

E-Messenger

First Church of Christ

From Bob Russell's

blog: I fell down last week. My wife and I were walking to the car, and as I followed her into the garage, I slipped on the middle step and went tumbling onto the concrete headfirst. I caught myself on my elbows and avoided banging my head on the cement or hitting it against the bumper of the car.

My wife heard the thud, turned around, and saw me sprawled out on the floor, and cried out, "Oh, Bob! Did you fall?" I moved my arms and shoulders to make sure I hadn't broken any bones or dislocated anything and then realized what she had asked. "Did you fall?" I started laughing and said, "Did I fall? No, I just decided this would be a good time to take a nap here on the garage floor!" Every time we think of that, we chuckle. "Did you fall?" What kind of question is that when you see your husband sprawled out on the garage floor?

If a child falls down, there's usually not much concern. Their bones are supple and bendable. But I'm 77 years old, and I know my bones are more brittle and breakable. I could have easily dislocated a hip, broken an arm, or something worse. Da-

vid wrote, "*There is but a step between me and death!*" (1 Samuel 20:3).

As we drove to our meeting, I kept thinking, "I could be on the way to the Emergency Room right now. I could be in line for a hip replacement or having to wear a shoulder harness on my right side. I could be facing surgery to relieve a brain bleed. Wow! Thank you, Lord, for what might have been but wasn't."

I've given that some thought this week. I wonder how many times God's providential care has spared us from potential disaster, and we weren't even aware of it. Or we didn't pause to thank Him for it. 1 Peter 1:5 says we "*are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*" Obviously, God doesn't shield us from all disasters, or we would never fall, break an arm, or be injured in an accident. But I suspect the Lord's guardian angels prevent a lot more than we imagine.

Jesus taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." I wonder how many times the

Lord has nudged us away from situations that could have morally ensnared us or spiritually ruined us. At the time, we weren't aware of our Heavenly Father's protective shield, but He gently guided us away from dangerous seductions that were greater than we could overcome. Jude wrote that God "*is able to keep you from falling*" (Jude 1:24).

A preacher friend texted me this past week, "I went to the doctor this morning. It's just a fatty tumor (not malignant) which is good news. But it needs to come out to not cause more damage to my arm or grow into anything else." He's expressing gratitude this Thanksgiving season for what might have been and wasn't.

If we look carefully, we can all find some calamities that "might have been" yet never materialized. Falls survived, accidents avoided, tragedies escaped, embarrassing blunders unnoticed. We spend a good amount of time complaining about the times we've skinned our knees or bruised our elbows. But we'll probably never know the full extent of the times

December Issue

Volume 9, Issue 12

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God's strong right arm has gone up to deliver us from evil.

This Thanksgiving season, take time to enumerate the tangible blessings God has given you. "Count your many blessings; name them one by one." And while you're at it, take a moment to thank Him for the tragedies that might have been but never happened. I suspect there are a lot of them in each of our lives because God does "immeasurably more than we ask or imagine."

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one

Serving in December

Prayer Warriors:

Deb Rhodes & Diane Altman

Elder Schedule:

6—Dave Beerbower
13—Jim McPeak
20—Mark Rhodes
27—Larry Snavelly

Nursery:

6—Stacie Beerbower
13—Jane Runyan
20—Teresa Gambler
27—Sharon Blinzler

Children's Church:

6—Kristi Schooley
13—Kim Snavelly
20—Todd Gambler
27—Kim Snavelly



Birthdays & Anniversaries



1 Holly Sprow
2 Cindy Horton
3 Shellee Brown
6 Dick Newcomb
7 Nikki Hull
8 Ron Roose
9 Ellen Walker
10 Maddison Hetrick
12 Derek Murphy, Katrina Tonneas
15 Henry Kidd, Samantha Ryan
17 Caity Karnes
18 Vickie Grimm

19 Norma Stambaugh
21 Teresa Brown, Annie Engel, Amber Rogers
24 Todd Gambler
29 Tao List
30 Patrick Rendleman
31 Tracy Rendleman, Braxton Wonderly

9 Casey & Kayla Sanders (3)
13 Gerry & Gail Wyrick (34)
23 Dave & Melissa Beerbower (37)



2 Tim & Samantha Ryan (3)
6 Jerry & Wanda Hug (45)



Family News



With Sympathy

The church family extends her sympathy to Annie Engel and family on the recent loss of her great-granddaughter, Sophia McBride.






The Christmas message is that there is hope for a ruined humanity — hope of pardon, hope

of peace with God, hope of glory — because at the Father's will Jesus Christ became poor, and was born in a stable so that 30 years later he might hang on a cross.

—J.I. Packer

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 5:45 Supper 6:30 Youth Life Groups	3	4 6:30 Children's Ministry Prayer meeting	5
6 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	7	8	9 5:45 Supper 6:30 Youth Life Groups	10	11	12 8:00 Men's Breakfast
13 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	14	15 12:45 Visitation Ministry	16 5:45 Supper 6:30 Youth Life Groups	17	18	19
20 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	21 <i>Happy First Day of Winter!</i> 	22 11:45 Lunch Bunch	23	24  7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 	26
27 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	28	29	30	31		



FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Love All, Worship One,
Make Disciples

Bryanfcc.org



Connect with us!

