



To the church of God as found at Marion Salem Church, called to be saints together with those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ: You are miracles of God's grace and mercy!

I've been thinking a lot about Christmas. It's not too far away now and it came to me that I need to manage my expectations for Christmas. I don't think this is going to be the Greatest Christmas Ever. Don't get me wrong. I think our family and our congregation are going to have a very good Advent and Christmas season—but the greatest? I mean, we live in a fallen world. Just so we're on the same page:

The Top Ten Reasons This WON'T Be the Greatest Christmas Ever

#10: The Weather is not going to cooperate: For some it will be snowy and that will be bad, for others it will be green and that will be equally as bad.

#9: You will find stress or perhaps stress will find you. Let's face it, there's a reason why hustle and bustle makes us cranky.

#8: People will be people. Someone is going to say or do something (or not say or do something) and it's going to be the source of stress, moodiness, and all sorts of unpleasantness. "Yeah, holidays!"

#7: Someone won't be able to afford Christmas. Many families in our community and some in our congregation will experience a financial pinch that will put a damper on celebrations.

#6: Someone won't be able to come home for Christmas. Certainly an experience that many families have experienced because of circumstances, yet there are also those who choose to be apart.

#5: Someone will be hungry for Christmas. For some families presents are the least of their concerns when it comes to Christmas. There will be a struggle to put food on the table.

#4: Someone will be sick for Christmas. We've had at least one Christmas where the flu's timing couldn't have been worse. Still, the flu is the least of concerns when it comes to health for some.

#3: We will miss someone at Christmas time. This one hits for me, those who made Christmas special and are no longer with us.

#2: It also won't be the Second Best Christmas, because that's the one where Jesus came to Earth as a little baby boy born in Bethlehem.

And finally, the number 1 reason why this won't be the Greatest Christmas Ever: When Christ returns that will be a real Christmas and it will be the Greatest Christmas Ever... Well, so I guess there is a chance He could decide to come back this Christmas— so I'll caveat with that.

For now, I'm placing my hope in a good Christmas, even very good—and looking forward to when Christ returns and makes it great!

Blessings 🙌,

Advent & Christmas Season Messages Series:

Nov. 30th: "One Unmistakable Return, One Response Demanded"

Matthew 24

Dec. 7th: "Hope, Standing Firm, and Comforted"

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Thessalonians 2

Dec. 14th: Christmas Musical "Love Sent a Child"

Dec. 21st: "T minus 5, 4..."

Romans 9:1-5, 10:1-4, 14-17

Dec. 24th: Christmas Eve "To Still the Chaos"

Philippians 2:5-11



Thank You!!



Thank you to our wonderful congregation for supporting the Upper Room and Genesis Sunday school classes with our sub sale.

Your generosity helps fund the many ministries that serve both within our church walls and out in our community. We are grateful for your continued support and loving spirit.



Thank you to everyone who has volunteered with the Mites' Message.

Your efforts are very much appreciated!!



Salem Card Exchange

Starting this weekend we will have tables out in the crossover to the Family Center for you to place Christmas Cards. Please sort your cards with the alphabetical dividers.

Please only place cards for those who attend Salem and shut-ins from Salem.



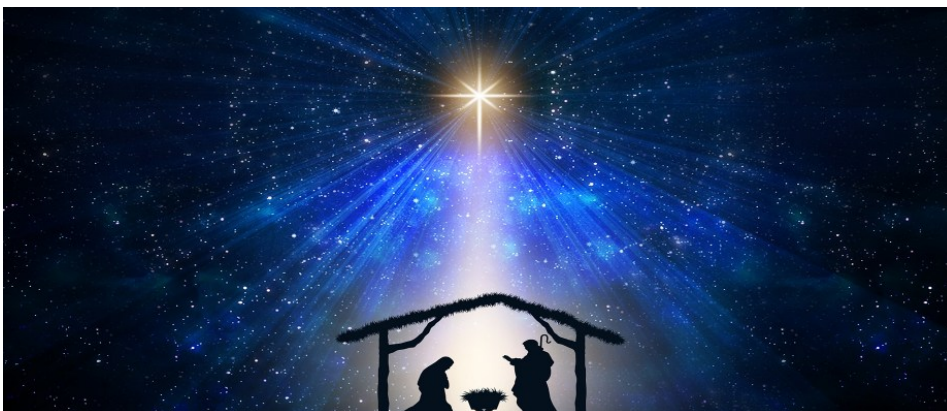
Wed. Dec. 10—Noon

Menu: Pizza

White elephant exchange

Dear God '26

Be watching for a 24-hour prayer marathon sign-up to start the New Year.



