

*The angel said to them "A Savior has been born
for you who is Messiah and Lord"*



Christine's Prayer

By: Jennifer L. Betts

For Christine, Christmas Eve wasn't the exciting time for her family of seven like it was for everyone else's. Pulling on her tattered coat that morning, Christine sighed, thinking about her youngest sister Letty. She wanted new sneakers for gym and Christine had been saving up for them. But when Willy had gotten sick, it had taken everything the family had to ensure they could pay the medical bills. Christine also knew Momma had splurged a bit on Christmas dinner for the family.

Full bellies are better than Christmas sneakers anyway, right? Christine thought, kicking an old stone on the ground.

A gust of wind picked up, sending Christine's schedule sailing out of her hands. "Darn it," she muttered, chasing it across the street.

The paper floated into the town nativity scene, catching on baby Jesus' manger. Grabbing up her paper, Christine smiled down at the sweet baby Jesus. She said a small prayer for her family and took one last look at Jesus before walking away. As she was walking, she noticed a small elderly woman get up from a bench just outside the nativity scene. A small slip of paper seemed to fall out of her purse as she put it on her shoulder.

Christine knew her family would be waiting for her, but she rushed over to the bench to grab up the piece of paper the woman had dropped. She gasped, realizing the paper that had fallen out of the woman's purse was actually not one, but two folded hundred-dollar bills. Christine looked at the money greedily, her heart yearning to use the money to give her family a nice Christmas.

With shaking hands, she picked up the money – almost stuffing it in her pocket. But she knew that wouldn't be right. With a sigh of resignation, she turned and called out to the woman.

"Ma'am," she shouted, running towards her. "You dropped something."

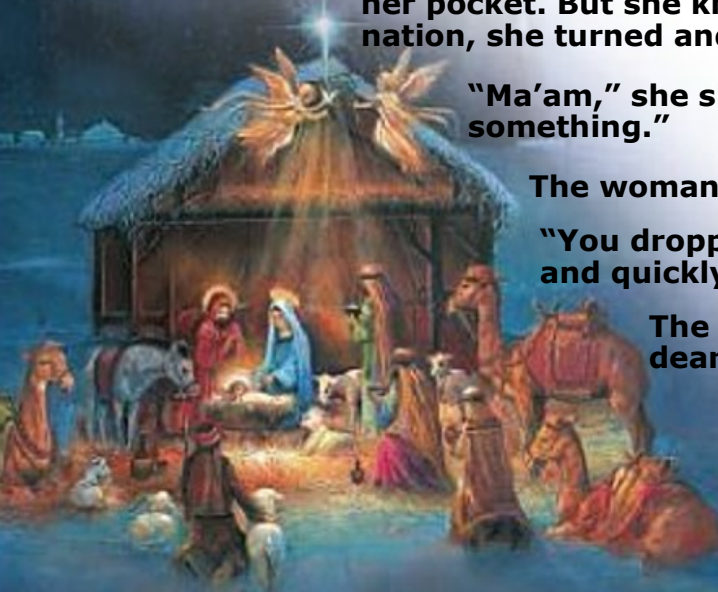
The woman turned toward her curiously.

"You dropped this." Christine said, handing her the money and quickly swallowing back a lump in her throat.

The woman eyed her quizzically. "Thank you, my dear"

Her voice was smooth and warm, just like Christine's Gram, who had just passed on a few months back.

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WEST HENRIETTA BAPTIST CHURCH

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PASTOR: REV. DR. PETER E. GRINION; TEL: (585) 278-8520



December 3rd Communion Sunday

Greeter: Connie Frank

Invocation & Call to Worship:

Rev. Peter Grinion

Scripture Reader: Valerie Bandemer

Offertory Prayer: Laurie Wenthe

Fellowship: Steve & Laurie Wenthe

December 10th

Greeter: Connie Frank

Invocation & Call to Worship:

Rev. Peter Grinion

Scripture Reader: Steve Wenthe

Offertory Prayer: Valerie Bandemer

Fellowship: Everyone

December 17th

Greeters: Connie Frank

Invocation & Call to Worship:

