

The Gift of Love

Don't forget that on Christmas day we will have a 10:00 AM worship only. Wait! What? Who decided to put Christmas on Sunday?! I remember having that thought when I was a child and Christmas landed on a Sunday. Being raised in a Christian home, I was brought up understanding the true meaning of Christmas Day from as far back as I can recall. The big guy dressed in red was discussed in our home, but he was not celebrated, so I knew the significance and meaning of Christmas from my earliest memories. But come on! There were presents that needed to be opened and now I had to wait until we got home from church to literally tear into them. Talk about torture! The funny thing is, I know Christmas fell on Sunday in my school years. I can guarantee that each time it did we went to church before opening our gifts, but I can't tell you any other memories from those few times in which it happened. Then Debbie and I had to make that same decision three different times (I went back and looked) before I was called into ministry. We probably said something similar to our kids that my mom and dad most likely said to me in those early years. ***"Christmas is about the birth of our Savior. It's His birthday we're celebrating, and we give gifts to one another because of the gift that God gave us when He sent His Son into the world."*** We reassured them that opening our gifts after church would be much more enjoyable than opening them and having to then get dressed and go to church leaving the excitement of the freshly opened gifts at home.

Christmas gifts. From the time the Wise men brought gifts to Jesus, Christmas has been a time of gift giving to those we love, to those who are less fortunate, to the church, to various charities, to extended family, friends and even to our pets. For some, the pets may be the first on your list to receive a special gift. Unfortunately, for many folks, Christmas has become little more than a time for giving and receiving gifts. We have become so focused on the material aspects of the season that we have lost sight of the true meaning of gift giving. I have often wondered how we would celebrate Christmas if it hadn't been for the gifts the Wise men brought to Jesus. If it hadn't been for those first three gifts, would we even give gifts to others?

When it comes to gift giving, the most important gift that we can offer someone at Christmas is the gift of our unconditional love and presence. After all, love is what Christmas is all about. Scripture reminds us of this gift throughout the New Testament. It's a theme that John uses in his letters. Just take a few minutes to reread **John 3:16-17** which reminds us of God's love. Then read **1 John 4:7-21** which tells us that God is love and He loved us before we loved Him. Paul told the church at Corinth in **1 Corinthians 13:13**, ***"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."*** The unconditional love of God wasn't given to us simply to receive and keep ourselves. Oscar Hammerstein wrote, "A bell's not a bell 'til you ring it, A song's not a song 'til you sing it, Love in your heart wasn't put there to stay, Love isn't love 'til you give it away!" What could be more fitting than to receive that gift of love that came down at Christmas, and then pass it on to others, not just at Christmas, but the whole year through?

Thank you for the many ways you all extend and show the gift of your love to Debbie and me throughout the year. Being part of the Mill Creek family is a huge blessing!

Oh, and for your information, Christmas won't fall on Sunday again until 2033.

Merry Christmas!
Danny



Our Stewardship

8:30 Service Nursery Workers

December 4 Debbie Rago & Anne Simmons
 December 11 Clara & Travis Holland
 December 18 Debbie Rago & Don Epperly
 December 25 No Early Service

9:30 Sunday School Nursery

December 4 Sue Lee & Ned Jeter
 December 11 Sue Lee & Rene Jeter
 December 18 Sue Lee & Annette Shaw
 December 25 No Sunday School

10:45 Service Nursery Workers

December 4 Sue Lee & Jess Hayden
 December 11 Sue Lee & Mary Bowser
 December 18 Sue Lee & Melissa Peery
 December 25 Sue Lee (10:00 Unity)

8:30 Service Preschool Workers

December 4 Kelly Focht
 December 11 Jennifer Simmons
 December 18 Cindy Holland
 December 25 No Preschool

10:45 Service Preschool Workers

December 4 Luke Winand
 December 11 Rachel Witt
 December 18 Melanie Thacker
 December 25 No Preschool