Rhema Academy Christmas Program

Everyone is invited

Date: December 11

Time: 6:30 pm

Place: Sanctuary



These Thanksgiving baskets were assembled by the Primary Class to give to our shut-ins and those who need an outreach of love. Thank you to everyone for donating, assembling and delivering!



"He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; he gently leads those that have young." Isaiah 40:11

The Strivers Sheepdog Spot



ASSISTING THE GOOD SHEPHERD IN TENDING THE FLOCK, ESPECIALLY THE LAMBS AND THOSE THAT HAVE YOUNG



Meet at the Church at 3:30pm on December 14th to carpool with Pastor Heather!



**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
& SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**

AT WOLF CREEK FARM AND SUPPLY

DEC 13TH 4-8PM DEC 14TH 4-7PM

Catch the bus at Northmor Board Office
to begin your journey

Step back in time and experience
the wonder of the very first Christmas.

- Live animals
- Costumed characters
- Family-friendly event for all ages
- Shop the marketplace

**ADMISSION: FREE
REFRESHMENTS
AVAILABLE**

**Come walk the streets of Bethlehem and
celebrate the true meaning of Christmas!**

www.mocobethlehemjourney.com

Strivers Youth Schedule

- **Dec 7, 6pm:** The Advent Conspiracy
- **Dec 14, 6pm:** Youth Christmas Party
- **Dec 21, 6pm:** New Year
- **Dec 28:** NO YOUTH GROUP Happy New Year!

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the

SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

If Marion County issues a level 2 or level 3 snow advisory or if Crawford County issues a level 3, all youth events will be cancelled for the day.

*Pastor Heather lives in Crawford County and will still try to make youth group if that county is under a level 2 and Marion is not. Parents and volunteers will be notified via text if a last minute cancellation must be made.

A New Advent Intergenerational Devotional Tradition

The Jesse Tree is a way of preparing for Christmas by journeying through the stories on Jesus's family tree.



The Jesse Tree tradition is rooted in Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jesse was the father of David, Israel's greatest king.

And Jesus is descended from the line of David. He is the branch God promised would grow from Jesse's family tree. Each day of Advent, we will read a Bible story about someone on Jesus's family tree and hang an ornament symbolizing the story on your Christmas tree. As you decorate your tree, you'll see how God prepared for Jesus to be born through many generations. Ornaments that you can color and devotionals for families and teens/adults were passed out on November 30. Contact Pastor Heather if you didn't get yours! Pre-colored ornaments will also be added to a tree during Junior Church.

Rev. Heather McLeod, Family Life Pastor · pastor.heather.gmc@gmail.com · 412-527-4531



We are looking for Adult Volunteers to help with Youth!

Are you passionate about helping teens grow in their faith? Our church's youth group is looking for dedicated volunteers to help lead and mentor our youth. We have several roles available, including:

- **Small Group Mentors:** Provide a consistent presence and spiritual guidance to a small group of teens.
- **Event Support:** Help with logistics for special events, retreats, and fundraisers.
- **Transportation:** Provide rides to and from events or regular meetings.

Thank you again for the warm welcome that I continue to receive on a regular basis. Coming here was truly an answer to prayer on both of our parts!

I would like to get to know you better, especially if you are or have been a volunteer in Sunday School, or Youth Ministry, or are a Parent or Grandparent. When and why did you come to Marion Salem? What is your faith story? What are your hopes and dreams for the future? I will also share some of my story and vision for the future of children, youth, and young adult ministry at Marion Salem Church. Contact me at my email or cell below, or scan this QR code to sign up for a time to meet online.



Coffee with Pastor Heather



Coming Soon to a Church Near You

It has been a busy first month, and I cannot wait to share with you some of the ideas that I have for the future! Here

is what I am currently focusing on.

