

The Ceresco Messenger
Ceresco Baptist Church
December ~ 2022

A Christmas Poem

At Christmas time there was a man, who looked so out of place.
As people rushed about him, at a hurried sort of pace.
He stared at all the Christmas lights, the tinsel everywhere.
The shopping center Santa Claus, with children gathered near.
The mall was packed with shoppers, who were going to and fro.
Some with smiles, some with frown, and some too tired to go.
They rested on benches, or they hurried on their way.
To fight the crowds for purchases, to carry home that day.
The music from the stereo, was playing loud and clear.
Of Santa Claus and snowmen, and funny nosed reindeer.
He heard the people talk about, the good times on the way.
Of parties, fund and food galore, and gift exchange that day.
I'd like to know what's going on, the man was heard to say.
There seems to be some sort of celebration on the way.
And would you tell me who this is, all dressed in red and white.
And why are children asking him about a special night.
The answer came in disbelief, I can't believe my ear.
I can't believe you do not know, that Christmas time is here.
The time when Santa comes around; with gifts for girls and boys.
When they are asleep on Christmas Eve, he leaves them books and toys.
The man you see in red and white, is Santa Claus so sly.
The children love his joyful laugh, and twinkle in his eye.
His gift-packed sleigh is pulled along, by very small reindeer.
As he flies quickly through the air, while darting here and there.
The children learn of Santa Claus, while they are still quite small.
When Christmas comes he is the most important one of all.
The stranger hung His head in shame, He closed a nail pierced hand.
His body shook in disbelief, He did not understand.
A shadow crossed His stricken face, His voice was low but clear.
After all these years they still don't know. And JESUS shed a tear.

~ Author Unknown



- Dec 18 Ryan Boysen
- Dec 21 Rayna Sommers
- Dec 27 John Paschen, 1939
- Dec 28 Donna Ruthruff
- Dec 28 Candace Ivey
- Dec 30 Viviana Anthony

Dec 23 Ken & Kay Davis

Jan	3	John & Ruth Paschen, 1959
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Jan	1	Michael Meng
Jan	2	Elise Rae Lopshire, 2022
Jan	4	Avery Goodman
Jan	13	Bob Beltz
Jan	18	Brian Gary
Jan	25	Emily Ivey
Jan	28	Harlynn Casey

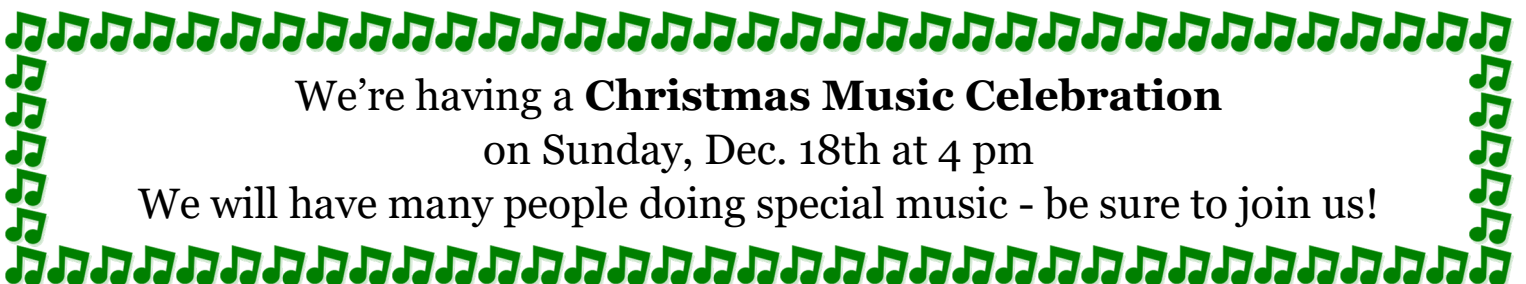
**Our next Fellowship
Sunday & Bake Sale
will be on
December 11, 2022.**



DATE	FLOWERS	CHILDREN'S TIME
12/4	Poinsettias/Sarah Collins	Joy Sommers
12/11	Poinsettias/Sarah Collins	Joy Sommers
12/18	Poinsettias/Sarah Collins	OPEN
12/25	Poinsettias/Sarah Collins	Joy Sommers
01/01	Poinsettias / OPEN	OPEN

We're having a **Christmas Music Celebration**
on Sunday, Dec. 18th at 4 pm

We will have many people doing special music - be sure to join us!