8:30 Greeters

December 4 Vana McClanahan, Heather Gilliland, Pat Shotwell
 December 11 Vickie Martin, Adam Bowser, Don Epperly
 December 18 Judy Deel, Pat Shotwell, Heather Gilliland
 December 25 No Early Service

10:45 Greeters

December 4 Donna Mack, Jimmy Brugh, Bertha Brugh
 December 11 Bill Wagner, Donna Mack, Melissa Peery
 December 18 Bill Wagner, Cindy Markham, Ryan Markham
 December 25 Marty Martin, Vickie Martin, Don Epperly
 (10:00 Unity Service)

Counting

December 4 Heather Gilliland & Jimmy Brugh
 December 11 Lesa Mabe & Regarna Pannell
 December 18 Marty Martin & Nancy Epperly
 December 25 Melissa Cook & Mary Bowser

Our Kingdom Giving

	SS	8:30am Worship	10:45am Worship	Regular Offering	Building Fund
October 30	130	89	121	\$4,361.00	\$1,140.00
November 6	145	128	87	\$13,136.00	\$2,460.00
November 13	144	146	99	\$6,681.00	\$2,890.00
November 20	160	130	115	\$9,776.00	\$2,431.00
November 27	160	150	118	\$7,877.00	\$515.00

Total given to BGAV Disaster Relief: \$1,482.17

Remember that we need a combined \$12,270/week in regular offering and building gifts to meet our budget needs.

Happy December Birthday!

- 1 Jonathan Holter
- 2 Evan Kritzberger
Ellie Holter
Sandra Kidd
- 3 Chad Simmons
Emily Johnson
- 5 Molly Winand
- 7 Bob Ailstock
Isaac Mack
- 8 Aida Simmons
Matt Ferguson
Hayden Albright
- 9 Adeline Kidd
- 10 Rachel Wheeler
- 11 Joe Obenshain
Teresa Simmons
Etta Montgomery
Brian Williams
- 13 John Mandeville
- 14 Thelma Taylor
Kristi Berry
- 17 Kaitlyn Benois Harrison
- 18 Ariel Wood
- 19 Jenna Hamilton
Jack Berry
- 22 Elaine Bays-Murphy
- 23 Dawn Montgomery
- 25 Hayden Booze
- 26 Jim Crawford
- 27 Philip Hayden
- 28 Sarah Harris
Suzanne Caldwell
Pam Fridley
- 30 Bill Booze
Ethan Humphries
- 31 Amy Marshall Dudley
Melanie Thacker
Arron Cook

Happy December Anniversary!

- 3 Jerry & Betty Fink
- 4 Paul & Melissa Peery
- 10 Katherine & David Carter
- 15 Isaac & Jessica Mack
Mike & Pam Fridley
- 16 Chris & Jodie Rago
- 21 Gary & Ruth Fix
Jay & Heather Gilliland
- 29 Stan & Lara Lee Strickler

MUSIC NOTES.....



Merry Christmas!! Have I ever mentioned that I LOVE Christmas??? We have been working since September to present the story of Jesus birth in new and different ways, while holding on to all our most loved traditions. It is such a happy season here at Mill Creek! I can't wait to share all the musical opportunities that the music ministry has been working on to present for the Christmas holidays. We began our **2022 Advent season on Sunday, November 27th**. Each week, we will continue to prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus by reading scripture and lighting a candle in the Advent Wreath..

Also on Sunday, November 27, our **Adult Handbell Choir** presented several beautiful selections of Christmas music **during both services**. Our annual **Hanging of the Green service** was at 6:00pm that evening. It was a time of decorating our sanctuary for Christmas and learning the meanings behind the decorations and traditions.

Our **Mill Creek Children's Christmas Choir** is presenting our very own musical drama called "**The Colors of Christmas**" written by Susan Plenge. The kids have worked so hard on this program to learn the speaking parts and songs. Please come and support them with your presence and your enthusiasm on Sunday, December 4th, at 6:00pm. We also invite you to a reception after the program!

