

# Meadowbrook MESSENGER

A Monthly Newsletter for Members and Friends of Meadowbrook Christian Church

DECEMBER 2022



## A Devotion from Daniel

I have an invitation for you this Christmas season. Truthfully it is an invitation for you to extend an invitation. Confused? I want to invite you this month to invite someone to Church. Of course, this invitation to invite is good all throughout the year but right now, the month of December is the easiest time to invite folks to come out to Church. One recent survey estimated that 60% of Americans will attend a Church service for Christmas. Your reaction may be “well what about the other 40%” but let’s choose to look at this glass as 60% full not 40% empty.

Although Christ might be removed from many Christmas traditions and celebrations the majority of the people you know and interact with are going to go to Church the weekend of Christmas, why not invite them to come to Church with you? We know many of those 60% are going out of family obligation or tradition, I get it. But if they are only going to come to one or two services this year why not invite them to come somewhere where you know the Gospel of Jesus Christ is going to be proclaimed.

They may not care what type of Church they are in; they may simply go to the Church that is located conveniently or whose service times are easiest for them to attend. But chances are they are going to go somewhere. And here’s the truth we know that not every building bearing the word “Church” upon its sign is a place where the worship offers praise to God and to Christ... many praise man. Not every building we call a Church holds God’s word to be infallible and true... many will teach whatever must be said in order to remain relevant. Many are more than happy to operate in the grey areas and teach what is comfortable.

So, if your family, your co-workers, your neighbors and friends are going to go to Church somewhere this Christmas why not invite them to come here? Meadowbrook isn’t a perfect Church (spoiler alert), as hard as it is to believe your preacher is not a perfect preacher (sarcasm intended). But at least if you bring your circle of influence here, I promise you the name of Jesus Christ, the birthday boy himself, will be proclaimed loudly. That the offer to confess, and repent and follow Christ will be made and God will be glorified.

Discipleship does not end at an invitation, our successes will not be judged by the number of empty seats at our Christmas Eve service... but an invitation is a start. It is a seed planted. A seed that we have no idea what God will do with.

Plant some seeds this month Meadowbrook, the ground will never be more fertile than it is when the name of Christ is in the air all around us. It is on all our radio stations, it is on all our televisions, in our shopping malls. Christmas may have been co-opted by those with nefarious intentions but there still is a reason for the season.



## Message from Anthony

Song Stories: Joy To The World (Unspeakable Joy)

Here at Meadowbrook, we sing a lot of different songs in worship. Be it a classic hymn, a well-known contemporary chorus, or something that is lesser known, we sing a variety of songs that help us connect with the Father and worship Him fully. But why THESE songs in particular? Well, this series of articles answers those very questions as we explore some of the songs that make up our worship sets on Sunday morning.

### Joy To The World

We are CELEBRATING this month! This is the month we remember that miraculous birth so many years ago, when hope came into this world through a baby boy, laid in a manger. Undoubtedly, we'll be singing about this event during worship this month, and for many Decembers yet to come. One of those songs we'll sing is an updated version of the classic hymn "Joy To The World", which was originally written by Isaac Watts in the early 1700s. Hymns back then were a little more...complicated in their lyrics. Imagine singing something like this on Sunday morning:

"Ye monsters of the bubbling deep, Your master's praises spout. Up from the sands ye ducklings peep, and wave your tails about." - Cotton Mather

Sounds like a real hit, right? Yeah, Isaac Watts didn't think so either. He grew frustrated with the complicated nonsense that made up "worship" back then. (Yeah, we face some of that in today's worship as well). So, when he was given a challenge to write something better when he voiced his thoughts, he set to it. Thus 18 year old Watts began writing hymns for the church, sharing them each Sunday. He grew into a loved and devoted Pastor for the flock, encouraging them in song with truths that were both scripturally sound and also simple to sing. One of these hymns was drawn from Psalm 98, and is entitled "Joy To The World."

Psalm 98 ESV

1 Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

2 The Lord has made known his salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody!

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it!

8 Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together

9 before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

We sing these simple truths because they plainly express the joy that we celebrate because Christ was born to us. We don't need fancy words and babbling nonsense to sing a song that pleases God and shows our heart. We just need the truth, and that truth is that joy came into the world because Jesus was born. Let the earth receive her King. Merry Christmas, Meadowbrook!

Joy To The World (Unspeakable Joy)

VERSE 1

Joy to the world, the Lord is come

Let earth receive her King  
Let every heart prepare Him room  
And Heaven and nature sing  
And Heaven and nature sing  
And Heaven, and Heaven and nature sing

#### VERSE 2

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns  
That all their songs employ  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

#### CHORUS

Joy, unspeakable joy  
An overflowing well  
No tongue can tell  
Joy, unspeakable joy  
Rises in my soul, never lets me go

#### VERSE 3

He rules the world with truth and grace  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love  
And wonders of His love  
And wonders, wonders of His love

*"Joy To The World (Unspeakable Joy" Written By: Isaac Watts / Chris Tomlin*

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**SAVE THE DATE:** Meadowbrook will be hosting a food packing event on Saturday, February 4th, 2023 from 8:00am-noon. The IDES organizers tell us that if we have at least 50 volunteers, we can pack the 15,000 meals in the time allocated that day.

