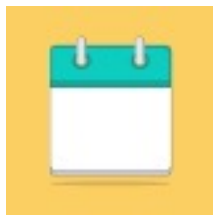


Date	Event	Birthdays	Anniversaries
Monday, December 11	Launch Team Meeting, 6:30 pm Young Adults Group, 7 pm Finance, 7 pm	Brett Brooks Hannah Hosfelt Mary Tremblay	
Tuesday, December 12		Jessica Folkert Mike Halstead Duane Rowson	
Wednesday, December 13	Women's Prayer, 10 am Youth Group, 5:30 pm Square Dance, 6:45 pm		
Thursday, December 14	Congregational Care, 2 pm Baton, 5:30 pm Chancel Choir, 6 pm		Jeff & Kristen Brink
Friday, December 15	Caroling, 5:30 pm Freddi's Angels, 6:30 pm		
Saturday, December 16			
Sunday, December 17	Worship, 9:30 am Fellowship, 10:30 am Hymn Sing, 11 am Dinner Theater Practice, noon	Brook Brooks Lynda Edsall Kim Johnson Jeremiah Najar Jr Abby Reidel Elaine Urrutia	

## Mark Your Calendar



- ◆ December 15: Caroling, 5:30 pm
- ◆ December 17: Hymn Sing, 11 am
- ◆ Christmas Eve services: 7 pm and 11 pm



Advent Devotional, December 12, 1997  
By Jean Culver

Maynard Culver found this Advent reflection, written by Jean in 1997. Let us give thanks for her everlasting faithfulness, and these words that still inspire today. Jean passed away March 19. Yesterday was her birthday.

Revelation 19:6 - The Lord God omnipotent reigns.  
1 Samuel 3:17 - What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee?

Jesus - Who was He? Who is He? When was He born? Why is He more than history? "Surely this was the Son of God." Matthew 27:64. What do I, in my consciousness and deepest heart, really believe? Robert Funk of the Jesus Seminar and many others ask questions in trying to figure out who Jesus was and is. All of us need to answer that question truthfully with no illusions, as to what Jesus is to each of us.

Jesus is the Light, the Way, the Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Balm in Gilead. He is the great Rescuer from sin, He is the Lily of the valley, the bright and morning Star, the fairest of ten thousand. All this is "depth thinking", but do I know it? He is the Chief Cornerstone, the Great Physician, the Word of God, the Wisdom of God, the Resurrection and the Life, the Rock of Ages, the Good shepherd, God's Unspeakable Gift.

Jesus could have been an Essene, we don't know - but Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostroyevsky wrote that "No one else was or is like Him, that Christ is an infinity marvel." Christ is our temple, was Man in guise, suffered not as God, but was God. Gandhi believed that "Christ belongs not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world: to all races and people - matters not under what doctrine or faith." Christ is for us and in us. He is our Robe, our Bread, our wealth, our pleasure, our treasure. As C.S. Lewis wrote, "He who fascinates and who saves", Christ is historical, but He is here now. He is God and Ghost and Everyman. We can touch Him in our everyday life, we can meet Him in our surroundings.

E. Stanley Jones' motto stated, "Jesus is Lord." I, too, like John Wesley, have felt a "strange heart-warming", for Jesus is Real, really real - no illusion - His presence is all around us, above us, and in us.

Speak, Lord: for thy servant heareth. 1 Samuel 3:9

God, our Savior, help me to take down all the barriers to reality in my life. Help me to let Thee have me - really have me, all the way, all the time. Open the Door that I may see. Amen.

By Jean Culver

## Lord...Hear Our Prayers

*Each week, everyone who attends worship at Wesley Park is welcome to share any joys or concerns they may carry in their heart. These are the requests we received from the December 3rd communication cards...*

**Diane Carpenter** - Please pray for Ava's grandfather and her whole family. Pray for Mary and her husband.

**Freddi Angus** - Pray for my friend, Sandie, to help her see her sister, Jennifer, who has terminal cancer. Sandie is having a real hard time with this. Help me be a support to both of them.

**Sallie McLean** - Please pray for the staff at Metron. They ask for your prayers. Pray for money for shoes for walking in. Mine are too slippery.

**Shirley Diederiks** - I loved the beautiful song, Sara. Bless everyone. Thank you for today! I am so happy to be in church this morning. Beautiful song, choir. Good to see you in your robes. Thank you, Dean, for a wonderful service.

**Val Rienks** - Prayers for me as I found out on Tuesday at my followup for survivorship that I have symptoms of Chemo brain. I have lack of concentration and inability to multi-task. I have a followup on December 20 at Mary Free Bed with Dr. Christian Vandenberg. I am also job searching as the symptoms have caused me to lose my job. Still searching for housing for my 80 year old mother-in-law.