Our **Adult Christmas Choir** will present the cantata "**The Glorious Light of Christmas**". Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 11th at 3:00pm and 6:00pm. You are invited to a reception after the 6:00pm service provided by the Hospitality Committee. A nursery will be provided for each cantata service.

We are going **Christmas Caroling** again this year. We had so much fun last year and it's a great way to bring a smile to our shut-ins and others this holiday season. We will meet on Tuesday night, December 13th at 6:30pm to go caroling. Please let me know if you or your family will be joining us to spread Christmas cheer!

We will have a very special service on **Christmas Eve at 5:00pm**. Come see what's going to be happening and bring the **entire family!**

We will have a **Unity Service on Sunday December 25th at 10:00am** to celebrate our Savior's birthday!

Luke 2:13-14 ***Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors.***

Merry Christmas from my family to yours,

Cindie, Philip, Wesley, Michelle, Samantha, Davis, Wayland, Graham, Ben and Jess



Welcome New Members

Jess Hayden joins by transfer of letter. Her address is 328 Spring Grove Drive, Vinton, 24179.

Alexis Chocklette joins by profession of faith & baptism. Her address is 120 Boyd Street, Buchanan, 24066.

Marshall Denison joins by transfer of letter. His address is 565 Stayman Road, Roanoke, 24019.

Larry Blevins joins by transfer of letter. His address is 1314 Old Hollow Road, Buchanan, 24066.

Richard Miller joins by transfer of letter. His address is 11235 Lee Hwy., Fincastle, 24090.

Our church family rejoices in their decisions.





The Greatest Gift

'Tis' the season for giving! As a kid, you may have had trouble sleeping on Christmas Eve because of the anticipation of what might be under the Christmas tree. Or maybe, as an adult, you have had trouble picking out the right gift for a loved one. Regardless, this season is filled with giving and receiving gifts.

During the month of November, the Mill Creek Youth gave their time at Solomon's Mission to help out those in need. We had a great day serving soup and grilled cheese for our neighbors in the community! Service Projects such as this are opportunities for students to share the gift of love with our community.

As we move into the month of December, there are a lot of gifts that we can give and receive during this month. For example, we can give the gift of time. During this season, there are a lot of opportunities to spend time with both our physical and spiritual families. As a church body, we will be having several special services this month that I would encourage you to make it to. As a youth group, we will have a **Christmas Party on December 14th from 6:30pm- 8pm** here at the church. We will decorate the youth room, have games, and eat food. Please consider giving some of your time to fellowship with your church family. Another gift you can give is money. This season we will have a special mission offering called the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The money will help with international missions.

Finally, the last gift that you can give or receive is the gift of faith. As parents, you can give this gift by reminding your teenagers what this season is all about. It can be easy to lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas with the number of distractions present. Take time over a meal or while you are driving down the road to talk to your teenager about the significance of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps it is difficult for you to give gift of faith because faith has not taken root in your life. If that is the case, my prayer is that this season you will discover the greatest gift of all time God's love. John 3:16 tells us that, ***"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*** God loved us so much that he died to free us from our sin that separated us from Him. My prayer is that if you have not received this gift, that this will be the Christmas that you receive the greatest gift ever given.

In Christ,
Joel Elmore



The church office will be closed **Friday, December 23, Monday, December 26, Tuesday, December 27 and Monday, January 2** for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

