



Our mission is to share the Good News, as we *love* everyone unconditionally, serve anyone selflessly, and live like JESUS. (1Peter 4:10-11)

# DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

Pastor: Tony Jackson  
8:15 am - Gathering Grounds  
Coffee Shop  
9:00 am - Bible Classes, all ages  
10:00 am - Coffee and Fellowship  
10:30 am - Worship Service  
& Kids Zone Jr. Worship  
[www.bethaltochristianchurch.org](http://www.bethaltochristianchurch.org)  
724 E. Bethalto Blvd.,  
Bethalto, IL 62010  
618-377-9259  
Email - office.bfcc@gmail.com



## A "Full" Christmas (for Better or Worse) By Daniel Henderson

The Christmas season is filled with opportunities to celebrate some of the greatest gifts of this life—the coming of Christ into our world, the treasure of time with friends and family, and the joy of giving to those we love. However, like precarious thorns on the stem of a beautiful rose, the fullness of the holidays can also threaten our spiritual, emotional and relational equilibrium in unique ways.

The Apostle Paul's timeless wisdom in Philippians 4:6-9 provides a clear path to help us survive and thrive through the craziness of Christmas. His advice can be summarized in four words: Careful, Prayerful, Thoughtful and Peaceful.

**We Will Be "Careful"** The holiday season is full of "cares." Our expectations are often high. Disappointment lurks. We tend to get overcommitted, overburdened with holiday shopping, tempted with overeating and overwhelmed with relentless commercialization. We are saddened by our inability to be with the people we love at Christmas or can even recoil at the thought of having to spend time with strangers or extended family that we don't enjoy being around. Financial worries are at an all-time high for many during the holidays. The "season of light" can get very dark for some of us.

When Paul wrote "be anxious for nothing" (Philippians 4:6a) he recognized that we will struggle with anxiety. Yet he also reassured us that we do not have to be overwhelmed with the cares of this life, even during the holiday crazies.

**We Should be Prayerful** Paul's primary antidote for anxiety is clear: "But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (v. 6b). Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest provides a very literal and helpful translation: "Stop perpetually worrying about even one thing, but in everything by prayer whose essence is that of worship and devotion and by supplication which is a cry for your personal needs, with thanksgiving let your requests for the things asked for be made known in the presence of God."

Paul's word for "prayer" is the most common word to refer to spiritual pursuit, often associated with the worshipful offering of the heart to God. "Supplication" involves our crying out to God, trusting Him for our needs and concerns. "Thanksgiving" recognizes God's faithfulness in the past along with His good provision now and in the future. When Paul writes "let your requests be made known to God," he is not implying that God does not know our need until we tell Him. Rather, we are looking to God and God alone for the solutions to our issues and the source of our well-being. Our satisfaction is in the presence and person of God, through Christ.

**We Must Be Thoughtful** Our thoughts always drive our emotions. Our emotions prompt our reactions. Our reactions fuel conflict, confusion and deeper concern. Knowing this, Paul challenges us to control and focus our thoughts. "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (v. 8).

In the disorder and disappointments of Christmas, the indwelling Christ literally gives us the grace to "fix our thoughts" on the God-honoring realities of the situation rather than the negative aspects of the moment. Instead of an obsession with complaining about circumstances and expressing criticism toward people, we can concentrate on the faithfulness and goodness of God, choosing to praise Him through it all.

**We Can Be Peaceful** Paul then gives us this meaningful encouragement: "The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you" (v. 9). He calls the believers to look at these fruits in the model of his own life. Paul writes from prison. He has endured persecution, beatings, criticisms and conflicts beyond description. Yet, he has known the grace of a praying heart and the power of focused thoughts. He has shown them by example that peace is promised and possible.

Earlier, in verse 7, he explained, "The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." In the midst of overwhelming cares, we can be prayerful and thoughtful, with the promise of a peaceful reality.

Paul teaches us that the peace of God, a reality beyond our human understanding or explanation, WILL "garrison and mount guard" or "stand sentinel" over our hearts and minds. He also says that God, whose very character is peace, will manifest His presence in our circumstances and hearts.

**A Season of Fullness** So, this Christmas season will be full. No doubt, it will be full of care. However, if we access the provision of Christ, this celebration of His coming to earth can also be an experience of His coming and ruling in the daily reality of this busy month. The message of a "silent night" where "all is calm and all is bright" can be the experience of our hearts and homes. He gives us a peaceful "center" if, by His grace, we can be prayerful and thoughtful—for His glory and our good.

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Our vision is to be a body of Christ  
 where every person is growing  
 and living the mission.  
 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

## CEAD: Christian Education and Adult Discipleship

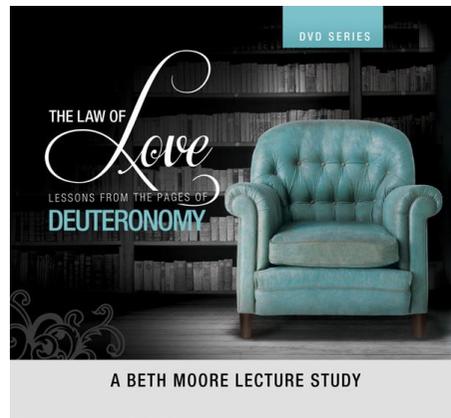
### SUNDAY MORNING 9:00 AM ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

**Prayer** - Tony Jackson 's Office

**Book of Genesis** - Room 113 – Curt Folmsbee

Genesis is the book of beginnings: the beginning of creation, the beginning of man, the beginning of sin, and the beginning of God's plan for the redemption of sinning man. Bring your Bible as we study chapter by chapter, verse by verse.