**Dolores Sanford** - Prayers for the doctors to find the meds that will work for Ron to win over the cancer.

**Patricia Beadle** - Prayers needed for my step-daughter, Kelly, who is having health issues. Thank you.

**Maddy Brink** - Please pray for my friend's mom because she broke her foot and has a boot on her foot. Also, next time you see me I will have bottom expanders.

**Charlie and Kathy Swanson** - Please pray for our family as we mourn the passing of Charlie's father. He went to be with the Lord on December 1.

**Ed & Evelyn Newton** - Prayers for my sister, Lucille Eichenberg, who is having a lot of health issues.

**Julie Riemersma** - Pray the Christmas by Candlelight was a blessing to all who attended. Thank you everyone who helped make it a great event.

**Barb DeCan** - Please pray for our friends, Kathy & Mike. It was thought that Mike was beating lung cancer. Kathy contacted me this week. The cancer is now in Mike's spine and he struggles with pain.

**Ginny Hughes** - My husband, Jim, has many problems. Our son, Bob, had colon cancer surgery on November 29th.

**Nancy Harrington** - Prayers for Chuck Dear as he suffers again with back pain.

**Steve and Diane Ellens** - Lord willing, we leave for Texas on December 10. We plan on doing 4 projects Jan-April. We will be back in May. Prayers for safe travel with our 5th wheel, health, and for good relationships with those we work with and those we serve.

**Bill and Vicky Van Dalsen** - We are so glad to be back in the sanctuary!

**Ken & Linda McKenney** - Wonderful sermon of Joseph and what Jesus may have learned from Joseph, his earthly father. Beautiful music, Sara.

**Mary Mingledorff** - Tom and I are grateful for the potential in the pacemaker Tom will receive December 13.

**Esther Fernandez** - Thank you, Gary, for sharing your beautiful story. I am so glad to know you and Deb. Thank you Jesus for good people. We have a lot of good people in the world!

## Welcome Desk Welcomes All



Stop by the Welcome Desk this morning in the Welcome Center.

- ✦ Get a **name badge**, even if this is your first Sunday!
- ✦ Drop off **Adopt-a-Classroom** items.
- ✦ Donations for **West Elementary**.

## Blue Bags Ministry Share Offering

### 100% Ministry Shares Challenge

Received To Date:

**\$33,435**

**(49 Weeks Completed)**

Remaining Balance Needed:

**\$8,548**

**(4 Weeks Remaining)**

Offered last week: **\$522**

### Hymn Sing

Please join Sara in the Sanctuary on December 17th at 11am for a great time of signing out of the hymnal. What is even better...you get to pick what we sing. The Wesley Park Hymn Sing will be in place of our regular Faith Formation. Come ready to share your favorite hymns. They can be Christmas songs or just one of your all time favorites. Give Sara (616-988-6738) a call if you have any questions.

### Adult Faith Formation: Slow [Advent]

This is the season of rushing around. There is so much to do and so little time. It is also the season of waiting. We wait for the kingdom of God to be shown to us again in the birth of Jesus Christ. We light candles, celebrate traditions, experience the tension/joy of the holidays in the midst of it all. What if we acknowledged the rush of life and intentionally slowed down in small ways? What if we began again in this new church year? Join us this advent as we acknowledge the rush, try slow down for a few breaths, and get ready for 2018.

WEEK 2: DEC 10 Slow Down

WEEK 3: DEC 17 [Hymn Sing]

WEEK 4: DEC 31 Begin Again

Everyone is welcome.

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## **Lunch with the Youth**

The youth are currently working on their 4th Annual Dinner Theatre production that will take place in March. The kids stay after church every Sunday to practice until about 3 pm. We are looking for volunteers that would like to have lunch with the "Best Youth On The Planet" and bring in a lunch for about 20 people. Please prayerfully consider having lunch with a great bunch of kids. If you have any questions or would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact Bill Schick (616-261-0428) or put "youth lunch" on your communication card and Bill will give you a call. The dates that are available include: January 14, 21, and 28; February 4, 11, 18, and 25.

## **Donations for West Elementary**

Just a reminder that we are collecting new and gently used winter gear for West Elementary. They are in need of boots (size 12/13-6), snow-pants (gender neutral, size 4-16), gloves (water proof ones), and coats (size 4-16). They would also love to gather up about 30 sleds for their sliding hill. You can drop them off at the Church office or contact Cindy Lang (616-822-9679) to arrange pick up.

## **Time For Some Caroling**

Friday, December 15 at 5:30 we will be going Christmas Caroling! We will meet in the Welcome Center. In the spirit of VCI and connecting with our community, we will be caroling in the neighborhood surrounding the church, so dress warm! All are welcome at this event, so please spread the news and invite your friends, neighbors, and family that aren't yet a part of our church. Following our caroling, we will return to the church for some hot cocoa/coffee and cookies.

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