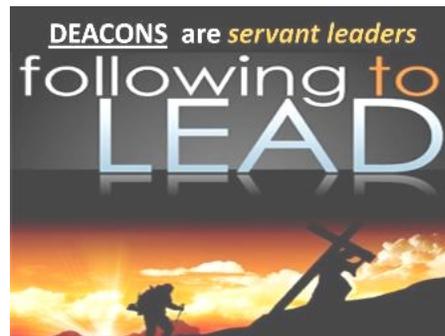
Photo Directory Update

The photos are in the process of being uploaded to the online directory. Once that is complete, if you have given us permission to include you in the directory, you will receive an email from the church office notifying you of a "Privacy Change" to your account. This will simply let you know that you have been opted into the directory. Then you will receive a "Realm Invite" email from the church office notifying you to go online and set up your account. After that process is complete, you will receive another email inviting you to download the RealmConnect app if you have a smart phone or tablet. It is through this app that you will be able to view the pictorial directory. If you don't have a smart phone or tablet, you will also be able to view the directory by logging into your account on a laptop or desktop computer.

From the Deacons' Desk

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

May this blessed season find you surrounded with family and friends. Our prayer for you is that the love of Christ and the joy of this season be abundant and His grace be yours for the new year ahead.



Your Deacon Ministry Team

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Tony Holdren | Sue Sweet | Bobby Simpson |
| Debbie Rago | Bill Potter | Pat Shotwell |
| Dan Lucas | Don Johnson | Mike Lee |
| Jeff Gibson | Donna Mack | |
| Johnny Morris | Mary Deel | |

Missions Sunday

On November 13th, we celebrated our annual Missions Sunday and rejoiced in the many ways that God is leading and using our church to share the Gospel in our community and around the world. Kristin Curtis, Virginia Baptist Disaster Response Training and Crisis Care Team Coordinator, was our guest speaker. During the worship hours, information was shared with the congregation about our mission outreach opportunities and the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes that had been given by our church family were dedicated. Many individuals helped with the Mission Lunch and all donations that were given will help with BGAV Disaster Response efforts. An offering of \$1482.17 was received. After lunch, deliveries of baked potato meals were taken to the residents of the Royal Apartments and Senior Residences adjacent to the church.

Thank you for all the prayers, love and support for our grandson, Austin Dudley. Austin's cardiac procedure was successful and he is now able to do the things he loves such as playing football. Austin loves his prayer blanket and still keeps it by his side. We are so blessed to be part of the Mill Creek Church family.

Blessings,
Shelba and Buck Ferguson



 * I want to take this opportunity to thank *
 * your church for the beautiful prayer *
 * blanket that Jimmy Brugh brought to *
 * my home following my heart surgery. *
 * I'm sure it was made with much love *
 * and many *
 * prayers. *
 * Kitty Parker *



Year-End Online Giving

As you are considering your end of year contributions to Mill Creek please make online contributions by Sunday, December 25. Online gifts are counted once they have posted in our system and we have learned that some banks take longer than others to post. Making them by this date should give time for them to post in our system by December 31.



Re-Gifting All Year Long

Throughout our lives we are given gifts for birthdays, holidays, and weddings. Some of these gifts are treasured, others my wife and I wondered why or even what they were for.

Over the past 34 years, we have been the blessed recipients of some strange gifts—Ragg-Mopp slippers, a very large plastic cross necklace, an object that we “thought” was a vase for many years and an ugly cookie jar to name a few.



So, what do you do with a “gift” from a well-meaning loved one? Do you place it in the spring yard sale, repurpose it or the inevitable “re-gift”? There are always choices when you receive a gift.

So, when you receive the “true” gift from God of Jesus Christ, will you share (“re-gift”) the message of salvation with others?

Christmas should be a wonderful time to talk about the birth of Jesus and what He is doing in your life. We should want to share the good news all year long. And Christmas should make it easier to reach people. As Christians, we know it is not about the commercial holiday, but an everlasting gift of salvation for those who believe. As declared so wonderfully in 2 Corinthians Chapter 9:15 ***“Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”*** Such a gift should be cherished and shared.

In what ways will you share the gift of Jesus? Mill Creek Baptist Church has many opportunities in which to be involved, help others through missions, experience the love of Christ and fellowship with believers.

