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Volume 24 - Issue 6 - November / December, 2020

An Encouraging Word

It can be easily forgotten, but God is the one who brought Christmas into being. And what God does, He does with purpose. So, what is the purpose of Christmas? Bringing a sense of excitement and wonder to children? Time off work? Family gatherings? Giving gifts? Showing appreciation? Or, those "magical" Hallmark moments? These are good things but they're not what God purposed. The purpose of Christmas is that God came to give. He gave Himself to us. It would be hard to relate to God if we only knew Him as God in heaven. But we don't have to struggle with that. Because at Christmas God came to earth in a human form so we could know Him better as Savior and Lord. He came to make the point that you and I matter to Him.

Considering all the things that you may feel have been taken away in 2020, refocusing on Christmas as being about God coming to give is a thought that might be welcomed now more than ever. Have losses this year caused you to question if you matter to God?

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken...and everyone went to their own town to register" (Luke 2:1 & 3). It's likely that you have either read these words or have heard them read more than once at Christmas time. However, it's easy to miss what the described events meant to Mary and Joseph. These words meant that they lost any chance of THEIR plans working out at all. Because now this new husband and expectant wife had to leave their home and travel miles to the town of Bethlehem where Joseph's family was from. They had no choice. It was mandated by the government. Imagine the loss Mary and Joseph felt! Mary's baby was due to be born and they had to leave home. And not just any baby, but the baby the angel Gabriel announced to the virgin Mary. A baby who was the Son of the Most High, Jesus the Savior. Being forced to leave home at a time like that had to feel like a loss for Mary and Joseph! Because of that they probably questioned if they mattered to God. Later Mary and Joseph realized that God was had been at work through their loss moving them to Bethlehem where He would fulfill His purpose of Jesus being born there (Micah 5:2). God did have a purpose for their lives. They did matter to God even when it didn't feel like it. God has a purpose for your and my life too. And we matter to God even when it doesn't feel like it. We matter so much that God came near in the person of Jesus to offer us the gift of salvation from sin and the gift of a right faith relationship with Him. A relationship of sacrificial love. Resulting in the trust that He can even use our losses for His greater purposes. Keep that in mind regardless of what may have been a part of your 2020.

Merry Christmas!
Pastor Mike



FALL FESTIVAL



Each year Mt. Nebo UMC gives age appropriate Bibles, that include devotions and study helps, to all 3rd and 8rd graders. Although 2020 has brought many changes, one thing that has remained the same is the need for the Word of God in each of our lives. It was great to be able to present Bibles at both the 9 AM and 11 AM service to our 3rd and 8th graders.



Looking for a way to reach out to families, friends, and community this Christmas? This year, Mt. Nebo UMC will transform the parking lots into a 'Drive Thru Nativity'. Each of us can do something in preparation and/or presentation for this event. Watch for dates and times to follow. Each evening people from our congregation will welcome folks in the parking lot and direct them in the path leading to the stable in Bethlehem. We will also need individuals and families to be characters as people drive thru the path through Bethlehem. Our goal is to have family groups take turns in each set (i.e. one family might be willing to dress as the shepherds in the field for a time slot, one or both evenings).

Here are ways you can be part of this ministry event:

Pray as preparations are made. Pray how you might give of your time and talents to make this a reality. Pray for those you might invite to visit the nativity from the comfort of their vehicle. Pray that the message of Christmas may be made real for those who are searching for Jesus (much like those who followed the star).

Be part of the design and construction team.

Help with set-up on Sunday, December 20, with final details on Monday, December 21 during the day.

Be hands on as a character to help retell the story of Christmas. (There are no lines to say, no acting experience needed) We will need to know what day works better for you and where you would like to serve!

What better thing can we do as a church family than to 'Give the message of Christ to others this Christmas!

Please let Pastor Mike, Brenda Reed, or Will Stratton know how you (and your family) would like to be part of this Drive Thru Nativity!





