

REFLECTIONS

December

2023

January

2024



Scalp Level Covenant Brethren Church

270 Hoffman Ave
Windber PA 15963-2368
Telephone – (814) 467-8460
Email – scalplevelcbc@gmail.com
Website – www.scalplevelcbc.com

Pastor: Mark D. Murchie
404 Cambria Ave.
Windber PA 15963
Cell – (814) 270-7586

Office Hours
Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri 9 am – 12 noon
Thursday – Day off

Sunday School – 9:15am
Morning Worship – 10:30am

Upcoming Sermons:

Advent Series: Worth the Wait
12/3 – "How long O Lord?"
12/10 – Children's Program – "Counting Down to Christmas"
12/17 – "Birth Pains"
12/24 morning – "The King is Coming"
12/24 evening – "New Birth"
12/31 – "Faith made sight"

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe there is only one Almighty God eternally existent in three distinct, co-equal and co-eternal Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Bible is inspired by God, without error & completely trustworthy.

We believe that all people have fallen into sin, have a sin nature & sin separates us from God.

We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, that He lived a perfect life, died on the cross for sin & rose from the grave conquering sin & death.

We believe that through faith in Jesus alone, our sins are forgiven and we receive eternal life.

We believe it is our calling as Christ's Church to share this good news and live holy lives.

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling a Christian is enabled to live a godly life and empowered to go and share the good news

We believe in the sanctity of marriage and that God created one biological male and one biological female and blessed their union through marriage.

We believe in the sanctity of all human life from conception until death.



PRAYER CONCERNS	LONG TERM:	LONG TERM –CANCER:
<p>SHORT TERM</p> <p>Cortez Baca family Terry Berkebile Joe Canonni Baby Chandler Michelle Decker Baby Dominico Greico family Tim Haupt Paula Irvin Skip Jones family Dolores Kish Sally Kohut Jim Kormanik Sherry Kowalczyk Joyce Lund Rebecca Maurizio Roxanne, Jean, & Marlene – D’s friends Hilda Miller Mac Newman Baby Noah Robert Osborn family Carol Pecze Brad Puckey Robine family Larue Ross Shannon Solosky family Anna Steinbeck Anna Swartzwelder Julie Soper family Laura Wanamaker</p>	<p>Jocelynn Berkebile Pauline Blough Ryan Creager Wesley Donelson Ashley Floyd – study abroad Sarah Fuska Donna Greig Larry Hartman Ann Hoffman Tyler Kalp AJ Kniss Jean Krug Ardyth Laney Chester Mickey Richard Manges Judah Pope Patsy Pudliner Ansley Stigers Larry Sullivan Jr. Timothy Wade Julia Woodley</p> <p>Covid Ric Magnes</p> <p>MISSION WORK Ben & Jessi Bock & Family, Spain Andrew Metcalfe, Samaritan’s Purse - Mexico</p>	<p>Terry Berkebile Donna Custer Dale Teresa Freeboy Jess Harclerode Glenn Hundertmark Jack Jodi Joni Jim Kormanik Mabel Ann Delene Pluta Diane Podolak Bev & Tom Pomroy Ryan Pritt Lisa Shaffer Debbie Shoemaker Susan Simmonds Pastor Val</p>

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 8—Katie Fisher
- 9—Audrey Coleman
- 10—Lester Brehm
- 13—Michelle Decker
- 14—Micah Madera. Tarun Pecze
- 16—Donna Marva
- 18—Ashley Harris
- 23—Gayle Denk, John Woodley
- 24—Wanda Custer
- 25—Evelynn Hassell
- 26—Deanna Hoffman
- 28—Rick Roman

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 31—Mike & Vicki Hasse

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2—Max Thacker
- 5—Clara Hope Murchie
- 11—Austin Podolak
- 12—Paul Pritt
- 15—Gregory Lynn, Lu Ann Deyarmin, Grace Hoffman
- 16—Brenda Weaver
- 30—Margaret Kearns
- 31—Elizabeth Karalfa

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 7—Richard & Luanne Stevens

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

¹“How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
²How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
having sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?