1. **Setting the foundation for a solid youth ministry.** While it would be wonderful if we suddenly had a 30 member youth group again, that is not going to happen overnight. As we invite youth to attend youth group, what are we inviting them to? It is more than just games and pizza. We are inviting them into a relationship with Jesus, and for those who already have a relationship to grow deeper. As we grow, I hope to split into small groups, first by gender, and then by gender and age group. In these groups, students will discuss the Bible lesson, pray for each other, and encourage each other in their walk with the Lord.
2. **A mid-week children's ministry for Grades 1-6.** This is currently in the dreaming phase, but I am hoping to launch something in the fall of 2026. Parents of children in this age range, what would you like to see?
3. **Something for young adults.** 20-somethings and 30-somethings, what are your needs? A Bible Study or Sunday School? A place to just hang out? A safe place for questions? Community service and/or mission opportunities? Baby sitters to watch the kids so you can have a date night for once? Let me know!

Pastor Heather



Blue Christmas Memorial Service

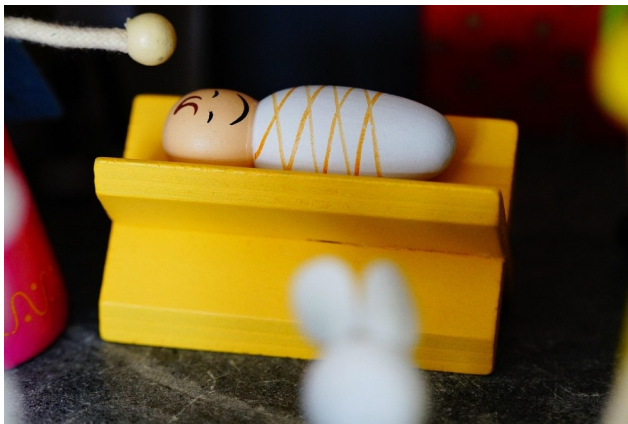
6:30 pm Wednesday,
December 10th

When painful memories
cloud Christmas cheer...

When the hustle and bustle
has made you sour...

When celebrating is the last
thing on your mind...

Come to Remember and Be Remembered



Christmas Program

The choir and children of Marion Salem will be presenting their version of **Love Sent a Child** on Sunday, December 14th during the morning service. There will be worship, special music, the children's bell choir and more. Come and enjoy watching the children give their best to Jesus!

*The Sharp Family
Invites you to a
Christmas Open House*

Join us at the parsonage on Sat. Dec 13,
Come and go anytime between 2:00 and 5:00pm.
Enjoy some snacks and conversation with us!
Please enter at our front door.



Rhema Academy Honors our Veterans

Rhema students led an assembly honoring five local veterans on Veterans Day. They interviewed each person, made posters and poems to honor them, had an extensive Q & A session followed by lunch. Thank you to our veterans and thank you to the students who recognized their sacrifices!

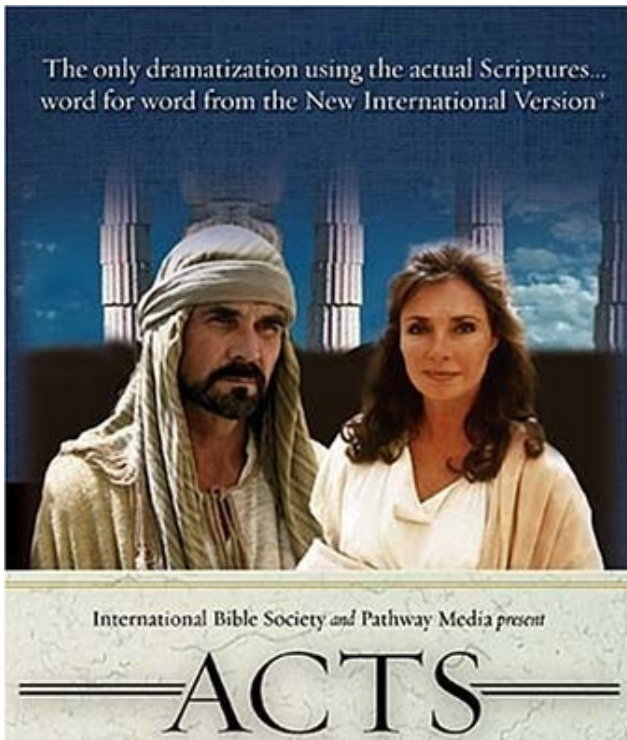


Monday Bible Study—Hiatus

We are going to pause the Monday Bible Study as the days get darker sooner. The Study will resume in February picking up in Acts 9:32.

