

# the MESSENGER

COUNTRYSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 2023

## Sunday Morning Services:

9:30am Sunday School\*

10:15am Breakfast

10:45am Worship\*

\*Nursery is provided

Children's Church (4yrs-4<sup>th</sup> grade) during Sermon Time

## Wednesday Activities:

3-5pm Kids Club (K-5<sup>th</sup>)

3-5pm Impact (Jr High/  
High School)

6:00pm Small Groups

## Church Office:

309-523-2834

## Church Email:

cccportbyron@gmail.com

## Church Website:

www.countrysidecc.org

## Live Streaming Info:

Check out our Facebook  
and Youtube pages!



YouTube



## Steve Allison, Minister

"Therefore, my beloved brothers,  
be steadfast, immovable, always  
abounding in the work of the Lord,  
knowing that in the Lord your  
labor is not in vain." 1 Cor. 15:58

***"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."  
(Isaiah 9:6)***

*Christmas is a time to marvel in awe and gratitude at the lengths God has gone to show us His love and to save us. The Creator came to His creation. The God of Heaven came to earth. The infinite God became an infant son. The Lord, whose royal robe filled the temple of heaven (Isaiah 6:1), became a baby who was wrapped in swaddling cloths (Luke 2:7). The God of the universe, who is present everywhere, did not have a room to be born in. The Son of God left His throne in heaven, surrounded by the unceasing praise of angels, to come to earth where He would ultimately receive a crown of thorns and hear crowds shouting, "Crucify him!" (Mark 15:13).*

*At Christmas, we stand in awe at the majesty and humility of God. He came not in power to kings in a palace but in humility to ordinary shepherds in a small rural town of obscurity. The Lord comes to us not with an angry fist, shouting from heaven, but with an open hand and helpless cry from a manger.*

*"She gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7 ESV).*

***May the unfathomable love, unending peace,  
and overwhelming joy of our Savior's birth be  
yours this Christmas!***

# CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

## EDUCATION HIGHLIGHT

### CHRISTMAS ROAD TRIP

The Journey Of A Lifetime



December 17<sup>th</sup>  
10:45am

Come hear the  
story of Christmas  
from the children  
at CCC

*This year, the children of the church will be putting together a Christmas play that will be presented during the Worship Service on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Over the next few weeks, the kids at Sunday School and Kids Club will be hard at work memorizing, acting, and recording their parts of the program. We can't wait to show you what we've been working on!!*

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." John 3:16-17*

# THANK YOU FOR HELPING

# EDUCATION HIGHLIGHT

CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY  
&  
VOLUNTEERS

*2024 is right around the corner and with it...a NEW CALENDAR that needs to be filled with volunteers for Children's Church and Nursery Workers!!*



Please prayerfully consider taking a few weeks this next year. The lessons for Children's Church are already planned and two people share the 20-30 minute time with the kids during the sermon time. Thank you!!

