



GOOD NEWS! January, 2024

Scenes of the Season at MWBC



New Year's Resolutions

by Rev. Dr. Karen Johnson, Interim Pastor

Wait a minute! I see what you are doing!

You are preparing to skip over this page and not have resolutions in 2024.

* That's okay, January can be a tough time to make changes. Save this 'til February, or June. But just skim over these three steps today, and give yourself something to ponder.

* Read carefully, if you are ready for change, or if you have resolutions and wonder if they are the best.

* Remember our 90-day challenge to read the New Testament. Reading schedules are on the church Facebook page, printed up and at the Welcome Center at church, and in this newsletter, for those who receive it by mail.

* No matter what . . . Happy New Year from Pastor Karen! God has great things in mind for you.



Here we go! Pray through these three steps as you consider your resolutions.

1. Lord, what would you have me stop doing?

2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!*

Think about: Old habits that no longer serve you well
Things that were good in the past but are destructive now
Problems that keep cropping up year after year
Actions that you know hurt those you love

2. Lord, what is it that you would like me to start doing?

Isaiah 43:18-19

*Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.*

Think about: What really makes you happy
What you look forward to doing, but that you don't get to do very much
What brings joy to those you love that you also love

3. Lord, what is it that you would like me to strengthen?

Revelation 3:2

*Wake up!
Strengthen what remains and is about to die
for I have not found your deeds complete
in the sight of my God.*

Think about: What habits do you halfheartedly have?
What do you do that is important, but you do not feel you do it well?
What commitment are you willing to increase this year?

(Adapted from a message by Dr. Jeff Johnson, Evangelism Specialist, American Baptist Churches)

More December Highlights

Kids who attended our Children's Christmas Party on December 10 enjoyed making "edible nativities"!



Day Care families celebrated the season with a Christmas Feast . . .



. . . and visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus!



Weekly Schedule

Sundays

9:00 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship Service & Children's Church
(in-person and streaming live on Facebook)

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Virtual Bible Study & Prayer Meeting
(streaming live on Facebook)

Coming Up in January . . .

- * **90-Day New Testament Challenge** – We invite you to join your church family in reading through the New Testament in the first 90 days of the New Year. A schedule of readings may be found at the Welcome Center and posted on our Facebook page. If you follow the schedule, you will be finishing your final reading in Revelation just in time for the celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, which falls on March 31, 2024.
- * **Annual Business Meeting: Sunday, January 28** – Our Annual Business Meeting will be held immediately after the morning worship service in the Fellowship Hall. In this meeting, you'll hear an overview of our ministries for the past year and participate in setting priorities for 2024.

Music

I know the Christmas season is technically over as you are reading this January newsletter, but I'm writing this when it's December so I'm still allowed to write regarding Christmas. First I want to congratulate Jih-Ting for completing and receiving her Doctorate degree with an emphasis on Piano Performance! A great accomplishment! Second, as we reflect on the past season of unrest and uncertainty, I want to also think on the peace that Christ brings. The carol "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," written by Edmund Sears in 1850, speaks to the announcement the angels brought that night in Bethlehem – "Peace on earth, good will to men." They came to shepherds on a hillside to a world waiting for a Messiah. A world of pain, hopelessness, and sorrow, much like our world today where war, anger, and stress sometimes keep us from listening to the angels' song and hearing the message of hope and love. My wish for the New Year is that as we toil along the climbing way, we put down our burdens and rest beside the weary road and think on the future as the prophets saw. A future where peace shall be over the earth and we of the world will give back to all our fellow humans that song of joy and good will that the angels gave to those shepherds. My wish is also that we take the admonition of Jesus from Matthew 11:28-30 to heart and follow Him and "come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly and the burden I give you is light. " May your New Year be happy, healthy, and lead to a more enriched knowledge of Jesus our Savior.



Rev. Jim Cagle, Minister of Music

A Family in Ministry

Mt. Washington Baptist Church | 2005 Sutton Ave.
PO Box 30437 | Cincinnati, OH 45230

Email: mtwashingtonbaptistchurch@zoomtown.com Phone: 513 231-4445 Fax: 513 231-7380
Pastor Karen Johnson: mwbcpastorkaren@gmail.com Website: www.mwbcare.net

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Missions

MWBC Christmas Distribution Recap

Under Jim Cagle's leadership, the Mission Board supplied ham dinners to 17 families for Christmas, along with gift bags containing a family game, hygiene items, Hershey candy bars wrapped with our Christmas service schedule, a Christmas card from the church, and a letter from Santa to each child in the family. The cards were prepared by Tom Pappas, and the gift bags were assembled by the Mission Board.

Martha Goble-Burck donated a stroller, high chair, tyke bike, and pack 'n play (all used but in good condition). The second family who came in for a meal had a three-month-old and was thrilled to receive the items.

A big thank you to Fay Pappas for helping with the cost savings at Kroger, to people who donated money toward the meal and games, and to those church members who volunteered their time to help with the distribution on Thursday night: Jim and Barb Cagle, Joyce Branning, Johnetta and Jomil Stallworth, Susan Lattarulo, and Connie Green.

Helping those in need during Thanksgiving and Christmas is a blessing to all who donate their time and talents.

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Our Staff and Leaders

Rev. Dr. Karen Johnson, Interim Pastor | Rev. Dr. Ken Atchison, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Jim Cagle, Minister of Music | Dr. Jih-Ting Chen, Accompanist
Darby Atchison, Administrative Assistant
Todd Racer, Praise Band Leader | Tim Rechel, Tower Bells Director
Tammy Caldwell & Cody Taylor, Day Care Co-Directors
Luke Tiettmeyer, Maintenance