

# Maple Leaves

December 2024

Maple Grove Community Church of New Paris

20430 County Road 46

New Paris, IN 46553

574-831-4421

Website: [www.maplegrovechurch.net](http://www.maplegrovechurch.net)



## *Let us pray for:*

Maple Grove Church Family  
Pastor Dwayne and Karen Runkle  
Josh & Andrea Keck  
Jim & Phyllis Kirkdorffer  
Mike Overpeck  
Troy Runkle  
Scott Sanchez  
Kim Wilfong  
Julie Yoder  
Wayne Yoder  
Our Widow Ladies  
Our Youth & Children  
Revival: Gather25  
Andy Smith, Alex Becker & Gavin Erb  
(serving our country)  
Fairfield Food Pantry  
Camp Mack (Staff & Volunteers)  
Kid's Alive Ministry (Orphans)  
Missionaries:  
Erica Simone (SonSet Solutions)  
Alan & Cheri Shea ((Liberia)  
Mike & Tara Overpeck (Elkhart Co.)  
Chris & Stefanie Hohm (Tanzania)  
World Missionary Press  
Destiny Rescue

Please remember the above (and their spouses or family) with phone calls, texts and cards.

## *Sunday, December 15th*

The children's Christmas program entitled "Fill Your Heart with Love" will be at 6:00 pm. Through songs, the children will retell the famous Dr. Seuss Christmas Story "How the Grinch Stole Christmas". Come and be a part of this special night and have your heart filled with love...

Following the program you are all invited to join us as we take a "Journey Through Bethlehem" from 6:30—7:30 pm here at Maple Grove.



*Come walk with us as we discover all that Mary and Joseph must have encountered as they made their 'Journey through Bethlehem'.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:00 AM  
SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:00 AM  
WEDNESDAY EVE. ACTIVITIES 6:30 PM  
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 6:30 PM

# Pastor Dwayne Runkle

Cell Phone: 574-238-1505

Email: dkca@maplenet.net

## “Are You in the Christmas Spirit?”

Ready or not, here comes Christmas! Thanksgiving and Black Friday will soon be in our rear-view mirror. But we don't even have to wait any more till Thanksgiving is over to start getting in the Christmas mode. Retailers make sure of that by putting up decorations and advertising earlier and earlier every year. Stores across the land and city lights seem to go up earlier and earlier as well. As a young boy growing up in my community, I couldn't wait until the streetlights went up in the little towns of Red Lion and Dallastown, PA. But I never remember them going up until after Thanksgiving. As we get more commercialized in our society, retailers are always looking for ways to sell their product to us as the consumer. They tell us, “Get it now and save money,” or “it's coming soon, so get ready for the sale.” So are you in the Christmas Spirit yet? Have you gotten all your Christmas shopping done or are you like me and wait until the eleventh hour?

It makes me wonder how it was for Mary and Joseph leading up to the very first Christmas as they anticipated the birth of their newborn Son. I'm sure they had their things they too had to get ready for, such as getting the nursery ready, etc.

During the Advent Season, we look forward to all that it brings (Advent is a Latin word that simply means, “Coming or Arrival”). We celebrate the coming (birth) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, just as Mary and Joseph did. Jesus is the reason for the season! Two thousand years ago the world waited for the coming of the promised Messiah. Then one day it happened just as the prophets of old said it would. *“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take*

*Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel!”—which means, “God with us” (Matthew 1:18-23).*

Today we still celebrate Jesus' coming, we call it Christmas. Let us remember the real reason for the season! But there is another day that we as Christians are looking forward to; another coming (Advent). We call this the “Second Coming,” when Jesus will return to take us to our eternal home in Heaven! Now, it does not get any better than that! We not only have this promised gift of salvation, but we also get all the gifts that go along with it in Heaven when Jesus returns again!

This Christmas season and throughout the year, let us give thanks for what our Savior has done for us! Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving!

I want to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Pastor Dwayne

## *Daily Breads*

New *Daily Bread* devotionals are on the Welcome Center. Take one, they're free!



## *Poinsettias*

It's time to order poinsettias!

You can order red or white,

but be flexible, some colors may be limited. The cost is \$15.00 each. There are order forms on the Welcome Center. These beautiful plants come Fashion Farm/Countryscapes. Please give orders to Sue Wilfong—574-536-8861.

## *Worship Schedule*

December 1- We start off our Advent Season with a message on "God's Love" and Erin Berkepile will sing "Christmas Lullaby".