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." John 3:16-17*

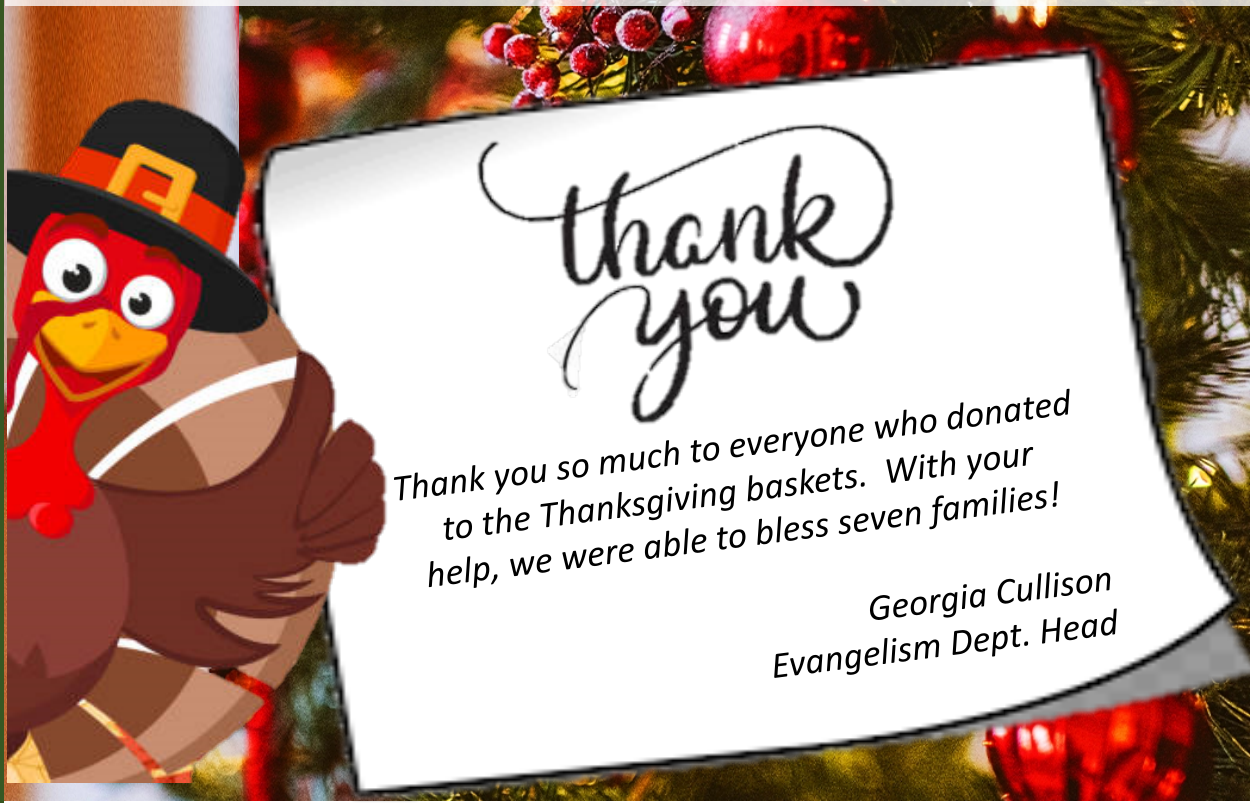
# ANGEL TREE



An Angel Tree is set up in the church foyer to support IAG (Individual Advocacy Group), a nonprofit organization that helps those with special needs.

Thank you everyone who chose an angel from the tree and will be purchasing some Christmas gifts for those in need. All donations will be due to the church on December 17<sup>th</sup>. It is your choice whether you wrap them or not. Any questions, please see Amber Ramos or Georgia Cullison.

Thank you!



Thank you so much to everyone who donated to the Thanksgiving baskets. With your help, we were able to bless seven families!

Georgia Cullison  
Evangelism Dept. Head

# YOU ARE NEEDED



## GIVE BLOOD

*Countryside is sponsoring a blood drive with ImpactLife (formerly Mississippi Blood Center) on **Saturday January 13, 2024**. It will be held from 7:30-11:00 A.M. in Countryside gym. Appointments can be made by contacting Connie Curry at 309-523-2504 or online at [www.bloodcenter.org](http://www.bloodcenter.org).*

*Appointments are required, bring a photo ID and please eat before donation. The last date to donate elsewhere is **November 8, 2023**. Blood is always in short supply, but the need is greater during the holidays.*

*Connie Curry*



## ImpactLife



# Bethlehem Walk

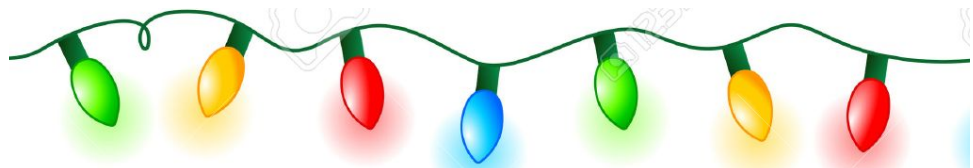


Join us for a realistic recreation of the night of our Savior's birth as you walk through a unique display inside and outside of the church. Live animals, fun activities for the kids, free soup supper and hot chocolate/hot cider with live caroling.

## Live Nativity

Hot Cider  
Hot Cocoa  
Carolers  
Soup Supper

December 17<sup>th</sup>  
4:30 – 6:30pm



# All is Bright

## Holiday Lights Tour

December 15<sup>th</sup>

If you are interested in joining others for a relaxing evening viewing Christmas lights in the neighborhood, please sign up in the lobby.

We may plan on getting dinner together that evening too if there is interest.

5pm



## December 2023

# KIDS CLUB & IMPACT



## Schedule

- 6 – Weekly Meeting
- 13 – CHRISTMAS PARTY
- 20 – NO KIDS CLUB
- 27 – NO KIDS CLUB



## Christmas Party

**December 13th  
3 – 5PM**

Our final week of Kids Club and Impact in 2023 will be on December 13<sup>th</sup> when we have our Christmas party!!

This night is always a fun one as the kids play games, win prizes, sing songs, and celebrate Christmas!

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**SUNDAY, DEC 17<sup>TH</sup>  
10:45AM**

**CHRISTMAS  
ROAD TRIP**  
The Journey Of A Lifetime



The children's Christmas program this year is called "CHRISTMAS ROAD TRIP" and will be presented during the worship service on December 17th. We are excited to share with you what we have been learning! Thank you to all the kids who have worked hard learning lines and songs!