Here at Mt. Nebo UMC, there are several opportunities to be part of an adult small discipleship group. What is a discipleship group? It is a small group of people who read together, pray together and meet together to become the love of God for one another. Scripture has much to say about spiritual

friendships. In both the Old and New Testaments, scripture affirms the value of developing such relationships with others in small groups. *“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another”*. Proverbs 27:17 In Hebrews 10:24-25 we find this message- *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

Social distance has not stopped groups from meeting. There are some that meet face to face and some that meet via of an online format. There are groups that meet different days of the week and different times of the day. I encourage each of you reading this to consider growing in your own faith and study with others.

I know from personal experience that through studying together with others in a small group, I have gotten to build relationships with other Christians who I would have not known well by seeing them an hour on Sunday mornings. By studying with others, I have grown in my faith. Regularly meeting with others to discuss scripture or books written to help us grow and mature as Christians, encourages me to study God’s word on a consistent basis. I need accountability and small groups offer this for each of us as we grow in grace. Having opportunities to pray for one another’s needs and serve together have also been special blessings.

This fall, there are groups you can join that meet weekly:

- * 7 AM Tuesday, Women’s Group online (Kristine Brookover, leader)
- * 10 AM Tuesday, Chapel in the Woods Women’s Prayer Group (presently meeting online (Susan Davidson, leader)
- * 10 AM Wednesday, Book of Ruth Study meeting at the church (Linda Henry, leader)
- * 6:30 PM Wednesday, Shoulder to Shoulder Men’s Group meeting in the Administration Building (Chris Erhardt, leader)
- * 7:00 PM Wednesday, Heart to Heart Women’s Group meeting in the church narthex (Elise Starkey, leader)

If these times or days will not work for you and you feel God is calling you to be part of a small group study, please let me know. Even in these times of social distance and pandemic, two new groups formed in 2020.

We all need Jesus — a growing relationship with Him and a relationship with others as we strive to Know Christ and Make Him Known.

—Brenda Reed, Discipleship Coordinator



Getting Our Hearts Ready for Christmas
Let's make 2020 the Best Christmas Ever!
Packing Shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child
Mt. Nebo UMC Packing Night
Monday, November 9th, Beginning at 6:00 PM
Sunday School Room area and Narthex



What to bring? Each individual or family will want to bring supplies for one or more shoeboxes. Below is a web link to see the types of items to be included.

<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions>

If you need a printed copy of this information, please call the church office or pick up a list at the sign-up table.

Since 1993 Operation Christmas Child, a ministry of Samaritan's Purse, has collected and distributed more than 178 million shoebox gift packs to children in more than 160 countries and territories.

Join others at Mt. Nebo UMC as we bring supplies and pack shoe boxes with school supplies and little gift items for children of various ages to enjoy. This is one way we can serve Christ by serving others.

If you would like to be part of our Operation Christmas Child event, but cannot be there in person, there are ways you can help:

- 1) Pray for those packing boxes and pray for those children who will receive our boxes.
- 2) It costs \$9 for the mailing of these boxes from Samaritan's Purse, so you could sponsor one of our packed boxes by donating the shipping cost of a box.

**NOTE—We will have some filler items you may choose
to use for those extra unexpected spaces in your box.**



Giving Manger Family Night
Advent—a time of preparation...
Monday, November 30th, Beginning at 6:00 PM

We will hear the story of the Giving Manger and each family will receive their own giving manger to use throughout the season of advent. This is a time for families to work together to plan how they will share the love of Jesus with others this Christmas.

Since there will be supplies that we will need to purchase prior to this event, registration is necessary. To save the space for your family, please call the church office (937-379-1225) or contact Brenda Reed (call or text 513-509-8498).

—Continued on next page



Fall Bedtime Bible Stories

Theme—God is Nuts about you!

We hear about how much God loves us, but scripture shares examples of this over and over—God loves us with a God sized love. Look for a schedule for Winter Bedtime Bible Stories that will begin in January, as we focus on ways to share the Warmth of God’s Love with Others.

A special thanks to Virgie Luck for help leading this group.



