



New Basel Church
1075 1100 Ave Abilene, KS 67410
785-479-5501
www.newbaselchurch.org

echo
New Basel Newsletter

DECEMBER 2024

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

December 25. Jesus' birthday. I have heard that some families buy presents not only for each other, but as a family give one to Jesus as well. Maybe a donation of some kind, or volunteering as a family; whatever the family decides. Whatever Jesus would like for his birthday!

But just when, exactly, was Jesus' birthday? December 25, in the year 0, right? Weeellll, probably not. First of all, I tricked you. There is no year 0. The calendar goes from 1BC to 1AD. But more to the point, the simple fact is there is nothing in the Bible that provides a whole lot of clarity to the timing of his birth. What we do have, however, is a bunch of shepherds with a bunch of sheep out in the middle of nowhere. Sheep grazing on grass would seem to lead us away from a mid-winter date. So would the fact that a lot of roads in the area would be impassable around that time of year. A governor that required everyone to travel on these roads to be registered would be crazy.

So why do we celebrate Christmas on December 25? It probably started with Emperor Constantine, in the year 336AD. December 25 happened to be the date of the pagan feast of Saturnalia, and afforded Christians a couple of easy analogies.

First, Saturnalia celebrated the return of the sun. Even today, you have probably noticed that the days are getting shorter and shorter all the time. Saturnalia celebrated light coming into the world and driving back the darkness. Choosing this date, therefore, offered Christians a chance to teach non-Christians about the nature of Jesus, who illumines our dark world.

Second, people used to exchange gifts on Saturnalia. Gifts also play a large role in the narrative about Jesus. The Magi from the east brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And the very salvation that Jesus brings is also referred to as a gift (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Third, and perhaps most obvious, is that Saturn was thought to be king of the gods. What better way to declare the supremacy of Christ than to take over the holiday of 'the king?'

If Jesus wasn't born on December 25, then when was his birthday? It has been suggested that Jesus might really have been born around a couple other holidays. Jews normally travelled all over the place for the Passover, which is typically held in the springtime. This would be a natural time for a governor to want to require people to travel to a specific place to be counted. Also, people traveled a lot for the Feast of Tabernacles, which took place around September or October. This festival celebrated God's providence for the Israelites in the desert, and included families bringing tabernacles, or tents. This would be another natural time to require people to travel, but leaves the question "Then why did Mary have to stay in a stable?"

So as you celebrate Christmas this year, remember it for what it is – a historical event that really happened, where the King of Kings and Lord of Lords came to earth to bring light and the gift of salvation. Just don't get hung up on the date!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Jamie

New Basel Church Council

Monday November 4, 2024

Called to order at 7:00pm by President Pam O'Neal

Present

Elders: Pam O'Neal , Chris Bethe, and Jen Reiff

Deacons: Judy Barten, Francis Anderson, and Jennifer Latzke

Trustees: Gary Foltz

Pastor Jamie opened with a devotion

M/S/C to approve the October minutes

Communications: Letter from Insurance Company and Pioneer Communications

Financial Secretary: Jennifer Latzke presented report

Treasurer: Judy Barten went over October financial report

Pastor's Report:

Work Summary for 10/7/24-11/2/24

Worship- Preached and led Sunday Worship 4 times, and at Homestead Memory Care

Administration Meetings- 1 Church Council, 1 Pastoral Relations (Phone), 1 Planning Meeting (Wheat State Retreat Center)

Pastoral Care- 5 Phone visits, 3 Home visits, 1 Pastoral Visit, 1 Hospital Visit

Other- 3 Crosstalk Local Meetings, 1 Crosstalk Global Meeting, 1 Church Movie night, 3 Volunteer Reading Sessions at Rural Center Grade School. He read Limelight Larry, How Does a Dinosaur Get Well, Little Blue Truck, and The Sneaky Beagle.

Vacation Days This month: 0, YTD 8

Professional Development Days This month 0, YTD 10, Mileage 176.2

Elders Report: Chris Bethe reported 38 took communion November 3rd

Deacons: Judy Barten reported that there is still money in the Missions Fund to spend before the end of the year.

Trustees: Gary Foltz reported it needs to dry up outside before they do more dirt work outside. Also, they are still talking about how to proceed with the basement ceiling.

Old Business:

New Business:

It was M/S/C to approve and pay bills

Pastor Parish committee needs to meet with Pastor Jamie before December meeting. Changed Church Council and Agenda meeting to Wednesday December 4th, instead of Monday the 2nd.

The Thanksgiving Service will be at Ebenezer 11/24, Pastor Jamie will be preaching.

Discussed the need to find families to light Advent Candles. Pam O'Neal and Jen Reiff will reach out to families.

Discussed need for nominating committee

Discussed kids collecting offering on Sundays

Pastor Jamie let council know the refrigerator in the Parsonage is falling apart

Discussed Parents Day Out, which will be held Saturday December 7th in the Parish Hall from 1:00- 6:00 pm. This will allow parents to get Christmas shopping done while their kids play games and have fun in the Parish Hall. Parents are to let Pastor Jamie and Angela know if they are interested.

It was reported that \$1,970.40 was received from the congregation for hurricane relief. It was M/S/C to add money from the benevolent fund to equal a total donation of \$2500.

It was M/S/C to donate \$1780 to Operation Mobilization and \$1780 to the Salina Rescue Mission from the Mission Fund.

