



Branson Christian Church
 (Disciples of Christ)
 213 S. Commercial St.
 Branson, MO 65616
 Office: 417-334-3453

THE SPIRIT

Monthly Newsletter of Branson Christian Church
 (Disciples of Christ)

December 2023

**Special Christmas Offering received on
 Sundays, December 17th & 24th**



Visit our website at: www.bransonchristianchurch.com

Our Worship Service can be viewed on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/bransonchristianchurch
 or on our website at www.bransonchristianchurch.com

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Branson Christian Church Staff & Board

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Don Tharp - Minister
 Samantha West- Office Admin
 Rod Phillips - Music Director
 Annette Sain - Custodial Services

Office Hours: Mon. through Thurs.
 9:00am. -2:00pm.

BOARD OFFICERS 2023

Cindy Baldwin-Board Chair
 Kathy Kauffman-Vice Chair
 Annette Sain-Treasurer
 Jean Mueller-Secretary
 Johnie Groves-Financial Secretary

BY THE WAY THRIFT SHOP

November has been a good month, with lots of customers and \$200-\$500 days. We have sold lots of Christmas items along with fall clothes. The Thrift store will be closed on Thanksgiving but open on the Friday and Saturday following. We plan to have our Christmas party for our wonderful volunteers on Saturday, December 16 so will close the store that day. Looking forward to staying open between Christmas and New Years.
 Needs: anything Christmas or jewelry.
 Thanks for all of your donations.

Kathy & Roger Kauffman
 Thrift Shop co-chairs



-SERVING THIS MONTH-

~DECEMBER~

Roger Kauffman
 Jody Nelson
 Jolene Herington



~DECEMBER~

12/03 Easton R.
 12/10 Jude F.
 12/17 John G.
 12/24 Preston S.
 12/31 Grace R.



~DECEMBER~

Kathy Kauffman
 Jamie Haage
 Johnie Groves
 Julie Groves



~Vision Committee~

We would like to take this time to begin the information process to the congregation about plans to refurbish the sanctuary. Plans and objectives have been approved by the board and we would like to begin the information process by providing posters of what the finished Sanctuary would look like as well as hand-outs that will be made available in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall. We will also have a video on the TV in fellowship hall that will show different angles of the Sanctuary in its finished state.

After you have viewed the information and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me: Tanya Armstrong 417-294-4186. I will do my very best to help.

The renovation will provide a wheelchair ramp up to the Chancel area from the main floor of Sanctuary and more available space coming out of the room where the elevator is located and entering into the Sanctuary. New carpet in Narthex and Sanctuary. We will use one pulpit instead of two and it will be centered and on wheels, should we need to view baptisms or have programs, it can easily be moved for better viewing by the congregation. All woodwork will remain to preserve the overall look and appeal of our existing structure. All musical instruments will be located on the Northeast corner of Sanctuary. We will have one organ, one electric piano, one acoustic piano, one harp, one hammer dulcimer, and space for other instruments and musicians. Choir will be on the southwest side, angled towards the congregation. Everything will be clean and provide a more inclusive and inviting atmosphere for our worship service. Please take time to look over and study the information when available in the Narthex & fellowship hall. We hope to have a special congregational meeting January 14, 2024.

Thank you for your patience and prayers.

*Tanya Armstrong
Vision Chair*

From the Pastor's Desk

~A Time of Thanksgiving~

Colossians 3:15-16- Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Peace is something we all need. Especially during these times of wars, unrest, and financial insecurity. Paul says we are to let the peace of Christ rule our hearts. He says we are "Called to peace." Not my peace, not a peace you can get from the world, but the peace that only Christ himself can give. And with that, we can be truly thankful. In these 2 short verses, we have our call to peace and thanksgiving, and also the call to worship. What is our worship to include?