Rev. Peter Grinion

Scripture Reader: Connie Frank

Offertory Prayer: Connie Necaster

Fellowship: Advent Pot Luck Luncheon

December 24th Christmas Eve

Greeters: Connie Frank

Invocation & Call to Worship:

Rev. Peter Grinion

Scripture Reader: Sharon Scurlock

Offertory Prayer: Kathy Gosnell

Fellowship: Valerie Bandemer

December 31st

Greeters: Connie Frank

Invocation & Call to Worship:

Rev. Peter Grinion

Scripture Reader: Dan Scurlock

Offertory Prayer: Loretta Hirschman

Fellowship: Gretchen Young





Prayer Group
Saturdays at 9:00 AM

Choir Practice
Saturdays at 10:00 AM

Sunday Mornings
Choir Practice at 9:30 AM
Worship at 10:00 AM
Fellowship at 11:00 AM

Bible Study
Wednesdays at 10:00 AM

Deacons Meeting
December 8 at 9:30 AM

Trustees Meeting
December 8 at 1:00 PM

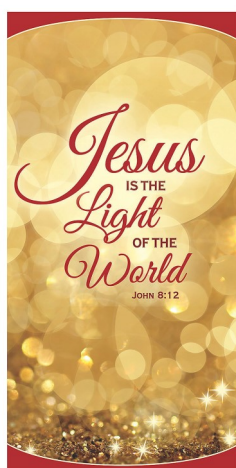
Advisory Council Meeting
December 11 at 6:30 PM

Advent Potluck Luncheon
December 17
Following Worship

Christmas Eve Service
December 24 at 10:00

LINK deadline for January 2024
is December 18 ~ Sharon Scurlock

Cabinet Meeting ~ TBA



Who: Everyone
When: December 17, 2023
Time: Following Worship
Where: Fellowship Hall

The Board of Christian Education asks the Congregation to bring a dish to pass.



Dec. 2 ~ Thomas Carpenter
Dec. 5 ~ Isaiah Buskey
Dec. 6 ~ Nancy Chase
Dec. 6 ~ Jim Braker
Dec. 12 ~ Barbara Miller
Dec. 12 ~ Joquina Tosciotti
Dec. 14 ~ Theresa Hirschman
Dec. 14 ~ Mike Shirley
Dec. 25 ~ Jesus of Nazareth

"Fellowship Hour Sharing"

WHBC is blessed with many good cooks and bakers!

On Sunday, Dec. 10, during Fellowship Hour, as we celebrate the holiday season, we all can "share in the blessing" of our marvelous cooks and bakers.

Let's have each family unit provide a "holiday treat": a family "special cookie", a delicious cake or pie, etc.

Please keep in mind some in our congregation may be diabetic, gluten or lactose intolerant, cautious of ground or tree nuts, etc.

Bring your family treat to share with a note regarding any ingredient(s) which may cause concern for someone in our congregation. Also, if you would like, bring a copy of the recipe for sharing.



WHBC's Adopted Family for Christmas, 2023

The family we are adopting this year is a single Mom and her two boys.

She would like gift cards to Wegmans, Aldis and/or Walmart would be perfect for to buy Food for their Christmas dinner.

Any questions, let Leanna (334-7610) or Valerie (737-1704) know.

NEED by Sunday, Dec. 17th ~ Bring items to Church Sunday morning; items will be delivered in the afternoon.

Thank you from the Board of Deacons.



Christmas Altar Plants

Plant	Pot Size	Cost
Christmas Cactus	6"	\$7.75
Cyclamen	4"	\$4.00
	6"	\$7.75
Poinsettias:	4.5"	\$3.90
Colors: Red, Pink and Marble	6.5"	\$7.75
	7.5"	\$12.70
(7.5" has 2 plants)	8"	\$19.95
(8" has 3 plants)	10"	\$27.80
(10" has 4 plants)		
Pot Covers:	4"	\$00.35
	6" - 8"	\$00.65
	10"	\$00.90

All orders for Christmas flowers needs to be given to Valarie Bandemer or Leanna Shirley by December 17th.

