

**AND THE PEOPLE CAME...**

- Week of December 3, 2023 -

Sunday School -----	34
Sunday Morning Service -----	31
Sunday Evening Service -----	22
Wednesday Eve., 12/06/23 Service -----	23

**AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...**

- Week of December 3, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 2,084.25
Love Offering Income -----	\$ 300.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 12/03/23: \$</b>	<b>2,384.25</b>

- Week of November 26, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,072.93
Media Ministry -----	\$ 1.00
Children's Missionary Offering -----	\$ 9.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/26/23: \$</b>	<b>1,082.93</b>

- Week of November 19, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,147.59
Children's Ministry -----	\$ 5.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/19/23: \$</b>	<b>1,152.59</b>

- Week of November 12, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,245.00
Children's Ministry -----	\$ 5.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/12/23: \$</b>	<b>1,250.00</b>

- Week of November 5, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,944.35
Children's Ministry -----	\$ 10.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/05/23: \$</b>	<b>1,954.35</b>

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,600.00



**WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED**

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.

GIFTS OF THE MODERN WISE MEN



Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.—Romans 1:22

REMINDER



The Unexpected Blessing of a Rural Church

*"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35).*

As I sat on a hard wooden pew in a tiny church listening to the preacher, my heart raced and beads of sweat covered my forehead. I blushed as I looked to and fro like a trapped rabbit before a hound dog, afraid to be seen if I moved, but filled with a panicked desire to flee. Even in my guilt and shame, my ears and eyes fixated on the pastor as every word he spoke resonated with and pierced my soul. The sermon centered on a woman who found faith and mercy, forgiveness and grace - words I had never heard before. She should have been ashamed, instead she openly and freely worshiped her Savior as she wiped Jesus's feet with her hair and tears. I felt as if I were the only one in the room. It seemed the pastor spoke directly to me as one who knew my thoughts and feelings. Could he know? I twisted my feet in restless angst, wishing I were invisible. Yet I hung on every word, drawn to them like a magnet. The wrestling match within my soul ceased with a quiet solitary prayer for forgiveness and mercy. That was the day the Holy Spirit melted my rock-hard heart and redeemed me - the day I found true peace.

The town I live in is a small community in a rural Canadian province. By small and rural, I mean population: 700. We live a one-hour drive from the nearest city. The "big city" here is as populous as most people would describe a small town. Because of its size and location, many would think this community is insignificant, but it has proven not too small for God to do his mighty work. This little town was the last place I thought I would find the Lord - not that I even looked for Him.

I didn't look because I didn't need Him. Life was just grand, you know. I had it all - a husband who was my high-school sweetheart, best friend, and co-laborer in raising our two responsible pre-teen children. We both worked decent jobs which provided all that we could ask for including the standard two cars, a nice house with a view, and so much more. Somehow though emptiness and hopelessness still gnawed on my fearful soul.

The Lord often draws a lost person by the most unusual means. In my case, he used a guitar-teacher-turned-small-town-gospel-preacher. This former musician had just moved to our community to plant a new church, of which I cared little about. Church was for religious people, and I was not one of them. My son began taking guitar lessons with him, and he often came home with invitations to various church events. I grew curious yet resisted.

I met many from the church, each time captivated by their sincere love. These people reached out to offer help and kindness. They exuded a happiness I had never seen before and a concern for others that seemed almost strange to me. Even so, I remained distant. When I met the pastor's wife, I walked away amazed by her genuine love and joy. Her patient answers to my foolish questions about church and God, which exposed my lack of knowledge, displayed her genuine care and desire for my children and me to come to church. Even as a stranger and outcast, I felt unconditionally accepted. Nevertheless, fear, pride, and a guarded heart kept me away.

The fate of my eternity changed on the second Sunday in September seventeen years ago. I awoke with a start, and for the first time in my life felt strangely **determined** to go to church, to finally accept the invitations from my son's persistent guitar teacher. I walked a little lighter on my feet that morning as the kids and I got ready to leave. We drove into the parking lot, an interwoven mixture of gravel and grass. Even though it was small, the century-old building dressed in weathered clapboards painted ages ago loomed large

(continued inside)

