

# Faith's Happenings...

December, 2021

## *Happy Birthday*

Ginny Linsberg	1st
Dorthea Fisher	3rd
Bonnie Goldsberry	12th
Art Hanson	15th
Tracy Reynolds	27th
Nick Hoops	29th
Pat Pelic	29th

## *Happy Anniversary*

Gene & Bonnie Goldsberry	19th
Byron & Bobbie Myrick	22nd
Larry & Linda Bennett	27th
Carl & Sandy Despreaux	28th
Roger & Gloria DeMeritt	31st

If we missed your name/date, we're sorry.  
Please notify Barbra in the church office  
to have your special dates added.

### **December at a Glance**

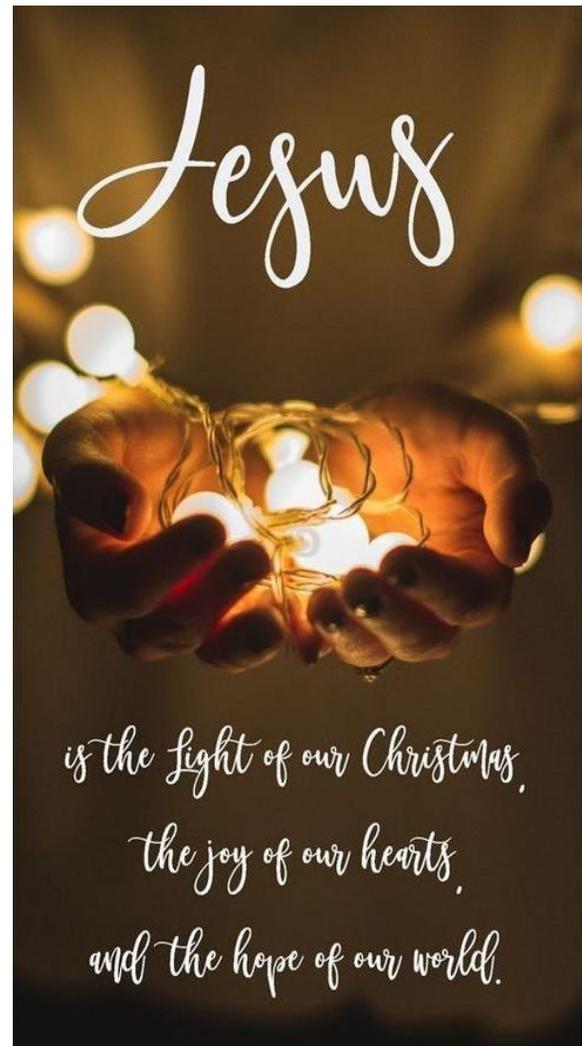
*Mark your calendars now!*

*Men of Faith Breakfast: Dec. 7*

*Ladies Luncheon: Dec. 14*

*Advent worship **Wednesdays***

*Christmas Eve worship: Dec. 24*



### **Christmas Eve Worship**

**5:00 pm**

**7:00 pm**

**Please join us!**

## Stephen Ministry in Our Congregation

Could you benefit from the confidential, one-to-one care and support of a Stephen minister? Call (941) 681-0297.

### No More Candle Dedications

When we switched to electric candles, the number of folks signing up to sponsor a candle weekly has dwindled. In light of this, Council has decided to discontinue the weekly candle sign-up effective December first.

### Long Term Prayer Update

This prayer list is for those who need continued, long-term prayer. We try to keep the weekly prayer list short, so people named may be moved to the newsletter after a few weeks in the bulletin. If you want to add someone to this list, contact Barbra in the church office (697-3313).

Please keep these folks in your prayers: Ralph Crites, Sarah, Hester and Carter Newton, Joanne Best, Kathy Kanak, Sandy Honeycutt, Larry Bennett, John Schleede, Jack Myers, Carl Jaspers, Lois Howell, Rick and Roberta Luckow, Ethel Hunn, Jackie Magee

### Electronic Giving

To contribute to support God's work, you may visit our web page <https://alivingfaith.org> and use the "Give" button.

### Men's Breakfast

Men, we invite you to join us for our monthly breakfast at Stefano's restaurant. We will meet at 7:30 am on Tuesday, December 7. Please join us!

