

# CROSS



# WORDS

Volume 11, Number 12

A newsletter published by  
First Christian Church of Warren

December 1, 2023



IT'S ONE  
THING TO PRAY.  
IT'S ANOTHER THING  
TO HAVE FAITH.  
BUT TO MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE  
THAT MATTERS PUT  
YOUR FAITH INTO ACTION!

## Looking Up

WITH PASTOR TROY

### Stay Ready So You Don't Have to Get Ready

Advent is both looking back and looking forward.

Black Friday. I suppose we all survived. You know what Black Friday is, don't you? That inevitable Friday after Thanksgiving that signals the official beginning of the holiday season. That day when shoppers line up outside malls and shopping centers to get those early bird deals retailers are offering to those crazy enough to brave the pushing and shoving to save a few bucks. I heard about one store, either Best Buy or Circuit City, where the crowd actually breached the doors and entered the store before it opened. The police had to be called to clear the store so it could open. The onslaught of people actually caused the store to open late. Thankfully, no one was hurt, but it is the time when we start preparing for Christmas. We start getting ready because the big day is coming. We get ready by wrapping the gifts, baking the cookies, decorating the tree, lighting the house, going to parties, and making travel plans. We have to get ready because Christmas will be here before we know it. And in the course of our conversations, we seem to inevitably ask someone, "Are you ready for Christmas yet?"

Even in our churches, we embrace the Advent season as a time of preparation. We prepare the sanctuary by hanging the greens, and we adorn the church with decorations and poinsettias and nativity scenes because, after all, the Advent season is the season when we look with expectancy to the coming of the Christ-child. Advent means "coming" or "arrival," and we focus on his arrival by setting out our prettiest nativity set for all to see. I find the traditions interesting as I have served the church over the years. Churches everywhere have never failed to set out the nativity, but what we do with the baby Jesus is interesting.

Some churches never give a second thought about putting out the baby when the decorations are put out. Decorate for the season and baby Jesus goes in the manger. Other churches, who consider themselves “liturgically correct” would never consider putting out the baby Jesus until Christmas Eve. I even heard of one church that would move the baby Jesus to a different place each week so the people would have to look to find him. We focus on the “first” advent of Jesus Christ. And we should, but we don’t stop there.

Perhaps we might understand it better if we think about how we live our lives. We live knowing death is inevitable, but we are all uncertain as to when it will come. Most sane people don’t go around lamenting, “Oh, woe is me! I’m going to die.” Rather, the prudent person prepares for that day, gets ready if you will, not by obsession, but by faithfulness. Living in faithfulness to the first advent gets us ready for the second advent. How do we live in faithfulness to the first advent? First, living in faithfulness to the first advent is accepting Christ. To accept Christ is to acknowledge what God was doing in the first advent, namely, sending His Savior in the world to redeem His creation. Secondly, living in faithfulness to the first advent is growing to maturity as disciples of Jesus Christ. It is allowing the awesome power of God through the Holy Spirit to transform us, to remake us, to give us new birth. We grow by opening ourselves to Christ, by preparing for his coming into our own lives through Bible study, through prayer, through fellowship, through so many other spiritual disciplines. Finally, living in faithfulness to the first advent is serving Christ by serving others. When we serve others, the spirit of Christmas/Spirit of Christ, lives through each of us as we give ourselves in sacrificial, humbling love, which is exactly what Jesus did in that first advent. Advent is the time when we reflect on the grace of God made real in our lives in a manger 2,000 years ago, and advent is living in anticipation of his glorious return. It is staying ready, so we don’t have to get that way.

BLESSINGS AND MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL,  
TROY AND MINDY DRAYER



Thank you Ruth and Jerry for sharing your villiage with us again this year!



**CROSSROAD**  
Child & Family Services

**It's time to start our collection  
for the Crossroads tree!**

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## NEEDED ITEMS

Colored Pencils  
Adult Coloring Books  
Drawing/Sketch Pads  
Body Lotion (men & women)  
Body Wash (men & women)  
\$5-10 Gift Cards  
(McD & Dairy Queen)

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Thank you to Linda, Jessica, Brandon, Wendy, Cammy, Connie, Julie, and Justin for teaching with me. I am so grateful for your help!



YOUTH DIRECTOR  
TAKARRA MYERS



WEDNESDAY  
NIGHT  
LIVE

WNL: EVERY WEDNESDAY  
AT 6PM  
PRE-K ~ 5TH GRADES

You BELONG Here!

202 East 2nd St, Warren  
260-375-2102

FOUR:12 YOUTH  
MEET ONCE A MONTH  
6TH ~ 12TH GRADES



Scripture  
Power

"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

(John 1:5-11)

## NEWS

It was so fun making ornaments with all of you at the holiday walk! December 10th we will be having a taco bar fundraiser following service to raise money for our roller-skating party. Thank you Terry Lee and East of Chicago Pizza for preparing the food for the fundraiser!



The kid who stood out most in my mind was Leah. She is a talented singer and is also very creative! She always notices when someone is feeling down and knows how to cheer them up. Her talents and kindness have also been noticed at her school. Great job being an example to those around you Leah! Keep it up!

