

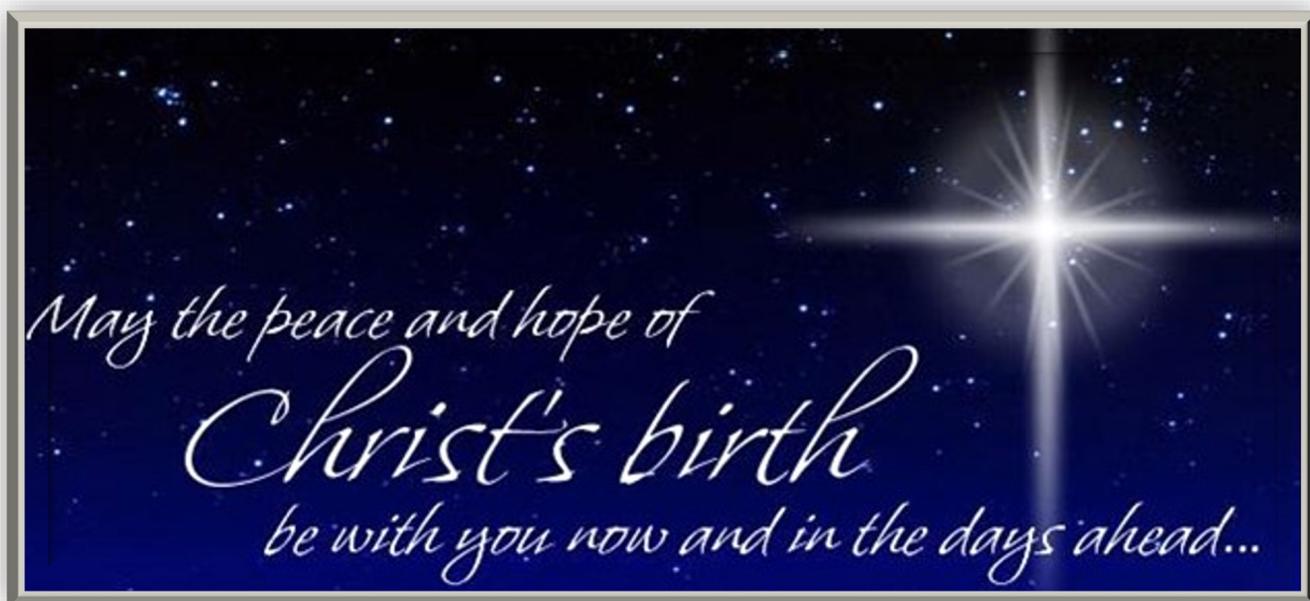


The Vine

News, Information and Inspiration from Royersford Baptist Church

Volume 52/Issue 6

November/December 2021





A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

A few months ago, we sang a song in worship called Woyaya. The song was written by Ghanaian drummer Sol Amarifio, and it is the title song of a 1971 album by Oisibisa, a musical group of Ghanaian and Caribbean musicians. The words are:

*We are going,
Heaven knows where we are going,
But we know within.
And we will get there,
Heaven knows how we will get there,
But we know we will.
It will be hard, we know,
And the road will be muddy and rough,
But we'll get there,
Heaven knows how we will get there,
But we know we will.
Woyaya, woyaya, woyaya, woyaya.*



I first heard the song sung during chapel services in seminary, and it has carried me through many muddy and rough roads. Stop by the office on a weekday afternoon and there's a good chance you'll find me humming it. Not only is it a catchy and mesmerizing tune, but the lyrics speak deeply to the place we find ourselves these days. We are going, heaven knows where we are going... The word woyaya comes from the Ghanaian Ga language and means "we are going."

Indeed, in this time of transitions and unknowns, we know we are going but only Heaven knows where or how we will get there. But we know we will. We have the faith that will carry us there- and most importantly, we are going. We aren't standing still, we aren't waiting for someone to rescue us, we aren't twiddling our thumbs wondering what is next. We are going.

I'm grateful to be on this journey with you, faithfully and courageously seeking what is next.

