

# Churches Celebrate the Birth of Christ

Christmas is “the most wonderful time of the year,” according to a popular song and it certainly is a highlight in many of our churches. Our churches celebrate the birth of Christ in several different ways. Many decorate the church building for Christmas and host fellowship meals, parties, and special worship services. Nearly all reach out to others to help provide for needs and to share the love of Jesus. This newsletter includes some of the things that a few of our churches did to celebrate.

Redeemer Baptist Church in Anderson had the “Hanging of the Greens” following their Thanksgiving Dinner the last Sunday evening in November. The Christmas tree in the sanctuary marked the Lottie Moon Offering Goal progress with each ornament representing \$20 given. Every Sunday, Women’s Missions Director, Mae Dean, shared a little about the purpose of the offering and invited the children to come and help decorate the tree with the ornaments representing



*The Christmas Eve service hosted by New Day Baptist Church in Pendleton featured a video presentation that told the Christmas story along with Christmas carols and a candle-lighting ceremony. Everyone was encouraged to go out and share about the Light of the World.*



*The Redeemer Baptist Church choir presented, “Messiah Heaven’s Glory” on Sunday, December 22. against the backdrop of the manger scene created by church member, Christina Bowen, several years ago and used each Christmas to celebrate Christ’s birth.*

what had been given the prior week. The Christmas tree in the vestibule gave people an opportunity to select a paper ornament denoting a gift for a family in need or for the women’s shelter then purchase the item to put under the tree. The adults held their annual White Elephant Christmas party the first Saturday in December. The choir presented the Christmas music program, “Messiah Heaven’s Glory” on December 22. All activities are planned to celebrate and share God’s love.

New Day Baptist Church promoted filling Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes again this year. New Day Baptist Church in Muncie held a painting class

to help raise money for the shoebox ministry and were featured on the Samaritan Purse website. View the video at [www.samaritanpurse.org](http://www.samaritanpurse.org) and select Muncie, IN. All together, the 3 campuses provided 130 shoeboxes. The Alexandria Campus was an official drop-off location. They collected 553 shoeboxes which will be going to Peru. The Pendleton Campus will be an official drop-off location for 2020.

New Day Baptist Church in Pendleton hosted the joint campus Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24 at 6:00 p.m.

*(See more pictures on page 3.)*

| Inside This Issue   |   |
|---|---|
| <a href="#">Birthdays/Anniversaries</a> and <a href="#">Upcoming Events</a> | 2 |
| <a href="#">The Katecheo</a>  | 2 |
| <a href="#">AWANA Thanksgiving Dinner at Redeemer</a>                       | 3 |
| <a href="#">Churches Celebrating Christmas Pictures</a>                     | 3 |
| <a href="#">IMB Missionaries Share and Receive</a>                          | 4 |
| <a href="#">Lottie Moon Legacy Preserved in China</a>                       | 4 |
| <a href="#">Trustee Report</a>  | 4 |
| <a href="#">November P &amp; L and Balance Reports</a>                      | 5 |



Dr. Ron Ross

## As We Think of Christmas

Indeed, Christmas is truly a special time of the year. The sightings of bright, colorful lights with beautifully decorated trees, the smell of pine-scented greenery and the songs of the Christmas Season — all make the season very special. The growing anticipation mounts as we contemplate the giving and receiving of gifts — wow, there's nothing like Christmas. As we ponder in amazement the season and better yet, the reason for the season; let's consider why people celebrate Christmas in the first place. Is it really about evergreen trees, bright lights, seasonal music and gift exchange, or is there something more profound that is actually the reason for the seasonal celebration.

Seemingly, the name of this seasonal celebration lends a major clue to its significance. Jesus Christ was born in 4 B.C. in the city of Bethlehem, Israel to an engaged couple from the northern sector of that country. Though a major sector of the religious world trace their origin to Him, His uniqueness has changed the atmosphere of the world — some love Him while others hate Him, and some deny He even existed.

The Christmas Season is a Christian celebration despite the fact it has become a seasonal secular event, stressing the concept of gift exchange. In becoming so secular in nature, the true meaning of the season has been greatly twisted, and in some cases actually ignored. For over two-thousand years, the event celebrates the birth of a baby, an event that seldom considers He eventually became an adult and in His adulthood, He would change the course of human history.

Unbeknown to many, the baby in the manger of Bethlehem would be

declared “the only begotten Son of God.” He was the long-awaited Messiah for the Jewish nation. He was presented as being with God in eternity past, and actually, the One who created everything visible and invisible. He was the fulfillment of foreshadowed types verifying of His Deity, position, and promised return for His Church.