1. The Word of Christ - dwelling in us richly (The Gospel read aloud)
2. Teaching and Admonishing each other with all wisdom (Solid preaching)
3. Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs

Then the promised outcome - Gratitude in our hearts to God

The centerpiece of each service here at Branson Christian Church is Holy Communion. In the past, this has been referred to as, "The Great Thanksgiving." Let me give some more details, since this may be a new term to some people. The Great Thanksgiving is the name of the prayers that surround the Lord's Supper or Communion. These prayers (by our elders) follow the pattern of prayer from the earliest days of the Church. What a great tradition to continue. A weekly remembrance of God's presence in our lives through the sacrifice of Jesus. As we continue in this season of Thanksgiving, let each of us put a priority on worship, that we might experience the peace of Christ dwelling among us richly.



Sincerely, Pastor Don

Board Report

~From the Board~

The Branson Christian Church met November 16 and the following items were discussed.

1. In unfinished business, the roof repair is still being sought. Several contractors have been contacted, but we have not been able to secure a bid to take care of the problem that is causing the roof leaks. We are currently waiting on another contractor to look at the problem.
2. Also in unfinished business, the board was presented with a visual demonstration of what the changes would look like in the chancel remodel in the sanctuary. With discussion of what needed to be done, the board voted to take the presentation to the congregation on the second Sunday in January (January 14) for a vote on the project.
3. In new business, a request for renovations for the pastor's office was granted for a \$2500 limit from the Pat Davis Gift Fund.
4. The website and office email has been restored! Please thank Stacy Eastridge for all of her help in taking care of getting back access to our website and email. Please continue to use: office@bransonchristianchurch.com to contact the office.

Reports were heard from the various committees. It was noted that our internet was upgraded for use in Fellowship Hall. A thank you was sent to Chris Armstrong for his help in setting this up. Please read the other reports from the committees in this newsletter. Also check out the calendar for all of the activities planned during this next month.

In this beautiful time of the year, we have so many blessings to count from our fellowships and friendships that have helped this congregation. We also have new members who have joined us by transfers and baptisms. As we celebrate the Christmas season of our Savior's birth, please remember that through Christ we have hope for our future.

May God continue to bless all our families and friends,
Cindy Baldwin, Board Chair

Membership News

The Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner was a great success! There was such a variety and number of yummy dishes that two card tables were set up for the overflow of food. Everyone was grateful for the food and fellowship!

The committee served a light lunch for after the sanctuary was decorated for Christmas.

The 75th Adoration Parade Open House is Sunday, December 3rd from 3:30pm.-5:30pm. in Fellowship Hall. Again, this year, hot cocoa and cookies will be served. Please bring your homemade or store-bought cookies no later than Sunday, December 3rd church service. Please leave the cookies in the kitchen. Volunteers are always welcome!

The December Fellowship Dinner is Sunday, December 17th. We will celebrate Happy Birthday Baby Jesus!

Bobbie Wydeen, Chair

Please welcome Blenda Marquardt on becoming a member and her baptism on 11/17/2023!

~Outreach & Missions~

The Christmas Offering will be on Dec. 17 and 24.

This offering supports regional ministries. Ministers are nurtured and congregations are provided opportunities for work and worship.
(Often recognized for the ministries of camps and conferences.)

There are no suggestions for December food pantry.
Please give to the charity of your choice.

A great charity event for December is a collection of small toys for ages 0-5-years old. The Outreach Committee is sponsoring this for the Junior Auxiliary for the Head Start Children of Taney County.

There will be a collection box in the Narthex for the toy donations.

Jolene Herington, Chair

~Christian Ed~

In order to strengthen the educational and spiritual needs of our congregation, the Christian Education committee will be providing Bible reading guides. We will start in December with 25 days of Christmas reading challenge. These 25 days of reading will encompass the life of Jesus from birth to ascension. Printed guides will be provided for the congregation as well as digital copies on our website and daily postings to the Facebook page.

In January we will be rolling out a couple of yearly readings as well as monthly readings. Again, with printed and digital copies available. There will be two yearly readings. One that was created by Billy Graham and one that will be a chronological reading. Monthly readings will be provided, each with a different theme for the month. In addition to these readings, we will also be providing both a 90-day and a 365-day reading guide for youth.

We will also be giving a Christmas story and activities books for all families with children, including our Missionary families, in early to mid-December.