Woyaya.

Pastor Sarah

Worship

What a blessing it is to worship in person in the sanctuary once again! For 86 weeks, we worshipped online and for a few weeks online and in the Fellowship Hall, but we joyfully returned to the sanctuary on October 31.



The COVID-19 pandemic is not over. As we continue to navigate protocols and protections for our most vulnerable, a few reminders:

- When in the building, masks are required at all times
- Practice social distancing as much as possible
- If you aren't feeling well, if you or someone in your family has a pending covid-19 test or has tested positive, please stay home and join us virtually!
- Remember that people have varying levels of comfort with in-person interaction. Some folks might be ready to hug, others might want to wave from across the room, and others might stay online.

We will continue to offer our worship service online- you can access it by going to our website. <https://rbcabc.org/online-worship>

Thanks for your patience as we continue to adapt the technology needs to keep us connected!



2021 Christmas & Advent



Hanging of the Greens

November 21 (after worship)

Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 6:30PM

RBC Youth Group



As you might be able to tell from this photo above, it has been a blast being back in person for our Youth Group gatherings! We kicked off the school year with an exciting (but non-competitive) game of "Slip n' Slide Kickball". Yes, that is right, a combination of our beloved back yard kickball, infused with the summer fun of slip n slides! Using kiddie pools as bases and properly graded plastic drop cloths, we got to slide into the bases like never before! We had an incredible time and look forward to setting this up annually for years to come.

But since this fun event, we have continued to meet regularly on our Sunday nights, spending time in fellowship, message, discussion, activity, and of course games. Talking about topics such as "Priorities", "Gratitude" and "Fears." It has been a lot of fun exploring these topics over the past few weeks. We have been getting anywhere between 8-13 youth show up to our Sunday nights, and many of them Middle school students.

This makes for a new and exciting dynamic for our group as we re-learn how to be back in person, but also, for many of our students, learning for the first-time what Youth group even is, and how to talk about their faith.

Covid continues to put restrictions on many of the events, trips, and activities we hope to get back to. And we cannot wait to get to open those doors back up, but we also understand that this is all going to happen in small incremental steps. We took one of those steps as we as a group did our first group event as we headed to Colonial Gardens for its Halloween themed activities. Thirteen students met at Colonial to experience the haunted hayride and hedge maze, and just spend time together. We had a great time, and it was a nice step in the right direction to be able to get our group together for something like that. Spirits were high and I look forward to our future as RBC Youth.

-Ryan Seckman, Youth Director





RBC BOOK CLUB

November/December 2021

The days are getting shorter and that means more time to read! This year the RBC Book Club has been reading books set in different countries which leads to some lively discussions. Join us on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:15pm. Here are the final two books for 2021:

November 18: "*The Pinks: The First Women Detectives in America*" by Chris Enss

December 16: "*No Man's Land: The Trailblazing Women Who Ran Britain's Most Extraordinary Military Hospital During World War 1*" by Wendy Moore

We will be meeting on Zoom. Contact Karen Mason for the Zoom link at K26mason@gmail.com.

Winter Choir Rehearsal Schedule:

November 10: 7-8 PM
November 17: 7-8 PM



*We will be looking at four non-traditional but relevant works for this advent. We will be wearing masks during rehearsal as a precaution against COVID spread. Feel free to invite others to come as well. The more the merrier! Hoping you consider this opportunity for fellowship, musicianship, and praise. Please reach out to Alex if you have questions. acifelli86@gmail.com

COVID-19 Booster Shots

Let's do all we can to keep one another safe! The Montgomery County Office of Public Health is now scheduling appointments for booster doses of the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines, following FDA and CDC approval for people who meet the eligibility criteria. Appointments can be made online at www.montcopa.org/COVID-19vaccine or by calling (833) 875-3967, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Flu shots are also available at all Montgomery County vaccination clinics. Individuals may receive their flu shot at the same time as a COVID-19 booster, but separate appointments must be made for both shots. To make an appointment for a flu shot, visit www.montcopa.org/Flu.