**Deuteronomy Adult Class** - Room 207 - Colleen Jumper



**Wednesday Evenings** - Serving meals to people in our Community  
 Prep time starts at 4:00, Time of prayer at 5 PM, Meal Delivery & Fellowship meal following.

**More cooks and servers are needed!** Sign up for a week or a month.

\*Contact Tony Jackson for information or suggestions for future Bible Class studies.

## THOSE TO SERVE IN DECEMBER 2019

### Offering Counters & Building Lock Up

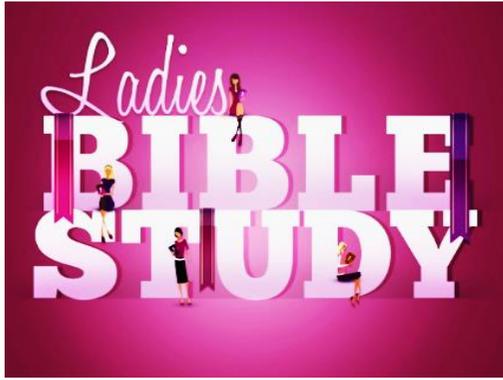
<b>December 1</b>	Dave G. & Randy B.
<b>December 8</b>	Kevin J. & Aaron T.
<b>December 15</b>	Randy B. & Kevin J.
<b>December 22</b>	Fred G. & Dave G.
<b>December 29</b>	Kevin J. & Randy B.

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”  
 1 Peter 4:10



In order to accomplish our Mission of sharing the Good News, loving people unconditionally, serving others selflessly, and living like Jesus', we must work together. Your servant's heart and hands are needed each

month. To volunteer, please talk to an Elder or contact Anna in the office at 377-9259 or by email [office.bfcc@gmail.com](mailto:office.bfcc@gmail.com) and let them know of your willingness to serve.



**Friday Mornings**  
**9:00 - 11:30 AM**  
**Childcare provided**

Dec. 6 & 13 – Service project  
Dec. 12 – Christmas Party  
Dec. 20 – Jan 3 – No class  
January 10, 2020 -Class resumes

*Secret Sister Reveal  
Christmas Party ???  
with  
Purse & Tote  
Exchange*



*Sunday, December 8*

*12:30-3:00 PM*



**LUNCH & FUN PROVIDED!**

*Come join us and  
bring a friend!*

*See Tammy or Tina for questions*



*All leftover purses/totes will be  
donated to ICM - Inner City Mission*

## WHO WE ARE

Parents NOW exists to provide parents with an encouraging and loving environment that assists them in becoming successful parents. While attending the program, parents are educated by special speakers, mentored by strong Christian examples, and are encouraged to enrich their lives. They also have the opportunity to earn points to obtain baby clothes, diapers, wipes, personal hygiene and other items from the Parents N.O.W. shop.



*...exists to empower young parents to meet their potential in an encouraging, non-judgmental environment.*

**THANK YOU**  
**for helping us in 2019!**  
**We couldn't do it**  
**without YOU!**



**Parent's NOW**  
**Christmas Party**  
**Sat., December 8**  
**2:00 - 4:00 PM**  
**At BCC**

New Phone #: 618-377-9350

Email: [contactparentsnow@gmail.com](mailto:contactparentsnow@gmail.com)