Payment can be made at a later date either by cash or check. Make the check payable to WHBC and put Christmas flowers on the memo line.



*We invite you to our
Christmas Eve Service
Celebrating our greatest gift
Baby Lord Jesus
December 24, 2023
10:00 a.m.
West Henrietta Baptist Church*



(Continued from page 1)

"No problem, Ma'am" Christine smiled. Christine turned to walk away when the woman stopped her and asked, "What's your name, my dear?"

Christine's smile widened a little further. "Christine Darling, Ma'am." The woman, who Christine noticed had warm, sad eyes, smiled slightly.

"This is going to sound like an odd request, Christine, but would you mind chatting with me for a bit?"

"Not at all," Christine answered, wanting to spend a bit more time with this woman that reminded her of her Grandmother.

Over the course of the next hour, Christine chatted pleasantly with Martha. Martha told her about the devastating loss of her own daughter.

"You remind me so much of her," Martha commented, grabbing Christine's hand and wrapping it in warmth.

Christine smiled, squeezing her hand back. Silence filled the air, so Christine started telling Martha her own family's story.

The minutes blended into hours until her nose was a little numb. Looking at her, Martha stood up.

"Your family will be missing you, for sure." Martha smiled, pulling Christine's coat a bit tighter around her body.

Abashed, Christine looked at her phone, noticing for the first time all the messages. "Right!" she muttered hurriedly, giving Martha a gentle hug.

She was about to walk away when she said, "I should really apologize to you."

"For what, sweetheart?"

Christine sighed. "Well, I nearly took that money you dropped – but I'm glad I didn't. I wouldn't have met you otherwise."

Martha smiled. "I'm glad as well."

"I know it won't be much, but if you're lonely tomorrow, you're more than welcome to our family Christmas. Mom went all out so there will be lots to eat."

Martha's smile reached her eyes. "If I do come, should I bring something?"

Christine just shook her head with a smile, and they parted ways. Stopping again at the nativity scene, Christine said a small prayer thanking God for introducing her to Martha and asking if there was any way that He could help her to get Letty those shoes she'd been asking for.

The next morning, as Christine was rubbing the sleep from her eyes, all she could make out was Letty's piercing squeal. "PRESENTS!"

Rushing down the stairs, Christine's eyes widened at the bounty of gifts overflowing through the open door.

Her sister Letty ran at her with a wide smile and shining eyes, clutching a pair of sparkly new white sneakers.

"Look at these shoes, Christine!" Letty squealed. Christine turned to her mother in confusion. Her Momma's eyes were a mixture of shock and bountiful happiness.

Pulling the door open wider revealed a small slip of a woman. "Martha?" Christine said questioningly, looking at the woman in confusion.

Martha smiled at her sweetly. "I know you said I shouldn't bring anything but..." her smile widened, "You were truly the answer to my prayers last night. The glint of your eyes and the shine of your smile made me feel like I got to talk to my daughter one last time. When I wanted nothing more for Christmas than to join her, my beautiful daughter," her eyes crinkled, "an honest angel sat with me and pushed away my despair. Because you answered my prayer, I felt God wanted me to answer yours."

Pulling Christine in to a hug, she said "Merry Christmas, my dear."

Moral of the Story: God is always listening. And answering someone else's prayers might just be the answer to your own.

In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Acts 20:35 ESV

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 19:12



FISH / RHAFT, Inc.

Serving Residents in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District

Thank you for your generous donations to RHAFT. The RHAFT food terminal is still experiencing increased needs and food shortages so we're going to do another food drive. If you can donate, please leave your food items in basket located in the Fellowship Hall. Steve and Laurie Wenthe will deliver them as they accumulate.

Below is a comprehensive list of needs.

Thank you for your generosity.