The first teen bible study went well with the theme being Thankfulness. All attendees wrote and posted in the Teen room what they were thankful for. These lists are available for all to see. We are going to be doing some rejuvenating of the room and have been blessed with some seating and a video projector.

The monthly teen worship services have been a great success. John Gillen has been preparing and leading the services, focusing on David. John has shared his lessons with Pastor Don. We look forward to what the future holds for John as he has chosen to continue his education into Christian Youth Ministry and Secondary Education.

Five of our youth volunteered on Monday morning at CAM. They unloaded pallets of shelf stable milk (6360 cartons), bagged them for individuals and re-packed them for storage. They helped unload a couple trucks and learned how to use a pallet lift. There are plans to return in the spring and help with handing out food.

Stacy Eastridge, Chair

Committee Reports

FINANCE REPORT

Finance Report through OCT. 2023

Operating income Sept.	\$24,442.45
Operating expense Sept.	\$9,602.54
Year to date income	\$173,433.50
Year to date expense	\$96,316.56

Online giving is available for your convenience at the church website and Facebook page.

SAFE ~ SECURE ~ SIMPLE

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

~Membership	Dec. 7	5:30pm.
~Outreach	Dec. 11	4:30pm.
~Worship	Dec. 12	10:30am.
~Finance	Dec. 19	6:00pm.
~Board	Dec. 21	5:30pm.



~Shoutouts to the Youth~

Lilly got into the Branson High School student council.

Jude did a great job in the Branson Jr. High production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" directed by Holli Segura. He was one of the brothers, Izacar.

Jude was student of the month (for October).

Darren has skipped an entire semester in college! He started this semester as a sophomore, next semester he's a junior!

John made the varsity basketball cheer squad.




December

ALL SUNDAYS
 9:30am - Sunday School
 10:15am - Fellowship Time
 10:45am - Worship Service

~December Birthdays~

Dec. 3 Gaile Ball
 Dec. 6 Lilly C.
 Dec. 9 Dorothy Polk
 Dec. 10 Naomi Felder
 Dec. 15 Sandy Sisson
 Dec. 16 Bob Johnson
 Dec. 17 Sandra Berry
 Dec. 18 Bobbie Wydeen
 Dec. 20 Holli Segura
 Dec. 24 Anna Lankford
 Dec. 24 Ronni Haston
 Dec. 28 Ashley Felder
 Dec. 30 Mary Wallace
 Dec. 30 Elias S.



~Anniversaries~

Dec. 14 Dominic & Rebecka Gillen
 Dec. 17 Greg & Ronni Haston
 Dec. 21 Larry & Mary Wallace
 Dec. 28 Bob & Marilyn Johnson
 Dec. 31 Rick & Rhonda Johnson

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Advent Begins Adoration Parade	4	5 The Chosen @ 6pm. (S3E4)	6 10:30am. – 12:00pm. Bible Study Choir rehearsal 6:00pm. Handbells 7:00pm.	7 Membership Mtg. 5:30pm.	8	9 Christmas Caroling 9:30am. - 2:00pm
10 	11 Outreach Mtg. 4:30pm.	12 10:30am. Worship Comm. Mtg.	13 10:30am. – 12:00pm. Bible Study Choir rehearsal 6:00pm.	14 Teen Bible Study 5:00-7:00pm.	15 Christmas Craft Day 5:00-7:00pm	16
17  Fellowship Dinner	18	19 6:00pm. Finance Comm. Mtg. The Chosen @ 6:00pm (S3E5)	20 10:30am. – 12:00pm. Bible Study Choir rehearsal 6:00pm.	21 5:30pm. Board Mtg.	22	23
24 Nativity Play Candlelight Service 6pm 	25 Christmas Day 	26	27 10:30am. – 12:00pm. Bible Study Choir rehearsal 6:00pm.	28	29	30

Serving in December
Worship Leaders
 3rd ~ Russ Wydeen
 10th ~ David Faragher
 17th ~ Johnie Groves
 24th ~ Youth
 31st ~ John Lea