Like Us On Facebook: Parents & Families NOW

# Gathering Grounds 8:20- 10:20 AM



**Come early to enjoy free coffee & tea.  
Come sit, visit & connect with others.**

**We offer homemade and pre-packaged  
items for donations.**

**We do this so it is not an added  
expense on the church.**

**We are not making a profit, as all  
money goes back into supplies  
for the coffee shop.**



## The Gathering Grounds Coffee Shop

**Thank you  
for your donations!**



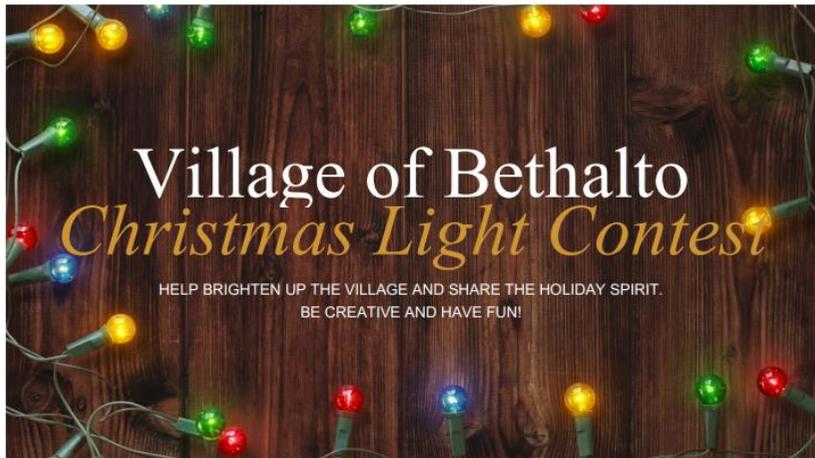
**Mark your calendars!  
Dec. 14-15**

**Anyone who would like to go,  
even for just Saturday is  
welcome to join us.**

**We're planning some holiday  
fun for the residents!**

**Remember to bring your stockings and  
gifts for the ICM residents to the building by  
Wed., Dec. 11.**

## Bethalto Community Post



### LIGHT UP THE VILLAGE

The Village of Bethalto is excited to announce our first annual Christmas Light Contest for the 2019 Christmas and Holiday Season. Please see full contest rules and details below. More information can be found on Facebook Bethalto Village or online at [www.bethalto.com](http://www.bethalto.com)

### CATEGORIES

**TRADITIONAL** Mayor Winslow will personally select the house with the best traditional decoration. This house is surely to be straight out of a Classic Hallmark Christmas Movie.

**THE "GRISWOLD"** Think of yourself as the Clark W. Griswold (of National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation fame) of the Village of Bethalto? Light up our entire village with your house alone. Just don't fall off the roof and remember to turn on the garage light!

**REASON FOR THE SEASON** In true traditional style, this home will exemplify the reason for the Christmas season.

### **RULES**

Take a picture of your lights and email it to [marketing@Bethalto.com](mailto:marketing@Bethalto.com) or drop off the picture to village hall (please write your name, address and phone # on the pic). All pictures must be received by noon on Wednesday, December 11th. Mayor Winslow will choose the winner of the traditional category. The other two categories will be voted on thru Facebook and a display at the Senior Center. Winners will receive gift cards (Bethalto Schnucks & Geno's 140 Club), yard signs, and have their photo displayed in the Advantage newspaper, the Pioneer newspaper, and the Bethalto Facebook Page.





GOD  
ROCK  
SAVIOR  
MESSIAH  
IMMANUEL  
HOLY • CHILD  
MIGHTY • GOD  
LORD • OF • ALL  
LAMB • OF • GOD  
CHRIST • OF • GOD  
KING • OF • KINGS  
THE • WORD • OF • GOD  
ALPHA • AND • OMEGA  
PRINCE • OF • PEACE  
LIGHT • OF • THE • WORLD  
HEAD • OF • THE • CHURCH  
SON • OF • THE • HIGHEST  
EVERLASTING • FATHER  
RESURRECTION • AND • LIFE  
JESUS



# Christmas Card Mailbox

Save a stamp and drop off  
Christmas cards to the  
church family during the  
month of December.  
Drop off your cards to give  
away in the box by the  
Gathering Grounds . Pick-up  
your cards on the table inside  
the coffee shop.



**BCC WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

**SUNDAY**

**Gathering Grounds Coffee Shop** - 8:15 - 10:20 AM  
**Classes** - All Ages 9-10 AM  
**Praise & Worship** 10:30, Gym Jr. Worship in Kids Zone  
 0 years -5th grade

**TUESDAY**

**Parent's NOW** - Meets 4th Tuesday of each month 5-7:30 PM

**WEDNESDAY**

**Meal Outreach Night** 5:00 pm

**THURSDAY**

**Sisters in Sobriety**  
 Kids Zone, 7 pm  
 \*Last Thursday of month is an OPEN meeting to all with a Potluck at 6 pm

**FRIDAY**

**Ladies Bible Study**  
 Rm. 114  
 9-11:30 am  
**Parent's NOW**  
 Meets 2nd Friday of each month 5-7:30 PM

**SATURDAY**

**Narcotics Anonymous**  
 Kids Zone area 7-8:30  
 Open meetings

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec 1 9:00am Class & Worship ... 1:00pm AAG Event	2	3	4	5 7:00pm Sisters of Sobriety...	6 9:00am Ladies Bible Class ...	7 1:00pm PN Christmas Part... 7:00pm Narcotics Anonym...
8 9:00am Class & Worship ... 12:00pm Secret Sis Purse ...	9	10	11	12 7:00pm Sisters of Sobriety...	13 9:00am Ladies Bible Class ...	14 8:00am ICM Trip 1:00pm NM Party 7:00pm Narcotics Anonym...
		Anna out of the Office – Mom’s surgery				
15 ICM Trip 9:00am Class & Worship ...	16	17	18	19 7:00pm Sisters of Sobriety...	20	21 7:00pm Narcotics Anonym...
22 9:00am Class & Worship ...	23	24 6:00pm Christmas Eve Ser...	25 8:00am	26 OFFICE CLOSED 7:00pm Sisters of Sobriety...		27 7:00pm Narcotics Anonym...
29 9:00am Class & Worship ...	30	31	Jan 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! Office Closed			