Major Needs:

Instant Mashed Potatoes
Instant Minute Rice
Crackers
Hamburger Helper
Hot Chocolate Packages
Jellos & Puddings
Peanut Butter
Canned Chicken, Tuna, Beef
Macaroni & Cheese Dinner
Baby Food/Formula
Beef Stew
Canned Hash
Chili
Cereals

Packaged Foods:

Sugar
Jelly
Ketchup/Mustard
Noodles
Cake/Muffin Mixes
Canned Fruits
Canned Vegetables
Soups
Fruit Juices

Personal Care Products:

Soap
Toilet Paper/Tissue
Toothbrushes/
Toothpaste
Deodorant
Shampoo
Diapers

Lessons from a Christmas Tree

1. Be a light in the darkness.
2. We all fall over sometimes.
3. You can never wear too much glitter.
4. Bring joy to others.
5. Sparkle and twinkle as often as possible.
6. It's okay to be a little tilted.



♥ You are very special

"Having an attitude of thanksgiving WILL NOT change your circumstances. But thanksgiving and praise WILL change what your circumstances DO TO YOU."

Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering

Is always about celebrating, thanking, and lifting up our servant leaders. The offering originated in the mid 1930's as the Communion Fellowship

Offering. And since 1977 has been known as RMMO. The RMMO funds your Church collections are distributed as thank you checks to retired ordained ministers and commissioned missionary's who have devoted 15 years or more, to ABCUSA. Please give with an attitude of love. Offering will be taken up each Sunday in December.

Leanna Shirley
Moderator



"It's been hard to be good. I have red hair you know."

'The Christmas Angels'

By: Susan Fahncke

It was December 23, 1993. For a single mom who was going to college and supporting my children completely alone, Christmas was looking bleak. I looked around my little home, realization dawning like a slow, twisting pain. We were poor.

Our tiny house had two bedrooms, both off the living room. They were so small that my baby daughter's crib barely fit into one room, and my son's twin bed and dresser were squeezed into the other. There was no way they could share a room, so I made my bed every night on the living room floor.

The three of us shared the only closet in the house. We were snug, always only a few feet from each other, day and night. With no doors on the children's rooms, I could see and hear them at all times. It made them feel secure, and it made me feel close to them -- a blessing I wouldn't have had in other circumstances.

It was early evening, about eight o'clock. The snow was falling softly, silently, and my children were both asleep. I was wrapped in a blanket, sitting at the window, watching the powdery flakes flutter in the dimming light, when my front door vibrated with a pounding fist.

Alarmed, I wondered who would stop by unannounced on such a snowy winter night. I opened the door to find a group of strangers grinning from ear to ear, their arms laden with boxes and bags.

Confused, but finding their joyous spirit contagious, I grinned right back at them.

"Are you Susan?" The man stepped forward as he held out a box for me.

Nodding stupidly, unable to find my voice, I was sure they thought I was mentally deficient.

"These are for you." The woman thrust another box at me with a huge, beaming smile. The porch light and the snow falling behind her cast a glow over her dark hair, lending her an angelic appearance.

I looked down into her box. It was filled to the top with delicious treats, a fat turkey, and all the makings of a traditional Christmas dinner. My eyes filled with tears as the realization of why they were there washed over me.

Finally coming to my senses, I found my voice and invited them in. Following the husband were two children, staggering with the weight of their packages. The family introduced themselves and told me their packages were all gifts for my little family. This wonderful, beautiful family, who were total strangers to me, somehow knew exactly what we needed. They brought wrapped gifts for each of us, a full buffet for me to make on Christmas Day, and many "extras" that I could never afford. Visions of a beautiful, "normal" Christmas literally danced in my head. Somehow my secret wish for Christmas was materializing right in front of me. The desperate prayers of a single mom had been heard, and I knew right then that God had sent his angels my way.

My mysterious angels then handed me a white envelope, gave me another round of hugs, and took turns hugging me. They wished me a Merry Christmas and disappeared into the night as suddenly as they had appeared.

Amazed and deeply touched, I looked around me at the boxes and gifts strewn at my feet and felt the ache of depression suddenly being transformed into a childlike joy. I began to cry. I cried hard, sobbing tears of the deepest gratitude. A great sense of peace filled me. The knowledge of God's love reaching into my tiny corner of the world enveloped me like a warm quilt. My heart was full. I fell to my knees amid all the boxes and offered a heartfelt prayer of thanks.