These four “how long” refrains in Psalm 13 are heavy questions asked in the midst of turmoil, lament, distress and confusion. Perhaps like David who wrote this Psalm, you have been there asking, “How long, O Lord?” You have faced a season of turmoil, distress, grief, loss, trial and you have prayed exasperatingly, “How long, O Lord??” You have felt deep down in your heart the words of this Psalm and questioned why God hasn’t shown up. Maybe you are there right now even as the Christmas season approaches.

In the time of Jesus’ birth, the people of Israel lived under Roman occupation, and they were asking, “How long, O Lord?” – Don’t you see our plight? Haven’t we been through enough? How much longer till the Messiah comes and delivers us? In our present day, many in Ukraine and Israel are asking, “How long, O Lord??” Our persecuted Armenian brothers and sisters in Christ who are being persecuted for their faith in Christ are asking, “How long, O Lord?” And each one of us has our genuine laments and tribulations for which we cry out, “How long, O Lord??”

But even in these moments, like David, you and I and countless others have gone to God in faithful prayer. David is praying because he knows that God is the only one who can rescue him. Actually, in verse 2, David is lamenting having to take his own counsel and being left to his own resources because he knows that he is insufficient and unable to deal with the reality of the distress he is in and the enemies he faces. He is saying, “I don’t know what to do and I don’t know how to get through this – God I want your counsel and your deliverance, not my own! I am incapable of overcoming my enemies, but you can overcome! I need you!” So we see that even in David’s questioning is a deep faith and trust in the power and might of God to overcome. May that be an encouragement to you when you ask God, “How long?”, that this is a question that comes from your deep faith and love for God and your trust in Him to save you.

This deep faith is seen in the span of a few verses as David moves from distress to confident triumph as He considers the Lord and proclaims His trust in Him. He says, ⁵“But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me.” In view of who God is, David is confident in the storm even as he waits out the “how long”. Is God your confidence in the storm?

Galatians 4:4-5 says, “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” These verses promise that God has not forgotten you. That God has seen your plight. That He has not turned His face from you but has sent in His perfect timing His Son Jesus Christ to redeem you. That Christ has defeated every enemy – sin, death and Satan – so that you could be eternally received as His child. This gospel is the foundational eternal hope of Christmas that never dies – not the manufactured materialistic hope that is here for a season and gone. You and I can have hope in every season because Jesus Christ came to die for our sin and He rose again so that by faith in Him we can share in His eternal life.

As you ask “how long”, may we do so with triumphant confidence in our King Jesus who has overcome! With David, let us sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with us!

In Christ’s love and Merry Christmas, Pastor Mark

CHURCH STATISTICS

Date	Online views	Attendance	Offering
11/5/2023	16	79	\$ 3,926.00
11/12/2023	14	67	\$ 1,622.00
11/19/2023	21	62	\$ 1,534.00
11/26/2023	12	45	\$ 1,780.00
		TOTAL	\$ 8,862.00
Amount needed this month to meet the budget			\$ 12,075.76
			\$ (3,213.76)

Bella Gift Cards

Available to purchase as a fundraiser for the United Churches of the Windber Area. They support projects such as a scholarship for a deserving senior from one of our participating churches, and the Windber Area School's baccalaureate service. Please contact Mary Lou Berkebile (814-467-5206), Carol Caputo (814-467-9048) or Pastor Mark Murchie (814-467-8460) to purchase a gift card.

Ministry to Single Parents

"Taste and see that the Lord is good." – Psalm 34:8

The challenges of raising kids today are immense and are even more challenging for single parents. We are beginning a new ministry to come alongside and be a measure of grace to single parents and caregivers of children. The purpose of the ministry is to show the love of Christ by supplying a prepared meal for single adult families raising children and to build relationships in our church family.

Here is how it works: Anyone willing in the church is invited to prepare a meal that can be frozen and put into the freezer located in the classroom next to the downstairs women's restroom. From there, a meal could be picked up from the freezer by a single parent family after morning worship or taken by a church member to a family that is in this situation as an outreach from our church. If you would like to participate in this ministry, there is more information in the lobby or you can contact Dave & JoAn Oatman at (814) 421-3436.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday December 17th - 4:00 PM

Everyone is invited to participate in Christmas Caroling as we bring the Joy of the season and Christ's love to those that we will be visiting. This year we will be visiting church and community members to share the sounds of Christmas. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 4 PM and will then ride a school bus to each location. Please consider joining us for this joyous seasonal event!