The 4-5-6 meets on Mondays from 4:30PM – 5:30PM. November through February the group will meet in the Ministry Annex. 4-5-6 is a youth group opportunity for young people grades 4-7. It is a great way for these young people to start their school week. Alys-a Eubanks, Neal Massengill, and Beth Keifer take time each Monday to encourage these youth in their faith journey through study, prayer, and fellowship. Please contact one of these adult leaders or Brenda Reed for more information.



devos & donuts

This middle school group for Hamersville students began meeting in September. The group meets before school for a time of devotions and prayer each

Wednesday. The relationships they form with other Christian peers, and the practice of taking time to study God’s Word and pray together are positive faith steps that will stay with them into adulthood. This group is for any 6th, 7th, or 8th grader that is looking for a small group. Groups like this do not happen without the support and help from unpaid servants. Hats off to Linda Henry who spends each Wednesday morning sharing time and faith with this group!



Continued on next page

Not already a part of 456 or Devos and Donuts? There will be a new middle school youth small group organizing in November. Please contact Brenda Reed if you are interested. Big things happen in small groups.



During September and October, high school youth have met bi-weekly on Sunday evenings at the Murphy Pavilion. This group will begin to transition to a weekly format—The Sr. High Youth will meet with a blended format—via Zoom some weeks and face to face meetings on a monthly basis. See Brenda Reed for a detailed schedule.

NOTE- Youth groups will follow the schedule for Western Brown Local Schools. If there is no school the group will not meet face to face.

If anyone feels God nudging you and you feel called to encourage youth in their faith walk—please know you already have what it takes to work with youth—a willing spirit. God always equips the called! Please talk to Brenda Reed about ways you might help with youth at Mt. Nebo UMC.



Confirmation Sunday


Last winter Olivia Cook and Dani Tackett spent time, over the course of several weeks, studying The Basics of the Christian Faith. Through this time of study and discussion, these young ladies not only learned more about what it means to be a Christian but what serving others has to do with living a life in

Christ. We were able to celebrate their confirmation during worship on October 18th. A special thanks to Natalie Cook who took the time to study with us and encourage these young ladies during the Confirmation Classes.

—Brenda Reed, Discipleship Coordinator

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Use the code to complete Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus, our Savior.



CODE:

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


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 11 14 12 10 21 21 14 13
 6 24 23 13 14 1 15 4 21
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 14 5 14 1 21 10 2 3 18 23 16
 15 10 3 17 14 1 , 25 1 18 23 12 14
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ANSWER ON PAGE 11

Bible Quiz

After Jesus healed 10 men at one time, how many returned to thank him? What had been their ailment?


A. five; blindness
 B. all 10; deafness
 C. one; possession by demons
 D. one; leprosy



Bible Quiz

Which of the four Gospels name(s) Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth?

A. Only Luke
 B. Matthew and Luke
 C. Mark and John
 D. All four

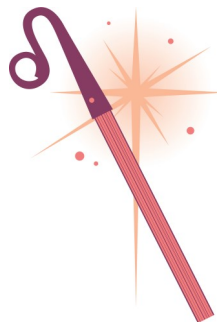


Answer to Bible Quizzes on Page 11



We're Lowering Our Mortgage!


Mortgage as of October 31, 2020:
\$492,433



The simple shepherds heard the voice of an angel and found their Lamb; the wise men saw the light of a star and found their Wisdom.

—Fulton J. Sheen

Men's Shoulder to Shoulder Small Group



Big things happen in small groups! Shoulder to Shoulder is a Men's Small Group that meets Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM at Mt. Nebo's Administration Building. The group is currently studying the book of Acts. In addition to studying together, this group of men lift one another up in prayer and pray for the concerns of others. These men study, pray, and hold one another accountable in their walks as Christian men. Chris Erhardt is the group leader. Any man interested in joining this group feel free to come on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM; also feel free to talk to Chris for more information.



Poinsettia orders are due on Dec. 6th. Cost is \$10

Roger Wash, passed away on September 11, 2020, at the age of 82. Roger was the husband of Darline Wash and father of Randy (Linda) Wash and Cheyenne Walters.

Chuck Schafer, passed away on September 16, 2020, at the age of 77. Chuck leaves behind his wife, Margie, son, Steven Schafer, and step-sons, Steve Wallace, Denny Wallace and James Wallace.

Connie McAfee, passed away on September 17, 2020, at the age of 81. Connie leaves behind her husband, Cecil McAfee, and children, Anita Earhart and Jeff Riddle.