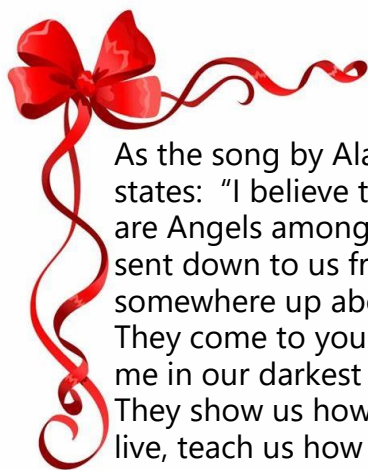
Getting to my feet, I wrapped myself in my blankets and sat once again to gaze out the window at the gently falling snow. Suddenly, I remembered the envelope. Like a child, I ripped it open and gasped at what I saw. A shower of bills flitted to the floor. Gathering them up, I began to count the five, ten, and twenty-dollar bills. As my vision blurred with tears, I counted the money, then recounted it to make sure I had it right. Sobbing again, I said it out loud: "One hundred dollars."

I looked at my children sleeping soundly, and through my tears I smiled my first happy, free-of-worry smile in a long, long time. My smile turned into a grin as I thought about tomorrow: Christmas Eve. One visit from complete strangers had magically turned a painful day into a special one that we would always remember...with happiness.

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It is now several years since our Christmas angels visited. I have remarried, and our household is happy and richly blessed. Every year since that Christmas in 1993, we have chosen a family less blessed than we are. We bring them carefully selected gifts, food and treats, and as much money as we can spare. It's our way of passing on what was given to us. It's the "ripple effect" in motion. We hope that the cycle continues and that, someday, the families we share with will be able to pass it on, too.



As the song by Alabama states: "I believe there are Angels among us, sent down to us from somewhere up above. They come to you and me in our darkest hour! They show us how to live, teach us how to give! To guide us with the light of love!"



WORLD PEACE

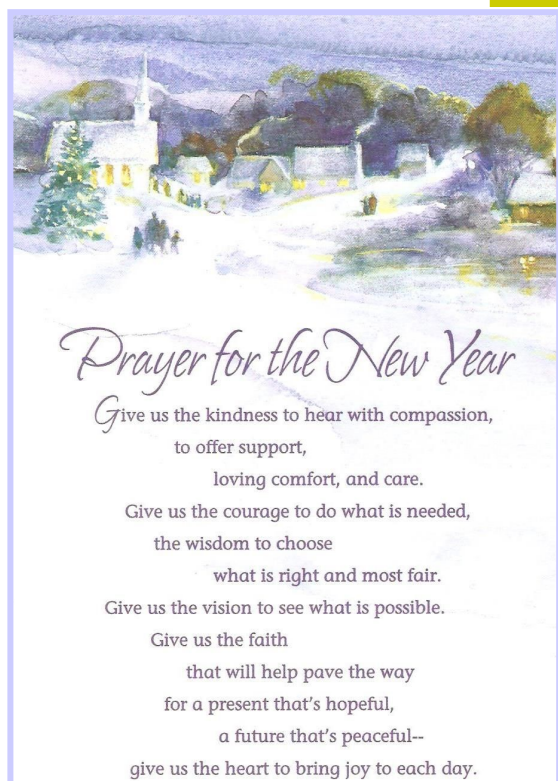
By: Evelyn M. Shoots

As we travel along
With a prayer and a thankful song
May kindness be strong!

Some souls do not know
How kindness can grow
And Goodness will thrive!

Those with high hopes
Know we each have a corner
Of the World – to prayer fully
As Peace heals our World.

May God Bless us all!



ADVISORY COUNCIL MTG.

December 11th at 6:30 PM

Please bring copies of
your report!

The LINK DEADLINE

Please submit: your articles, events and/or
calendar items for January 2024 to
Sharon Scurlock by December 18th.