

# CHURCH *Life*

A monthly publication of First Christian Church, Princeton WV



BlessusO-  
Lord and these Thy gifts which wear  
e about to receive from Thy bounty  
th rough Christ our Lord. Amen

My childhood blessing for the  
meal is well engrained within my  
memory. I got so good at it I  
could pray without taking a  
breath accomplishing the task in  
under three seconds. I was cham-  
pion amongst my siblings.

Although my family at least  
acknowledged the necessity to  
offer prayer before we ate our  
food, they fell far short of truly  
instilling a sense of sincere  
thanksgiving to God for His  
bountiful blessings within my  
heart. My Christianity defaulted  
to a checklist of pretentious ges-  
tures which did little more than  
fulfilling my need to complete  
my religious duties. Where we  
have failed the younger genera-  
tions is in our imposition of rules  
without a true sense of relation-  
ship. We and our parents have  
portrayed for our posterity a reli-  
gion of going through the mo-  
tions and adhering to the regula-  
tions without a sincere love for  
God, His Word, and His church.  
The Western Culture returned  
from World War II with an eco-  
nomic boom and great prosperity  
that produced a negative result  
when it came to instilling a sin-  
cere dependency upon God. The  
following generations proved the  
adage that "rules without rela-  
tionship produce rebellion".

This revelation in my own life  
has forced me to examine not on-  
ly the practices of my faith but,  
and more importantly, the mo-  
tives behind my traditions. So  
often I find myself going through  
the motions without my heart en-  
gaging in true worship. *Then the  
Lord said, "Because this people  
draw near with their words, and  
honor Me with their lip service,  
but they remove their hearts far  
from Me, and their reverence for  
Me consists of tradition learned  
by rote."* Isaiah 29:13 During  
Jesus short time of ministry, He

exposed the religious leaders of  
His day as being guilty of the  
same accusation God brought  
upon the nation in Isaiah's day.  
Matt 15:7-9

This religious snare is difficult to  
recognize. This religious snare is  
easy to get caught in. Every Sun-  
day Worship service we have the  
tradition of reading a scripture  
and having the congregation  
stand as the scripture is read. I  
think this is a wonderful outward  
act of showing reverence to the  
Bible. Whoever, if that is the on-  
ly act of reverence we show  
throughout the week, I would be  
bold enough to declare that we  
have fallen into the same rut that  
the nation of Israel was found  
guilty of. It is quite simple, and  
cost us very little, to stand for a  
moment as the Bible is opened  
up. Do we actually pay attention  
as the Bible is read? Do we in-  
vest the mental energy necessary  
to comprehend what we are hear-  
ing? If we have a true heartfelt  
desire to honor God's Word, than  
we will pick it up during the  
week, read its words, and seeks  
opportunities to apply it to our  
lives. *Open my eyes that I may  
behold wonderful things from  
Thy law... Give me understand-  
ing, that I may observe Thy law,  
and keep it with all my heart...  
Thy word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path... Thy  
word have I treasured in my  
heart that I may not sin against  
Thee.* Psalm 119:18, 34, 105, 11  
Psalm 119 happens to be the  
longest chapter in the entire Bi-  
ble. The context of the entire  
chapter is the Bible; reading it,  
studying it, memorizing it.

In the early history of our coun-  
try, our children were taught to  
read using the text of the Bible.  
To lazily declare that the Bible is  
too difficult to understand, the  
children not only read the King  
James Version but the old King  
James Version at that. We give  
excuse after excuse failing to tru-

ly honor and reverence the Holy  
Bible in our lives. Somehow we  
have defaulted to making an idol  
of the ink, onion paper, 100%  
genuine artificial leather and  
gold edging while neglecting the  
holiness of the truth found within  
its writings. Jesus declared,  
*God's Word is Truth* John 17:17

Are we making a pretense of rev-  
erencing the Word of God? Do  
our children and grandchildren  
see in us a sincere love for the  
Bible? Do they witness us read-  
ing and studying on a daily ba-  
sis? Are the truths of the Scrip-  
tures being played out in our  
lives, or are we promoting rules  
without relationship? Are we at-  
tempting to enforce adherence to  
the traditions and customs we  
were brought up on without dis-  
playing God's law in our lives?  
These days and times in which  
we live desperately need to wit-  
ness true followers of Jesus  
Christ. They need to see a church  
that not only honors God with  
their lips but their hearts are far  
more sincere than their words.  
They need to experience a people  
who wholeheartedly sing, "All to  
Jesus I Surrender, all to Him I  
freely give." In our day and time,  
we find a lost and dying world  
desperate for the power of the  
Gospel displayed in the lives and  
words of true followers of Jesus  
Christ.