Father God, thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ. I pray that Christians will boldly pronounce that Jesus Christ is Lord. I pray that we will share the gift of Jesus Christ and people will come to know You as their Savior. Father, there are many people that are sick and hurting, I ask for healing and comfort. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Dan Lucas
The Deacon Prayer Team

Ministry to Fluvanna Correctional Center



Grace Inside

VIRGINIA'S PRISON CHAPLAIN SERVICE

On November 14, three from the Men's Prayer Breakfast Group delivered our items for the Fluvanna Correctional Center to Effort Baptist Church in Palmyra. Mill Creek was a collection site and 8 different Baptist churches in the Roanoke area delivered their donations to us. We had about 75 gallon bags of toiletry items and 6 boxes (varying sizes) of stationery and stamps. Sixty or more of the bags filled with toiletries were donated by Mill Creek folks!

Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women opened in 1998. For a number of years our church has supported this ministry of providing toiletries and stationery items which are given to the women inmates by GraceInside, Virginia's Prison Chaplain Service. Donations like ours ensure that the approximate 1,300 inmates will receive the gifts. Thanks to all who participated in this ministry.

Start the New Year with First Place for Health Bible Study

There will be a nine week First Place for Health Bible study beginning on January 3rd and ending on February 28th. The class will meet on Tuesdays from 5:30 – 7:00pm in the Randy Daniels Room. The class will use the book *“Strength Will Rise”* as a guide. This study will follow Israel’s journey as they cross the Red Sea and Jordan River and move into the new life that God had promised them. In addition to studying scripture and learning from God’s Word, participants will learn how to change from unhealthy habits to healthy ones. The program of First Place for Health can be transformative if we commit to living healthy in all four areas of our lives: spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional. Contact Shelba Ferguson, Judy Deel or Laura Epperly by December 11th if you are interested in participating. Cost of the book is approximately \$20.



Men’s Ignite Conference

There is an upcoming Men’s Ignite Conference on March 10th-11th, 2023. This conference will be held at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg. The early bird rate for admission is \$64. If you are interested in attending, please let Luke Winand (540-798-7367) or Joel Elmore (804-896-4090) know.



Dear Church Family,

We could never put into words how thankful we are for all of the prayers we have received over the past month! They have meant so much to us. Thankfully, Isaiah is making great progress! All the meals we have received have been such a blessing! We are so grateful to be part of the Mill Creek family!

Love,

Chris, Danielle, Maggie, & Isaiah Tolley



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

Lottie Moon was sent as a Southern Baptist missionary to China from 1873 to 1912. She saw firsthand the world’s greatest problem – LOSTNESS. Meeting so many people who had never heard the gospel compelled her to write letters to American churches describing the need for a greater missionary presence. She pleaded for increased prayer and financial support to send and sustain more missionaries. This challenge became known as the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®. Every year, Southern Baptist churches collect an offering to send and support missionaries to be steadfastly present among those who have never heard the gospel.



This offering is unique from other mission offerings in that 100% of gifts provide for missionaries all over the world. It is a valuable part of Southern Baptists' 175-year history of reaching the nations with the gospel and vital to reaching the vision of a multitude from every language, people, tribe and nation knowing and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 7:9).

Consider how you will participate this year by praying and giving. **Our church goal is \$8500.00.** Offering envelopes are available in the vestibule and at the fellowship hall entrance or you may give online at millcreekbc.com.

Daytime Mission Group

IMB Missionary Speaker on December 6

Marcia Richardson, retired IMB missionary, will be the guest speaker at the Daytime Mission Group meeting on Tuesday, December 6th. The meeting will begin at 10 am and a potluck lunch will be enjoyed after the meeting. All are welcome!

Marcia and her husband, Jim, served as missionaries in East Africa for 33 years. They returned to the States in 2007 to retire and have lived in Roanoke since then. Although the Richardson's are retired, they have made numerous trips back to Africa to help in various capacities with the ministry there. This past year they have made two trips to Germany to work with refugees. Come and learn how our missionaries share the Gospel around the world.