## Contact Us!

**Countryside Christian  
Church**

3817 230<sup>th</sup> St. N, Port Byron  
309-523-2834

[www.countrysidecc.org](http://www.countrysidecc.org)  
[cccportbyron@gmail.com](mailto:cccportbyron@gmail.com)

Outreach International was founded in 1977. Since that time many people have been recruited for missionary work in several countries. ***“The operating philosophy of Outreach International since its beginning in 1977, is based on the fact that all mankind deserves the chance to hear about the saving grace of Jesus Christ and that it is each Christian’s responsibility to do all we can to reach the world with the Good News of Salvation found in Jesus Christ” Therefore Outreach International has acted as ‘starters’ for those new to worldwide missions and has helped start, by the grace of God, several new missions across the world.”*** (Brochure of Sept. ’10).

“In 1998 there were approximately 18 workers, in 9 projects and 9 countries. Currently there are 60+ workers, in 37 projects in 18 countries. By God’s grace, OI has helped workers start and establish their own ministries as well as recruited workers to serve with other mission ministries. Because of supporters like you that continue to support the Outreach International General fund, we are able to have 100% of the funds each missionary raises go to their projects without worrying about funds being taken out for administrative costs and support services.”

Dale and Sonja Hawkins are enjoying their new office space with the inside plumbing and additional space. The new office in Shelbyville, Missouri continues to bless them and works well as the hub for support services for our 60+ workers in cross-cultural work. Sonja’s mom, Annette Hamilton passed away peacefully on June 14<sup>th</sup>. She had been in declining health for several years. For 6 ½ weeks she had been under the full time care of her family at Dale and Sonja’s home. Al and Annette Hamilton, Sonja’s parents, were instrumental in establishing Outreach International in 1977. Their faith and commitment to Christ has helped to take the message age of salvation thru Christ to many countries around the world.

A year ago Dale and Sonja began being full time care givers for Dale’s parents who are now living full time with them. They are doing a lot of caregiving while doing their best to keep up with everything else. Please keep them in your prayers.

“Thank you for praying for us and with us-you bless our lives and ministry over and over again and we thank God for you! We love you all. We too, pray for the Lord’s Blessings on each of you! Because of Jesus and in His Love, Dale and Sonja.” (Newsletter Feb. 2021)

One of the missions under the umbrella of OI is Me and My House in Colima, Mexico. Countryside Christian Church also financially supports that work as well as funding OI.





CELEBRATING HIS BIRTH

COUNTRYSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

# Candlelight

CHRISTMAS EVE



SUNDAY  
**DEC 24**  
5:00 PM



## Christmas Services 2023

**Dec 17<sup>th</sup>**

Children's Christmas Program  
(10:45am)  
Bethlehem Walk (4:30-6:30pm)

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup>**

Worship Service (10:45am)  
*There will be no Sunday School this day*  
Christmas Eve (5pm)

*"Bless us, Lord, this Christmas, with quietness of mind; teach us to be patient and always to be kind."*

*—Helen Steiner Rice*

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHT

# OUR GIVING



## **God's Gifts to Us**

Here's the way Christmas is described in the most famous verse: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Then there's the simple, short, spectacular exultation of 2 Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!" The very essence of Christmas includes a divine overflow of generosity, kindness, grace, giving — doing for us, giving to us, what we could never do for ourselves or get on our own.

The ultimate gift is God. God gives God, like it says in 1 Peter 3:18: "Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God." This was all so that we might have God as our supreme, all-satisfying gift or treasure. At the heart of Christmas is God giving God for the enjoyment of his people, whom he saves by giving his Son to suffer. That's breathtaking. It is the heart of Christmas.

## **Our Response**

Hebrews 13:16 says, "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices" — that is, worship — "are pleasing to God." Even our giving to others is viewed as a sacrifice of worship to God.

Here's the sum of the matter. I think all of our gift giving should seek to form a mindset about giving at Christmas that helps the children and the adults to (1) rejoice in God as the great and first giver of the greatest gift, (2) seek the mindset that offers back to Christ the gift of trust, hope, admiration, joy, and affection, and then, finally, (3) seek the mindset that overflows with joy in giving to others — not primarily the mindset of getting, but the mindset of joyful overflow: giving.