I pray that we can set aside our  
hypocrisy and pretense, that we  
can become sincere followers of  
Jesus Christ, and love God with  
all our heart, all our soul, and all  
our strength. I pray that others  
will find Christ and His love in  
us so that they too might come to  
believe. I pray the our church  
may represent His kingdom here  
in our place and at our time until  
He comes back again.

*Pastor Steve*

Prayer Concerns

**Week Ending Nov. 25, 2023**

*Carol Allen, John Alexander, Shelia Belcher, Memory Bhebhe, Ronnie Cecil, Margaret Conner, Bud Raines, Mary Jane Rorrer, George Sink, Steve & Sylvia Spooner, Lisa Smith, Barbara Terry,*

**Week Ending Nov. 18, 2023,**

*Conner & Natalie Cornwell, Pastor Bill Pollack, Scooter Smith, Believers of Ukraine*

**Week Ending Nov 11, 2023**

*Family of Zack Carter, Gary Reed, Loved ones in Israel & Palestine, Wisdom for our government*

**In the Military:**

*Mike Kennedy, Devin Lusk, T. J. Morris, Robert Worrell*

**Our Friends Who are Homebound:**

*Betty Craft, Betty Doyle, Mike Elmore, Lola Fanning, Evelyn Jenkins*

**Our Friends in Nursing/Retirement Facilities:**

*The Havens: Peggy White  
The Havens: Cleo Halsey  
Stonerise Princeton: Gary Reed*

**Mark Your Calendars!**

**Tuesday, December 5, 2023**

*Church Council—7:00 p.m.*

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023**

*Elders Meeting — 6:00 p.m.  
Ministry Teams —6:30 p.m.*

**Social Media Broadcast**

*Follow us on Facebook at First Christian Princeton WV.*

*Website: [firstchristianprincetonwv.org](http://firstchristianprincetonwv.org)*

*Youtube: First Christian Princeton WV*

*E-mail: [fccprincetonoffice@gmail.com](mailto:fccprincetonoffice@gmail.com)*

*Phone Live Stream: 1-833-336-0457*



Memorial Gift Fund

Memorial gift has been given in loving memory of:

† ***Violet Belcher*** by Jean Foster & Drew H. Foster

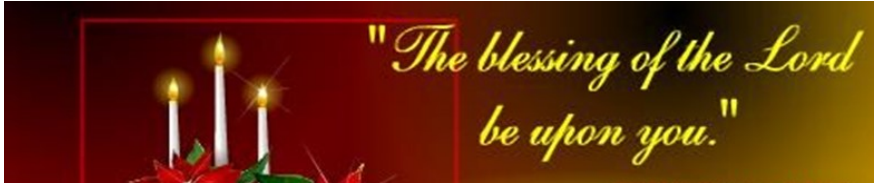
DECEMBER 2023

Elders: Michael Reed, Kenneth Reeves

Deacons: Ishmael Bhebhe, Randy Winfrey

Deaconess: Cindy Brannon, Deidre Crutchfield

Advent Readers: TBA



Christian Women Fellowship

Christian Women will meet on **Thursday, December 7 at 11:00 a.m.** We will meet in the upstairs lounge.

Christian Women are selling pecans and mixed nuts again this year. Pecan halves and pieces is \$10.50 for a 16 oz. bag, and a 16 oz. bag of mixed nuts is \$8.50. Please contact Margaret Conner on her cell (C) 304-920-5041, if you want to purchase pecans for the holiday.

Senior Breakfast

Senior Breakfast is on **Tuesday, December 12, at 9:00 a.m.** at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant. Come join in the fellowship and fun.

From the Archives



One of the ways of raising money for the construction of our sanctuary was the selling of Victory Bonds, which were sold in the amounts of \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50, and \$100. Donors received a paper bond with the donor's name, date and signatures of the Chairman of the Board, the Treasurer and the Pastor.