December Project

Join the Daytime Mission Group as they collect items for the Friendship House on Elm Avenue. This ministry will be filling 150 food boxes for the folks in their neighborhood for Christmas. Many of these neighbors are refugees who live in this inner city community. Items needed include: Mac and cheese, stuffing, brownie mix, evaporated milk, green beans, mashed potatoes, gravy mixes. Monetary donations are needed to purchase milk and meat and perishable items. Personal hygiene items, laundry detergent, and winter items such as scarves, gloves and hats are also needed. Please bring donations for Christmas boxes by December 6th. If you have questions, please contact Judy Deel (540.759.1914).

Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, December 3



Breakfast

Fellowship Hall
8 am



Bazaar

Fellowship Hall
8 am - 1 pm

White Elephant Sale

Fellowship Hall
8 am - 1 pm

Visit with Santa Claus

Sanctuary
10 am - 12 noon

Santa's Workshop

(No parents allowed!!)
10 am - 12 noon

Santa's Workshop is a place that kids can shop for family and friends. All items are \$1.



Lunch

Fellowship Hall
11 am - 1 pm



All proceeds will benefit the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Building Fund.

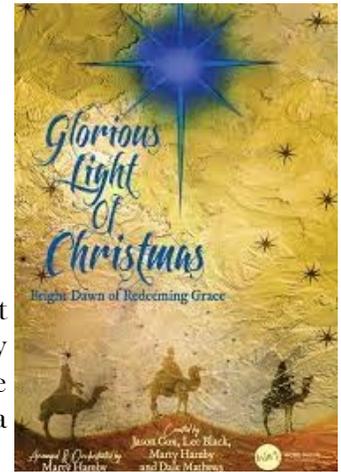
We need your help! If you want to donate baked goods or crafts, contact Nancy Epperly; items for Santa's Workshop, contact Laura Epperly; or items for the White Elephant sale, contact Judy Deel.

Glorious Light of Christmas

Bright Dawn of Redeeming Grace

Sunday, December 11

3:00pm & 6:00pm



Our adult Christmas choir will present this joyful and celebratory musical that shares the hope and promise that came down to earth in the form of a Baby on that first Christmas night so long ago. Please join us as we celebrate the glorious light of God's love! A nursery will be available. There will be a reception following the 6:00pm presentation.



Presented by the
Mill Creek Children's Christmas Choir
Sunday, December 4

6:00pm

Come support our children as they teach us the meaning of the colors we decorate with at Christmas. There will be a reception following the presentation.

Christmas Eve Service

Saturday, December 24

5:00pm

Our family friendly program will include scripture, special music and favorite carols. We will conclude the service with the lighting of candles. Come and bring your family to celebrate this special night.



Christmas Caroling

Tuesday, December 13

Meet at the church at 6:30pm

If you would like to participate, please call or text Cindie Hayden at (540)314-6456. We would love to be able to go caroling to as many homes as possible. Please join us!



Unity Services

December 25

and January 1

10:00am

(No Sunday School)

Let's all come together to worship and praise God during the holiday season!



Lottie's Post Office

Bring your Christmas cards for attending church members through Sunday, December 19 and "mail" them for 25 cents per card. All proceeds will go to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Lottie's Post Office is located at the top of the handicap ramp.



2022 Operation Christmas Drop-Off

Thank you, Mill Creek Baptist Church, for your support of the 2022 Operation Christmas Child Ministry!

"Since 2009, 30.9 million shoebox recipients have participated in The Greatest Journey, with more than 18.7 million graduates and over 15 million decisions for Christ." (Operation Christmas Child 2022 Communication Guide) What an awesome praise and shout out...

Hallelujah! Amen! Luke 10:20 – NIV **Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.**

Each box you prayed over, each box you packed, each donation of the \$10 shipping cost you gave or items you bought for the Mill Creek packing party impacts a child's life. Thank you!