Christmas Post Office

Christmas cards addressed (only name needed) to active members of our church family and residents of Windber Woods will be accepted on Sunday, December 3rd and Sunday, December 10th. Cards and monetary donations can be placed in the designated boxes in the foyer. **No cards will be accepted after December 10th.**

Cards will be available for church family members to **PICK UP ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH.**

WE NEED YOUR HELP! If there is a church family member that is not attending worship on a regular basis or someone is not in worship on Sunday, December 17th, please pick up those cards as well and help us deliver them. Your help is **GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

This year's donations will be given to the Baca family of Windber. They recently lost their 6th grade son, Cortez.

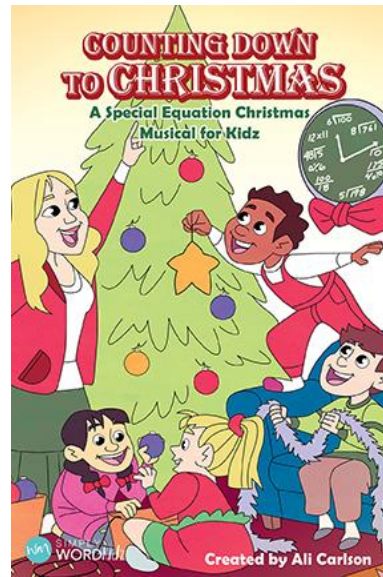
Thanks and God Bless!

Children Christmas Party Saturday Dec. 9

We will be having a children and families Christmas party on Saturday Dec. 9 @3:30 in the fellowship hall. We will have some fun games, cookie decorating and eating and a merry time together! This is for any kids age three through 5th grade and their families. See you there and feel free to bring a friend!

Children's Christmas Program

'Tis the Season to start counting down! The Children's Christmas Program, *Counting Down to Christmas* will take place during the December 10th church service. We hope to see you there! Merry Christmas!!



The Gnome Giving Tree at Windber Woods

The Witness commission is inviting you to help make the Christmas Holiday a little brighter for the residents at Windber Woods. Stop by The Giving Tree in the lobby of Windber Woods, choose a Gnome ornament that has a resident's name, and register it at the front desk. They will have a list of gift suggestions for each resident. 'Gift bags' need to be returned to Windber Woods by December 8th. Thank you all in advance for cheering up the residents during the Christmas Holiday.

WINDBER WOODS CAROLING

CALLING ALL CAROLERS! If you like to bless others and enjoy Christmas carols, please join in singing at Windber Woods for their Christmas Open House on Thursday December 14th. The Open House will be from 2:00-6:00, but we plan to begin singing around 4:00. If you can't be there at 4:00, come and join us at whatever time works for you. It is very informal and we will end at 6:00. Mark your calendars NOW- and PLAN to take advantage of this wonderful ministry opportunity! See Norma, Mary Lou, or Wanda with any questions

ACTS 29

We will be meeting from 6:00-8:00pm on Sunday Dec. 3rd and 10th. We will be having our Christmas Party on Dec. 17th from 6:00-8:00. Bring a wrapped gift (\$5-10) to the party to participate in our gift exchange. Friends are invited too! Youth are invited to join the church for caroling too on Dec. 17th from 4:00-6:00pm. We are looking forward to seeing you this month! Any youth in grades 6-12 are welcome.

Thursday Night Fellowship & Bible Study

We will have bible study on Thursday Dec. 7th and Wednesday Dec. 13th this month. We are studying the book of First Thessalonians. All are welcome to join and grow with us as we fix our eyes on Christ!

Our only meal this month will be on Wednesday Dec. 13th starting at 5:00. It is a simple meal and a great time of fellowship. All are welcome to come and stick around for bible study after words. We needed to move it to Thursday as several of our regulars will be helping to sing carols over at Windber Woods. See you there!