The construction of our sanctuary required a loan of \$50,000 (well in excess of a half million dollars in today's money) from the Church Board of Extension. The last loan repayment was in 1958 and the congregation held note burning ceremony on Sunday afternoon, September 14, 1958 to celebrate the event. Dr Ralph E. Valentine, executive secretary of the West Virginia Christian Missionary Society, was the guest speaker. A reception followed. The organizing committee for the ceremony consisted of Pastor Norman Crawford, Associate Pastor Bob Garner, Mrs. Curtis McKenzie, Mrs. Addie Williams, Mrs. Fred Bailey, Fred Cooke, Walter White, Jack Scott and Ed Rule.



Sunday School: 10 a.m.  
Morning Worship: 11 a.m.

# December 2023

First Christian Church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
	<div>Nov 2023</div> <table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			<div>Jan 2024</div> <table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<i>1</i> <i>Michael Coburn</i>	<i>2</i>
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<i>3</i> <i>Cassidy Lilly Hudgins</i> 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Morning Service 12:30 PM Annual Christmas Dinner	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i> <i>Mike Elmore</i> 2:30 PM Straley Homework Session 7:00 PM Church Council	<i>6</i> <i>Courtney Dye; Scott Okes</i> 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study & 7:00 PM 7:00 PM Children's Program	<i>7</i> <i>Tracy Reed, Kade Vipperman</i> 11:00 AM Christian Women Fellowship /Upstairs Lounge 6:00 PM Hand Bell Choir	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> <i>Kami Anderson; Drema Wall</i>																																																																																				
<i>10</i> <i>Debra Jones</i> 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Morning Service	<i>11</i> <i>Terry Kierstead</i> <i>Matt &amp; Michelle Dye</i>	<i>12</i> 9:00 AM Senior Breakfast 2:30 PM Straley Homework Session 6:00 PM Elders Meeting 6:30 PM Ministry Teams	<i>13</i> 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study & 7:00 PM 7:00 PM Children's Program	<i>14</i> <i>Greg Coburn</i> 6:00 PM Hand Bell Choir	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>																																																																																				
<i>17</i> <i>Zachary Coburn</i> 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Morning Service	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i> <i>Wyatt Anderson; Derrick Shrewsbury</i> <i>David &amp; Stephanie Stinson</i> 2:30 PM Straley Homework Session	<i>20</i> 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study & 7:00 PM 7:00 PM Children's Program	<i>21</i> <i>Darrell Folden</i> 6:00 PM Hand Bell Choir	<i>22</i> <i>Casey Honaker</i>	<i>23</i>																																																																																				
<i>24</i> 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Morning Service 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	<i>25</i> Merry Christmas <i>Larry Wimmer</i> Church Office Closed	<i>26</i> <i>Doug &amp; Mary Feuchtenberger</i> <i>Christie Reed</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i> 6:00 PM Hand Bell Choir	<i>29</i> <i>Evelyn Jenkins</i>	<i>30</i>																																																																																				
<i>31</i> <i>Harlan &amp; Melissa White</i> <i>Cynthia Brannon</i> 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Morning Service 8:00 PM New Year's Eve Service																																																																																										

## A Christmas Poem

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, make thee a bed, soft, undefiled, within my heart,  
that it may be a quiet chamber kept for Thee.

My heart for very joy doth leap, my lips no more can silence keep,  
I too must sing, with joyful tongue, the sweetest ancient song.

Glory to God in highest heaven, who unto man His Son hath given,  
while angels sing with pious mirth, a glad new year to all the earth! Amen.

—Martin Luther

Community Outreach

In the spirit of giving, there will be “Fill A Bag, Feed A Family” grocery bags available for pick-up. This food will be for the Salvation Army.

A toy box will be available also if anyone wants to donate a toy to the Salvation Army. Please have all food donations and toys in by Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Fellowship

The annual Christmas dinner will be on Sunday, December 3, after church. The Fellowship team will provide turkey, ham, mashed potatoes, gravy, dressing, rolls and drinks. If your last name begins with **A-H**, please bring a dessert, **I-R** please bring a side and **S-Z** please bring a salad. We are looking forward to delicious food and wonderful fellowship.

Worship

Advent season starts on Sunday, December 3, 2023 and ends on Sunday 24, 2023, please join us for a celebration of the Christmas Eve Candlelight service, Sunday December 24, 2023 at 7pm and New Year’s Eve service Sunday December 31 at 8pm.

We wish to thank the Lay Readers, *Randolph Evans* for the month of **November**. We are looking forward to having *the Advent Readers* for the month of **December**.



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