This year we had 21 Mill Creek volunteers who helped pack 800 shoe boxes into shipping cartons that were then delivered to Salem Baptist Church. There they were loaded onto a tractor trailer truck by volunteers of the Virginia State Police. Then they were transported to Charlotte,

NC for processing.

Mill Creek Baptist Church packed 316 of the 800 boxes.

Also, 4 of the 21 volunteers were students who received hours needed for National Honor Society. We had record-breaking numbers this year. Way to go Mill Creek and surrounding churches!

Mark 16:15 – NLT

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

Love and Blessings, Until Next Year...

Cindy Markham and Josephine Powell





Operation Christmas Child Packing Party

Thank you to everyone who brought toys, school supplies, hygiene items and other supplies for the packing party on Wednesday, November 9th. Guided by our youth and adult volunteers the Wednesday night children's classes packed 145 boxes!! A great time was had by all!



On Missions Sunday, November 13, children at both services eagerly held boxes as Pastor Danny led everyone in a prayer of dedication. He prayed for Samaritan's Purse, the children who would receive the boxes, and all the volunteers.



Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers

Mini and Mighty Mill Creek Explorers had a very busy October as we painted Bible bags, decorated pumpkins and participated in Trunk or Treat. All of this was in addition to having our nightly Bible story, learning about missions and learning some new songs.

Trunk or Treat was a success with approximately 45 kids and approximately 20 Trunk participants. The children had so much fun! The activities that night included a pumpkin walk game and pumpkin carving. The children listened to a story about how we are like pumpkins in God's pumpkin patch. He picks us. He washes off all the dirt from us. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, and greed. Then He comes into our hearts and gives us a smiling faces and puts His light in us for all the world to see.

Stay tuned because the next couple months we will be doing lots of fun things, too. Don't forget if you have a child or know one who would like to join us on Wednesday

nights, they are welcome! For more information contact Peggy Arbogast at 540-520-0107.





LOTTIE MOON

Missionary to China

Lottie Moon was a missionary to China. A missionary is someone who travels to another place to tell people about Jesus. Lottie went to China on a ship in 1873 to tell the Chinese people about Jesus. At first, the Chinese people were afraid of Lottie because she didn't look like them and she came from a place they had never heard of. Lottie decided to bake cookies for the children. The children liked the cookies! Then, the mothers invited Lottie into their homes, and she told them about Jesus. The children called Lottie "the cookie lady."

Lottie also wrote lots of letters home to the United States. She wanted people to pray for the Chinese people. She also wanted more people to go to China to tell people about Jesus. Because of Lottie's letters, Southern Baptists began collecting an offering every year for international missions.

Lottie Moon died on Christmas Eve, 1912. Every year, Southern Baptist churches collect an offering to send Southern Baptist missionaries to countries around the world where they tell people about Jesus. The offering is called the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®. This year, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal for Southern Baptists is \$196 million! That's a lot of money, but it helps support nearly 3,600 missionaries and their 2,880 children who are telling people about Jesus! Thank you for giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering!

Plain Tea Cake

(As made by Lottie Moon)

Three teacups of sugar
One teacup of butter
One teacup of sour milk
Four pints flour
Three eggs, well beaten
Half a teaspoon of soda
Flavor to taste, roll thin,
bake in a quick oven.

Adapted recipe:

2 cups flour
½ cup butter
1 heaping cup of sugar
1 well-beaten egg
1 tablespoon cream
Cream the butter and sugar.
Add the egg and mix well.
Add the flour and cream.
Dust a board with flour.
Roll the dough very thin.
Cut cookies with a round
cookie cutter. Place on a
buttered or nonstick cookie
sheet. Bake at 475 degrees
for about 5 minutes.



Child Care News

Hello everyone! We are anticipating a wonderful December! The children are looking forward to making Christmas crafts, decorating our tree, looking for snow, and all the other wonderful activities that happen in December!