December 8- The Girl's Group will sing "The Manger" as we take a look at "God's Character" from Luke 2:8-20.

December 15- Brian Cripe will be our Guest Speaker for the morning.

December 22- CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION with the Maple Leaves singing a song from their Christmas program, "Feels Like Joy".

December 29- The Worship Team will sing "I Won't Go Back" as we reflect on the past year with a message on "Resolutions".

## *Men's Breakfast*

Come join us for Men's Breakfast on Saturday, Dec. 7th at 7:00 am. We will be meeting at Tiffany's in Topeka this month. If you're coming, please sign up on the Welcome Center.

## *Attention Journey Cast Members*

Please meet in the sanctuary on Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 7:45 pm to pick up your costumes and get final instructions. Thanks, Pam

## *Myers' Small Group*

Ned and Linda's Small Group will meet on Dec. 15th for lunch at Fashion Farm.

## *Sr. High Youth Group...*

will be going caroling on Wed., Dec. 18th at 6:30 pm.

## *Evangelism*

We are adopting a couple of families for Christmas again this year. We will announce any needs we will have as we find out more details.

## *Worship Nursery Workers:*

Dec. 1 Lauren Carrick & Leah Herschberger  
Dec. 8 Leah Herschberger & Tonda Carrick  
Dec. 15 Crystal Dunlap & Julie Nankervis  
Dec. 22 Jeanie Stuckman & Marla Snider  
Dec. 29 Crystal Dunlap & Julie Nankervis

## *Kid's Stuff Volunteers:*

Dec. 1 Crystal & Michael Dunlap  
Dec. 8 Krista Runkle & Madison Keck  
Dec. 15 Tricia Stilwell & Vicki Becker  
Dec. 22 Jessica & Derek Gilreath  
Dec. 29 Jessie Kreider & Tonda Carrick

## *Sister's In Christ*

'Create with Fresh Greens'

When: Tuesday, Dec. 3rd, 6 pm

Where: Kim & Sue Wilfongs

19140 CR 140, Goshen

(located at former Christmas Tree Farm)

You may decorate a wreath, make and decorate a 'greens' spray or make a fresh centerpiece (bring your own pot 6-8" or smaller, or wicker basket, or she has some.) Please bring glue gun and glue to share if you have one. We will be doing lots of chit-chatting, creating, decorating and fellowship. Sign up on the Welcome Center please.

## *Birthday's & Anniversary's*

1 Nick & Abby Anderson, 2018  
4 Libby Byler  
5 Michael Dunlap  
8 Theodore Gilreath  
8 Eva Miller  
13 Andrea Byler  
14 Karen Runkle  
14 Ron & Jeanie Stuckman, 1991  
15 Randy & Elaine Sharkey, 1990  
23 Heather Houston  
23 Jeremy Klinedinst  
24 Jim Kirkdorffer  
24 Betty Stutsman  
25 Josie Dunlap  
25 Randy Sharkey  
27 Mike & Tara Overpeck, 1981  
29 Chris Keck  
29 Jeremy & Courtney Klinedinst, 2006  
29 Ashley Morehouse

## *From the Librarian*

This year I had a hard time finding Christmas books to present to you. Everywhere I looked I found the same book, "Don't let the Pigeon Drive the Sleigh". What? I don't care about birds in sleighs. Where was my Jesus books? I finally found four Christmas books I think you'd be PROUD to read to and with your kids.

1. **"Christmas in the Manger"** A board book for nursery age.
2. **"God gave us Christmas"** A read-to-me book. A polar bear cub starts asking about Santa. His mama takes him on an adventure to show him God at work and leads him to the TRUE meaning of Christmas.
3. **"The Nativity Story"** Bedtime or read together, this is a true presentation of the birth of the Christ child. It is supported by scripture, giving an older child and parent to share the birth and reason for Christmas.
4. **"One Christmas Lasts Forever"** A book that will promote you and families to share the memories and importance of Christmas celebration.

I hope these choices add to your Christmas. I also encourage and pray that anyone out there who has a "story in your heart" that you will write in a book form for these kids we love.

Thanks, Linda Myers

Friends and Family,

We want to begin by thanking you for continuing to believe in our ministry. Your prayers, affirming words and financial support mean a great deal to us. Your partnership in ministry with us is helping to change lives. God is good.