**GREAT LAKES CHRISTIAN COLLEGE:** 'Meet the New GLCC President' sessions are scheduled this month in various locations. The college is offering a subscription-based online certificate program for churches. Mike will share this in an upcoming leadership meeting.

**HIS HOUSE UPDATE:** Reports this month from Troy Andreasen (SVSU Campus Minister) discussed the transitions that have occurred this year. There have been several initiatives to expand the outreach to campus, including 'Every Student

Prayer', 'Ask Me to Pray for You' T-shirts, and a CRAVE Bible reading event. They've already had 2 students baptized this semester. Praise God!

**VOICE OF THE MARTYRS:** The International Day of Prayer service on 11/6 was well received, with good participation. We agreed to provide an ongoing prayer resource from VOM. We will copy and make available their monthly prayer calendar to the congregation.

**KARAMOJA, UGANDA** – They have received the extra gift from Meadowbrook for food. Duncan has sent multiple emails with pictures of the families receiving the food, and they are very grateful for our support as they enter the dry season, when the food supply will be further impacted and very expensive. We discussed the best way to proceed with the application process for Karamoja to partner with IDES during this time of famine. Mike and Duncan are continuing to exchange information to provide to our IDES contact.

Mike forwarded the list of Missions we support to Anthony for inclusion on the church website.



**Sisters in Service Mission:** *We exist to honor God by ministering to those who are in need and encouraging one another to the praise of His Glory.*

Sisters in Service will not be meeting in December. However, we will continue to work on community outreach projects for the months to come.

Our 2022-2023 service year started with a very successful garage sale in August, with the amazing help of our wonderful church family! Thank you to everyone who gave generously of their time and support.



Since then:

- led by our wonderful Sisters of the Cloth, over 70 beautiful fleece hats were made for needy children in our community.
- hats, toiletries and misc. items will be purchased and delivered to Hope Shelter in Pontiac, servicing the homeless in our community.
- we supported our Meadowbrook Youth Group with a donation for their Thanksgiving food basket project.
- a donation will be made to the Rochester Fire Dept. to purchase new hats & mittens for kids.
- a generous donation was made to Grace Centers of Hope on Giving Tuesday, doubling the amount. GCH is a faith-based non-profit that helps those afflicted by homelessness, chemical dependency, and abuse. They do not receive any government funding.

*'Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.' Galatians 6:9*



### **MCC Youth Group**

One of the important parts of our ministry here at Meadowbrook has always been local and global missions. We are a very loving church for God's mission, giving both in prayer and monetary support all over the country and the world. This year, our youth has been faithfully doing their part to join the rest of our church family in that same focus by giving to missions. As a youth group, we set a goal of giving to two different causes this year - one local and one global.

For the local outreach, we set a goal of raising money to put together and deliver Thanksgiving baskets to people in our community and within our church body who could use a little help this season. The youth put together a total of five baskets based on the needs they were aware of, and delivered those baskets the Thursday before Thanksgiving, bringing hope and joy to each doorstep.

For the global mission, we set a goal to give \$250 dollars for a one-time gift to ChildFund International, an organization that provides basic needs to children worldwide, and connects child sponsors with families in need. The youth group met that goal by giving of their own money - dollar by dollar - to make an impact on families and children all over the world. This Christmas season, we will be giving that gift as we remember the greatest gift we have received - Christ.

Please continue to support, encourage, and connect with our youth here at Meadowbrook. YOU are making a difference in their lives with your faithfulness and your Christian example.

God Bless & Merry Christmas



### **Young Adults – Save the Date**

Email Daniel at [daniel@mccrochesterhills.com](mailto:daniel@mccrochesterhills.com) for more information about upcoming meetings – Next meeting on 12/07.

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Meadowbrook Christian Church has a subscription to RightNow Media and want to offer this resource to our church body. Please see the RightNow Media statement below:

“We believe the mission of the church matters, and we’ve seen how God can change lives through video resources. That’s why we developed **RightNow Media**. With your ministry’s subscription, every person in your organization can access over 20,000 biblically based videos for small groups, families, students, leadership development, and much more.”

Please use the QR Code above or web address here(<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/MeadowbrookChristianChurch>) to sign up for this tool. Once the link is selected or QR Code used, a 'Confirm & Sign-up' prompt will come up and you can create your own profile. If you have any questions, please see Brenda Cox at 586-615-1614.

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## Birthdays

Karen Parrett - December 4  
Mary Jane Cavins - December 5  
Blythe Sweigard – 12/18  
Karen Robinson - December 21  
Elaine Klaus – December 24  
Jerri Gilbert - December 29  
Jean Cox - December 30

## Anniversaries

Elaine & Eric Klaus – December 1  
Darrell & Jean Cox - December 22  
Matt & Brenda Cox - December 27