Our older preschoolers will get to visit Santa at the O Winston Link Museum for the first time since December of 2019. It is such a great trip for our preschoolers! We get to spend at least 30 minutes with Santa listening to stories and singing Christmas songs.

We are also planning to have Christmas parties for our preschoolers and our school-agers on December 15th. The children will do a gift exchange within their classrooms and school groups. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be attending our preschoolers' Christmas party. Santa always passes out the gifts to each child.

The Center will be closed the week after Christmas and January 2nd. We will open again on January 3rd ready to start a brand new year!

We hope that everyone has a blessed Christmas and New Year full of God's love in your hearts!

See you in 2023!

Cherry and Debbie



December 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 8:00am - 1:00pm Christmas Bazaar 10:00am - 12:00pm Visits with Santa & Santa's Workshop
4 Week of Prayer for International Missions 8:30am Worship 9:10am - 9:40am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Worship 6:00pm Children's Christmas Program	5 Week of Prayer for International Missions	6 Week of Prayer for International Missions 8:30am Men's Breakfast @ Greenwood Restaurant 10:00am Daytime Mission Group in Randy Daniels Room	7 Week of Prayer for International Missions 6:00pm Supper for Children 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Activities/Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, Adult Choir Dress Rehearsal	8 Week of Prayer for International Missions 10:00am Leisure Time Group to Preston's at the Inn at Virginia Tech	9 Week of Prayer for International Missions	10 Week of Prayer for International Missions
11 Week of Prayer for International Missions 8:30am Worship 9:10am - 9:40am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Worship 3:00pm Christmas Cantata 6:00pm Christmas Cantata	12 6:00pm BWNG Christmas Dinner @ North Star Restaurant	13 Newsletter Articles Due 6:30pm Christmas Caroling	14 6:00pm Supper for Children 6:30pm Mini & Mighty Mill Creek Explorers, Youth Christmas Party, Adult Bible Study	15	16	17
18 8:30am Worship 9:10am - 9:40am Holy Grounds Coffee Shop 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Worship	19	20	21 No Wednesday Evening Activities	22	23 Church Office Closed	24 5:00pm Christmas Eve Service
25 10:00am Unity Worship	26 Church Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28 No Wednesday Evening Activities	29	30	31

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Fincastle, Virginia 24090-4481
(540) 992-3474

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Return Service Requested

*Mill Creek Baptist Church
Ministers... the Congregation*

Pastor.....Danny Quirin
Minister of Music..... Cindie Hayden
Minister of Youth & Discipleship.....Joel Elmore
Director of Children's Ministry.....Peggy Arbogast
Pianist.....Marcia Neighbors
Administrative Assistant.....Sandra Kidd

A History of the Christmas Tree at Mill Creek



A decorated tree has long been a part of the Christmas celebrations at Mill Creek. In the past, the Christmas tree was a very tall cedar tree cut from a local farm. The tree would be 18 to 20 feet tall and would touch the ceiling! Those with the earliest memories recall small unwrapped gifts being used on the tree as decorations. Handkerchiefs, small toys, socks, and one special doll near the top of the tree would make the tree festive. Strands of popcorn and cranberries would be added. When Christmas lights came into vogue, strings of colored lights adorned the cedar tree along with colorful blue and red glass ornaments and bright gold tinsel. Harlan Sifford, who now lives in Iowa City, Iowa, has a clear memory of the first electric lights that were used to decorate the tree in the mid 1930s. In 1980, Blanche Garland led a group to create Chrismons for the tree. Today, these gold and white ornaments, symbols of our Christian Faith, decorate the church's Christmas tree. About this same time, Tom Moore began to supply the church with white pine trees from his Christmas tree farm on Brugh's Mill Road. In 2003, the Virginia Fire Codes were changed, stating that it was illegal to display a fresh cut tree in churches, apartments, or multi-unit dwellings not equipped with a sprinkler system. The church now displays an artificial pre-lit tree.