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child

Thanks to all who participated this year! We were able to fill 48 boxes as a church and they are on their way to their child. Thank you Gayle and Unk for delivering them to Camp Harmony for us. Please keep the boxes and their recipients in your prayers that they may enter into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. We will hopefully be able to share with you in the coming months where the boxes ended up! Thanks!!

Women's Fellowship Luncheon

December 4th at 1pm, the Women's Fellowship will be having their end of year party. Food is provided. This event is only open to members of the Women's Fellowship.

Devotions: Hilda Miller

Hostesses: Carol Reed & Wanda Custer

Christmas Poinsettias

Thank You to those that graced our altar with Christmas Flowers

Nancy Abbott

(2 Pink Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Elizabeth Herring & Julie Soper

Marilyn Berkey

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Dennis Berkey

Lionel & Mary Lou Berkebile

(9 Red Poinsettia)

IN HONOR OF Shauntay Belton and Family
Brett, Lynn, Adilyn
and Carter Crisi
Shirley Deyarmin
Bill & Janet Hoffman
Ardyth Laney
Violet Strahan
Linda, Jeff and Kaitlyn Walker
Nathan, Madison
and Aubrey Walker

Jim Hayes

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Denise Hayes

Carol Caputo

(1 Marble Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Jeanie & Ed Birkhimer

Mike & Vicky Hasse

(1 Marble Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Parents

Donna Richey

(2 Red Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Don & Marian Buttler

Amy Berkey

(1 Red & 1 White Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Kerry Berkey & Lois Berkey

Wanda Custer

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Son, Owen Custer

Brett & Emily Hoffman

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN HONOR OF Piper & Milo

Denny & Deanna Hoffman

(2 Red & 1 Pink Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Paul & Mickey Good
IN HONOR OF Bill & Janet Hoffman, Children
& Grandchildren

Jim & Suzy Hoffman

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN HONOR OF Nate, Patrick, Grace,
Cole, and Luke

Bill & Norma Creager

(2 Red and 1 Pink Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF David & Mildred Rizzo,
William & Dorothy Creager
IN HONOR OF Pap & Gram Be & Nicolette

Bill & Janet Hoffman

(1 Red Poinsettia)

IN HONOR OF Our Great-Grandchildren

Patrick, Grace, Cole, and Luke Hoffman

(1 Red and 1 Marble Poinsettia)

IN HONOR OF Grandparents
& Great Grandparents

Michelle Decker

(1 Red and 1 Marble Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Howard & Mickey Decker

Anonymous (Someone in the Love of Christ)

(11 Red Poinsettia)

IN MEMORY OF Brenda Yerty
IN HONOR OF Ardyth Laney
Peg Wonders
Shirley Deyarmin
Ann Hoffman
Elizabeth Karalfa
Geraldine Fetzer
Ruth Hindman
Billie Lehman
Louise Brehm
Paul Pritt

**SCALP LEVEL COVENANT BRETHERN CHURCH
CHURCH BOARD**

November 20, 2023

The Church Board met on November 20, 2023 with the following members present: Patrick Hoffman, Norma Creager, Mary Lou Berkebile, Chuck Madera, Carol Caputo, Audrey Coleman, Dave Oatman, Zach Denk, Kevin Kiser, Joe Denk, Lionel Berkebile, Denny Hoffman, and Pastor Mark.

Absent: Wanda Custer

Patrick Hoffman called the meeting to order and Pastor Mark led us in prayer.

Minutes from the October 16, 2023 meeting were approved as printed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Received the October Summary Report by Month and the 2023 Budget Report to date. 47 weeks into the year we are \$1,877.77 over the amount needed to meet the budget. Praise the Lord for those that made generous donations this past Sunday.

