

DECEMBER 2023
**BELL ROAD
BAPTIST CHURCH
JOURNAL**

BELLROAD.ORG



MONTHLY EVENTS

- 12-9 Women's *Breathe*- 9 am- 455 Slowdown Rd. Newcastle. Contact Diana Knapp or DeLynn Rosenau for info.
- 12-23 Caroling at Westview Care Home 12-1 pm. See Alexis Rosenau for more info
- 12-23 Union Gospel Mission- *Dinner at the Rosenau home at 5:30 pm. Leave/carpool at 6:30 pm Service at UGM from 7:30-8:30 pm*



JESUS OUR LIGHT AND THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

BY PASTOR RYAN RINDELS

ADVENT, WHICH SPANS SEVERAL WEEKS LEADING UP TO CHRISTMAS, BEGINS ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 3RD. BECAUSE THE PRECISE DATE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH IS NOT REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE, ROMAN AUTHORITIES IN THE 4TH CENTURY *CHRISTIANIZED* AN EXISTING PAGAN HOLIDAY. DECEMBER 25TH WOULD COMMEMORATE JESUS' BIRTH, RATHER THAN SOL INVICTUS (THE "UNCONQUERED SUN"). THAT YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF *SOL INVICTUS* PERHAPS PROVES THAT THE SWITCH WORKED!

AS MISSIONARIES SPREAD THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, THEY FACED THE CHALLENGE OF TAKING A CULTURE'S ESTABLISHED TIMES OF FEASTING AND CELEBRATION AND GIVING THEM A CHRISTIAN MEANING. IN OUR OWN COUNTRY, VARIOUS CHURCHES HOST "HARVEST FESTIVALS" ON HALLOWEEN NIGHT, AN IMPLIED CONCESSION THAT HALLOWEEN IS SO POPULAR THAT IT IS MORE FRUITFUL TO OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE "TAKE" ON OCTOBER 31ST THAN TO PROTEST IT.

DECEMBER 8TH IS THE FIRST DAY OF *HANUKKAH*, THE JEWISH "FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS," WHICH REMEMBERS A MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION OF OIL DURING AT EIGHT-DAY PERIOD IN THE SECOND CENTURY B.C. DURING JESUS' DAY, IT WAS CALLED THE "FEAST OF DEDICATION" BECAUSE IT MARKED A REDEDICATION OF THE JEWISH TEMPLE AFTER ITS DESECRATION BY ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES IV IN 167 B.C.

IT IS INTERESTING THAT HANUKKAH IS BASED OFF ON 1 AND 2 MACCABEES, BOOKS WHICH WERE NOT PART OF THE CANONICAL OLD TESTAMENT, BUT A TRADITION THAT JESUS HIMSELF CELEBRATED. DURING THIS TIME, THE JEWS ASKED HIM (JOHN 10:24), "...IF YOU ARE THE CHRIST, TELL US PLAINLY." JESUS ANSWERED, (V. 25) "I TOLD YOU, AND YOU DO NOT BELIEVE." EARLIER, IN JOHN 8:12, JESUS CLAIMED TO BE THE "LIGHT OF THE WORLD." THE CHRIST, AS MANY OT PASSAGES TEACH, WOULD NOT DIE. THE PROPHET DANIEL FORESAW THE PERSON OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES IV, WHOSE NAME MEANS "GOD MANIFEST" IN DANIEL 11 AS AN ANTI-CHRIST.

JESUS' JEWISH OPPONENTS UNDERSTOOD THE MAGNITUDE OF CLAIMS TO BE "LIGHT" DURING THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS. WAS HE THE TRUE CHRIST OR ANOTHER ANTIOCHUS? COULD THE CHRIST ALSO BE GOD? FOR US WHO KNOW THE ANSWER, THIS SEASON SHOULD REMIND US PRAY FOR MANY— INCLUDING THE JEWISH PEOPLE—TO SEE "THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST" (2 CORINTHIANS 4:6).

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING
DECEMBER 23RD
12-1 PM
AT
WESTVIEW CARE HOME
SEE ALEXIS ROSENAU FOR
MORE INFO**

COME CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR WITH YOUR CHURCH BODY! SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST WE WILL GATHER AT 5 PM. TO CELEBRATE. BRING SOME FINGER FOOD OR SOUP TO SHARE. ALSO BRING YOUR FAVORITE TABLE GAMES. WE WILL HANG OUT WITH EACH OTHER, PLAY GAMES, AND SPEND A FEW MOMENTS IN PRAYER/WORSHIP AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT GOD HAS IN STORE FOR 2024



ISAIAH 9:6

“FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN, TO US A SON IS GIVEN, AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ON HIS SHOULDERS. AND HE WILL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.”

CHRISTMAS EVE

WE WILL ENJOY OUR REGULAR WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10 AM. THEN YOU ARE INVITED TO COME BACK AT 4PM. FOR A SPECIAL EVE SERVICE. INVITE YOUR FAMILY, NEIGHBORS, AND FRIENDS AND HELP US CELEBRATE OUR SAVIOR'S BIRTH!

10 WONDERFUL TRUTHS OF CHRISTMAS

- 1. GOD IS WITH US**
- 2. GOD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN US**
- 3. GOD UNDERSTANDS**
- 4. GOD IS IMMEASURABLY GREAT & AND HUMBLE**
- 5. GOD IS AT WORK IN THE DARKNESS**
- 6. GOD HAS GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE**
- 7. GOD GRACIOUSLY GIVES AND GRACIOUSLY SAVES**
- 8. GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES**
- 9. GOD IS WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE**
- 10. JESUS IS COMING BACK TO RENEW ALL THINGS**

[HTTPS://WWW.HOPEFORTHEHEART.ORG/CHRISTMAS-DEVOTIONAL-10-WONDERFUL-TRUTHS-OF-CHRISTMAS/](https://www.hopefortheheart.org/christmas-devotional-10-wonderful-truths-of-christmas/)



INVITATION FOR A FATHER-SON BOWL NIGHT AT FOOTHILLS BOWL ON DECEMBER 1ST FROM 6-8 P.M. ALL MEN ARE WELCOME TO JOIN. CONTACT BEN ROSENAU FOR MORE INFO.



**ANNUAL CHURCH BUDGET MEETING
DECEMBER 17TH IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING THE SERVICE.
MEMBERS JOIN US IN APPROVING
THE 2024 BUDGET!**