December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
						Men's Breakfast 8 am "Joy to the World" Children's Christmas Party 10am-1pm
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Communion & 2nd Sunday of Advent	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm					Administrative Council Meeting 9 am
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
3rd Sunday of Advent, Fellowship Sunday & Bake Sale!	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm		Martha Circle Christmas, 6 pm		Church in use in evening	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
4th Sunday of Advent, Christmas Music Celebration at 4 pm	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm					Christmas Eve Service @ FBC Marshall at 5:30 pm
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Happy Birthday Jesus! Merry Christmas! (no Sunday School)			Information for January Messenger due by noon			New Year's Eve

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the earth,
Every creature was stirring, awaiting a birth.
The time for Messiah was certainly near,
The prophets foretold it; the Bible was clear.
From the book of beginnings, the very first sin,
God's word made it clear how His grace entered in.
Born of a virgin, He'd come as a man.
The Creator among us, the time was at hand.
The stars were arranged to show marvelous things,
Setting Wise Men to journey and find the true King.
Shepherds in Bethlehem gazed on the sky,
Longing to see him, their Lord the Most High.
How could they know that the very next night
An angel of God would speak words of delight?
How the Savior was born, it was news of great joy.
In a cloth and a manger they'd find the dear boy.
And a heavenly host would soon join to sing
Of the glory of God and of wonderful things.
He entered creation, set position aside
To show us how deeply his love did abide.
Sin sent us away from our almighty Lord.
He became one of us that we might be restored.
He's the Prince of our Peace; He's the one who makes whole.
He is Wisdom Incarnate, a Shepherd of Souls.
He's the Author of Life; He's the Ruler of All.
He can offer salvation, on His name we call.
The shepherds and Wise Men would bow to adore
Holy God among men, our greatest reward.
All glory and honor is due to this King.
Let all join in worship; let every tongue sing.
Jesus is Lord, all creation proclaims.
He's the first and last, He is always the same.
History turned on the first Christmas day,
When God became man in a humble display.
As we think of the manger in which He was laid,
Let our hearts welcome Him to the world He made!

You are cordially invited to

A Birthday Celebration!

Guest of Honor: Jesus Christ

Date: Every day. Traditionally, December 25 but He's always around, so the date is flexible...

Time: Whenever you're ready (Please don't be late, though, or you'll miss out on all the fun!)

Place: In your heart . . . He'll meet you there. (You'll hear Him knock.)

Attire: Come as you are, grubbies are okay. He'll be washing our clothes anyway. He said something about new white robes and crowns for everyone who stays to the last.

Tickets: Admission is free. He's already paid for everyone! (He says you wouldn't have been able to afford it anyway . . . It cost Him everything He had.) But you do need to accept the ticket!

Refreshments: New wine, bread, and a drink He calls "Living Water," followed by a supper that promises to be out of this world!

Gifts: Your life. He's one of those people who already has everything else. (He's very generous in return. Just wait until you see what He has for you!).

Entertainment: Joy, Peace, Truth, Light, Life, Love, Real Happiness, Communion with God, Forgiveness, Eternity in Paradise, Contentment, and much more! (All "G" rated, bring your family and friends.)

R.S.V.P. Very important! He must know ahead so He can reserve a spot for you at the table. Also, He's keeping a list of His friends for future reference. He calls it the "Lamb's Book of Life."

Party being given by His Kids!

Hope to see you there!

Do You Remember My Birthday?