## **MY FAITH PROMISE TO WORLD MISSIONS**

**After a period of much prayer and discernment, I/WE promise to support the worldwide missionary program of the Countryside Christian Church over the next year. In total dependence upon God for HIS provision, it is our promise that "As God Gives, So Shall We Give." By faith, I/We promise the following amount of money:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Annual Total**

**Note: This is a faith promise, a covenant between myself and God. It is my voluntary offering for the evangelization of the world.**

FINANCE HIGHLIGHT



Point your smartphone camera at the QR code to the right to be taken to the online giving site. From here you can choose to give online or via text



**December Anniversaries**

- 6 – Kenny & Debbie Collis
- 20 – Chuck & Hetty Volk
- 26 – Bill & JoAnn Courter

**December Birthdays**

- 1 – Jamie Schumpert
- 5 – Mary Green
- 10 – Dorothy Newton
- 14 – Brandon Simms
- 15 – Emmett Jones
- 17 – Willy Biscontine
- 20 – Gabby Krogman
- 21 – Ellie Byam
- 23 – Kathy Kohrt
- 23 – Grant Rutledge
- 24 – Islay Miller
- 24 – Ben White
- 31 – Brock Coverdill

# VOLUNTEERS THIS MONTH

## Children's Ministry

Sunday School (9:30-10:15)			Worship* (10:45-12:00)				
			Children's Church			Nursery	
Date	Teacher's	Nursery	Date	Teacher	Helper	Leader	Helper
			*Children's Church Teacher & helper are dismissed from service after the worship communion / offering *Nursery workers are scheduled for the entire church service from 10:40-12:00				
November			November				
3	Connie Curry Judy Millies	Becki Winger	3	Criss Evans	Cheryl Gipson	Shanie Bird	Cathy Lotz
10	Connie Curry Judy Millies	Ruthie Coverdill	10	Criss Evans	Sarah Denekas	Shanie Bird	Mikah Mikles
17	Connie Curry Judy Millies	Cathy Lotz	17	Criss Evans	Donna Vickroy	Shanie Bird	Georgia Cullison
24	Connie Curry Judy Millies	Ruthie Coverdill	24	Criss Evans	Amber Bird	Shanie Bird	Sarah Denekas
31	Connie Curry Judy Millies	Sarah Denekas	31	Family Sunday	Family Sunday	Shanie Bird	Becki Winger

## Worship Ministry

### COMMUNION MEDITATION

December 3 – Jim Kaecker  
 December 10 – Teresa Garcia  
 December 17 – Wayne Lotz  
 December 24 – Ryan Schmidt  
 December 31 – Steve Allison

### GREETERS

*Please sign up for a Sunday that works for your family! Welcome people, direct them to the sanctuary, nursery, or restrooms if needed, and hand out bulletins.*

## Breakfast

### VOLUNTEERS



*New sign-up sheets are in the lobby. Please sign up for a Sunday that works best for you! Provide breakfast treats and help serve coffee and clean-up between Sunday School and Worship.*

## Church

### BUILDING CLEANERS

Ryan & Laura Schmidt  
 Rhonda Stahl & Cheryl Gipson  
 Jeff & Naomi Jones



*"Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Matthew 9:37-38*

VOLUNTEERS THIS MONTH

# December

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Stamping Club (Bev Skelton) 9am-12pm	2
3 SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM COFFEE TIME 10:15AM WORSHIP 10:45AM Disciple Group 5pm	4 Evangelism/ Missions 6:30pm All Depts. 7pm U of I Home Extension 7-9pm	5 Men's Study 9am Women's Study 9am	6 Kids Club/Impact 3-5pm Small Groups Port Byron -6pm Geneseo - 6pm	7 Worship Team 6:30pm	8	9 Women's Coffee 9:30am 
<b>DECORATE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS</b>						
10 SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM COFFEE TIME 10:15AM WORSHIP 10:45AM Disciple Group 5pm	11 Church in use Zuma Township Meeting	12 Men's Study 9am Women's Study 9am	13 Kids Club/Impact 3-5pm  Small Groups Port Byron -6pm Geneseo - 6pm	14 Zuma Home Extension 1:00-4:00pm Worship Team 6:30pm	15 Holiday Lights Tour 5pm 	16
17 SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM COFFEE TIME 10:15AM WORSHIP (KIDS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM) 10:45AM  BETHLEHEM WALK 4:30-6:30PM	18  ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE TODAY	19 Men's Study 9am Women's Study 9am	20 <i>No Kids Club/Impact this week</i> Small Groups Port Byron -6pm Geneseo - 6pm	21 Worship Team 6:30pm	22	23
24 SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM COFFEE TIME 10:15AM WORSHIP 10:45AM  Christmas Eve Service 5pm	25 Christmas Day 	26 Men's Study 9am Women's Study 9am	27 <i>No Kids Club/Impact this week</i> Small Groups Port Byron -6pm Geneseo - 6pm	28 Worship Team 6:30pm	29	30
31 SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM COFFEE TIME 10:15AM WORSHIP 10:45AM Potluck -12pm		<b>"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21</b>				