# THE GIFT OF CHRIST

Everything good is a gift from God but, the greatest was the gift of Christ. "Thank God for his gift that words can't describe!" (2 Corinthians 9:15) There is no good or proper way to describe the blessings that God has poured out for us but, in my own flawed way of thinking, I will give it my best attempt.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) Because of Christ's love for us we are saved. This is the greatest gift we have been given. Christ willingly extended God's grace to us through death on the cross. It is because of this that we can go home to be with him again. This alone is the greatest, and the most immeasurable gift to be received.

Another gift Christ has given to us is that he promised to be with us always. The bible tells us that he is our ever-present helper in times of trouble. No matter what bad things we experience as born-again Christians, we have the promise that Christ and the Holy Ghost will always be with us no matter what.

Additionally, it can be said that everything that is good at all, is a gift of God. And it is only because of Christ that we would come to know love or goodness at all. "Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above. These gifts come down from the Father, the creator of the heavenly lights, in whose character there is no change at all." (James 1:17) Everything good is a gift from God but the greatest gift was the gift of Christ!

The best way to appreciate the gift of Christ is to accept the gift of Christ, accept Jesus into your heart and believe in him. This is the most important thing that we could do to show our respect and adoration for the gift of Christ. We should seek out a relationship with him. We should want to strive to live as Christ did and live out his teachings. Once we accept Jesus, we can share Jesus and his love with everyone around us.

*Takarra*





*Santa is coming!*

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>! Santa will arrive at the church following service. Stay after church Sunday and come down to the Fellowship Hall for refreshments and pictures with Santa.



*firstccw.net*

**STAY INFORMED**

First Christian Church of Warren  
202 East Second Street

*Christmas*  
Candlelight Service  
Join us Sunday, December 24, 11pm



**Merry Christmas**  
*for unto us a child is born*



Join us ~ Sunday, December 24  
Fellowship Hall, 9:30am

Light brunch will be served.



**SEASON OF GIVING**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Angel Tree. You helped make it another successful year! The Remnant house has scheduled a wrapping party in our fellowship hall on the December 19<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't brought your gifts back in yet, please drop them off this week in the office. Thank you again for your support!

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH of WARREN  
202 East Second Street  
PO Box 344  
Warren, IN 46792



## First Christian Church of Warren

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# The Nativity Story

### JOSEPH & MARRY

A long time ago, a woman named Mary and a man named Joseph were going to be married. Mary and Joseph were good people who did what God wanted them to do.

### ANGEL

One day an angel came to Mary and told her she was going to have a baby! The angel said she should name the baby Jesus. The baby would be the Son of God, the Savior.

### DONKEY

Mary and Joseph had to travel to a town called Bethlehem to pay taxes.

### JESUS & ANIMAL

The town was very crowded. So Mary and Joseph spent the night in a place where animals were kept. That night baby Jesus was born!

### SHEPHERD

Shepherds were taking care of sheep in nearby fields. Angels came and told the shepherds that the Savior had been born. The shepherds went to find and worship the baby.

### WISE MEN

Far away Wise Men saw the new star. They knew it was a sign that the Savior had been born. They followed the star until they found Jesus. They gave Him presents and worshipped Him.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. We can be like Mary and Joseph by doing what God wants us to do. We can be like the shepherds and Wise Men by following Jesus Christ. We can be like the angels by telling others the real story of Christmas. And we can be like Jesus by following His example!





# December 2023



First Christian Church of Warren

## REFRESH

Every Wednesday Evening, 6pm

Church Operating Cost  
\$3,550 Weekly

11/5 - \$3,080  
11/12 - \$2,237  
11/26 - \$2,345

★  
**WE wish YOU A Merry CHRISTMAS**

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

					1	2
3 Sunday Service Communion 9:30am	4	5	6 Refresh Service WNL Youth 5:45pm	7 Gary & Jill Yount	8 Carson Thiele Luke Thiele Jerry Wilson	9 Amanda Tolen Jill Yount
10 Sunday Service 9:30am Taco Bar Jada Johnson	11 Brenda Tolen Keaton Jones	12 Deb Baker	13 Refresh Service WNL Youth 5:45pm	14	15	16 Ron & Cynthia Wartzok
17 Children's Program 9:30am SANTA Peggy Wilson	18 Ceaten Brubaker	19 Remnant House Wrapping Party	20	21 Kari Green Kevin Deakyne	22	23
24 Christmas Service 9:30am - Hall Candlelight 11pm Joyce Dahlquist	25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26	27	28	29	30
31 Sunday Service 9:30am Chod & Claudia Boxell						

**25% OFF**

**COUPON OFFER**  
Use Code: 25percent  
At Checkout!  
**EXPIRES DECEMBER 4, 2023**

One Coupon Code allowed per order.  
This offer can not be combined with any other offer.

**TACO 'BOUT A PARTY!**

**FCCW YOUTH INVITE YOU!**  
Please join us for a yummy  
taco bar on Sunday, Dec 10  
11 - 1pm  
Free Will Donation  
Money raised will help pay  
for this year's roller  
skating party.