

The BIG Gift  
John Jones

As we think about God’s good gifts to us through the month of December, where else could we start except with the BIG gift? I don’t know what your childhood was like, but I was very fortunate to have parents who made Christmas a big deal. My brother and I were given gifts (probably too many to be honest) on Christmas morning. Like Ralphie in *A Christmas Story*, *we were given a BIG gift after we’d opened the smaller gifts. Whereas Ralphie’s “official Red Ryder, carbine action, two-hundred shot range model air rifle” was hidden behind the Christmas tree (to his mother’s surprise), our parents would hide one end of a string somewhere in the tree or in the living room. When we found the string, we would follow it wherever it led (often outside). One year the string led us to a new trampoline and another year, we were excited to follow it to bikes in the garage. What wonderful Christmas memories!*

When we consider God’s gifts to us, we have so many things to be thankful for: a church family who loves us, every “good and perfect gift” (James 1:17) of our physical blessings, and all spiritual blessings which are found in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). But let’s not forget the BIG gift that makes all these other gifts possible:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Jesus Christ was God’s BIG gift to the world. His life and death have provided for us eternal life. There’s no need to connect December 25th to Jesus’s birthday when the Bible doesn’t do so, but isn’t it wonderful to consider that anytime we give, we are following the example of God? He gave freely, sacrificially, and of Himself. God’s gifts we receive don’t come with strings attached and they aren’t something impossible to find.

Our parents had great joy in giving us kids gifts at Christmas time, but eventually those toys would grow old, break, or something new would catch our attention. Consider God’s joy in giving us the eternal gift that never wears out. Let us always cherish His gift and show our appreciation for the Gift and the Giver in the way we live. As children, we may have struggled to share the gifts we received, but Jesus is the gift that continues to give to us, *especially when He is shared with others.*

While you consider the gifts that you’ll give and receive this season, let’s not forget Jesus. God’s BIG gift to mankind. Let’s model our own lives after His and give ourselves to the Lord for service. We do so by giving ourselves to the brethren, serving them, considering their needs, and working together for God’s glory.

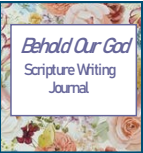
On Our Prayer List...  
\*May we always be using God’s blessing & power of prayer for one another: Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them they should always pray & not give up. Luke 18:1.

{Recent Medical concerns/updates}	{Upcoming Surgeries-Recovery}
<p>*<b>Retha Raye Mullinicks</b>-currently back in Horizon *<b>Cora Birchett</b>-been home sick</p>	 <p>*<b>Lacey Franklin</b>-now home after open heart surg- 6-8 wk recovery. *<b>Dennis Wright</b>-recovering fr shoulder surg</p>

THOSE DEALING/BEING TREATED FOR CANCER:	
<p>*<b>Jimmy Phy</b>-continued endurance with cancer *<b>Lillian Childress</b>-(Sherry Harvey’s aunt) , upcoming check up. Ck see if CA gone *<b>Dale Street</b>-(N. Buttrey grandfather)CA *<b>Mack Winstead</b>-CA-continued prayers *<b>Hudson Jones</b>-(2yr old son of Dan &amp; Catherine,Walnut St COC–Leukemia} *<b>Robert Gardner</b>(friend of Bill Williams) CA *<b>Debbie Gafford</b>-friend of Diane Curtis</p>	<p>*<b>Houston Howell</b> *<b>David Nowlin</b>-CA treatments-WcoC elder *<b>Joel Flowers</b>-(Joey’s dad) CA-home on hospice *<b>Jackie Borders</b>-Lauren Stuart’s mom *<b>Maggie Wright</b> -(friend of N. Buttrey) CA</p>

