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## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 3, 2020

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### A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVE

#### **A Weary World Rejoices**

I so enjoy singing the old Christmas songs. They seem to connect me to the past and remind my soul to rejoice at the coming of Jesus to this world. As old as they are, they speak of the reality of hope that can crash into us this year as

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*

*Fall on your knees!  
O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;*

We are living in a weary world right now. Weary from being isolated. Weary from being torn by conflicting information. Weary from not seeing smiles, or frowns, for that matter. Weary because it takes more energy to navigate a day than it used to. We also live in a society that is sliding further and further away from the rule of Christ. As frustrating as this is, it is not unique in history.

This Christmas you'll probably watch Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. It was written in a time when there was great poverty; when the poor barely made a living; when people were weary from the cost of living (literally!); when workhouses and orphanages were synonymous; and when large families, high mortality rates, and illness were the norm.

Or go back further to the time of Christ. The Jewish people had been oppressed in their own homeland for decades. They longed for the freedom to live and worship without Roman laws and punishments looming constantly.

The lyrics go, "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn." When Jesus left his throne in heaven and took on flesh (the incarnation), He brought the thrill of hope to a weary world. This hope remains today. It is the hope that we who know Him as Savior have an eternal home and this is not it. It is a sure hope of victory over death and disease. It's why both Bonnie's parents and mine have said, "We'd rather have you come than be isolated without human contact. Besides, we want to go home. It doesn't matter how we get there." Jesus' invasion into the world brought hope for new life, eternal life, abundant life.

"Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till He appear'd and the soul felt its

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Just like drugs, their effects wear off and the empty misery of sin returns. God's love for us was strong enough to send His Son. The truth is we are all sinners who deserve eternal death, but God loved us. He valued us. He cared for us enough to die on a cross to bear our sins. So the lyrics were right, "Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth". Our worth is not in our accomplishments, but in His value of us. He valued us so much that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

If you are struggling with weariness or sin this season, I'd like to suggest you ponder what God did on that holy night when our dear Savior was born. Just maybe, you will be caught up in the thrill of hope.

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## You are Invited...

**What:** Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

**When:** Thursday, December 24, 3:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.

**Where:** RiverValley Church

*Please note: There will be no child care for these services.*



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## RVC | kids

Even though my children are all grown, I still love collecting children's books. One of my favorites is *The Carrot Seed* by Crockett Johnson. It is a simple book about the patience and determination of a young child. Let's face it, patience is hard for an adult and even harder for a child (believe me, I have seen my fair share of impatient kids). One of my more humorous prayers as a young convert in the faith was, "Hurry up, God, and give me patience!" At the time, I didn't know I wasn't supposed to pray for patience. At least that is what I

We all face situations that try our patience on a daily basis. Maybe the kids are being unusually difficult, and you need a little more patience to get through the moment. Maybe the Wi-Fi is slow, and your kids cannot finish their school work. When times are hard, it's even more difficult to keep going with a good attitude. When everything is going our way, patience is easy. When we face opposition, patience is hard. I pray for you families that are home together that you would be completely humble and patient and bearing with one another in love (Eph. 4:2). I ask that your love for God would come through as patience and kindness (1 Cor. 13:3-4). I ask that the Holy Spirit works so others can see His love in you by the way you are patient with each other.

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## RVC MEN

We meet at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 12. Breakfast will be served at 8 a.m. followed by a video and discussion. We are finishing the Men's Fraternity 33 material. This is the final lesson on the idols of significance and comfort.

A quote from this week:

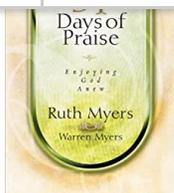
"The thing we remember from meeting a truly gospel-humble person is how much they seem totally interested in us. Because the essence of gospel-humility is not thinking MORE of myself or thinking LESS of myself; it is thinking of myself less." Tim Keller

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## NEW DECEMBER LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Thursday morning ladies Bible study group will work through a book on thankfulness in December. This is a great drop-in study that all ladies are welcome to join. Though the study began this week, there is still plenty of time to join. Just meet next Thursday in the Café at 9:00 a.m. The study goes until

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If you are interested in joining ladies Bible study after the new year, the Thursday morning group will be starting the video series *Jesus and Women*.

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## SERMON NOTES AND SPACERS

Sermon notes are available on Sunday mornings. You can pick them up before you enter the Worship Center. They are located in a basket under the missions map.

Also, as a reminder, we have Spacers available for you, as well, under the missions map. Spacers are 8.5" x 11" pieces of paper that you can use to let people know you want one or two spaces between you. So, if you'd like to use a spacer, please pick one up before entering the Worship Center. You will see that we have more chairs in the rows in the middle section, because we have some large families that need more seats.

Note: If you don't use a spacer, then you can't give the "Stink Eye" when the ushers put people in the row next to you. I am actually teasing a little. I have noticed that people assume they are getting the stink eye sometimes when they aren't, but with masks it's hard to tell. Remember, lots of grace.

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## 2021 GIVING ENVELOPES

Giving envelopes for 2021 will be available for pickup in the Café starting on Sunday, December 13. If you are new since last year and don't have giving envelopes but would like some, please let Kathi Miller know. Also, if you prefer to give online and no longer need envelopes, you can let her know that, too. Kathi can be reached at (920) 231-2265.

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## GIVING UPDATE:

### YTD Giving 5/1/20 - 11/30/20

Actual: \$441,228.32

Budgeted: \$414,284.00

### Weekly Giving: 11/23/20 - 11/29/20

\$14,979.09

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