NURTURE COMMISSION: Norma Creager

1. Mary Lou Berkebile will serve as Vice-Chairperson and Wanda Custer as Secretary.
2. The Luncheon after Congregational Business was well attended (38). It was a nice time of fellowship with 5 soups as well as chicken and ham salad sandwiches and cookies. Thank you to all those that attended, provided food, helped to clean up.
3. Continued discussion on getting volunteers to serve in the Nursery during morning worship.
4. Reviewed and updated various job descriptions.
5. Carols & Cookies service will be held on Saturday, December 2nd, at 7:00 p.m. to "ring in" the Advent Season. The service will begin in the sanctuary with music selections from the bell choir, congregational singing and guest singers. Cookies will be served in the fellowship hall following the service. The youth canvassed the neighborhood and put door hanger invitations in the neighborhood as well as Orchard Point, Coventry and Taufer. Flyers were also mailed to the those on the inactive list as well as area churches.
6. Patrick Hoffman & family will coordinate church decorating to be held on Monday, November 27th at 7:00 p.m.
7. The Denk family will coordinate the Christmas Card Post Office Cards can be dropped off at church on December 3rd & 10th. Cards will be available for pick up on December 17th. Proceeds will benefit the Baca Family for their expenses.
8. Children will present a program "Counting Down to Christmas" on Sunday December 10th. Dress rehearsal will be held on December 9th with a Christmas party for children and their families to follow in the fellowship hall.
9. Brett Hoffman & Nathan Hoffman will coordinate Christmas caroling on December 17th at 4:00 p.m. The cost for the bus is \$230.00.
10. Poinsettia orders are due November 27th.
11. Our church is invited to sing at Windber Woods on December 14th from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. There will be more information in December bulletins.
12. Discussed new ideas for 2024.

13. Thank you to everyone who prayed for and sent cards to the Murchie and Rupert families during Pastor Appreciation Month – to the college students this fall – provided special music the past few months – to Paster Mark for the meaningful baby dedication and Operation Christmas Child shoebox services.

WITNESS COMMISSION: Chuck Madera

1. Thank you to all that participated in OCC Shoebox project. 48 boxes were donated from our church. Camp Harmony collected a total of 1,905.00 boxes at their collection site.
2. Windber Woods Gnome Giving Tree – each member of the Commission will sponsor a resident. The congregation will be encouraged to participate in this project.
3. Collections will be received for the Hat & Mitten Tree during the month of December. The donations will be given to Trinity Methodist Church for their coat ministry.
4. Will give goodie bags to the children at Cuddle Corner Daycare. The bags will contain candy and the legend of the candy cane. There will also be an invitation to our Christmas Eve service.

STEWARDS COMMISSION: Zach Denk

1. Kevin Kiser will serve a Vice Chairperson and Lionel Berkebile will serve as Secretary.
2. The parsonage storm door and latch has been repaired.
3. Curtains for the ladies rooms have been pressed and hung.
4. The church and parsonage furnaces are scheduled to be cleaned and checked by Ott Plumbing & Heating.

DEACON REPORT: Denny Hoffman

1. Made 13 visits and sent 4 greeting cards to shut-ins and others yesterday.
2. Making plans for Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service at 7:30 in sanctuary.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Mark

1. Men's Group finished up this past week. There were a total of 15 that attended with a steady attendance of 12 each week. Did a service project at Ardyth Laney's house. There has been good spiritual growth in the group.
2. Youth group is going well. Have had several opportunities to connect with youth from Rummel Church.

October Statistics:	20	Visits (home, or hospital etc.)
	4	Church related meetings / events
	2	Other Ministry related meetings / events
	3	Prayer Meeting
	14	Bible Studies (taught or attended)
	4	Taught Sunday School
	1	CBC Region Three Board Meeting
	1	CBC Region Three Annual Meeting – Oct. 7
	2	Communion
	3	Meeting with Dan
	5	FCA
	2	Thursday Night Fellowship
	1	Ministerium meeting
	4	Youth Group
	5	Community Event

- 1 Funeral – Edward Greathouse
 - 1 Handbell Practice
 - 1 Love Feast
- Numerous calls, text messages and emails

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the reports.

Viewed a RightNowMedia video Lead Like a Shepherd by Larry Osborne – Session 4: “Take the Long View”.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to make a donation to Compassion House in the amount of \$1,200.00.

NO DECEMBER MEETING

JANUARY MEETING will be held on January 15, 2024.

Closing prayer by Pastor Mark.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Deanna Hoffman, Church Clerk

Scalp Level Covenant Brethren Church
NEWSLETTER – Dec. '23 – Jan. '24 issue
270 Hoffman Ave
Windber PA 15963