Today, if you have never been formally introduced to Jesus Christ, please take just a few minutes to consider the actual reason for this season. Before the first human being was created, God knew His creation would rebel against His authority. God knew Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree in rebellion against the wishes of their Creator. Once they ate of the forbidden tree — was there any hope of restoration? It was God who clothed the naked couple in animal skin instead of their leaf-coverings; however, such an act provides the student of the Bible with helpful clues. First, an animal's life was taken to provide covering for that first couple. Secondly, animal sacrifices were ordered and expected by God for the “covering of sin” in the Old Testament. An Old Testament prophet preached some six-hundred years before Jesus' birth that He would become the “Lamb of God,” the One who would pay in full the sin-debt incurred by us all. He would become the Savior of the world to those who would believe in Him solely for eternal life.

Yes indeed there are the bright lights, the ever-green trees, the carols, the exchanging of gifts...yes, indeed; however, there is a reason for it all. The reason for the celebration is because that Baby in the manger became the Savior on a cross, and one day He will be declared the King of kings and the Lord of lords. If you do not know Him, hopefully you will before this year is history. The greatest gift you will ever receive is

the gift of eternal life. If you desire a relationship with God, He will provide you with the ability to believe. You can become a child of God today. Experience the best Christmas ever, then share that experience with others.

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### Upcoming Events

#### In January

**January 9**—10:00 a.m., Leader Lab and Pastors Luncheon at Halteman Village Baptist Church, 4100 N Oakwood Avenue, Muncie, IN 47304

*SBC Emphasis for January*

**January 5-12** —January Bible Study

**January 19**—Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

*January*

*Please pray for our pastors and their wives on these special occasions.*

#### **Birthdays**

**None**

#### **Anniversaries**

**January 23**—Jim & Jama Marlow (North Del Muncie)

#### **Church Anniversaries**

**January 19**—Mark Wilkerson—Eaton, 9 years

# AWANA Kids Get a Traditional Thanksgiving Meal

The AWANA kids at Redeemer Baptist Church in Anderson were treated to a traditional Thanksgiving meal on November 20. Some of these children do not get to experience a meal like this with their family and found it to be a special treat. Parents and family members were invited to enjoy the meal, too. Here are a few pictures from that evening.



# More Churches Celebrating Christmas Pictures



*(Left) New Day Baptist Church in Muncie held a painting class that raised money that went to the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry.*



*(Below) New Day in Alexandria packed OCC Shoeboxes and served as an official drop-off location.*

*(Above and below) New Day Baptist Church in Pendleton gets items ready then packs into the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.*



# Missionaries Share About Their Ministry and Receive Help

Missionaries from Southeast Asia shared at our Associational quarterly meeting on November 14 and were also able to visit some of our churches while they were on furlough recently. Because they are in a sensitive area, we cannot use their names. They shared about some of the challenges and blessings they have experienced as they share Jesus in a predominantly Muslim world. Please keep them in your prayers as they return to their Asian home soon.

While here in the states, the missionary couple was able to purchase a home. Their plan is to rent it while they are out of the country then have it available for them to move into when they return. The home needed some repairs and remodeling to make it ready to rent. Women



Mike and Jamie Brown from New Day Baptist Church in Alexandria try on headwear from Southeast Asia and had their picture taken against a backdrop when IMB missionaries spoke at their church.



Pastor Chris Hubler lays flooring at the IMB Missionaries' home.

on Mission, Adults on Mission and the Men's Group from New Day Baptist Church in Alexandria helped the IMB missionaries with remodeling. Thanks goes to Jeremy Dishman, Eric and Kim Martindale,

Doug Rowland, Travis Semon, Pastor Chris Hubler and his wife, Tami, Jamie Brown and Sherri Hughey for helping with the house.



Lottie Moon's legacy will now be preserved beyond the Southern Baptist realm. Wulin Shenghui Church of Penglai in Shandong province, where Lottie Moon was a member during her time in Dengzhou, China, has been designated as a nationally protected historical and cultural site by The State Council of the People's Republic of China, the China Christian daily reported November 14. The announcement came just before Southern Baptists observe the Week of Prayer for the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions. This year's offering goal was \$165 million. The Week of Prayer was December 1-8.



## Trustee Report

We have accepted an offer on the Portland property and are working with the realtor to get everything finalized. We are happy to be able to turn the property over to the new owners before winter sets in.

