

---

---

# TIMBER RIDGE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER

---

---

December 2020

*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year*

### CHANGES FOR DECEMBER DUE TO COVID

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DEC 2 - STUART SZELMECZKI'S BIRTHDAY

CRYSTAL SPAID'S BIRTHDAY

DEC 6 - NO WORSHIP SERVICE

DEC 7- PEARL HARBOR DAY

DEC 11 - SHELVA SWITZER'S BIRTHDAY

JEANIE SPAID'S BIRTHDAY

DEC 13 - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM -TBD

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING- TBD

DEC 17 - SUSAN CLARK'S BIRTHDAY

DEC 20 - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM - TBD

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE -TBD

(SEE ARTICLE)

DEC 22 - BETTY WINGFIELD'S BIRTHDAY

DEC 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY

DEC 27 - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM - TBD

HOME MISSION OFFERING

STEVEN SZELMECZKI 'S BIRTHDAY

DEC 30 - JANET FRIES' BIRTHDAY

Due to the increase in Covid cases and quarantines associated with it, the Deacons have made some decisions about church activities for December.

First, for at least the month of December there will be no Sunday School or Bible Study.

Second, worship services have been cancelled for December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Deacons will decide by mid-week prior to the scheduled service about each of the remaining Sundays in December (hence TBD in the calendar).

The same will be the case for the Church Council meeting scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup> and the Candlelight Service scheduled for December 20<sup>th</sup>.

We plan to get the word around through the calling tree, Facebook and the church website.

As was the case in the past, the audio of Pastor Mike's Sunday message will be available through the church website, as well as his daily devotions.

We welcome any comments and suggestions.  
Alan & Ginger Brill, alanbrill1@frontier.com  
(304) 856-3635

---

---

# TIMBER RIDGE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER

---

---

Page 2

December 2020

### PASTOR'S PEN

#### Guarding Christmas

In a crazy busy world, overwhelmed by materialism, it's easy to let the significance of Christmas get lost in the noise of holiday activity. Though you may not have as many house guests this year as you did last year, the problem of keeping Jesus as the central figure of Christmas will still be just as tricky. So, I want to encourage you to guard your Christmas.

When Lorri and I were dating a long, long time ago, I visited her in the Netherlands, where she was working in a Christian youth hostel. I happened to be there at the beginning of December. Being there early in December meant I was able to experience Sinterklaas day. Sinterklaas day in the Netherlands is a day when they celebrate Saint Nickolas. However, unlike the American Mr. Claus, this Saint Nikolas wears a bishop's hat and carries a shepherd's crook.

Interestingly, Sinterklaas day is NOT the day the Dutch celebrate the religious holiday of Christmas. Sinterklaas day falls on December 5. On this day, they offer gifts to one another along with candies and chocolate. One of the traditions is to give a child the first letter in their name made of chocolate. The children also leave their shoes by the door or window, expecting Sinterklaas to fill their shoes with treats for them overnight.

One of the beautiful aspects of this early December tradition is that the Sinterklaas celebration is over well before December 25. When the 25th comes, the celebration's focus is distinctly more religious. Families get together to share meals. Communities take time to fellowship over traditional foods. And the church enjoys a time of quiet celebration as congregations commemorate the birth of Jesus without the commercial pressures we have here in the United States.

To be clear, I'm not proposing we change our traditions or the dates we celebrate Christmas. But I am suggesting that you make an effort to guard the central theme of Christmas within your families. How do you do this? Use religious decorations as the centerpiece of your Christmas displays. Nativity scenes work incredibly well. Play Christmas music that celebrates the birth of the Savior. Take time to enjoy some Advent readings each night of the week. Read through portions of the gospel of Luke (The first two chapters at least).

I am convinced that once you decide to keep Jesus as the focus of the season, you will have the freedom to celebrate joyfully with those around you. Being reminded of God's love displayed at the birth of Jesus is a sure-fire way to invigorate your Christmas spirit. Having your heart filled with hope allows you to experience God's gift of the Savior anew. With the joy of the Christmas message filling your soul, you will be able to share the light of the gospel even during the business of the season.

May the Lord bless you this Christmas with a real sense of His presence. May God Almighty remind you of exactly what the birth of Jesus means for you. May the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with joy this Advent season. And may that joy overflow in praise and thanksgiving as you celebrate Emanuel – God with us.

~ Pastor Mike