**LISTEN TO -**



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

**Church Directory**

Todd W. White -----	Pastor
Debra Carlton, Mickie Shatwell, Lois Mae Floyd -----	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly -----	Greeter
Kim Phillips; Shirley White/LeAnna White; Berdena Bergman/Debra Carlton; Daniel Avery/GiGi Avery; & Keith Shufelt -----	Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars -----	Outreach
LeAnna White -----	Custodian
Keith Shufelt -----	Men's Prayer Group
GinaMarie Shufelt -----	Ladies Bible Study/Flowers
Seth White -----	Sound/Video

before me. Rectangular stained-glass windows glistened in the morning light, and a wooden cross rose high above the front door. I froze. After all, what would people think? I did not belong. Fear almost held me in place, yet something stronger pushed me on. Up the stairs the kids and I ambled, my stomach in knots. There was no turning back as we passed through the main doors that landed us right in the sanctuary. Genuine smiles and the warmest welcome greeted us, evaporating my fear and stilling my shaking body. I felt like I had been wrapped in a warm blanket. The joy and care that poured forth from these people cast all my hesitation aside as the kids and I found a seat in a wooden pew.

Two Sundays later I sat in that same wooden pew in the same country church filled with less than fifty people, in a nowhere blink-and-you-miss-it town. This was the Sunday the preacher told the story of the woman who wept at Jesus’s feet. Though the preaching of the Word changed my heart, the people drew me in to hear it. The love of these Christians made this outcast feel welcome and enabled me to let my guard down and Christ in.

Love for Christ compelled this pastor to accept the call—**“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19)**—to sacrificially move to and labor in a rural community in order to build a church from nothing. This pastor’s compassion for the lost stirred him to pray for a woman who looked so empty, depressed, and fearful one day as I unknowingly sat behind him in a drive-thru line. That same love and compassion still drives him on as he continues to boldly preach the gospel, which not only saved me but both of my children as well.

The local church is like a raindrop that lands on still waters and ripples outward in concentric circles, growing larger and wider as it travels. Though He doesn’t need to, God uses means to accomplish His work on earth. He uses ordinary men, women, and children of his church doing ordinary tasks in the mundane moments of daily life. Somehow, God takes these meager offerings, like the five loaves and two fish, and multiplies them for eternity. This is the local church. Yours might be small or large—neither matter. What matters is the faithfulness of the body, first to love God with all their heart and then love their neighbor by serving him or her in any way they can. The local church isn’t perfect; sinners dwell there, after all. But it’s glorious when each does his part. What a true privilege to serve with those who love the Lord sacrificially.

They tore down that old country church with its wooden pews many years ago once this small-town body of Christ outgrew it. We now gather in a larger facility—an old grocery store—historical charm and stained glass replaced with steel siding and a sprawling flat roof. Even better than the physical building, Christ’s presence dwells amongst His people here. The love that welcomed me seventeen years ago, lowered my guard, and prepared my heart to receive the gospel, has done the same thing to many others over the years. It’s the love of God in His people—a surprising love to those without hope and without God—and it still draws the lost to their Saviour today.

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## NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

❑ **TIKTOK JESUS** - TikTok has dozens of videos with computer-generated Jesuses quoting Bible verses in synthetic voices. They promise the viewer some vague blessing, such as “good news soon” or “blessing in an hour,” in exchange for likes, comments (“amen,” “I believe”), or sharing.

There are also threats. One of the videos that has been watched 22 million times says, *“Send this video to all your friends and family, if you reject, remember what he said: ‘If you deny me before men, I will deny you before the father.’”* The **Daily Believer**, with 70 of these Jesus videos, has over 800,000 followers and 9.2 million likes. The statistics mean the Daily Believer is raking in money through the TikTok Creator Fund that pays creators with over 10,000 authentic followers (as evidenced by likes, comments, and sharing). The Jesus images are the typical Anglo-Saxon hippy Jesus variety. The “gospel” is a vague “believe in the power,” “discover God’s unconditional love,” etc.

**Matthew 24:24** - *“For there shall arise false Christs...”*

**II Corinthians 11:4** - *“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”*

❑ **UN AND “FAITH LEADERS” CALL FOR DRACONIAN CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION** - This month, religious leaders joined hands with their secular one-worlder counterparts at the United Nations Climate Summit (COP28) in Dubai. The “faith pavilion” demonstrated *“the pivotal role of faith communities in tackling the climate crisis”* (“Faith Leaders Can Influence the World,” Religion News Service, Nov. 30, 2023).