As we reflect over this past year, what comes to mind is "this is not what we expected." In late January, Mike received a message from a friend asking if we would consider helping the West Goshen Church. We learned they were facing a challenging time and the few people that remained were quite discouraged. We had a relationship with them from the past and felt God prompting us to contact the church.

The Leadership Team at the church showed interested in meeting with us and sharing their story. Following that meeting we spent time in prayer seeking God's direction. We felt God leading us to offer our help and we pitched an idea to them which has now become an incredibly unique arrangement. We told them they could not hire us because we had worked hard to build our support base for our own ministry, and we did not want to lose that or the work we do through On Community. We told them we could not come and help them alone; we would be bringing a team of people to help us. And due to Mike's health concerns, we would not be able to stay if it became stressful. They agreed to our terms and insisted on at least giving a contribution to our ministry. We consented. They have accepted the limited amount of time we can give them while maintaining the ministry of One Community. We completed a six-month commitment and agreed to six more months. We will continue to listen to God for direction for our future.

Every December we invite you to a Christmas Service to thank you for your support throughout the year. We wanted to let you know we are combining our annual Christmas Service with the West Goshen annual Christmas Eve Service this year at 6:00 pm, Tuesday, December 24. The service will be at the West Goshen Church, 1200 Berkey Ave., Goshen. We would be honored to have you join us.

We are grateful for you, Mike and Tara Overpeck

### *December Newsletter Articles*

Please have your articles turned into Tonda by December 22nd. You may email articles to carrick@bnin.net, text them to 574-596-6657 or place them in the 'newsletter' mailbox in the church office. Thanks!

## *Looking ahead*

Jan. 19 Dream Big Sunday

# December 2024

**Sun**  
Worship Greeters:  
Kyle & Lauren Carrick

**Mon**


**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Two Cents Worth Offering Food Pantry Collection	6 pm Sister's In Christ at Sue Wilfong's	6:30-8 pm Wed. Eve. Activities 6:30-7:30 pm Bible Study			7:00 am Men's Breakfast at Tiffany's in Topeka
8	11:30 am Worship Team Brunch	10 6 pm Deacon's Supper	11 7 am Pastor Breakfast 9:30 am JTMA Mtg. 6:30-8 pm Wed. Eve. Activities 6:30-7:30 pm Bible Study 7:45 pm Journey Cast Meet	12	13 Pastor Dwayne in PA	14 Pastor Dwayne in PA
15	Myers' Small Group lunch 5:45 pm Children arrival 6:00 pm Children's Christmas Program 6:30-7:30 The Journey	17	18 6:30 pm Sr. High Youth Caroling	19 6:30 pm Dwyane Runkle's Small Group meet	20	21
22	Newsletter articles due	24 6 pm Christmas Eve Service at West Goshen Church	25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	26	27	28
29		31				

## *Outreach Opportunities*

### **Two Cents Worth Offering:**

The children will be taking up the Two Cents Worth Offering the first Sunday in December. The money collected goes toward our sponsored children: Bryan, from Mexico, Mackline from Kenya and Alim Mollah from Bangladesh.

### **Fairfield Food Pantry:**

We will also be collecting food for the Fairfield Food Pantry on December 1st. They are in need of **noodles, chunky soups, spaghetti and spaghetti sauce**. Please place your donations in the shopping cart as you enter the sanctuary. Thanks for giving to those in need!

*Thank you* so much for your faithful support for Bryan Martinez Aguillar (Mexico). He has finished high school this year. He is now working. Our *Companeros En Ministerio (CEM)* scholarship program is winding down as the need for assistance has decreased as the prosperity of the people have increased. Thank God for that and your willingness to help! We do appreciate it. God be with your church.

Love in Christ,

Ruth Ann Jamira, CEM Secretary

Our vision at the Maple Grove Church is to train and equip believers to reach the unsaved by sharing the Gospel with children, youth and young adults in our church, community and the world; to mentor and train them by using multiple generations; to make disciples and enable them to disciple others; and to baptize them and teach them to obey the commands of Christ in their daily lives.

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## *Revival: Gather 25*

Feb. 28—Mar. 1, 2025 the entire Global Church is invited to come together for Gather25. Maple Grove is essential to bringing the Global Church together because we are the Global Church. Pray boldly and dream big about joining us for 25 straight hours of worship, food, and fellowship. Details to come or reach out to Megan Hunter, Krista Runkle, or Tricia Stilwell with questions.

The Mission of Maple Grove Church:  
"To nurture the spiritual growth of our congregation,  
empowering us to share with others the hope of Jesus Christ."