Joe Fox

### ECBA Profit and Loss Statement for November 2019

|   |  |                 |
|---|--|-----------------|
| <b>Income</b>                               |  |                 |
| 4000 · Church Receipts                      |  |                 |
| 4060 · New Day                              |  | 1,000.00        |
| 4120 · Halteman - Muncie                    |  | 724.05          |
| 4140 · Kingston - Anderson                  |  | 284.40          |
| 4160 · North Delaware - Muncie              |  | 237.69          |
| 4170 · Old Town Hill - Muncie               |  | 0.00            |
| 4180 · Redeemer - Anderson                  |  | 704.98          |
| 4190 · First - Montpelier                   |  | 93.00           |
| 4210 · Faith Christian Fellowship           |  | 0.00            |
| 4230 · Integris                             |  | 271.42          |
| 4240 · Remedy City                          |  | 99.33           |
| 4250 · Muncie Chinese Christian Fellow      |  | 197.72          |
| <b>Total 4000 · Church Receipts</b>         |  | <b>3,612.59</b> |
| <b>Total Income</b>                         |  | <b>3,612.59</b> |
| <b>Expense</b>                              |  |                 |
| 7000 · Administrative Ministry              |  |                 |
| 7090 · Payroll                              |  | 714.92          |
| 7000 · Administrative Ministry - Other      |  | 2.90            |
| <b>Total 7000 · Administrative Ministry</b> |  | <b>717.82</b>   |
| 7200 · Church Planting                      |  | 105.22          |
| 7400 · Baptist Collegiate Ministry          |  | 69.00           |
| 7500 · Trustee                              |  | 116.69          |
| <b>Total Expense</b>                        |  | <b>1,008.73</b> |
| <b>Net Income</b>                           |  | <b>2,603.86</b> |

### ECBA Balance Report November 2019

|  | Nov 19            | Oct 19            | \$ Change       |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>1000 · ONB</b>                              |                   |                   |                 |
| 1010 · General Budget                          | 38,001.95         | 35,398.09         | 2,603.86        |
| 1011 · Discretionary Admin Team                | 7,493.99          | 7,493.99          | 0.00            |
| 1015 · BCM Rent Deposit                        | 0.00              | 0.00              | 0.00            |
| 1016 · BCM Capital Fund                        | 0.00              | 0.00              | 0.00            |
| 1025 · Mission Building Capital Fund           | 5,442.19          | 5,442.19          | 0.00            |
| 1035 · Church P&H Fund                         | 6,297.89          | 6,297.89          | 0.00            |
| 1040 · OMC                                     | 1,307.84          | 1,307.84          | 0.00            |
| 1051 · ECBA Endowment                          | 0.00              | 0.00              | 0.00            |
| 1055 · Funds Temporarily Restricted            | 2,599.78          | 2,599.78          | 0.00            |
| 1000 · ONB - Other                             | -900.99           | -900.99           | 0.00            |
| <b>Total 1000 · ONB</b>                        | <b>60,242.65</b>  | <b>57,638.79</b>  | <b>2,603.86</b> |
| <b>1100 · Indiana Baptist Foundation</b>       |                   |                   |                 |
| 1110 · ECBA Endowment                          | 9,866.01          | 9,866.01          | 0.00            |
| 1111 · Church P&H ROI                          | 1,331.39          | 1,331.39          | 0.00            |
| 1120 · Church P&H Fund                         | 17,978.09         | 17,978.09         | 0.00            |
| 1125 · BCMH Temp Restricted                    | 148,113.64        | 148,113.64        | 0.00            |
| <b>Total 1100 · Indiana Baptist Foundation</b> | <b>177,289.13</b> | <b>177,289.13</b> | <b>0.00</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                   | <b>237,531.78</b> | <b>234,927.92</b> | <b>2,603.86</b> |

**EAST CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

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Follow us



**Please pray for our Churches and Church Plants as they begin this New Year**

Integris Community Church in Albany

New Day Baptist Church in Alexandria

Faith Christian Fellowship in Anderson

Kingston Avenue Baptist Church in Anderson

Redeemer Baptist Church in Anderson

The Cross Church in Anderson

True North Church in Daleville

First Baptist Church in Eaton



First Baptist Church in Montpelier

Chinese Christian Fellowship in Muncie

Halteman Village Baptist Church in Muncie

North Delaware Baptist Church in Muncie

New Day Baptist Church in Muncie

Old Town Hill Baptist Church in Muncie

Remedy City Church in Muncie

New Day Baptist Church in Pendleton