A Quick Update From Mark Hite, Your Friendly Local Moderator

An Update from the Moderator

Hello RBC'ers. Here's a quick update about the finances, plans for congregational conversation, and some thoughts about the gospel...

Finances

As of the end of October, the finances are proving out the law of averages.

- Giving – our giving is up a bit from the last 2 months, but the last 3 months are down a bit from the previous 6 months. Overall, if you do an extrapolation exercise, the annual result is ~\$322,000, but we indicated in the canvass that we would give ~\$328,000. But that \$6,000 shortfall just an extrapolation, and, as they say, “the opera ain’t over...”
- Expenses – if we do a similar extrapolation exercise on expenses, the annual result is ~\$363,000, and we have been doing all of our numbers based on annual expenses of \$380,000. Again, this is just an extrapolation.
- Surplus – proving the law of averages, our surplus took a big hit in October (\$9,002) after several months of remaining pretty steady. The six month average reduction in surplus is (\$4,565) per month. We have been doing our numbers based on an average monthly reduction in surplus of (\$4,750). Pretty close. Reminder: the surplus is being depleted because we’re spending more than we’re giving.
- “Hit the wall” estimate – again, since everything is constantly in flux, this is a guesstimate of when we begin to experience serious financial trouble. Worst case scenario (assuming our expenses really do end up at \$380,000, and our giving ends up at \$322,000), we “hit the wall” by September 2022. Best case scenario (expenses at \$363,000 and giving at \$328,000), we “hit the wall” by around April 2023.
- Conclusion: *unless something changes significantly*, we run out of financial viability within a year, give or take a few months.

Better Together Initiative

The Sympara Exploratory Group spent the middle 2 weeks of October hosting in-person and online meetings attended by some other organizations as well as a fair number of RBC folks. We got some huge insights into the affordable housing picture (and we expect to get more insights), and we got some very valuable input from the few other organizations who attended. While the outside attendance numbers were not big, the process was the right one, it was very helpful, and some interesting things are coming into focus...which we can all discuss in...

Small Congregational Gatherings

...which we intend to host in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving. We'll communicate what we've been learning, and we'll seek your insights. The intent is for every single person in the active congregation to participate in one of these information and listening sessions. Please keep your eyes open for opportunities to sign up for a session – everyone's participation is crucial!

Thinking About the Gospel

A bunch of us read and discussed the book *Surprise the World: The Five Habits of Highly Missional People*. In this book, Australian Baptist pastor Michael Frost

shares his insights on habits that can tune us to be “outward facing”. One of those habits is to constantly immerse ourselves in the Gospels. If we want to be able to talk about Jesus, we should *all the time* have in front of our minds what Jesus was doing and talking about, as described in the Gospels. Troupier that I am, I set about reading the Gospels, which I thought I knew. Well, you’re never too old to keep learning. I was scratching my head way more than I had expected.

Then I remembered a book I had bought about 15 years ago but had never read: *The Secret Message of Jesus*, by Brian McLaren. Why did Jesus talk in parables all the time? Why is some of the language so...unclear? Why didn’t he just lay it out for us in a Systematic Theology sort of way?? I’m on my third read-through of the book. It makes my soul vibrate. There’s a lot to it, and I highly recommend it, but I won’t try to lay it all out here. I do, however, want to share one story.

McLaren (a pastor) describes a conversation he had once with a noted scholar and writer. They were at lunch, which Brian was enjoying, until the scholar threw out this statement: “You know, most evangelicals haven’t the foggiest notion what the gospel really is.” McLaren describes staring at his soup, hoping the scholar would resolve the question. Instead, he asked: “What do you think the gospel is, Brian?” McLaren laid out the concepts drawn from the writings of the apostle Paul – justification by faith through grace, the free gift of salvation, substitutionary atonement for sin – all the biggies.

“That’s exactly what most evangelicals say,” he replied, letting the tension hang for what seemed like a long, long time. Finally, McLaren asked him, “Well, what would you say the gospel is, if not that?” McLaren braced himself for heresy since he was very confident in his understanding of Paul’s writings.