Blaming everything from hurricanes to drought and famine on “climate change,” the UN and their religious partners called upon wealthy nations to pony up yet more money. It’s the best scam the UN has yet devised. Pope Francis had to cancel his scheduled appearance at COP28 for health reasons, but he has issued an encyclical on saving the planet. He said, “Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God.” Cardinal Joseph Tobin, archbishop of Newark, NJ, a delegate to COP28, said, “World leaders must keep their promises to provide more financial support for these communities [developing countries]. The clock is ticking. We must act soon and with unity.” Tobin is correct about “the clock ticking,” but the only “global warming” the Bible warns about is the rapidly approaching day of the Lord when the opportunity for salvation will be finished.

**“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought**

**ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Peter 3:10-13).**

❑ **BAPTIST CHURCH HOSTS DRAG QUEEN** - Grace Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia, hosted a “drag queen” on Dec. 2 to show support for “the LGBTQ+ community.” It was part of the Grace Concert Series. Flamy Grant, a man who dresses like a woman, was advertised by the church as “a shame slaying, hop-swaying, singing-songwriting drag queen.” In June, Flamy performed at the Drag Queen Bible Story Hour at Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. A Facebook post said, “For the gift of Drag Queens, O God, we give you thanks!” This apostate church advocates for using third-person pronouns for God. A banner hanging above the church entryway reads, “GOD: the original they/them.” Flamy’s Bible Belt Baby (2022) “is the world’s first full-length contemporary Christian album by a drag performer.” It hit number one on the iTunes Christian album chart. The single “Good Day,” featuring Derek Webb of Caedmon’s Call, charted at No. 20 on Billboard’s Christian Digital Song Sales. On Twitter, Oct. 13, 2023, Webb promoted the sale of a cup bearing an image of him in a dress (drag queen attire) and the slogan “but i say unto you, you’re beautiful and free” from his song “God in Drag.” Webb presumptuously uses the words of Jesus (“But I say unto you”) from the Gospels to claim Christ’s support for homosexuality.

❑ **HOW THE BIBLE CONNECTS FALSE TEACHERS WITH HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE LAST DAYS** -

**“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. ... For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment ... And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly ... Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. ... Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children ... These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage”.**

- II Peter 2:1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 14, 17-19)

❑ **JUDGE REJECTS TEACHERS UNION’S EFFORT TO CANCEL VOUCHER PROGRAM** - School choice is the only program that can have a significant impact in reducing the power of America’s propagandizing public school system, and school choice is growing. At the same time, the government remains in ultimate control of the money in these schemes, which could always spell danger at some point. The best thing Bible-believing parents can do, in our estimation, is to home school or church school and don’t take a dime from the government.

God has promised to take care of those who trust Him. At the same time, the school choice movement is an encouraging sign in these times. We believe it is an answer to prayer.

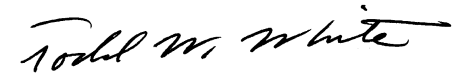
The following is excerpted from “Judge tosses,” Fox News, Nov. 19, 2023:

“The New Hampshire Superior Court on Wednesday dismissed a teachers union’s challenge to the state’s voucher program, which argued that the use of public money to fund private schools was unconstitutional. Merrimack County Superior Court Judge Amy L. Ignatius ruled that the AFT [American Federation of Teachers-New Hampshire] failed to prove the measure violates the Constitution. According to In Depth New Hampshire, who procured notes from the case, Ignatius said that ‘the burden of proof is on Howes to prove it is unconstitutional.’ Howes had failed to do so. ... The Education Trust Fund, which was established to distribute education grants to school districts, was amended this year to include vouchers. The vouchers are facilitated through Education Freedom Accounts [EFA]. ... Reacting to the outcome of the case, American Federation For Children Senior Fellow Corey DeAngelis told Fox News Digital that ‘power-hungry teachers unions were just dealt a major L[oss] in New Hampshire.’ ‘Education freedom is here to stay, and there’s nothing Randi Weingarten and her union stooges can do about it,’ he said. He went on to say, ‘Teachers unions should hang their heads in shame after this attempt to trap kids in their failing government schools. Parents deserve the right to direct the upbringing of their own children, and school choice gives them real power. Kids don’t belong to the government. With this win in New Hampshire, parents will continue to be in charge.’”

Thank  
you 

Words fail me to adequately express our church family for the outpouring of love, kindness, support, and generosity that each and every one of you have bestowed upon us during my recent surgery and continuing recovery period.

We are blessed beyond measure to be able to serve this wonderful local assembly of God’s dear saints.



Pastor