As you well know, we are getting closer to my birthday. Every year there is a celebration in My honor and I think that this year the celebration will be repeated. During this time there are many people shopping for gifts, there are many radio announcements, TV commercials, and in every part of the world everyone is talking that My birthday is getting closer and closer.

It is really very nice to know, that at least once a year, some people think of Me. As you know, the celebration of My birthday began many years ago. At first people seemed to understand and be thankful for all that I did for them, but in these times, no one seems to know the reason for the celebration. Family and friends get together and have a lot of fun, but they don't know the meaning of the celebration.

I remember last year there was a great feast in My honor. The dinner table was full of delicious foods, pastries, fruits, assorted nuts and chocolates. The decorations were exquisite and there were many, many beautifully wrapped gifts. But, do you want to know something? I wasn't invited. I was the guest of honor and they didn't remember to send Me an invitation.

The party was for Me, but when that great day came, I was left outside, the closed the door in My face. . . . And I wanted to be with them and share their table.

In truth, that didn't surprise Me because in the last few years, all close their doors to Me. Since I was not invited, I decided to enter the party without making any noise. I went in and stood in a corner. They were all drinking; there were some telling jokes and laughing at everything. They were having a great time. To top it all, this big fat man all dressed in red wearing a long white beard entered the room yelling Ho-Ho-Ho! He sat on the sofa and all the children ran to him, saying: "Santa Claus, Santa Claus" ... as if the party was in his honor!

At midnight all the people began to hug each other; I extended My arms waiting for someone to hug Me and . . . Do you know . . . No one hugged Me.

Suddenly they all began to share gifts. They opened them one by one with great expectation. When all had been opened, I looked to see if, maybe, there was one for Me.

What would you feel if on your birthday everybody shared gifts and you did not get one? I then understood that I was unwanted at that party and quietly left.

Every year it gets worse. People only remember the gifts and the parties, nobody remembers Me. I would like you to allow Me to enter your heart this Christmas. I would like you to recognize the fact that over 2,000 years ago I came to this world to give My life for you, on the cross, to save you.

Today, I want you to believe this with all your heart. I want to share something with you. As many didn't invite Me to their party, I will have My own celebration, a grandiose party that no one has ever imagined, a spectacular party. I'm still making the final arrangements.

Today I am sending out many invitations and there is an invitation for you. I want to know if you wish to attend and I will make a reservation for you and write your name with golden letters in My great guest book. Only those on the guest list will be invited to the party. Those who don't answer the invitation will be left outside.

Do you know how you can answer this invitation? It is by extending it to others whom you care about . . . I'll be waiting for all of you to attend My party this year. . .

See you soon . . . I love you!!! - Jesus

Twas the night before Jesus came
 and all through the house
 Not a creature was praying not one in the house
 Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
 In hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed
 Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
 And mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
 Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the east there arose such a clatter
 I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter
 Away to the window I flew like a flash
 Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
 But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here
 With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
 I knew in a moment this must be the day.

The light of His face made me cover my head
 It was Jesus, returning just like he said
 And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth
 I cried when I saw Him, in spite of myself.

In The Book Of Life which He held in His hand
 Was written the name of every saved man
 He spoke not a word as he searched for my name
 When He said "It's not here" my head hung in shame.

The people whose name had been written in love
 He gathered to take to His Father above
 With those who are ready He rose with out a sound
 While all the rest were left standing around.

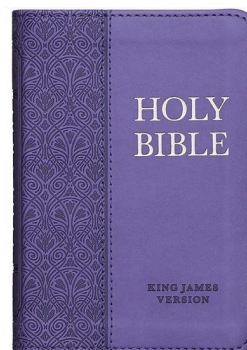
I fell to my knees but it was too late
 I had waited too long and this sealed my fate
 I stood and cried as they rose out of sight
 Oh, if I had only been ready tonight.

In the words of the meaning is clear.
 The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
 There's only one life and when comes the last call
 We'll find that the **BIBLE** was true after all.

Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth

<u>2023 Slate of Officers</u>		<u>Expires</u>
Lay Moderator	Rick Frey	2023
Assist. Lay Mod.	Roger Sommers	2023
Clerk	Joy Sommers	2023
Treasurer	Mary Ivey	2023
Assist. Treasurer	Ruth St. John	2023
Financial Secretary	Dawn Frey	2023
Assist. Fin. Secr.	Marcy Bonney	2023
Member at Large	Linda Chisholm	2023
Member at Large	Sarah Collins	2023
Deacon Ministry Team		
	Roger Sommers	2024
	Dave Hadley	2025
	Gretchen King	2026

2023 MINISTRY TEAM INFORMATION
Property Management Ministry Team Members
Bob Beltz, Rick Frey, Roger Sommers, David Hadley, Sarah Collins
other volunteers appreciated
Educational Ministry Team Members
Marcy Bonney, Sally Beltz, Sarah Collins, Kay Davis, Dawn Frey, Sharon Hadley,
Veronica Anthony, Joy Sommers
Worship Ministry Team Members
Mary Ivey, Sharon Hadley, Veronica Anthony, Joy Sommers





"My First Christmas In Heaven"

**I see the countless Christmas Trees around the world below,
with tiny lights, like heaven's stars, reflecting on the snow.
The sight is so spectacular, please wipe away that tear,
for I am spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.**

**I hear the many Christmas songs that people hold so dear,
but the sounds of music can't compare with the Christmas choir up
here.**

**I have no words to tell you, the joy their voices bring,
for it is beyond description, to hear the angels sing.**

**I know how much you miss me. I see the pain inside your heart,
but I am not so far away. We really aren't apart.
So be happy for me dear ones. You know I hold you dear,
and be glad I'm spending Christmas, with Jesus Christ this year.**

**I send you each a special gift, from my heavenly home above.
I send you each a memory of, my undying love.
After all "LOVE" is a gift, more precious than pure gold.
It was always most important in the stories Jesus told.**

**Please love and keep each other, as my Father said to do,
for I can't count the blessing or love he has for each of you.
So have a Merry Christmas and wipe away that tear,
Remember, I'm spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.**

Martha Circle Minutes, November 9, 2022 Hostess: Marcy Bonney

PRESENT: Gretchen King, Joy Sommers, Darlene Anthony, Veronica Anthony, Dawn Frey, Pastor Mary, Ruth St. John, Vi Halder, Sarah Collins, Marcy Bonny, Joyce Cary, & Joanne Henley

DEVOTIONS: Given by Marcy. Readings: "Unselfish Service" & information about Florence Nightingale ministering to the sick and transforming the medical community. She also read about Ann Sullivan who helped Helen Keller learn to communicate. Also read John 12:24

SECRETARY: Minutes were in the November Messenger.

TREASURER: Given by Joy. Beginning Balance from October meeting: \$1534.92. October Love gift In & Out \$20.20. Sept Bake Sale \$29.00 in, Oct. Devotional In \$20.00. Oct. 23rd Pastor Appreciation gift -\$50.00. Oct. 27 FTD Florist One for Ida Mae Fair funeral -\$242.83, Nov. 9th -\$79.45 Harvester Flower Shop, Garden Stone for Pastor Mary, Nov. 9 +\$81.00 and +\$12.50 CBC Reimbursements for funeral arrangement. New balance \$1,305.14

MISSIONS: Given by Marcy: International Ministries Update – new seminary built

138th anniversary of I/M being part of D/R of Congo. Updates on several countries and what's happening there, including Haiti – scholarships for nursing students. Also, Amanda & John Good – developing community, International Baptist Church. Newest Project is the Three-in-One: (see email)

SUNSHINE: Given by Sarah: Cards sent to Joanne, Lance & Pat VanHorn, Ellen Grimes, Pat VanHorn, Family of Ida Mae Fair x2, and Marcy Bonney.