## Tidings of Comfort and Joy: A Midweek Advent Series

The holiday season can stir deep emotions within each of us. Many children greet the advent of Christmas with joy and excitement, whereas those who have lost loved ones during the past year may find great sadness in the very same event. Thankfully, our God meets us wherever we are, both physically and emotionally. This year our Advent series gives voice to the complex situations and emotions with which we greet the coming Messiah, and uses the reactions of those who first received the news of Jesus' birth (Zechariah, Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds) to do so. These services acknowledge responses of fear, confusion, doubt, and curiosity, while the coming of Jesus promises comfort and joy for all of us.

We will be starting the series on Wednesday December 1 at noon. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us.

### Last Chance

We must receive all 2021 donations by December 26 in order for them to be credited on your 2021 giving statement.

### "Faithful Families" is Coming to Faith!

The Florida Department of Health sponsors a special series of lessons for local families to help improve their lives in several areas. Faith will be offering this 9-lesson curriculum, "Faithful Families," from January 5 through February 16 (Wednesdays at 1:00 pm) and again from March 2 through April 13 (Wednesdays at 10:00 am). Sessions are 45 minutes long, and topics include diet and exercise among others. Classes are limited to 15 and there will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex. More details will follow later in December.

## ***Gratitude and Thanksgiving Promise and Hope***

*The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him. Psalms 28:7 NIV*

*The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me...*

Thanksgiving is upon us. While we may look back in history to events surrounding early immigrants (the Pilgrims) and the hospitality extended by the indigenous/native peoples/first nations (the Indians) we cannot overlook the timeless lesson on hospitality and care for others.

Thanksgiving is a time to remember, learn and live out the lessons of giving thanks, communicating gratitude, and caring for others. If you have a need, please share your need so that others have an opportunity to be God's blessing for you.

If you are blessed, look for the needs around you, look for those who are facing challenges this time of year, and look for ways you can be God's blessing and care for others.

In all of this remember it is God who is at the heart of Thanksgiving. We are thankful for the grace God continues to show us in the gift of a Savior, and for sustaining care throughout all the changes and challenges each day of the year. God is the one who helps us.

This week we will move from the harvest focus on thanksgiving to a season of promise and hope. The Advent and Christmas cycle draw our attention to the ancient promises of God given through the Old Testament prophets. To people living in fear, confusion and doubt, and to people having curiosity, we hear God's promise to help all as the savior of the nations comes.

If we only focus on the promise, however, we miss the point. We must also focus on how that promise is fulfilled in the coming of the Christ child. So, while we watch and wait, we also respond as Elizabeth with hearts leaping for joy, and like the shepherds with songs praising God and telling of the wonder they experienced.

Please join us for worship as we journey from...

Thanksgiving (Wednesday, November 24, 7:00 pm)

to the Sundays in Advent...

8:30 am [Outside-bring a chair]

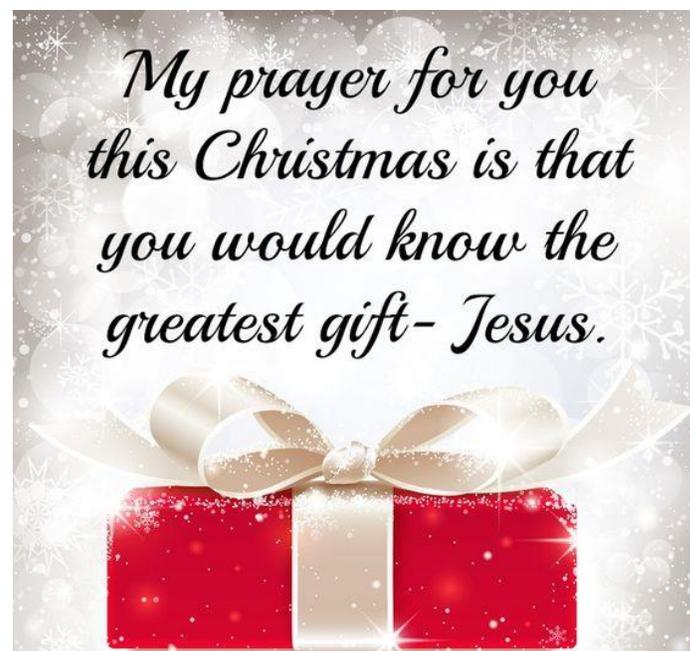
and 10:30 am [Inside and live streaming]

And, finally, remember...

Midweek Advent worship (Wednesdays, NOON)

Let us join together singing and praising God for God's faithfulness,  
*Blessings this Advent and Christmas Season,*

*+ Pastor Brian and Lori*



**Merry Christmas  
From the  
Church Staff**