“*The kingdom of God is at hand*. That was Jesus’ message. Don’t you think we should let Jesus tell us what the gospel is?” Of course, McLaren, says, he had to agree with him, but he could see no connection between this “kingdom of God” message and the gospel as he understood it from Paul. He ignored the idea for a few years – he was busy! But eventually it launched a journey for Brian to come to understand those connections. And for Brian, it turned out that coming to see the message of Jesus in a deeper way gave him a deeper and more nuanced understanding of what Paul was up to.

The core of the message is that the kingdom of God is not supposed to be some future, after-death reality. It’s supposed to be made real, now, on earth, through the living followers of Jesus. And the keys to making the kingdom real are the Great Commandments as pointed out by Jesus: “Love God and love your neighbor.” It happens when followers of Jesus live this out in their lives, both individually and in community.

That’s our calling, RBC. Whatever our base of operations ends up looking like, that’s our calling. However messy that reality is, that’s our calling. Are you up for that?

Blessings!

FROM THE GREEN TEAM



Buy Nothing Day

The holidays are coming. Are you ready? It's a good idea to step back and be intentional about how we approach the seasons before us. Rather than have the usual list of how to celebrate the holidays in an earth friendly manner, this article will focus on another aspect of the holidays – over consuming. It is so easy to get out there to find that perfect decoration, that perfect gift, or that perfect meal. The holidays are a plethora of activities encouraging us to buy, buy, buy. Yes, it can be fun. But is it helping or hurting the Earth? According to “The World Counts”, the negative effects of consumerism include the depletion of natural resources, and pollution of the Earth. The way that we are consuming is not sustainable. We are currently overusing Earth's natural resources [by] more than 70%. If everyone on earth lived like the average American, we would need 5.2 planets to support us. The consequence of the current rate of overconsumption is no more rainforests (by the end of the century), no more water (by 2040), and no more fish in the ocean (by 2048).

But there IS good news. A holiday has been established to encourage us to spend less on items and spend more time with our family and friends. So, what is this holiday called? Established in 1992, it is a day of protest called Buy Nothing Day. It is geared specifically to the day after Thanksgiving (in the US), which encourages us to rethink all our spending around the holidays. Its participants, from over 65 countries, are to buy nothing for 24 hours, to raise awareness of the negative environmental, social, and political consequences of overconsumption. There are even suggested forms of protest on that day if you feel called to do so. Here are a few examples:

1. Go to malls with a sign explaining the mission, and scissors, and be willing to cut up credit cards.
2. Participants steer empty shopping carts (labelled with Buy Nothing Day signs) around a mall or store in a long conga line, without making any purchases.
3. Keep your lights, TV's, computers, and other non-essential appliances turned off, plus cars parked and phones turned off, from sunrise to sunset.
4. Go for a hike instead and celebrate Earth and Nature.

In 2001, the idea extended to officially establish a Buy Nothing Christmas. Embracing the principles of a movement called Occupy Christmas, it encourages folks to do “something as simple as buying locally – going out and putting money into your local economy – or making your Christmas presents.” Basically, it promotes the idea of supporting local economy, artists, and craftspeople in holiday shopping.

If we keep going at our current rate, “The World Counts” predicts the collapse of the Earth's support systems in 28 years. Isn't it a good time to think clearly about how our consumption impacts the Earth? From our food purchases to our gift buying, to our travel, and everything in between, huge changes are needed. Will you think about it? Let the facts and the principles of “Buy Nothing Day” guide us through the holidays and beyond, choosing to help, not hurt, our beautiful planet.

Royersford Baptist Church Nursery School

RBCNS, LLC is in full-swing and having a great time being back in the building. We are all working hard at keeping each other safe and healthy while still learning every day! In Pre-K we have worked on some units about Fall, Fire Safety, Apples and more! We are learning how to write our names and our numbers. In our 3s class we worked on opposites, recognizing our name, and some fine motor skills. Our 2s are hard at learning how to separate from our parents as well as learning to share with others and painting with all different types of materials. We have been very busy, and we also just had our Halloween Parade outside with some amazing weather. We are looking forward to our Thanksgiving break as well as all our fun activities leading up to our Christmas Break! We appreciate all the love and support from-RBC!!