Listed below are those that are continuuing to have on-going medical issues that are in need of our prayers.					
* <b>Hattie Tate</b> * <b>Claude Hurt</b> * <b>Marcia Simpson</b> * <b>Whitney(Bullion)Sager</b> * <b>Savannah Patrick</b> -(Rhetts syndrome-Marsha Patrick’s granddaughter-she loves cards) c/o Jaimie Patrick—111 McJury Lane, Lafayette,TN	* <b>Betty Suddeath</b> * <b>Carlene Davis</b> * <b>Sue Edmission</b> * <b>Shane Cobb</b>	* <b>Al &amp; Vicki Peek</b> * <b>Rhonda Canada</b> * <b>Alyssa Gold</b> * <b>Warren</b> (Johnny) Proctor	* <b>Marvin England</b> * <b>Chase Lewis</b> * <b>Carolyn Wilson</b>	* <b>Mike Gunn</b> * <b>Doug Simpson</b> * <b>Steve Forster</b> * <b>Thelma Davidson</b> -(Gwen’s sister)	* <b>Margie Gunn</b> -now hm * <b>Josh Barnett</b> * <b>Scotty Palk</b>

{Assisted Living/Nursing Home/Rehab}	At Home in McEwen
<p><b>AHC Decatur County</b>-726 Kentucky Ave,Parsons,TN 38363<b>Wyle Marshall</b>-(Rm 726) (Traci Adams dad) <b>NHC</b>—812 N.Charlotte, Dickson,TN 37055- <b>JoAnn Haley</b> <b>Humphreys County NH</b> 104 Fort Hill Rd. Waverly,TN 37185-<b>June Dreaden</b>- Rm 204 <b>Magnolia Place</b>- 811 W. Main St, Waverly, TN 37185-<b>Jimmy Tyler</b>-(room 106) <b>Waverly Hills Post Acute</b>-895 Powers Blvd, Waverly, TN 37185-<b>Bertha Bradford</b>-rm 102A / <b>Gary Pace</b></p>	<p><b>Jim &amp; Jane Ridings</b>-172 Indian Ck Rd <b>Robert Bradford</b>-347 Brown Mill Rd. <b>Jimmy &amp; Retha Raye Mullinicks</b>-56 Mike St.</p>

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS			
<p>The church office will be closed the week of Christmas {Dec 22nd-Dec 26th}&amp; then on New Year’s Day, Jan 1st . There will be no bulletin for the week of Christmas. Those to serve for Dec 28th will be listed on Dec 15th bulletin. {Phone #’s are listed on OV door if you need}</p>	<p><b>Area Wide Singing</b> Will be this coming Friday night, Dec 12th @ 7:00 PM. As Mark said, this is the first year no one else as been scheduled for the same night. So we may have several more than usual. Be sure to sign up to bring food, list in the foyer. Thank You</p>	<p><b>Golden Age Banquet</b> this Sat. Dec 13th @ noon@ Samuel’s in Waverly. Bus will be leaving at 11:20 sharp.</p>	<p>We are so thankful &amp; rejoice in the baptism of Jarod Wright, last Friday. Be sure to encourage &amp; pray for him as our new brother in Christ.</p> <p><b>Ladies:</b> If you’re interested in joining us in doing the Ruffled Mango Scripture writing and want a notebook,the cost is (\$31.50). Please see Erin to order, &amp; remember You can still participate without the book.</p> 
<p><b>YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTIES:</b> {All Groups please bring a gift that will work for a boy or girl} Fast Groups - is a \$10-\$12 range. Bugs &amp; Youth Group—is a \$10-\$15 range.</p>			
<p><b>BUGS Group</b>-(Pre-k-2nd) Wed, Dec.17th @ 5:00 PM {Pancakes &amp; PJ’s} in the fellowship room. <b>FAST Group</b>-(3rd-5th) Sun, Dec14<sup>th</sup>@ 3:30{Parents-finger foods please}in the fellowship room. <b>YOUTH Group</b>-(6th-12th grades) - Sun, Dec 21st after evening worship at Keith &amp; Laurie’s.</p>			