OLD BUSINESS: Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser \$160 in donations, 84 adults x \$7 = \$588 16 kids @ \$5 = \$80, 2 kids free, 3 meals to go @ \$7 = \$21, extra donations of \$197. Grand Total \$1,046.00 / Rick reimbursed \$124.00 (food), Dawn reimbursed \$449.00 (gifts). Balance of \$473 from the fundraising. Darlene submitted a receipt for \$44.91. If we need more items to finish boxes, we will shop for those and finish them out. [Paid out additional \$5.30]

Women's Sunday was a success, Dawn thanked everyone that helped out. March meeting – Sarah will be our hostess. That's when we will do our officer election and do the hostess sign-up.

Gretchen – Heifer International / World Vision catalog – Motion by Ruth St. John, second by Darlene Anthony. 1 goat, 2 ducks, 3 rabbits & 4 chickens (same as last year), price has not increased, still \$215.00. Motion approved!

NEW BUSINESS: Have our December meeting start at **5:00 pm** – bring snacks and a wrapped white elephant gift for our Christmas Gathering.

Spring Craft Show at the Church, possibly May 6th? And maybe bake sale too?

Motion by Joanne Henley, second by Dawn Frey to donate \$52.08 to the Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries to provide 24 Christmas meals. Motion approved.

Dec. 18th at 4 pm – Worship Ministry Team is planning a Christmas Musical – inviting groups from area churches. If you know of anyone that would like to perform, please let someone on the Worship Ministry Team know.

SCRIPTURE STUDY: Given by Dawn: Colossians 3:15-17 Giving thanks to God.

COLLECTIONS: Love gift - \$23.08 Devotion - \$20.64

Meeting was closed in prayer by Dawn Frey and after refreshments, the ladies packed the OCC boxes

Next meeting is our Christmas Gathering, Dec. 14th at 5 pm. Bring a wrapped white elephant gift.

CERESCO BAPTIST CHURCH APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2023

PASTOR'S SALARY	\$33,000.00 >
CONVENTION	\$2,000.00 >
CONTINUING EDUCATION	\$800.00
HOSPITALITY	\$100.00 >
BOOKS AND MISC EXPENSES	\$750.00
M&M RETIREMENT	\$1,000.00
PULPIT SUPPLY	\$1,050.00
MISSIONS (ABC ABOVE SPEC GIVING)	\$2,400.00
FOOD BANK OF S CENTRAL MI	\$200.00
CHARITABLE UNION	\$200.00
MACS	\$200.00
CAMP LAEL	\$125.00
LAKE LOUISE CAMP	\$125.00
WORSHIP SERVICE COMMITTEE	\$125.00
BULLETINS & OFFICE EXPENSES	\$500.00
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	\$1,500.00 >
MAINTENANCE/EQUIP REPLACE/REPAIR	\$2,000.00
CUSTODIAL	\$5,400.00
KITCHEN & BATHROOM SUPPLIES	\$200.00
INSURANCE & WORKSMAN'S COMP	\$4,000.00 >
UTILITIES (CONSUMERS TELE REFUSE)	\$6,500.00 >
INTERNET (LINE, WEBSITE, DOMAIN)	\$1,500.00
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	\$650.00 >
DUES AND LICENSES	\$1,200.00
 BUDGET FOR 2023	 \$65,525.00

\$1,260.10 NEEDED FOR PER WEEK TO MEET BUDGET IN 2023

NOTES:

Increased (>) 7 line items for 2023 Proposed Budget

Pastor Salary

Convention - Pastor Mary has been invited to the Biennial Convention in Puerto Rico

Hospitality

Christian Education - potential new programs from planning session meeting

Insurance & Workman's Comp - annually increases

Utilities - annually increases

Miscellaneous Expense

Ceresco Baptist Church

Pastor Mary Fair-Matthews

PO Box 35

Ceresco, Michigan 49033-0035

Pastor: 313-301-3301

Church: 269-964-9669

**Merry Christmas! Jesus is the Reason
for the Season! May God bless you!**



The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering is a long-standing tradition established in 1977 which supports ministers, missionaries, and their widowed spouses who have devoted 15 or more years of their lives to service in American Baptist Churches. We are collecting during the month of December.