2's class enjoying the playground after their Halloween Parade



Some of our 3's at the Halloween Parade



Pre-K Class at the Halloween Parade

***RBC Leadership Council members are here for you!
Please reach out with any questions or concerns.***

OFFICERS

Moderator

Presides at meetings of the Leadership Council, and at meetings of the Membership.

Mark Hite

Vice-Moderator

Assumes all roles and responsibilities of the Moderator during the Moderator's absence.

Karen Mason

Clerk

Keeps accurate records of Leadership Council meetings and meetings of the Membership.

Keeps records of membership, conducts business correspondence.

Deb Savage

Treasurer

Receives records of deposit and disburses funds as directed, keeps accurate records of disbursements and monthly reports to Leadership Council.

Weegee Neiffer

Financial Secretary

Receives and records cash and checks, and deposits them promptly. Monitors online giving. Provides a monthly summary to the Treasurer.

Bernice Rogers

Assistant Treasurer

Assists the RBC Treasurer

Ryan Crist

GROUPS

Education & Discipleship Group

Learning and teaching how, today, to live and serve like Jesus.

Leader: **Mary Panetta**

Assistant Leader: Millie Collins

Worship Group

Going to God with all our hearts and offerings.

Janelle Trulson

Membership Care Group

Attending to the social and spiritual needs of members, deepening friendships through small group ministries and other RBC activities, and making it fun and easy to become an RBC member.

Melissa Reitnour

Mission & Outreach Group

Discerningly, through attention and selfless action, bringing hope to a world in need of our caring.

Reid Trulson

Youth Ministry Group

Bucking trends through Jesus-sponsored risk-taking and engagement in activities of Groups at RBC.

VACANT

Facilities Group

Through RBC-owned buildings and grounds, creating and preserving a beautiful and socially responsible place to worship God and serve the community.

Leader: **George Reitnour**

Assistant Leader:

Herb Rogers

RBC COMMITTEES 2021

Finance Committee

Assist in budgeting and financial matters affecting RBC.

Leader: Mark Hite

Members: Weege Neiffer; Bernice Rogers; Ryan Crist; George Reitnour

Staff Relations Committee

Foster constructive communications between RBC and the staff.

Leader: Karen Mason

Members: Del Engstrom; Cathy Slade; Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

RBC MINISTRY TEAMS 2021:

RBC Kids Planning Team

Leader: Mary Panetta

Assistant Leader:

Millie Collins

Members: Ginny Dearolf; Lorri Engstrom;

Marcia Ricketts; Sandi Rosenberry;

Ryan Seckman (Youth Leader)

Sarah Strosahl-Kagi (Pastor)

Selectives Team

Karen Hite; Stan Slade; Reid Trulson

RBC/RBCNS LLC Team

Millie Collins (representing RBC)

George Reitnour (representing RBC)

Cara Burrell (representing RBCNS)

Michelle Hang (representing RBCNS)

Melissa Moffa (representing RBCNS)

Facilities Maintenance Team

Leader: Chris Scales

Members: Charlie Denning;

George Reitnour; Herb Rogers;

Dan Stauffer; Dave Strosahl;

Gene Wheeler

Membership Care Team

Leader: Melissa Reitnour

Members: Tonya MacCoy; Marty Murray;

Nancy O'Neil; Marcia Ricketts; Sandy Smoyer

RBC Reopening Team

Millie Collins (representing Education & Discipleship Group)

Janelle Trulson (representing Worship Group)

Reid Trulson (representing Missions & Outreach Group)

Diversity Team

Leader: Reid Trulson

Members: Elle Crist; Judy Denning; Charlie Denning;

Shawn MacCoy; Deb Savage; Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

Green Team

Leader: Kay RolfsMassaglia

Members: Mary Glassman; Mark Hite; George Reitnour

Youth Ministry Support Team

Charlie Denning; Shawn MacCoy; Marcia Ricketts; Sandi Rosenberry; Ryan Seckman (Youth Director)

Sympara Exploration Ministry Team

Leader: Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

Members: Mark Hite; Nancy O'Neil; Mary Panetta; George Reitnour; Kay RolfsMassaglia;

Deb Savage; Reid Trulson

Let's join together in this "Thank You" gift to retired ministers and missionaries for serving God and blessing us in the past.