Melissa Stephen, passed away on October 7, 2020, at the age of 49. Melissa leaves behind her daughter, Kayla (Terry) Meadors and father, David Stephen.

In Memory
of those who
lost their
Lives.



The Mt. Nebo congregation has lost so many dear friends.
Our prayers and love go out for all their families.



Backpack Blessings is now bringing 44 children at Hamersville School nutritious meals to take home each weekend. We are now packing these totes in the basement of the Ministry Annex. Because of Covid-19 we are not allowed in the school where we were working from. I coordinate tote drop off and pick-ups with Bethany from the school. My sister, Ginnie, and daughter, Paige, are a huge help and very much appreciated.

We can always use:

*Small cereal boxes *Individual Mac & Cheese *Oatmeal packets
*Small cans of soup *Nutri-grain breakfast bars *Kool-Aid Slammers *Individual Ravioli's

Anyone of these items that you would like to donate would be great.

—Virgie Luck, Coordinator

Just when everything is bearing down on us to such an extent that we can scarcely withstand it, the Christmas message comes to tell us that all our ideas are wrong, and that what we take to be evil and dark is really good and light because it comes from God. Our eyes are at fault, that is all.

God is in the manger, wealth in poverty, light in darkness, succor in abandonment. No evil can befall us; whatever men may do to us, they cannot but serve the God who is secretly revealed as love and rules the world and our lives.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is in the Manger*



Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year!

ANSWER FROM PUZZLE ON PAGE 8

Answer: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6, NIV

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUIZZES ON PAGE 9

Top—D (See Luke 17:11-19)

Bottom—B (See Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:1-7)



Hello to all of you who have been anxiously waiting to hear about our next

Prime Timer event. Unfortunately, our calendar of events for the year of 2020 has almost come and gone, except for our beautiful, but cool evening spent at the Dunn's Gospel sing at their little prayer chapel on September 19th. All of those in attendance were seated outside and around the chapel to hear the guest singers and musicians perform. Of course all joined in on singing some of our favorite hymns together. Later, down by their shelter, we were seated at tables, which were spaced in safe distances apart, to partake of the walking tacos served by those who helped prepare them. It was a wonderful and uplifting time of fellowship and we thank the Dunns, and those who helped, for working so hard to give us such a welcomed relief from these past months of seclusion.

We will all miss celebrating the upcoming holidays together but will look forward to the New Year and our Prime Timer Fellowship events. In the mean time stay safe and well.

"May God Bless You All"

—Bonnie Oney, Reporter

November & December Sermon Topics

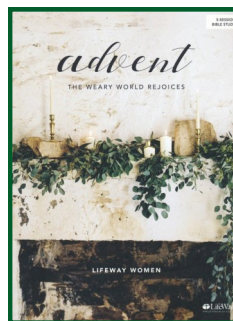


"The Names of God" series continued:

- Nov. 1 – The Lord Our Banner (Yahweh Nissi)
- Nov. 8 – Father (Abba)
- Nov. 15 – Holy Spirit (Teacher, Comforter)
- Nov. 22 – Jesus (Savior, Messiah, Redeemer)
(Advent begins)

The Purpose of Christmas series:

- Nov. 29 – A Time for Anticipation
- Dec. 6 – A Time for Celebration
- Dec. 13 – A Time for Salvation
- Dec. 20 – A Time for Reconciliation
- Dec. 27 – A Time for Proclamation



Women's Heart to Heart Study Group will begin an Advent study beginning November 11th. Any woman that would like to join this study is welcome. We

will meet in the Narthex on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. The cost of the study book is \$10.

Elise Starkey, Leader

Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church

11693 St. Rt. 774

Bethel, OH 45106

Pastor Mike Starkey

Phone: 937-379-1225

Fax: 937-379-9038



Invite Friends and Family to Worship!

Service Times:

9:00 - 10:00 AM Worship with Band

Service inside and parking lot on 91.1 FM

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Worship with Band

Service inside and parking lot on 91.1 FM

*Videos of all services are
offered on our website
www.mtneboumvooh.com
and on our YouTube channel
(Mt. Nebo UMC).*

**Our Mission:
To Know Christ and Make Him Known**