Office Hours: Monday—
Thursday 8:00 AM-5:00
PM



Facts & Figures

November 1

Attendance SS 29 Worship 38/54
Offering \$7,866.00

November 8

Attendance SS 20 Worship 29/48
Offering \$4,066.07

November 15

Attendance SS 22 Worship 35/48
Offering \$6,281.95

October 25

Attendance SS 22 Worship 35/43
Offering \$4,700.50

Needed for Budget \$5,149.15

Love All

Our Service Personnel:
Lindsey Carter (FL), Caleb
Lloyd (Japan), Josh Severs (S.
Korea), Braxton Singer (NC),
Katie Sparks (PA), Jessie Still-
man (OH), Josh Tonneas
(TX)

Cancer: Gwen Acker-
Dickinson, Joyce Bailey, Na-
than Bailey, Sue Bever, Tim
Bight, Brent, Sherry
Buchsteiner, Jennie Case, An-
drew Dell, Adam Farger, Car-
rie H., Molly Johnston, Kent,
Chuck Lees, Ron Lewis, Tim
Mavis, Jim McPeak, Chloe
Merrilet, Crystal Miller, Aaron

Nartker, Ruth Ordway, Mary
Pinckley, Anna Pitman, Elaine
Purdue, Steve Ringer, Bob &
Sue Secoy, Elizabeth Shetler,
Terry Shinaberry, Dean Sme-
thurst, Lyle Snavely, Norma
Stambaugh, Ron Stark, Amy
Tobin, Linda Walker, Kathy
Walton, Drew Wayman. *Oth-
er Concerns:* Jennifer Mavis,
Trevor Bailey, Neighborhood,
Arlene Boyer, Dale Boyer,
Danielle Strouse, Asher Cra-
vens, Brenda Ridgway, Cindy
Wolf, Zach Swisher, Cheryl
Towers, Keller Gardner, Gene
Nash, Kim Beek, Joshua Tay-
lor, Keely Strouse, Carson

Strouse, Gene Crawford, youth
ministry, Danny Hull, Jim
McElfresh, Bryan Tonneas,
Cindy Webber, Gail Wyrick;
Shut Ins: SKLD: Gloria
Wright; *Home:* Barb & Ra-
mon Alpaugh, Shirley Bard,
Annie Engel, Linda Lewis,
Marilyn Lundy, Leona Puff,
Edith Wagner; Ottawa River-
view: Barbara Hake, Haw-
thorne Glen: Roy Koerner.





When they said
"Let's go to the house of GOD"
my heart leaped for joy

Psalm 122:1

body you were called to peace. And **be thankful**. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God **with gratitude in your hearts**. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks** to God the Father through him (Colossians 3:15-17).

Destined to Win,
Larry Snavely

Your generosity enabled us to send 40 Operation Christmas Child boxes! Thank you for giving in the name of Jesus Christ to impact the lives of children around the world.



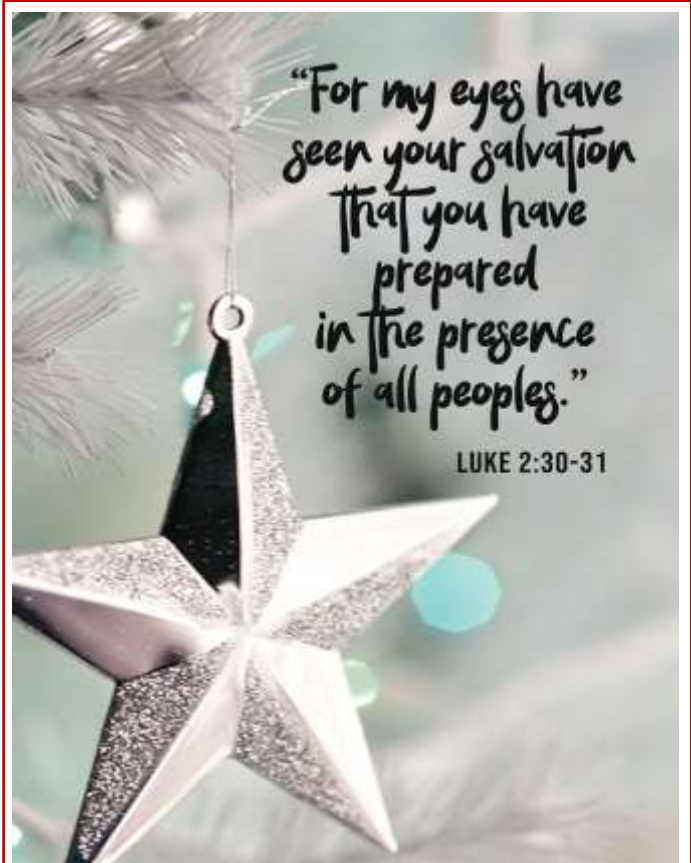
Luke 2: 10-12

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."



"To prepare our hearts for Christmas, we must cultivate the spirit of expectancy."

—Handel H. Brown



"For my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples."

LUKE 2:30-31