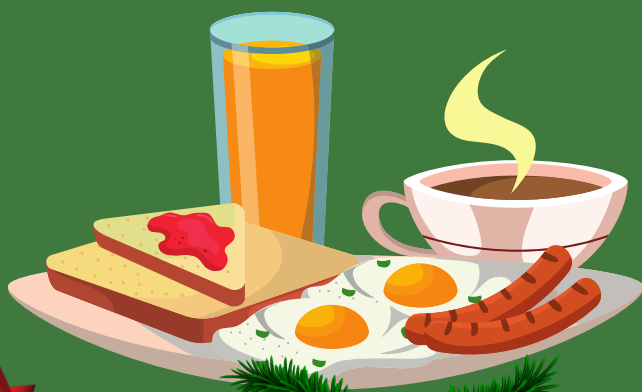
IN DECEMBER, OUR MAIN EVENT WILL BE OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY ON THE 8TH.

WE'RE ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO THE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & CHOIR ON THE 10TH - THERE ARE LOTS OF YAMS IN IT AGAIN THIS YEAR!



MEN'S MINISTRY

Men's Breakfast: Saturday December 2nd at 8 AM.
Join us for bacon, eggs, pancakes, juice, and coffee.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Hilary Field

AS THE MONTH OF DECEMBER COMES UPON US, MAKE IT A TIME TO BE PRESENT WITH YOUR FAMILY, ENJOY THE MEMORIES AND TAKE TIME TO REMEMBER JESUS' BIRTH. TAKING EVERYDAY MOMENTS AND MAKING THEM SPECIAL MAKES CHRISTMAS MEAN MORE. THINK ABOUT IT THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES. IN THE HUSTLE OF THE SEASON, TAKE TIME TO THINK ON THE BIRTH STORY OF JESUS. IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL STORY OF LOVE!

MOM'S LIFEGROUP, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2 ND AT 1 P.M.

This is a wonderful time of being together with other moms and friends.

LADIES CHRISTMAS BRUNCH, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9 TH AT 10 A.M.

WE WILL BE HAVING A BEAUTIFUL MORNING CELEBRATING OUR SAVIOR'S BIRTH.

This is held at Stephenie Brentner's Home
(1945 Cliffside Drive, State College).

Bring a friend and an item to share (juice,
baked goods or fruit).

ESTELLE WILL BE SHARING A CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONAL WITH US ALL.

**PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE CHURCH LOBBY BY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 TH
OR LET HILARY KNOW BY THAT DATE.**



COOKIES FOR COMMONFOOD



Every December is an opportunity to bless families in the community with cookies. If you're interested in baking cookies or donating them, sign up in the link provided. The cookies need to be delivered to our church kitchen during the week of December 11th. The packing of cookie plates will be happening later that week.

CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4FAAAF2FA0F49-45943078-christmas>

**SAVE THE DATE
GAME NIGHT, JANUARY 2024**

**LADIES SPRING RETREAT AT CAMP HEBRON, APRIL 5 – 7, 2024
RETREAT BROCHURES WILL BE OUT EARLY 2024. STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS.**



RIOT Report



Pastor Jon

As we come to the end of this calendar year, I look back on the last eleven months to reflect on 2023. The thought that keeps coming to mind is that change is good. This year, we have seen a lot of change: We tried out a new Spring Retreat location; we saw students graduate and move on from youth ministry; we welcomed in a bunch of new students; we tried to spend eight Sunday evenings serving local families; we changed around how our Sunday night program runs; we had to make a temporary change to our guys Bible study; and we started up a multi-ministry monthly event for the girls, and so much more. Sometimes, change can be scary, but when we have the God of the universe on our side, leading the way, we can rest assured that things will be alright. Through each of the changes that we made this year, I can see the way that God has used each one to further His Kingdom work here on earth. Of all the changes we've made, I'm the most grateful for our Sunday night change, and the start of Something on Saturdays. The reason for that is the relationships that I've seen grow and develop because of these changes. I'm excited for the growth in relationships between the teens, and between the teens and the leaders. It is because of these changes that we can look forward to next year with great anticipation for what God is going to do at RIOT.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 2nd – Something on Saturday – 1:00 – 4:00 pm

December 17th – Christmas Party – 6:30 – 8:15 pm

December 24th – No Youth Group

December 31st – No Youth Group