IN F.O.C.U.S. Faith, Obedience, Character, Unity, Salvation

Our youth activities for this past week began with FLAME on Wednesday night. Our youth met at 5:15 and we began with a game called 4 On the Couch. It is a fun game that really makes the kids think. We played for about 45 minutes before enjoying some pizza together. We had 10 youth in attendance, and I appreciate each one for coming. Our final activity for the weekend was our devotional Sunday night after evening worship. We jumped on the bus and headed to Dickson to the home of Derek and Kelly Berryman. We had 10 teens and 5 younger ones in attendance, along with 8 adults. We began with a devotional period together of singing followed by a lesson from John Hurt. After devo we enjoyed some GREAT food and fellowship together. I appreciate all the youth and adults that came and I am so thankful for the Berryman family for hosting and providing the food. It was another great night with great people!

In Christian Love, Keith

## ***SCHEDULE OF SERVICES***

### **Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> 2025**

<i>Welcome</i> .....	Mark Forster
<i>Lead Singing</i> .....	Mark Forster
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Prayer</i> .....	Dwight Stuart
<i>Sermon</i> .....	John Jones
<i>Lord's Table</i> .....	Gerald Curtis
Jimmy Suddeath	Ethan Tummins
Terry Parchman	Mike Burns
Thomas Cook	Chad Vaughn
<i>Closing Prayer</i> .....	Andrew Peyton
<i>Collect Cards</i> .....	Jaxon Holt & Sterling Hurt
<i>Greeters</i> .....	Lori & Karolann Ridings
<i>Nursery</i> .....	<i>Not at this time</i>
<i>Collect Cups</i> .....	Youth
<i>Security</i> .....	Team #5

### **Sunday 6PM December 14<sup>th</sup>2025**


<i>Lead Singing</i> .....	Mark Forster
<i>Prayer</i> .....	Billy Buttrey
<i>Sermon</i> .....	John Jones
<i>Lord's Table</i> .....	Derek Berryman & Mike Tyler
<i>Closing Prayer</i> .....	Jesse Kilpatrick

### **Wednesday 6:30 PM, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2025**

<i>Lead Singing</i> .....	Bruce Mayfield
<i>Prayer</i> .....	Joe Smith
<i>Adult Class</i> .....	John Jones

*\*If you are unable to serve.....please contact  
Wade Tummins in advance. (cell 931-209-6291)*

*\*If changes need to be made in scheduling please  
contact Jimmy Phy.*



# The MESSENGER

A weekly publication of the McEwen church of Christ

Week of December 7<sup>th</sup> 2025


A Caring Church Lifting Up The CROSS And CROWN of CHRIST

FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH:  
BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS

*eternal life*

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

ROMANS 6:23



Schedule of Services

**Sunday**

Bible Study.....9:00am  
Worship.....10:00am  
Evening.....6:00pm

**Wednesday**

Bible Study.....6:30pm

Elders:

Calvin Buckner

Billy Buttrey	Bruce Mayfield
W.R. Long	Mike Robertson

Deacons:

Derek Berryman	Mike Burns
Wayne Coates	Mark Forster
John Hurt	Barry Phy
Robert Proctor	James Ridings
Joe Smith	Dwight Stuart
Ethan Tummins	Wade Tummins
Ronnie Tyler	

Staff:

Ministers	-----	Every Member
Pulpit	-----	John Jones
Youth	-----	Keith Grigsby
Secretaries	-----	Terri Tummins
		Teresa Fleming

<u>Sunday Morning</u>	"Upcoming Sermons"	<u>Sunday Night</u>
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To Contact Us:  
9704 Hwy 70 E  
Mail us: P.O. Box 256  
McEwen, TN 37101  
Phone: 931-582-6130

E-mail: [mcewencofc@gmail.com](mailto:mcewencofc@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.mcewenchurchofchrist.com](http://www.mcewenchurchofchrist.com)

EVANGELISM PROGRAM  
**Continue to be:**

1. Praying for those we are studying with
2. To provide new {Contact's} cards for us to reach out to.

**{Team - 2 there will be cards to work on this Wednesday night.}**

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