Rhema Chapels on Wed. 9am

Rhema Academy invites the Salem Church Family to join them for worship on Wednesdays, please enter by the office door and check in at office before 8:50am.



Basic Christian Faith Wednesdays 7pm

Join Pastor Jason for an engaging time of discussion as we explore basic teachings of Christian Faith. This is a paced study and you can drop in anytime.

December Studies:

- 3rd: study continues
- 10th: No study, Blue Christmas Service
- 17th: study resumes
- 24th: No study, Christmas Eve Service
- 31st: No study, New Year's Eve



Christmas Eve 7PM

Communion & Candlelight Service

It's tradition! This year we look at the unlikelyst of Christmas Scriptures, telling us the story of Christ's coming to Earth and leading us straight to the cross.

Remember to invite your friends, family and neighbors! We'll celebrate communion together, pass the flame around with candles, and welcome the birth of Christ singing "Silent Night!"

The First Sunday of Christmas! Dec. 28th

Scriptures, Songs, and a Story!

Journey through the story of Scripture as we once again see how Christ is revealed from beginning to end. This is a great opportunity to invite people to worship.

No sermon!

We'll need volunteer readers, sign up at information table.



REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A FOOD BANK.

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- December 20 - tomato soup
- December 21 - can corn
- December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- December 23 - can carrots
- December 24 - can green beans


PASSIONATEPENNYPINCHER.COM

Each week we serve between 6 to 10 families in our community through our food pantry.

During the month of December, we will be restocking food supplies through a reverse advent giving.

We are encouraging families to add one food item each day to a grocery bag and bring the bag to Sunday service at the end of each week to fill up our big Christmas box in the back of the sanctuary.

December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Ladies party 6 pm	3 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	4 Family Center Reserved	5 Nick & Natalie	6 Family Center Reserved
7 Communion	8	9	10 Knitting/Craft 1pm Blue Christmas 6:30	11 Rhema Concert 6:30	12 Family Center Reserved	13 Sharp Open House 2-5 pm
14 Children's Program	15 Ad C 6:30/7 pm	16	17 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	18 AHG 6 pm	19	20 Family Center Reserved
21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 7 pm	25 Merry Christmas 	26	27 Family Center Reserved
28	29	30	31			



Pray for

Ron VonAlmen
Janet Schelb
Jude Stitzel
Sheryl Campbell
Donna McKinnis
Vicki Adams
Israel
Judi Myers
Rick Hicks
Haiti
Mike Dilsaver
Steve Crock
Paul Messenger
Kelly Marsh family
Shawn Wilcox
Jamie Marquis
Inda Lama
Janie Wooten
Doug Burkhart
Mary Linn
Joni McCray
Helen Denton family
Jana Bauer
Tierney Bender
Sharon Murray
Colton, Haylie
Camden
Callen Klingler
Steve Shamhart



1st Sunday every month in the Family Center at 8:30 AM.

Dec—Upper Room Class
Jan—Genesis Class



Birthdays

12/1 Nick Hedges
12/3 Piper Croskey
12/8 Dorothy Barker
12/13 Sharon Murray
12/15 Sheryl Campbell
Dale Wagner
12/17 Mike Doezema
Penny Rose
12/ 22 Kathy Fisher
12/26 Jay Woodruff
12/30 Bob Barker
Bill Linn



GREETERS

12/7 Janet Burns & Janet Strine
12/14 Cindy Fuller & Cheryl Slack
12/21 Curt & Mary Galloway
12/28 Jana Bauer & Leslie Jordan



ANNIVERSARIES

12/2 Mike & Cheryl Doezema
12/14 Terry & Kathy Fisher

Children's Church

12/7 Pageant practice
12/14 Children's program
12/21 No Children's Church
12/28 No Children's Church

Nursery Schedule

12/7 Avy Bauer & Marilyn Shroyer
12/14 No nursery
12/21 Karla Sharp & Robbi Smart
12/28 Jennifer & Piper Croskey