Announcements: Upcoming Events:

November 10th, Movie Night

November 24th, Thanksgiving Service @ Ebenezer, Pastor Jamie Preaching

November 25th, Echo Articles Due

December 1st- Hanging of the Greens, No Communion this day

December 4th, Agenda Meeting 6:30, Church Council Meeting Following (note this is a Wednesday instead of Monday)

December 7th, Parents Day Out 1:00- 6:00 pm

December 15th, Children's Christmas Program

December 24th, Christmas Eve Service **6:30 pm**

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 8:21 by praying the Lord's Prayer in Unison
Jen Reiff, secretary

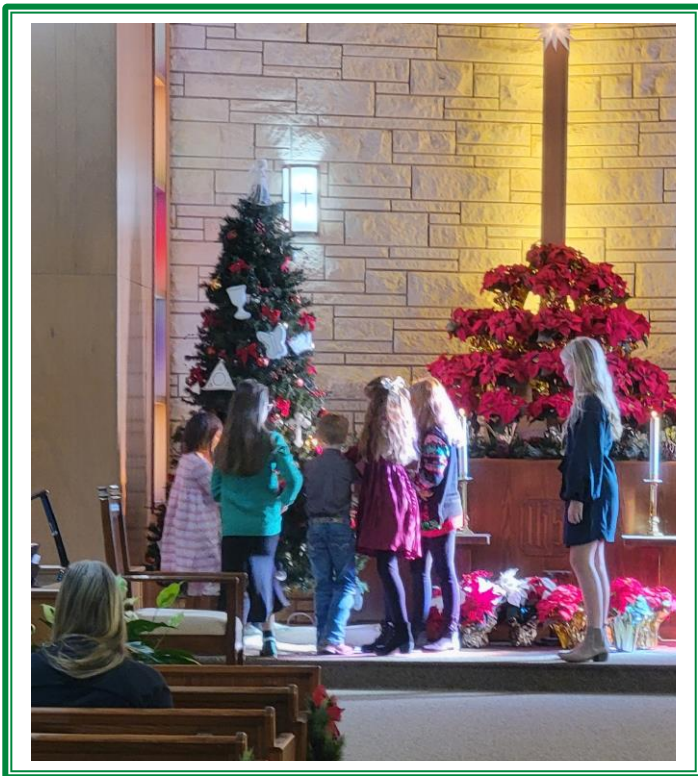




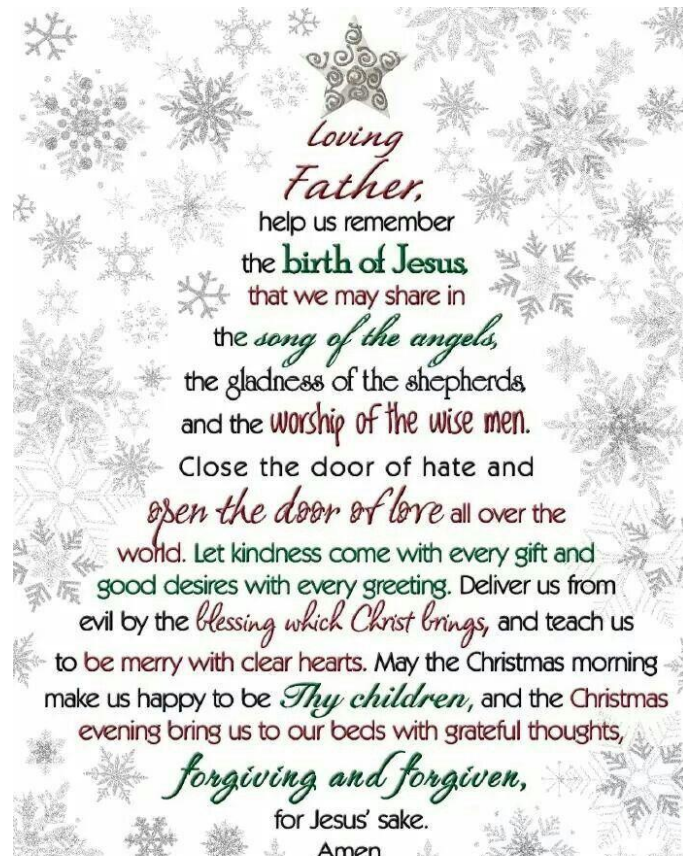
Maxine Kauffman
Naoma Foltz
Jane Haney
John Meuli
Judy Lauer

Kelly Schrader
Tony Herman
Family of Dwight Meuli
Family of Jim Stalder
(son in law of Carolyn Beetch)

*A confirmation class will be offered in 2025. Please see
Pastor Jamie for more information.*



**Sunday School Youth decorate the tree during
the Hanging of the Greens Service at New Basel.**



DECEMBER

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

7th Casey Barten
9th Robby Haynes
10th Janis Haugh
Brett Koster

17th Molly Hunnicutt
25th Terry Reiff
27th Justin Latzke
29th Parker O'Neal

Upcoming January Birthday

2nd Travis Beetch

The Children's Sunday School Christmas program will be during regular Church Service on Sunday December 15th. During the Christmas Eve Service, the youth will be singing a Christmas song.

Classes will resume on January 12th.



Greeters, Acolytes, & Usher for December

Greeters:

Acolytes:

1 st	Kenny & Janet Chamberlin	Blake Murphy
8 th	Ed & Jan McAdams	Farrah Rothchild
15 th	Jen Reiff and Joan Reiff	Axie and Stetson Shrack
22 nd	Randy & Judy Barten	Sterling Bonnema
24 th	Mark & Holly Bethe	Devin Kamm
29 th	5 th Sunday Breakfast	

December Usher: Larry Haugh

Thank you to Gary Foltz for being the November Usher



December 7th: Parent's Day Out 1-6pm

December 15th: Youth Sunday School Christmas Program

December 24th: Christmas Eve Service at 6:30

December 29th: 5th Sunday Breakfast at 9:30