RBC receives the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering throughout December. You may give online, by text, by mailing or bringing your gift to the church office during business hours. Checks should be payable to RBC with "RMMO" in the memo.

Please give with a generous heart.

"The RMMO is my favorite offering because it is rooted in gratitude. I understand how missionaries and ministers serve and how it serves them. It symbolizes a caring for each other in an appreciative and respectful way with the profound ability to impact for the good. During this unprecedented time, people question in their head and hearts, 'What can we do to help?' We can come together in faith and gratitude."

Rev. Dr. Jim Hopkins
Pastor
Lakeshore Baptist Church
Oakland, CA



Retired
Ministers &
Missionaries
Offering
2021



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Margaret Clevensline	9
Phillip Hinostroza	12
Megan Fallon	14
Madison Engstrom	15
Stan Slade	16
Gwen Thompson	16
Amelia Crist	19
Shawn Turley	19
Krystal McLaughlin	21
Kay RolfsMassaglia	23
Charlie Denning	25
Oliver Scales	29

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Tobias Hess	2
Tonya MacCoy	2
Carolyn Haley	3
Kiera Phillips	4
Marcia Ricketts	4
Ralph Eichelberger	5
Carol Francis	7
Natalie Hinostroza	8
Brenna Saxton	9
Rachel Fisher	12
Trevor Hess	14
Eric Engstrom	18
Logan Savage	22
Jeff Bedford	25
Megan Schmidt	25
Martha McDaniel	31

If there are any additions/changes that need to be made to the birthday and anniversary list, please contact the church office.

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

Bradley and Molly Moser	3
Roger and Deb Savage	3
Ron and Nancy O'Neil	22

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

Gene and Amy Wheeler	17
Del and Lorri Engstrom	20
Peter and Joy Dramby	28
Mark and Karen Hite	29
Shawn and Tonya MacCoy	29





In this season of THANKSGIVING let us give Thanks to God and Blessings to others by sharing with our neighbors in need.

Please leave your “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” food and toiletry donations in the boxes provided at church to be distributed through Project Outreach to families in our community.



You are invited to
Project Outreach's
Annual
Free Community

Thanksgiving Dinner

at **Royersford United Methodist Church**
380 Church Street, Royersford.

Meals will be served in house, "sit-down" style, (not take-out).

Food to be served at **Noon** on Thanksgiving Day.

Doors open at 11:30am.

Call for reservations:

610-948-5111 (by 11/18/21)



Royersford Baptist Church
452 S. Lewis Road
Royersford, PA 19468

***Royersford Baptist Church
(RBC)***

Office - 610-948-4170

Email - rbcabc@rbcabc.org

Website - www.rbcabc.org

OFFICE HOURS:

***Monday through Friday,
9:15 AM - 1:15 p.m.***



RBC is affiliated with
American Baptist
Churches USA

STAFF:

Pastor - Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

Youth Director - Ryan Seckman

Worship Coordinator – Lara Cifelli

Minister of Music – Alex Cifelli

Office Manager - Kate Ligouri

Technology Coordinator - Josh Kagi

Custodian – Danielle Crist

Nursery School Director – Melissa Moffa

**Please call the office at
610-948-4170 if you wish to
schedule an appointment with
the Pastor or Youth Director.*

If you have been touched by the ministry of RBC, you can be part of continuing our ministry together through your financial gifts. Our website has online giving options that make it possible for you to be a part of supporting the work of Royersford Baptist Church. Your gifts and your prayers make a vital difference in the Kingdom of God.



For the latest in news and information about Royersford Baptist Church, visit our website at:

www.rbcabc.org